

FRANKLIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING AGENDA

LOCATION: Franklin County Superior Courtroom

DATE AND TIME: September 3, 2024 @ 3:30 A.M.

The Franklin County Commissioners' meetings are open to the public. This meeting is also available virtually via [Video Conferencing, Cloud Phone, Webinars, Chat, Virtual Events | Zoom](#). Here is the meeting ID# 492 510 0482 passcode 030621.

APPOINTMENTS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. Clerk's Report**
- 2. Treasurer's Report**
- 3. Opioid Committee**
- 4. Sheriff's Department – Making a Deputy a Sergeant**
- 5. Town of New Vineyard Internet Service**

OLD BUSINESS:

MISCELLANEOUS:

WARRANTS: County AP, ARPA, UT, and Payroll

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting Packets are available to view by clicking on the link below:

[Agendas & Minutes - Franklin County, Maine \(franklincountymaine.gov\)](#)

**County Commissioner's Meeting
Agenda Discussion and Analysis
September 3, 2024**

Appointments: None at this time.

Agenda Item: Clerk's Report

Comments: Minutes from the August 20, 2024, meeting

- We submitted the letter for the grant available through DHHS for the Victim-Witness Advocate position at the DA's office.
- Mary Richards will be out for the month of September.
- Probate department is conducting interviews for their parttime position.
- We are continuing to receive ARPA applications.
- We are continuously working with the USDA for the grant funds awarded to the County for the EOC building.
- The UT roads bid work for the West Freeman Road and the Reeds Mill Road have been posted. We are accepting bids until September 13th

Recommended: Motion to approve and sign the August 20, 2024, Minutes.

Treasurer's Report: Included in Commissioners Packet

Recommendation:

3. Opioid Committee

Comments: Interviews were conducted on the three applicants that applied to become committee members. The Commissioners are prepared to appoint committee members.

Recommendation: Motion: Appoint Opioid Settlement Committee Members

4. Sheriff's Department – Making a Deputy a Sergeant

Comments: The Franklin County Sheriff's Department would like to promote a Deputy to a Sergeant. They are not asking to hire a new position, rather it would be a promotion within the department. By creating a fourth Sergeant position, it would reduce the number of shifts that a Sergeant is not working, thereby increasing accountability and

reducing liability. It will also the reduce the overtime hours within the department. A copy of a letter from Lieutenant Rackliffe regarding this matter can be found in your packet.

Recommendation:

5. Town of New Vineyard – Internet

Comments: Bruce Turcotte and David Bliss reached out to Commissioner Carlton regarding the internet service in the Town of New Vineyard. A portion of the Town has Fidium and the other portion has TDS. Commissioner Carlton would like a discussion on this matter. A copy of a letter from Bruce Turcotte and David Bliss can be found in your packet.

Recommendation:

PAM PRODAN, TREASURER – September 3, 2024

Current cash and investment (CDARS) balances

General Fund Operating Cash \$3,356,786.48
General Fund Payroll Cash \$63,976.78 (cr.)
General Fund CDARS \$750,708.96
ARPA Fund Cash \$375,144.89
ARPA Fund CDARS \$2,590,584.12
UT General Fund Cash \$724,598.87
UT General Fund CDARS \$1,013,315.64
UT TIF Fund Cash \$479,952.23
UT TIF CDARS: \$3,647,936.37

Interest rates

Rates are current as of date indicated on the most recent bank statement. NOTE: Interest rates have not changed. Interest rates will be reported from the August bank statements, when available.

Town Tax Payments

The due date for the first of two payments is September 1, with a grace period until interest starts on November 1. Current Town Tax Payments received:

AVON \$42,511.00
CARRABASSETT VALLEY \$802,937.00
CARTHAGE \$63,222.50
COPLIN PLANTATION \$41,423.00
DALLAS PLANTATION \$137,503.00
EUSTIS \$180,260.00
INDUSTRY \$105,698.50
KINGFIELD \$138,766.50
RANGELEY \$610,040.00
WILTON \$283,290.50

Warrants

AP Warrants for signatures 09/03/2024 (Amounts are as of noon Friday before the meeting):

AP County Warrant \$75,252.93
AP ARPA Warrant \$122,724.85
AP UT Warrant \$50.23

Payroll Warrant

Pay period from 8/4/2024 to 8/17/2024: \$216,346.04

From: Bruce Turcotte and David Bliss

To: Franklin County Commissioners

August 20, 2024

We are residents of New Vineyard, Maine who access the internet every day. Some residents, those located along a few of the most populous roads, have new access to a TDS or Fidium optical fiber network thanks to the efforts of the Greater Franklin Development Council. Although we appreciate the progress that has been made to provide fiber to certain homes, this has left large numbers of homes still underserved. Other options, like internet satellite delivery, are out of reach because of the high cost of equipment for such a service. Underserved homes make do with DSL service, which offers 3-5 MB at best, and an upload speed of 0.5 MB or less! These families are limited in their access to reliable internet for work, education and entertainment.

Note: these underserved rural Americans are the target of recent broadband initiatives.

Broadband internet service is a necessity for modern life. Remote work relationships require access to office communication through applications like Zoom or Teams. Likewise, educators and students need frequent two-way communications through the internet. Learning at home utilizes streaming video applications. We all use search engines like Google and Bing to find the information we need to survive and thrive. We are delighted that Fidium and TDS have received federal funding to bring Fiber to our communities. Now we are told that progress for the underserved portion of New Vineyard must wait another year or two, even though the companies have received the money to do the work.

Please complete the installation of fiber optic cable to our underserved community. We need everyone, not just a few near the highway, to have access to a fast, reliable network. Bringing access to underserved neighborhoods in New Vineyard will benefit everyone. It will help current residents to stay and attract new families to move in. The benefit is both to the provider companies and to the Franklin County tax revenue--and of course, to the families themselves.

Respectfully,

Bruce Turcotte

David Bliss

August 29, 2024

Franklin County Commissioners,

The Franklin County Sheriff's Office would like to promote a deputy to a sergeant. This is not an additional position, it is a simple promotion that will allow for better supervision of the existing deputies. Currently we have three sergeants and four shifts. Two dayshifts and two nightshifts. There are on average three days a week where no sergeant is working and one night every few weeks where there is no sergeant on. By adding a fourth sergeant position, we will significantly reduce the number of shifts where a sergeant is not working. This helps to ensure we have supervision and accountability which ultimately reduces liability. It will also give us greater flexibility with staff who currently accumulate a significant number of overtime hours each week by being able to shift their hours of work.

In the past five pay periods, we are under last years overtime hours by an average of 14 hours per pay period. Last year we were three deputies short during this time frame. So, now that we are full-staffed, we are using less overtime per week on average. This should not only continue at a steady rate, but I expect the amount of overtime hours to continue to decline, especially if we can move a deputy into a sergeant position. With these changes we should be considerably under budget on the overtime line.

We also have reimbursements that come from several sources, MCJA, Rangeley coverage, COPS grant and councils that we can apply those revenues to offset the increase in the budgeted salary line for sergeants. The estimated increase for base salary and benefits to move someone from deputy to sergeant is \$7200 a year, with two months already down in this fiscal year, that would be approximately \$6000 for the remainder of the year. In the event that I can't keep the overtime expense low enough to offset that salary and benefit increase, there are those other revenues that could be applied to balance out that increase.

This change helps provide more supervision, more accountability, allows for delegation of more duties from the Sheriff's Administration and reduces liability, all without any expected end-increase in the budget.

Respectfully submitted,

Lt. David Rackliffe