OXFORD COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES

June 16, 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, June 16, 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:

June 4	approved

Agenda Adopted
The agenda was adopted with the addition of making an appointment to the Dark Sky Initiative under other items and tabling the Opioid Response Committee updates to the July 21 meeting.

Public Comment
Several members of the public were present, however the only one to speak was Scott Cole of Bethel who expressed his opinion that the Town (Bethel) is going "the wrong direction" following a recent vote to no longer fund the enhanced patrol contract and that he hopes the County will "keep something in place" until the Town can meet again.

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 about a recent incident that occurred on campus where it was incorrectly reported that shots were fired and wondered how that happened and if there was an investigation into it. Sheriff Wainwright explained that it wasn't something his department reported, and that what likely happened is that dispatch heard the taser being deployed, which makes a popping sound, and thought it was a firearm that had gone off.

The Commissioners discussed the enhanced patrol contracts with Mexico and Bethel. The residents of Bethel recently voted against funding the contract. Commissioner Keim explained that due to the loss of the contract funding, there should be layoffs or else there will be a deficit in the budget which wouldn't be fair to the other towns.

The Sheriff argued that the County does have a contract with the town despite the recent town vote and urged the Commissioners to hold off on making any decisions for a few weeks to see the outcome of upcoming town meetings. He also urged them to have the County's legal team review the contract terms regarding termination of the agreement.

Commissioner Turner expressed that he doesn't want to lay anyone off until all options have been exhausted and is in favor of the County's attorney reviewing the terms. Commissioner Keim suggested that maybe Treasurer Calhoun could be of assistance. Administrator Loper cautioned against using the Treasurer, who is an attorney, for legal guidance and instead utilize the County's attorney because they would ultimately be the one defending the County in any litigation.

Administrator Loper also advised using caution in making a quick decision on layoffs, noting that the County is obligated to explore all options before making such an important decision.

Commissioner Keim suggested scheduling a special Commissioners meeting after the Town of Bethel's special meeting to discuss the outcome.

Treasurer Beth Calhoun suggested that the additional positions could potentially help relieve the overtime issue in the Sheriff's Office and that the finance team should run some numbers before making any final decisions regarding personnel.

The Commissioners decided to schedule a special meeting early next week to discuss the outcome of Bethel's town meeting.

The Commissioners authorized acceptance of a Byrne/JAG grant to purchase a radar speed trailer to be utilized throughout the county to address speeding issues.

The Commissioners authorized the status change of Corrections Officer Batchelder from part-time to full-time effective July 5, with a wage rate of $26.44

The Commissioners ratified a contract with the Deputies Union (Fraternal Order of Police) to include retro pay back to January 1.

Treasurer's Report

Finance Director Lindsay Kay and Treasurer Beth Calhoun updated the Commissioners on departmental matters.

It was determined that July workshop would be pushed back to July 9 to allow finance to gather figures regarding funding in the Sheriff's Office as a result of Bethel's vote to not fund the enhanced patrol contract.

Updates from the Oxford County Opioid Response Committee

Tabled to July 21.

Matters Pertaining to the Regional Communications Center

The Commissioners reviewed bids for maintenance and marketing of the Sweden, Streaked, and Dispatch towers and awarded the project to Communications Facilities Inc.

Commissioner Keim expressed concern for having EMA be a voting member on the Communications Advisory Board (CAB) because it gives appearance of one department head (EMA Director) overseeing another department head (RCC Director) and asked that the bylaws be sent back to the CAB. The Commissioners also appointed Commissioner Keim as their representative on the Board with Commissioner Turner as the proxy.

Matters Pertaining to Buildings and Grounds
The Commissioners reviewed a footprint layout of a potential new IT/RCC building.

The Commissioners reviewed bids for heat pump installations in the Probate and Deeds Offices and awarded the project to Nason Mechanical Services.

The Commissioners accepted a bid from Nason Mechanical for heat pumps in the Probate and Deeds offices

Personnel Updates and Actions
The Commissioners accepted the resignation of Dispatcher Kira Slone effective June 18.

The Commissioners accepted the resignation of Dispatcher Caitlin Cutchin effective June 19.

Items for Discussion and Action – Considered as Time Permits Throughout Meeting
1. Reviewed Administrator's work sheet.
2. The Commissioners appointed UT/Airport Supervisor Tony Carter to the Dark Sky Initiative Board with Administrator Zane Loper as his proxy.
3. The Commissioners adopted the attached resolution regarding grant funding at the Airport.
4. The Commissioners considered joining the Maine Development Foundation. Commissioner Keim explained she was not in favor of joining at this time as she does not feel it will be as valuable at the County level as it is for municipalities. She also pointed out that the budget is tight this year and that maybe this decision should occur during budget season. Commissioners Turner and Millett felt that the $425 fee was worth a trial run of the program to invest in employee development. Deeds Register Cherri Crockett explained that training and resources would be available to all employees, not just department heads or supervisors. The Commissioners voted 2-1 to become a member with Commissioners Turner and Millett in favor and Commissioner Keim opposed.

Executive Sessions
The Commissioners entered an executive session (1 M.R.S.A. § 405-6 A) with RCC Director Geff Inman to discuss a personnel matter. No action was needed upon returning to open session, however it was noted that a retention survey would be sent to the dispatch staff.

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.*