

**OXFORD COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES**

March 17, 2026

Meeting Convened

At the Court of Oxford County Commissioners begun and held at Paris, Maine within and for the County of Oxford at 9:00 am on Tuesday, March 17, being a regular session, there were present:

Lisa Keim	Chair
Sawin Millett	Commissioner
Timothy Turner	Commissioner

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Minutes for Approval

The following action occurred regarding sets of minutes of previous meetings:

February 17	approved with amendments
February 27	approved
March 5	approved with amendments

Agenda Adopted

The agenda was adopted as written.

Public Comment

Joan Kelly of Hartford asked who investigates complaints to the County and how they get filed.

Commissioner Turner explained that the complaint goes to the Administrator who goes to the Chair and they determine if investigation is needed – if so, they approach the County’s Attorney who will advise further.

Joan asked if all complaints get logged or if the Administrator solely maintains them. Administrator Loper confirmed that he passes all complaints on to the Commissioners.

Joan made reference to a complaint made to Administrator and questioned if the results of his findings were passed on to Commissioners and expressed she feels it is best practice for the Commissioners to actually see all aspects of the matter and not just take somebody’s word that it was not an issue. She also noted that she’s still waiting on a response to her FOAA request related to that matter.

Joan then asked about the recent reassignment of Deputy to CID (Criminal Investigative Division). She questioned the difference between promotion and reassignment and why the distinction was made.

Administrator Loper explained that it was requested by the Sheriff to call it a reassignment and not promotion because there was no rank change in the process.

Joan questioned if the sheriff can reassign anyone and if that goes around the Commissioners authority to approve hires, noting the Detective position is different than the employee's previous Patrol Deputy job.

Commissioner Keim explained that he cannot create positions but can assign his deputies to certain roles. Joan asked if the commissioners knew how many reassignments have occurred and Commissioner Keim explained that HR would need to be notified for payroll purposes and that the Deputies could bring concerns to the board or Union Stewards if they felt they were being treated unfairly in this process. Joan expressed her concern that in this case the Union Steward was the one who was reassigned and that she has spoken to several people who have come to the Board with concerns but haven't seen action or result.

Department Heads

Department heads met with the Commissioners to discuss a variety of topics, some being unique to specific departments and other topics being of concern to several or all departments.

Sheriff's Report

Sheriff Chris Wainwright updated the Commissioners on departmental matters.

Commissioner Keim asked him to take a close look at his overtime line and see what he could do to get it under control.

Commissioner Millett asked for an update on the open part-time SRO position. Major Thompson explained that it is a very difficult task to find someone who is qualified for that job who wants to work part-time.

The Commissioners authorized the hiring of Levi Cole-McDonnell as a part-time Corrections Officer with the following confirmed:

- Effective Date: March 24, 2026
- Wage Rate: \$20.00/hr (PT uncertified rate)
- Special Conditions: none
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The Commissioners authorized the hiring of Kaden Neureuther as a part-time Corrections Officer with the following confirmed:

- Effective Date: March 25, 2026
- Wage Rate: \$20.00/hr (PT uncertified rate)
- Special Conditions: none

Sheriff Wainwright and Administrator Loper spoke in favor of engaging Enterprise for fleet management services which they believe will yield significant financial savings by keeping the fleet current which will prevent significant repair and maintenance costs and will allow more favorable trade in deals. Commissioner Keim wanted to be sure that if the Commissioners approved the agreement, it wouldn't make them commit the County to purchasing seven vehicles because she doesn't feel enough justification has been made yet for that many new vehicles this year. Administrator Loper explained that if the fleet management gets turned over to Enterprise they will work within our budget, despite adding an additional new vehicle bringing the total to 8 this year. The following years will only be about 2-3 vehicles since the fleet will be brought up to date. Commissioner Keim also questioned how many spares would be kept on the fleet. Anthony

Wu of Enterprise said that it's difficult to tell today how many spares would be needed due to current condition or fleet and the territory the vehicles cover, although he's confident that the number will reduce as the fleet becomes more healthy. The Commissioners authorized Administrator Loper to engage in a contract with Enterprise for fleet management services.

Treasurer's Report

Finance Director Lindsay Kay updated the Commissioners on departmental matters and warned about a few potential short funded budget due to loss of revenue and expressed the need for savings this year, especially in the Sheriff's Office salary lines in anticipation of several leaves in that office that will require filling with overtime.

Finance Director Kay recommended creating reserve accounts to plan for financial emergencies, which would be determined by the Commissioners, deriving from the 2024 undesignated funds.

County credit reserve - \$500k

Jail credit reserve - \$200k

County facility reserve - \$100k

Jail capital reserve - \$100k

The Commissioners set the 2026 municipal tax due date as September 1 with a late payment interest rate of 7%.

The Commissioners authorized sending out an RFP for a tax anticipation note (TAN) up to 5 million dollars.

Personnel Updates and Actions

The Commissioners authorized Executive Assistant Nichole Cargino to carryover 48 hours of vacation time.

Matters Pertaining to the Airport

The Commissioners authorized Airport Supervisor Tony Carter to update the masterplan up to \$200,000 of which the County would pay \$5,000. Commissioner Keim expressed concern for the rising costs of the airport and how it doesn't truly benefit the entire County due to its location. UT Supervisor Carter explained that a market analysis will be part of the masterplan.

The Commissioners authorized engaging in a contract to install a new lock system at the airport.

Items for Discussion and Action – Considered as Time Permits Throughout Meeting

1. Reviewed Administrator's work sheet.
2. Reviewed Open House flyer and expressed their excitement for the event.
3. The Commissioner authorized UT Supervisor Tony Carter to send out an RFQ for paving projects in the Unorganized Territory.
4. UT Supervisor Tony Carter expressed concern for the
5. Commissioner Millett

Executive Sessions

The Commissioners entered an executive session (1 M.R.S.A. § 405-6 D) to discuss union contract negotiations. No action was needed upon returning to open session.


The Commissioners entered an executive session (1 M.R.S.A. § 405-6 A) to discuss a personnel matter regarding insurance claims. No action was needed upon returning to open session.

Adjournment


The Commissioners adjourned at 1:43pm



Lisa M. Keim, Chair



H. Sawin Millett, Commissioner



Timothy G. Turner, Commissioner

Notes:

- 1) These minutes are intended to be a brief description of meeting actions to provide, in a general sense only, an account of what was discussed.*
- 2) Unless otherwise noted, all votes taken by the Commissioners were unanimous.*