

STATE OF MAINE

Lincoln, ss.

December Term, 2019

At a meeting of the County Commissioners, begun and holden in Wiscasset, within and for the County of Lincoln, on the fifth day of May, by adjournment from the twenty-first day of April

Present: Mary R. Trescot, Chair  
William B. Blodgett  
Hamilton W. Meserve

In response to the Executive Order from the Governor's Office, the meeting was held by Conference Call to limit the physical interaction of the individuals participating. The meeting agenda reflects this change in protocol. Two members of the press participated, in addition, several County departments were on the call.

Commissioner Meserve moved to approve minutes from the April 21, 2020 meeting; second by Commissioner Blodgett; 3 – 0 vote approved.

Finance Director, Michelle Cearbaugh, presented for approval:

Warrant #29 \$204,938.63

Motion to approve by Commissioner Meserve; second by Commissioner Blodgett; 3 – 0 vote approved. All warrants will be signed at a later date.

One (1) Payroll Warrant was presented for approval:

Payroll Warrant #2020-9 \$166,512.47

Motion to approve by Commissioner Blodgett; second by Commissioner Meserve; 3 – 0 vote approved.

Sheriff Todd Brackett reported a current Jail count at Two Bridges Regional Jail (TBRJ): 8 Lincoln County inmates; Sagadahoc County holds 14 inmates at TBRJ; Federal 1; Oxford 22; Penobscot 23; Hancock 1; and Androscoggin 1 for a total of 70. The jail population is significantly reduced because an effort has been made to home release as many inmates as possible in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Three bids for ammunition were received for the fall range qualifications. Sheriff Brackett recommended accepting the bid received from TJ Morris in the amount of \$8,973.80, as it was the lowest cost in each category of the bid. Motion to approve by Commissioner Blodgett; second by Commissioner Meserve; 3 – 0 vote approved.

A purchase order was presented for the purchase of three alcohol monitors and three GPS electronic monitors from Securus Monitoring Solutions to supplement our current inventory. The amount of the request is \$5,700.00 and is a budgeted expenditure. Motion to approve by Commissioner Meserve; second by Commissioner Blodgett; 3 – 0 vote approved.

Sheriff Brackett made a request to hire Eze F. VanBuckley, for a full-time Patrol position. Mr. VanBuckley has been working for the Towns of East Millinocket and Bucksport Police Departments as a part-time Patrol Officer. The Sheriff recommends hiring him, pending the usual background checks and tests. Commissioner Blodgett moved to approve the hiring, as specified; second by Commissioner Meserve; 3 – 0 vote approved.

Sheriff Brackett also recommended hiring Michael Godin for a part-time Patrol position. Mr. Godin will be graduating from college soon and will also be subject to the background check and testing. Commissioner Meserve moved to approve; second by Commissioner Blodgett; 3-0 vote approved.

A request was made to purchase 24 rifle noise suppressors for use at the range. This equipment will help reduce the amount of noise exposure employees experience during qualifications. The Department of Labor has recommended all Law Enforcement agencies in Maine to develop a hearing protection program for employees who are exposed to high noise decibels. In addition, employees will wear two layers of hearing protection during qualification rounds. Motion to approve the purchase by Commissioner Meserve; second by Commissioner Blodgett; 3 – 0 vote approved.

Sheriff Brackett requested all in attendance on the call observe a moment of silence in honor of Deputy Rueben Blackman, who was killed in the line of duty as a Lincoln County Sheriff's Deputy. His death occurred 87 years earlier on May 5, 1933. The Commissioners honored the request and recognize his sacrifice.

From the Communications Center, Director Tom Nelson presented a quote to install a memorial garden at the Communications Center in memory of long-time County employee, Kathy Blagdon, who passed away last fall. The estimate totals \$2,160 and will include a retaining wall, memorial stone, birdbath, bird feeders and multiple plantings. The Commissioners approved proceeding with the project.

Director Nelson also reported that Emergency Communications Officer (ECO) trainee, Kyle Greene recently passed his qualifying tests and is now certified as a full-time ECO. A vacancy still exists for an additional ECO and the hiring process is currently underway.

From the Emergency Management Agency (EMA), Director Casey Stevens updated the Commissioners on Lincoln County EMA's efforts to assist local agencies to combat the Coronavirus outbreak. The Lincoln County cases have stayed low and community transmission has not been detected in Lincoln County. A vendor has been identified that has reusable N95 masks in stock that required changeable filters. A group purchase of ENVO N95 masks is being coordinated with local EMA agencies and first responders. So far 10-12 agencies have expressed interest. Director Stevens requested approval to facilitate the group purchase, with a cost of up to \$15,000. Each agency that submits a purchase request will be invoiced for the cost of their purchase and all funds expended will be repaid by the purchasing agency. Motion to approve the purchase by Commissioner Meserve; second by Commissioner Blodgett; 3 – 0 vote approved.

From the Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission (LCRPC), Executive Director Mary Ellen Barnes and Community Development Specialist Sandy Gilbreath presented an update on items their department is working on remotely. A letter to State DACF Commissioner Amanda Beal was reviewed. Agencies across the state grouped together to jointly oppose a decrease in funding to Regional Planning Commissions and Council of Governments. This reduction is related to an increase in state spending on COVID-19 response. The LCRPC Board has approved the joint communication.

Sandy Gilbreath reviewed a briefing she prepared on emergency food response activities by the LCRPC. Outreach has occurred to local food pantries, town offices and grocery stores to identify needs and support opportunities. Volunteers have been lined up to provide home delivery services and to assist at local food pantries. Lincoln County employees have assisted with food donation transportation from local grocery stores and emergency donations from state coordinating facilities. This is an ongoing process and needs are identified and resources allocated as quickly and efficiently as possible.

An update on the ASK Grant (Assistance with Specific Know-How) process was reviewed. The Town of Alna has applied and approved for a \$2,000 grant. The Town of Edgecomb has also submitted a proposal that is still under review.

Representatives from audit firm Berry, Talbot, Royer, CPA joined the meeting. Hadje Esmiller and Justin Berg reviewed the audit process and the 2019 Lincoln County financial statements. They reviewed the change in net position vs. the prior year and other relevant fund balance changes. The final audit received a clean "unqualified" opinion.

The TBRJ Lease arrangement for a proposed solar project, which was prepared by legal counsel representing both Lincoln County and TBRJ was reviewed. The arrangement would allow TBRJ to lease the property surrounding the jail for one dollar per year from Lincoln and Sagadahoc Counties for the placement of a solar array. In return, the counties would benefit from the purchase of electricity at a reduced cost for the needs at county buildings. Commissioner Blodgett moved to approve with the lease, as presented; second by Commissioner Meserve; 3 – 0 vote approved. Commissioner Trescot will sign the lease document.

A Payment in Lieu of Taxes in the amount of \$200 was received from Maine Coast Heritage Trust for property owned in the Unorganized Territory. Administrator Kipfer recommended passing these funds on to the Town of Bristol, as has been past practice. Motion to approve by Commissioner Meserve; second by Commissioner Blodgett; 3 – 0 vote approved.

The Town of Waldoboro has proposed paying their County Taxes in an installment method, with the total amount paid in full by the due date set in state statute. Although this type of arrangement has not been previously done, Lincoln County is willing to make any accommodations possible to make the process easier on a town's cash flow. Since this results in pre-payment of taxes, it will also help with the County's cash flow.

A renewal application for a liquor license was received from the Monhegan Island Inn. Previous applications were reviewed and approved by an employee authorized by the Commissioners. That employee has since retired, so Administrator Kipfer suggests the Commissioners appoint the County Administrator to act on behalf of the Board of Commissioners to approve applications for liquor licenses and spirits for the Lincoln County Unorganized Territories and Plantations; Commissioner Blodgett moved to approve the appointment; second by Commissioner Meserve; 3 – 0 vote approved. Administrator Kipfer will approved the application and forward to the State Bureau of Alcoholic Beverages.

An employee resignation received on May 4th was presented to the Board. Bookkeeper, Pamela Perry has resigned her position. Commissioner Blodgett moved to approved acceptance; second by Commissioner Meserve, with regret; 3-0 vote approved. The process to fill this vacancy has been implemented.

At 10:48 a.m., Commissioner Hamilton Meserve moved to enter into executive session with the County Administrator to discuss a Personnel matter, according to 1 MRSA 405 (6) (A); second by Commissioner Blodgett; 3 – 0 vote approved. Out of executive session at 11:06 a.m. No votes were taken.

Meeting adjourned at 11:07 a.m.  
Lincoln, ss.

December Term, 2019

There being no further business, the Commissioners adjourned to meet on the nineteenth day of May A.D. 2020.

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
County Administrator