COMMISSIONER'S MINUTES

Wednesday, October 7, 2026

MEETING STARTS AT 3:00 PM

SOMERSET COUNTY COMMISSION CHAMBERS

Present Commissioners: Chair Robert Sezak and Commissioners John Alsop, Don Skillings and Joel Stetkis were present. Vice Chair Scott Seekins was absent.
Staff: Tanya Belanger, Patrick Dolan, David Spencer, Christopher Dostie, Sheriff Dale Lancaster and Tim Curtis
Public: Jake Freudberg with the Morning Sentinel and Road Consultant Robert Lightbody

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The pledge was observed.

B. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 3:00pm.

C. MINUTES:

Resolution 26-166: To accept the minutes from the meeting of September 16, 2026.
Motion: Commissioner Alsop motioned to accept the minutes from the meeting of September 16, 2026.
Second: Commissioner Stetkis
Vote: Motion carries 4-0

D. PUBLIC COMMENT: (To allow members of the public to comment or reserve time to speak on an upcoming agenda item.) None

E. DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

1. Administrator Curtis shared that he is currently covering maintenance at the Courthouse as the Facilities Supervisor is currently on medical leave. He and HR are meeting with a cleaning service this week and have advertised custodial services. Two significant capital improvements have been identified at the Courthouse. Replacement of the concrete walkway into the building and upgrading the elevator to modern internal parts that are readily available. In the past few weeks, the County Administrator has participated in the MCCA Convention of Counties at Sunday River, the KVCOG General Assembly Meeting, a regional economic update from Maine DECD and speaking to students about municipal government at Valley High School in Bingham.

He also attended a meeting of local stakeholders in Jackman hosted by Town Manager Rick Petrie. Rick will be at the next Commissioners meeting to discuss plans to renew training for outdoor rescue in the greater Jackman area. Finally, Somerset Public Health is having an open house/annual meeting tonight from 4-6pm at their office in Skowhegan and October 21st the County will hold its annual recognition night for the Spirit of America recipients.

2. Finance Director Patrick Dolan updated the Commissioners on financials through the first quarter of the fiscal year. Overall labor costs are running favorable to budget. Auditors will be on site next week.
Patrick mentioned that he received an estimate of $140,000 to convert the boilers at the jail to multi-fuel which would allow changing from fuel oil to natural gas depending on which is the cheaper option. Commissioner Alsop asked if there was a way to assess the return on investment. Patrick said he could run the numbers based on past fuel consumption. Commissioner Sezak said that Summit Natural Gas may have

incentives that could help with the cost of conversion. Patrick said the price of fuel oil continues to fluctuate between $4.55 and $4.80 per gallon.

3. Sheriff Lancaster reported 408 calls for service in the past week. He announced that the County Jail had received a $3.1M grant from the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to provide for the costs of opioid treatment for inmates. These funds will be allocated over 5 years, over that time the State should have a program in place to allow inmates to receive MaineCare benefits in the last 60 days of their sentence.

4. Register of Deeds Tanya Belanger reported that things are running well in the Deeds Office. She is looking into new software that uses AI to assist with documentation, and she is also considering creating a policy to allow for credit card transactions.

5. DA Office Manager Christopher Dostie updated the Commissioners on staffing in the office. There have been several good candidates to fill the vacant restitution clerk's position. District and Superior Court will be on administrative leave later this month as the Assistant District Attorney's hold their annual prosecutors' conference.

6. U/T Coordinator Dave Spencer said work has begun on formulating the FY28 UT Budget. He will provide a first draft for the Commissioners at the next meeting.

F. PUBLIC HEARING: None

G. WORKSHOP:

1. Update on Bridge Repair and Maintenance in Lexington and Concord Townships: Dave Spencer and Road Consultant Robert Lightbody discussed plans to replace the guardrails on at least four of the five county bridges in this area. Dave said there are sufficient funds to address this project in the spring/summer of 2027. The bridge that crosses Sandy Stream on Back Road in Lexington is at the end of its useful life. Robert Lightbody believes the cost to replace will come higher than the engineering study estimate of $770,000. The Commissioners discussed the option of replacing with blocking off the bridge indefinitely. County Administrator Curtis said there could be sufficient funds to replace the bridge with the TIF revenue that comes from the Northeast Clean Energy Connect (NECEC) Project. The Commissioners will discuss further during the upcoming UT Budget discussion.

2. Update on Grant Funding for XRB Treatment at Somerset County Jail: Picking up on the Sheriff's announcement, Administrator Curtis explained that the SAMHSA grant will provide funding for the purchase of extended-release buprenorphine for inmates dealing with substance use disorder for the next five years. This is significant because the funds should bridge the gap to Medicaid coverage for inmates expected to be in place by 2028/2029.

With this development, the County Administrator recommends that the Commissioners consider creating a matching grant program for opioid settlement funds as they become available each year through 2039.

H. NEW AGENDA ITEMS: (Commissioners Only): Commissioner Skillings recommended that the Commissioners give directions to the County Administrator to establish a process to reduce the number of non-emergency calls that come through the RCC Business line. The consensus of the board was to add this item to the agenda (Resolution 26-172).

I. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

J. NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution 26-167: To approve payment of Community Benefit awards to the following applicants for completion of their matching grant projects:

Hospice Volunteers of Somerset County (Volunteer Training Program) $15,000.00

Motion: Commissioner Alsop motioned to approve payment of Community Benefit awards as presented.
Second: Commissioner Stetkis
Vote: Motion carries 4-0

Resolution 26-168: To approve Commissioners Mileage Reimbursement for the 1st quarter of the fiscal year.

Motion: Commissioner Skillings motioned to approve Commissioners Mileage Reimbursement for the 1st quarter of the fiscal year.
Second: Commissioner Stetkis
Vote: Motion carries 4-0

Resolution 26-169: To approve the hiring of Francis Hayden, Ashton Clough, Liam Savoy, Jaydan Bornstein, and Justice Lupton as Corrections Officers at the Somerset County Jail.

Motion: Commissioner Alsop motioned to approve the hiring of Corrections Officers as presented.
Second: Commissioner Stetkis
Discussion: Administrator Curtis noted that four probationary corrections officers have given notice over the past month to pursue other career endeavors.
Vote: Motion carries 4-0

K. CAPITAL RESERVE EXPENDITURES:

L. UNORGANIZED TERRITORY:

Resolution 26-170: To authorize the contract with the Town of New Portland for Fire Protection in the Unorganized Territory.

Motion: Commissioner Skillings motioned to authorize the contract with the Town of New Portland for Fire Protection for three years at $14,520 per year to cover townships in Unorganized Territory.
Second: Commissioner Stetkis
Vote: Motion carries 4-0

M. WARRANTS:

Resolution 26-171: To approve the Treasurer's Warrant for General Fund, SCJ, Unorganized Territories and TIF Community Benefit:

GENERAL:	**$ 138,303.92**
JAIL:	**$ 360,710.49**
UT:	**$ 745,285.92**
TIF COMM BENEFIT:	**$ 15,000.00**
TOTAL:	**$1,259,300.33**

Motion: Commissioner Alsop motioned to approve the Treasurer's Warrant for General Fund, SCJ, Unorganized Territories and TIF Community Benefit as presented.
Second: Commissioner Stetkis
Vote: Motion carries 4-0

Resolution 26-172: To direct the County Administrator to establish a process to reduce the volume of calls on the non-emergency business line at the Somerset Regional Communications Center.
Motion: Commissioner Skillings motioned to direct the County Administrator to establish a process to reduce the volume of calls on the non-emergency business line at the Somerset Regional Communications Center.
Second: Commissioner Stetkis
Discussion: Administrator Curtis recommended any changes in call policy should be communicated with the towns and other users in an effective manner. That may require a series of meetings involving at least one Commissioner.
Vote: Motion carries 4-0

N. MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION ITEMS (Commissioners Only)**:** Commissioner Sezak said the Convention of Counties was very informative and well attended.

O. RECESS TO EXECUTE DOCUMENTS: The Warrant and other documents were signed.

P. ADJOURN: Meeting adjourned at 4:22pm.