Maine County Corrections Professional Standards Council

CCPSC Meeting minutes, December 11, 2025

Via Zoom

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 11:02 A.M. Council members Commissioner Steve Gordon, Tim Curtis, Erica LaCroix and Sheriff Dale P. Lancaster were present. A quorum was present. Council Clerk Mary-Anne LaMarre was present. Guests included Amanda Campbell, Andre Cushing, Lane Feldman, Scott Ferguson, Mitchell Boynton, and Michael Livingston, MPR

2. Approval of Minutes: Tim Curtis moved that we accept the minutes of the previous meeting (11/23/2025. Sheriff Lancaster seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. Old Business

4. New Business

A. Council report:

The meeting began with a discussion of the November meeting minutes, which were approved with a correction to include Amanda's attendance. Tim then presented a review of LD 719, highlighting the need for counties to complete their general fund audits, with Waldo, Washington, and Penobscot being particularly behind schedule. He also mentioned a conversation with Michael Livingston, a reporter from Maine Public Radio, who is working on a story about jail funding and its impact on property taxes. Tim offered to facilitate a potential jail visit for Michael, and Mary-Anne agreed to coordinate this. The conversation ended with a brief discussion about the reporting format in LD 719, where Tim explained that red numbers indicate expenses over budget and increased revenues, rather than errors.

Jail Audits and County Requirements

Tim discussed the need for Tony to draft a letter to county managers and commissioners regarding jail audits, with a reimbursement of up to $5,000 available for the effort. Steve clarified that LR2823 requires county jails to accept all legitimately arrested individuals, not just those arrested by ICE, and Amanda noted that the bill title passed through Ledge Council as "an act to provide local control over jail capacity decisions," which differs from the language Steve had seen. Amanda explained the legislative process for bills and LR requests, clarifying that LR2823 would become her bill in the second session if deemed an emergency by Ledge Council.

County Audit and Jail Funding

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Unfunded Mandate Cost Analysis Review

The group discussed a report on unfunded mandates, identifying four main cost drivers: personnel costs, inmate medical care, mental health treatment, and community corrections. They reviewed potential improvements to operations, including financial reporting rules and jail standards, with Tim mentioning that a study of county jail medical care contracts would be conducted in 2026 to explore cost savings through consolidations. Steve suggested including capital projects in their audit report, and Tim agreed to track these costs. The group also discussed reviewing inmate healthcare coverage, with Tim mentioning talks with Kevin Kelly about examining current contracts, and addressed transportation costs as part of their statutory responsibilities.

Jail Reporting System Coordination Challenges

The meeting focused on the challenges of coordinating medical and transmission reporting across 15 jails due to the lack of a unified reporting system. Tim discussed legislative steps to improve the council's operations, including funding for a new coordinator position and county jail audits. The group examined the state's support needs, noting that while jail expenses have increased, the state's contribution has remained flat, with counties facing budget constraints. Tim recommended leaving a broad statement about unreported expenses in the CRAS documents.

Jail Funding and Tax Cap Discussion

The group discussed jail funding and tax caps, with Tim explaining that counties are currently capped at $20.34 million for jail funding, with a 4% annual increase allowed but no specified percentage for the base amount. They noted that counties must submit

requests to adjust these caps to the legislature in 2026, and Tim suggested including specific examples of struggling counties in their report to highlight the financial challenges faced by counties. Mary-Anne mentioned that legislators were seeking detailed numbers for the report, and Erica agreed that concrete examples of counties struggling with funding, despite good financial practices, would be important to include.

County Jail Funding and Overcrowding

The meeting focused on jail operations and funding, with discussions centered on the need for state support for county jails facing overcrowding and aging facilities. Sheriff Lancaster highlighted examples of counties consolidating to build new facilities due to funding shortfalls, emphasizing the financial burden on property taxes. The group reviewed a legislative proposal for additional funding and discussed the importance of tracking fiscal impacts, such as Sheriff Morton's case involving a dangerous inmate requiring constant supervision. They also addressed the need for state guidance and financial incentives for regional jail construction. The council agreed to request a hearing with the Criminal Justice Committee to present their report in detail and to consider changes to their structure and standards. Additionally, they discussed compliance with a new statute on jail boarding rates and the need for data on average costs per inmate per day to ensure equitable funding.