

March 24, 2011

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners
Special Meeting
held March 24, 2011
in the Commissioners' Conference Room
Machias, Maine**

**Attending the meeting were:
Commissioner Christopher M. Gardner
Commissioner Kevin L. Shorey
Commissioner John B. Crowley, Sr.
Dean Preston, UT Supervisor
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager
Gail Popham, Administration
Mike Hinerman, EMA Director
Jill Holmes, Treasurer
Judy Alexander, Financial Accountant
Jim Lucas, Buildings & Grounds
Diane Smith-Halkett, SCEC - TIF Administrator
Susan Aygarn, Landvest Regional Forest Manager
Trevor Hold, Wesley
Josh Bragg, East Machias
Ricky Harmon, Roque Bluffs, Twp. 19
Wayne Spear, Twp. 14 (Cathance Twp.)
Phil Duggan, DECP
Sharon Mack, BDN
Ruth Lubecker, MVNO**

Commissioner Gardner called the meeting to order. He stated that the purpose of the meeting was to continue discussion regarding the status of the 19 road which was tabled at the regular meeting held March 10, 2011. The road starts in Twp. 18, goes through Twp. 19 and ends in Crawford and was seriously damaged from a storm that occurred in December of 2010. The damage includes several washouts. The question on the table is whether or not the County wants to maintain its interest in the road.

Commissioner Gardner asked for the public's input. Wayne Spear of Cathance Twp. stated that he had worked on the road off and on for 40 years noting that several culverts had been replaced in 1998 with grant money. Ricky Harmon stated that he had a camp at Round Lake and the road was his only access to it. Commissioner Gardner asked Mike Hinerman, EMA Director, his thoughts on the issue. Mike said he didn't want to get involved in County management of roads. He added that

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funds could be applied for through FEMA though whether or not they would be granted was anybody's guess.

Discussion continued and everyone seemed to be in support of retaining the road and making it usable again for many reasons including forestry practices, fire protection access, and hunting and fishing pursuits.

Dean Preston, Supervisor of the UT spoke next stating that he too, would like to see it retained as a County Road but that there were many variables to consider including cost and liability. He developed an initial plan (see attached) to address the immediate concerns as well as future plans to minimally maintain and control safe passage. He noted that there is no money slated for such repairs in the current (2010/2011) budget or in the proposed 2011/2012 budget. However, he said, he would pursue FEMA funds initially and reprioritize and/or change some current projects to try and get some work done to the road sooner rather than later. He stressed that a Commissioners' decision in 1982, that there would be no winter maintenance, would stay in effect.

***MOTION* Commissioner Shorey moved to accept UT Supervisor Dean Preston's plan to sustain the 19 road as a County Road and authorize him to pursue obtaining FEMA funds for disaster repairs and report back to the Commissioners. Commissioner Crowley seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

Before closing the meeting, Commissioner Gardner told everyone that Dave Randall, Calais Chief of Police and member of the Blue Knights Motorcycle Club, would be having a fundraising event in the summer. The event will showcase eastern Washington County towns such as Eastport, Lubec and Machias as bikers tour the area. The money raised is to benefit the Relay for Life and Chris supported the event and hoped that everyone else would also.

***MOTION* Commissioner Gardner moved to go into Executive Session at 4:30 p.m. pursuant to MRSA Title 1, § 405-A 6D to discuss union negotiations. Commissioner Shorey seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to come out of Executive Session at 5:03 p.m. Commissioner Shorey seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

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No decisions or motions were made after Executive Session.

Adjournment

5:03 p.m.

Attest:

Gail Popham, Administrative Asst.