

## STATE OF MAINE

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

None present.

### Minutes

**February 17, 2026** – Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to accept the minutes as written, seconded by Commissioner Blodgett; 3-0 vote approved.

### Finances

**Warrants** – Finance Director, Michelle Richardson asked to table the Accounts Payable Warrant to the next meeting due to technical difficulties with the final processing steps.

**Payroll Warrant** – Director Richardson presented Payroll Warrant #2026-4 paid on February 20, 2026, in the amount of \$261,31085 for approval. Commissioner Blodgett moved to approve the Payroll Warrant as presented, seconded by Commissioner Goodkowsky; 3-0 vote approved.

### Sheriff's Office

**Jail Count** – Sheriff Todd Brackett presented the current jail count as follows: Lincoln 28, Sagadahoc 12, Knox 55, Penobscot 52, and Federal 2 for a total of 149.

**Behavioral Health Liaison Update** – Sheriff Brackett introduced Danielle Pierce, the Behavioral Health Liaison working under contract through Sweetser with the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff explained that while the number of mental health-related calls the office receives is typical compared to other Maine counties, Lincoln County is somewhat unusual in having a full-time liaison dedicated to behavioral health. The position is part of a new initiative intended to strengthen the county's response to mental health and substance use crises and to supplement, rather than replace traditional law enforcement services.

Ms. Pierce described her role as a confidential, community-based support resource for individuals experiencing mental health challenges, substance use issues, or both. Since beginning formal data collection in October, she reported seeing an average of 16 new individuals per month, in addition to maintaining ongoing contact with people previously served. Most referrals come from deputies, though she also responds to non-emergency calls and collaborates with community resource officers. A central feature of her role is

confidentiality: she emphasized that she does not report information back to law enforcement unless an individual signs a release. Ms. Pierce explained that many people are reluctant to engage when services are closely tied to law enforcement, fearing that information shared could be used against them. By remaining independent and clearly distinguishing herself from police, she is better able to build rapport and encourage individuals to seek help voluntarily. This distinction is presented as critical to the effectiveness of the role, particularly for individuals with prior negative experiences with law enforcement.

The position of Behavioral Health Liaison has flexibility over other behavioral health resources and that is important in a rural county with limited services and transportation. Ms. Pierce meets people in their homes and communities, including evenings, rather than requiring office visits. Her work extends beyond individuals in crisis to include family members affected by a loved one's mental health or substance use challenges, recognizing that these issues often have wide-ranging impacts across households and communities.

Sheriff Brackett and the Commissioners discussed data collected on mental health and co-occurring substance use calls, much of which is shared with NAMI Maine. These calls often do not result in arrests but consume significant deputy time. The Commissioners expressed hope that the liaison program will shift follow-up and support responsibilities from deputies to a behavioral health professional, improving outcomes for individuals while reducing the burden on law enforcement. The Commissioners questioned future needs and funding. While one liaison is currently sufficient, Ms. Pierce noted that expanding community awareness and use of the program may eventually require additional staff. The Sheriff explained that opioid settlement funds were used to help launch the position, reflecting the documented overlap between substance use and mental health crises. Overall, the program is a promising, evolving model that the Sheriff plans to monitor, refine, and potentially expand as demand grows

**Purchase Authorization – Renewal of Cellebrite \$16,327.65** – Sheriff Brackett presented a Purchase Authorization for the budgeted renewal of the Cellebrite contract in the amount of \$16,327.65 for the software used to extract information from cell phones during investigations. There is potential for grant funding to help cover some or all this cost. Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to accept the Purchase Authorization for renewal of the Cellebrite contract, seconded by Commissioner Blodgett; 3-0 vote approved.

**Bid Opening – Replacement Patrol Vehicles** – The Commissioners opened three sets of bids received by the deadline of March 2, 2026, at 3 PM. Commissioner Goodkowsky opened a bid from Key of Newcastle. The bid included 2026 Dodge Pursuit Durango all-wheel drive patrol for \$39,247; 2026 Dodge Pursuit Durango all-wheel drive Detective for \$39,126; 2026 Jeep Grand Wagoneer all-wheel drive command operations vehicle Lieutenant with a short wheelbase \$59,288 or with a long wheelbase \$61,999. Estimated date of delivery would be April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026.

Commissioner Blodgett opened a bid from Quirk Ford, Augusta, which included 2026 Ford Police Interceptor Supervisor for \$44,152; 2026 Ford Interceptor Detective/Lieutenant for

\$43,945; 2026 Dodge Durango for \$41,573; 2026 Hemi Dodge Durango for \$42,986; 2026 Ford Ready for Road package for \$49,852; 2026 Chevy Tahoe for \$56,553.

Commissioner Levesque opened a bid from Darlings Ford, Brunswick. The bid included a 2026 Expedition 4x4 Active for \$64,590 and a 2026 Police Interceptor Utility all-wheel drive base for \$45,240. Delivery is estimated for 12 to 14 weeks.

Sheriff Brackett and Chief Deputy Rand Maker will review these bids and come back later to the meeting with a recommendation for approval. There are some Stonegarden funds which may be allowed for the purchase of one vehicle.

**Employee Retirement** - Sheriff Brackett announced, with regret, the retirement of Chief Deputy Rand Maker effective March 30, 2026. Chief Maker has been a key part of the Sheriff's Office for over 30 years, working his way up from Patrol Deputy to Detective to Patrol Commander and then Chief Deputy. He has been an exceptional investigator and invaluable in his roles. The Sheriff expressed his thanks for all of Chief Maker's contributions to the department and recommends, reluctantly, that the Commissioners accept the resignation of Chief Deputy Maker. Commissioner Blodgett moves the acceptance, with regrets, of the resignation of Chief Deputy Rand Maker, seconded by Commissioner Goodkowsky; 3-0 vote approved.

## **Deeds**

**Approval of Proposal to Index Land Records by Info Quick Solutions, Inc. \$22,391.50** – In the absence of the Register of Deeds, Becky Wotton, who is away at a training, Administrator Carrie Kipfer presented a Proposal from Info Quick Solutions (IQS) to index land records from the historical records in the amount of \$22,391.50, funded through the Deeds surplus account. IQS will index, verify and load the documents into the Land Records Management System beginning with Volume 1 and working forward. They will ensure accuracy of the handwritten records. Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to approve the proposal for indexing by IQS, seconded by Commissioner Blodgett; 3-0 vote approved.

## **Communications**

**Updated Job Description – Emergency Communications Officer (Dispatcher)** – Director Tara Doe presented a revised job description for the Emergency Communications Officer (Dispatcher) position. In the process of hiring, a review of the existing description was done and there were several updates needed in the training required and certifications needed for the position. Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to accept the updated job description, seconded by Commissioner Blodgett; 3-0 vote approved.

## **LCRPC**

**Hiring Recommendation – Land Use and Transportation Planner (Conditional)** – Administrator Kipfer presented an update on the hiring of the Land Use and Transportation Planner. A verbal approval was received from Commissioner Levesque to make a conditional offer to one of the candidates and the negotiation process has not been completed. The name

of the candidate will be tabled until the next meeting in the hope that the position will be filled by then.

**Approval for Out of State Travel – National Association of Regional Councils Annual Conference, Tulsa, OK** – Executive Director Emily Rabbe requested permission to travel out of state to attend the National Association of Regional Councils Annual Conference from June 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>, 2026 in Tulsa, OK. She is also submitting a proposal to present at a session at the conference to share some of the work we are doing in Lincoln County with groups outside of New England. If the proposal is accepted, there could be a reduction in the cost for the conference. The maximum cost would be approximately \$2,300 for the conference, travel and hotel. Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to approve out of state travel for Emily Rabbe to Tulsa, OK and up to \$2,300 in travel expenses, seconded by Commissioner Blodgett; 3-0 vote approved.

**ARPA Housing Reallocations** – Over the last couple months, Director Rabbe and Administrator Kipfer have been meeting with the past awardees for both phases of the ARPA Housing funding – phase one housing projects that were shovel ready and phase two municipal projects that needed funding for planning. They presented the Commissioners with a detailed memo on where all the projects stand and how they have been spent down, or how they are working to spend down the funds granted. Ledgewood Court was originally allocated \$96,000 for phase one and they have had some issues which will lead to them not being able to spend down the funds by the ARPA deadline of December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026, so they have returned the funds. Wiscasset's project scope changed, so those funds were not disbursed. There is a total of \$336,000 in ARPA funds still on hand that were allocated to affordable housing that needs to be disbursed. During the conversations with the awardees, one of the focuses was to determine which projects did not receive full funding for their proposal. To disburse the ARPA funds, they must stay within the projects which were already allocated by the Commissioners; no new projects can be created after the original December 31, 2024 allocation deadline.

The recommendations for distribution of ARPA funds are:

- \$150,000 to the Town of Waldoboro – Water Infrastructure
  - Fund an additional \$150,000 to the Waldoboro water booster station and extension project, which previously received \$50,000. As outlined in the application, the funds would support pre-engineering and required federal environmental reviews not covered by a separate \$1 million Northern Borders Regional Commission grant. The project is foundational for enabling higher-density and affordable housing development (up to 153 potential units) and supports another ARPA-funded affordable housing project nearby. The town has committed to spending the funds by December 31, 2026, and is ready to issue an RFP/RFQ imminently.
- Conditional \$150,000 to Waldoboro & Volunteers of America AD Gray Project
  - Conditionally award \$150,000 to extend three-phase power to two ARPA project sites - Town of Waldoboro and Volunteers of America Northern New England. The recommendation is conditional pending confirmation from CMP on final scope and costs. ARPA funds would likely cover poles and wires

only, avoiding transformer costs that have long lead times (30–40 weeks). A decision is requested by May 1, 2026, to allow time to finalize feasibility, timeline, and updated cost estimates.

- \$36,000 to the Town of Newcastle (with Potential Increase)
  - Using the remaining \$36,000, provide more funding to the Town of Newcastle for their ARPA-funded housing project. The expanded funds would help with hydrant relocation and engineering work for utilities, road, and stormwater infrastructure. If the three-phase power project comes in under budget or does not proceed, additional funds could be shifted to Newcastle after May 1, 2026. Newcastle has demonstrated strong progress, including land acquisition, concept designs, and community engagement, and aims to spend funds before the end of the year.

Commissioner Blodgett moved to accept the ARPA funding recommendations as presented by LCRPC, seconded by Commissioner Goodkowsky; 3-0 vote approved.

**LCRPC Annual Meeting** – Director Rabbe let the Commissioners know that the LCRPC Annual Meeting will be held on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026, at Bigelow Labs in East Boothbay.

#### **Sheriff's Office (continued)**

**Purchase Recommendations for New Vehicles** – Sheriff Brackett returned to the meeting to recommend awarding the bids submitted by Key in Newcastle for three vehicles – one Durango for Patrol for \$39,247 and two unmarked Durangos for \$39,126. He recommends accepting the bid from Quirk in Augusta for one Ford Interceptor for \$44,152. Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to accept the Sheriff's recommendation for accepting the bids as presented, seconded by Commissioner Blodgett, 3-0 vote approved.

The Sheriff also recommended conditionally using Stonegarden grant funds to purchase one Tahoe for \$56,553 from Quirk in Augusta. Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to accept the Sheriff's recommendation for accepting the bid conditionally as presented using Stonegarden funds, seconded by Commissioner Blodgett, 3-0 vote approved.

#### **Administrator**

**DOT Notice of Taking – Town of Newcastle** – Administrator Kipfer informed the Commissioners of a Notice of Taking received from the Department of Transportation regarding a parcel in the town of Newcastle on Route 215 Jones Woods Road. Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to accept the DOT Notice of Taking in the Town of Newcastle and place it on record in the Register of Deeds Office, seconded by Commissioner Blodgett; 3-0 vote approved.

#### **Old Business**

**Public Safety Building Project** – Administrator Kipfer informed the Commissioners that a parcel of land in Newcastle is being evaluated. The consultants have been updated on the status of the research and have been asked for an estimate of additional costs to expand the scope of their services.

**Two Bridges Regional Jail** – Commissioner Blodgett asked for an update on how the transfer of Knox to the TBRJ had gone. Administrator Kipfer let the Commissioners know that Colonel Bailey had said the transfer had gone smoother than expected. The inmates from Knox were all moved to TBRJ in December along with the hiring of several staff members. They are working on streamlining transportation issues.

**Opioid Settlement Funding Grant Application** – No updates.

### **Commissioners' Updates**

**MCCA Convention Dates – September 22-25, 2026, Sunday River** – Commissioner Levesque will let the Commissioners know more information as he gets it but hopes they will save the date to attend.

**LCRPC** – Commissioner Goodkowsky let the Commissioners know that the next Executive Committee Meeting will be March 24<sup>th</sup>. The invitation to the Annual Meeting has been received and will be on April 15, 2026, at Bigelow Labs in East Boothbay.

**CCWI** – Commissioner Goodkowsky let the Commissioners know that the next meeting will be March 13, 2026.

**TBRJ Authority** – Commissioner Goodkowsky let the Commissioners know that the next Jail Authority meeting will be March 11, 2026, at 3 PM at the TBRJ and the new Board appointee, Joan Schwartz, will be attending.

### **Executive Sessions**

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

Commissioner Blodgett moved to come out of Executive Session, seconded by Commissioner Goodkowsky; 3-0 vote approved.

Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to approve and employee's request regarding FMLA, seconded by Commissioner Blodgett; 3-0 vote approved.

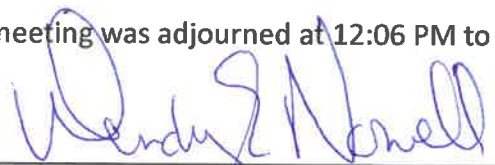
**Discussion of Real Property – 1 MRSA 405 (6) (C)** - Commissioner Goodkowsky moved to enter Executive Session for Discussion of Real Property per 1 MSRA 405 (6) (C); seconded by Commissioner Blodgett; 3-0 vote approved. LCRPC Executive Director Emily Rabbe joined the Executive Session.

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 12:06 PM to the seventeenth day of March 2026 A.D.

ATTEST:

  
Executive Assistant