

STATE OF MAINE

At a meeting of the County Commissioners, begun and holden in Wiscasset, within and for the County of Lincoln, on the seventeenth day of February 2026 by adjournment from the third day of February 2026.

Present: David Levesque, Chair
William B. Blodgett
Evan Goodkowsky

Meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM by Commissioner Levesque, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Forum

Sharon Bailey, Jefferson, voiced her opinion that opioid settlement funds should support a broad range of substance use services—such as prevention, harm reduction, treatment, recovery, and youth education—rather than being concentrated in a single behavioral health liaison role. She shared her personal loss to emphasize that substance use disorder affects all families and stresses the need for stronger, more comprehensive community and school-based prevention efforts, while questioning whether current funding decisions can still be reconsidered. The Commissioners emphasized that the current year funds are already committed and they have supported many organizations over the past year with the funds received with no guarantees of future funds being received through the opioid settlements. They suggested that Ms. Bailey reach out and converse with Sheriff Todd Brackett and Administrator Carrie Kipfer for more details.

Lauren Woodcock, Newcastle, stated her belief that opioid settlement funds were originally intended to support treatment, prevention, recovery, and harm reduction, inclusively, and that this approach was successfully carried out by several local nonprofits the previous year. Ms. Woodcock argued that redirecting all the funds to a single mental health position within the sheriff's department does not reflect her interpretation of the original purpose of the settlement. While acknowledging the value of having a Behavioral Health Liaison in the Sheriff's Office, she stressed her feelings that opioid settlement funds are not the appropriate source for that position.

Tori Amborn, Newcastle, spoke about her work in recovery and substance recovery support, emphasizing the interconnection between substance use and mental health. She stressed her belief that creating a mental health liaison without sufficient follow-up resources undermines its effectiveness. She concluded by sharing how comprehensive recovery resources enabled her to build a stable, meaningful life, and urges long-term investment in integrated mental health and substance abuse services so others can have the same opportunity.

Peter Arnold, Damariscotta, explains that, through work with Repower Wiscasset and in partnership with local economic development leaders, he is advocating for LD 2112 which would allow municipalities to form community choice aggregation programs to procure electricity. Mr. Arnold urged the Commissioners and the Lincoln County Planning Commission

to review the bill and consider its possible benefits, noting that a larger regional aggregation could have stronger bargaining power, support new local energy generation, and enable community benefit agreements that keep energy prices affordable as infrastructure is developed.

Minutes

February 3, 2026 – Commissioner Blodgett moved to accept the minutes as written, seconded by Commissioner Goodkowsky; 3-0 vote approved.

Finances

Warrants – In the absence of Finance Director, County Administrator Carrie Kipfer presented Accounts Payable Warrant #40, in the amount of \$64,882.32 for approval. Commissioner Blodgett moved to approve the Accounts Payable Warrant as presented, seconded by Commissioner Goodkowsky; 3-0 vote approved.

Payroll Warrant – Administrator Kipfer presented Payroll Warrant #2026-03 paid on February 6, 2026, in the amount of \$264,795.63 for approval. Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to approve the Payroll Warrant as presented, seconded by Commissioner Blodgett; 3-0 vote approved.

Sheriff's Office

Jail Count – Chief Deputy Rand Maker presented the current jail count as follows: Lincoln 31, Sagadahoc 14, Knox 61, Penobscot 54, and Federal 2 for a total of 162.

Behavioral Health Liaison – Chief Deputy Maker emphasized the importance of communication and explains that the county and the Sheriff's Office has long invested in addiction and mental health support. This includes budgeting an annual contract with Addiction Resource Center, employing peer and recovery coaches based in the sheriff's office, and working with a liaison to engage with the community. Chief Deputy Maker noted that many interactions involve individuals with co-occurring substance use and mental health disorders. Additional support includes housing a state Options employee at no cost and ensuring all deputies carry and can administer Narcan. The Chief Deputy underscored the community benefits of these efforts and expressed willingness to discuss funding details and program impacts further with the community members, while noting that funding decisions rest with the Commissioners. The Behavioral Health Liaison will be attending a future Commissioners' Meeting to give an update on the position.

EMA

Purchase Authorization – Renewal of Lease for Storage Unit - \$15,000 – EMA Director Emily Huber presented a Purchase Authorization for Just Right Storage, Damariscotta, for a two-year storage facility lease (\$15,000 per year). The rental unit is used to store the command vehicle, sheltering equipment, ham radios, the UTV and other materials which cannot be stored outside. Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to approve the Purchase Authorization for a lease period of two years and as well as approving Director Huber to sign on behalf of the Commissioners, seconded by Commissioner Blodgett; 3-0 vote approved.

LCRPC

Permission to apply to the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center for a 2026 Intern through the Maine Government Summer Internship Program – LCRPC Executive Director Emily Rabbe requested permission to apply for a summer intern through the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center program. The application deadline is March 1, 2026, and this will be the seventh or eighth intern. The interns have been extremely helpful with assisting on various projects for the LCRPC and the County, and many have gone on to other roles within planning within the state of Maine or higher degrees in Planning. Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to approve the LCRPC Director applying for the Summer Internship Program, seconded by Commissioner Blodgett; 3-0 vote approved.

District Attorney

Job Description Updates – Paralegal – In the absence of the District Attorney, Administrator Kipfer presented revised job descriptions of the Victim Witness Advocate Coordinator and Paralegal positions, shifting some of the supervisory duties listed in the VWA role to the Paralegal role, including budget preparation and invoice submission, policy compliance, performance evaluations, among other duties. Commissioner Blodgett moved to approve the job description changes for the Paralegal and the Victim Witness Advocate Coordinator positions as presented, seconded by Commissioner Goodkowsky; 3-0 vote approved.

Administrator

Payment Authorization – Hibberts Gore Roadside Tree Mulching \$18,337.50 – Administrator Kipfer let the Commissioners know that the County had contracted with Steve Childs, Palermo, to pull back some of the small tree growth and open up the roadway helping to get sunlight on the road surface to reduce ice buildup. He also maintains the Palermo portion of the same road, so costs are reduced since the machinery is already on site. The work has been completed and the cost due is \$18,337.50. Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to approve the purchase authorization for \$18,337.50, seconded by Commissioner Blodgett; 3-0 vote approved.

Short Term Rental Notice for Plantations & Unorganized Territories in Maine –

Administrator Kipfer informed the Commissioners about a new notice received the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry and the Land Use Planning Commission (LUPC). It is regarding the adopted rule that they are now requiring operators of short-term rentals in the Unorganized Territories and Plantations to notify the LUPC of rental activity. There are no permits needed, just simple notification. The Commissioners questioned whether this was a one-time notification or whether the operators were required to notify of every new rental? The notice was not clear on that point, but a one-time notice seems more practical than informing the LUPC of every changeover of tenants all season.

TBRJ Jail Authority Application – Joan Schwartz, PhD – Administrator Kipfer presented an application from Joan Schwartz, Newcastle, for serving on the TBRJ Jail Authority. The recommendation is to appoint her as an alternate and see what committees she might be interested in serving on. Dr. Schwartz has extensive experience in correctional settings and is very interested in learning more about how regional corrections facilities operate. Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to appoint Joan Schwartz as an alternate to the Two Bridges Jail Authority, seconded by Commissioner Blodgett; 3-0 vote approved. Term expires on December 31, 2027.

Purchase Authorization – Recycling Roll-Off Cans – Administrator Kipfer presented a Purchase Authorization for the purchase of four new roll-off cans which are needed to replace older cans which have become structurally weak. This is a budgeted expense, and we would be looking to purchase two now and two later this year. Two quotes were received: one from Valley Enterprise, Pennsylvania and the other from Plum Container, New Hampshire. The quote from Plum Container is less and, due to the closer location, transport costs would be less. The current quote is up to \$25,000 for four cans over the next year. Commissioner Blodgett moved to purchase the four cans over the next year for a maximum expense of \$25,000 from Plum Container, New Hampshire, seconded by Commissioner Goodkowsky, 3-0 vote approved.

Fidium Broadband Project Update – Administrator Kipfer provided the Commissioners with an update on the Fidium Broadband Project with a summary included in the meeting documentation. Simon Thorne, Fidium Project Manager, provided the update which reports that the Fidium project is now complete and has significantly expanded fiber-to-the-home internet access across the region. The project directly focused on 10 local towns but also extended service to additional “incidental” towns along the build routes, resulting in approximately 37,000 homes becoming eligible for service. While most areas were covered, some very rural or camp road locations remain unserved. To address these gaps, Fidium has applied to the Maine Connectivity Authority’s BEAD (Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment) program to pursue alternative solutions—such as satellite or cellular connections—for hard-to-reach locations. Overall, the project is viewed as a success, with ongoing efforts planned to achieve full countywide coverage and continued support for residents who experience connection issues.

Old Business

Public Safety Building Project – Administrator Kipfer informed the Commissioners of recent good press that the County received regarding the stalled search for a viable property for this project. Several landowners have reached out to regarding possible property which they are interested in selling. The Planning Commission department has been researching and preparing maps of some of these so we can investigate the viability and feasibility of the properties.

Opioid Settlement Funding Grant Application – Administrator Kipfer stated that the pending applicant is still waiting on the IRS response to their non-profit application but have requested it be expedited.

Commissioner Updates

LCRPC – Commissioner Goodkowsky stated that the next executive committee meeting is Tuesday evening, February 17th, at 6 PM.

CCWI – No updates

MCCA - Commissioner Levesque let the Commissioners know that the next MCCA Convention could possibly be in September at Sunday River, Bethal. Also, the President of MCCA was requesting as many people as possible attend the Maine State Appropriations meeting next week on February 25th to speak or be a supportive presence for the lack of funding in the Governor’s budget for county jails. Administrator Kipfer also plans on attending the Housing Committee work session on the Transfer Tax Bill LD2124 the afternoon of Tuesday, February 17th.

Executive Session

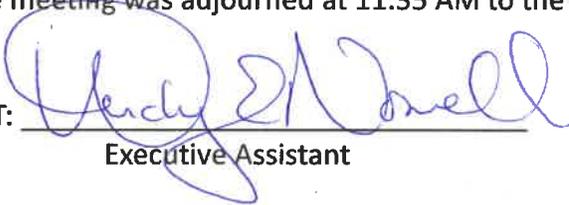
Discussion of Real Property – 1 MRSA 405 (6) (C) - Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to enter Executive Session for Discussion of Real Property per 1 MSRA 405 (6) (C); seconded by Commissioner Blodgett; 3-0 vote approved.

Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to come out of Executive Session, seconded by Commissioner Blodgett; 3-0 vote approved. No votes were taken.

Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Blodgett; 3-0 vote approved.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:35 AM to the third day of March 2026 A.D.

ATTEST:



Executive Assistant