

1 **COMMISSIONERS' MEETING**

2
3 **December 3, 2025**

4
5 At a regular meeting of the County Commissioners of the County of York, begun and holden at the York
6 County Government Building in Alfred, within and for the County of York, being held on Wednesday,
7 December 3, 2025, A. D. at 4:30 P.M.

8
9 **COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

10 Richard R. Dutremble
11 Richard Clark
12 Robert Andrews
13 Justin Chenette
14 Donna Ring

15
16 **COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:**

17 None

18
19 County Manager Greg Zinser, Deputy County Manager Linda Hutchins-Corliss, Sheriff William King,
20 EMA Director Arthur Cleaves (via Zoom), Deputy EMA Director Megan Arsenault (via Zoom), Fire
21 Administrator Rod Hooper, and Facilities Director Rick deRochemont were present at the meeting.

22
23 **YOU ARE INVITED TO RISE AND SALUTE THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES**

24
25 **ITEM**

26
27 **1. PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY ITEM(S)**

28
29 None.

30
31 **2. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS**

32
33 a. Commissioners' meeting of November 19, 2025

34
35 Commissioner Clark requested two edits to the November 19, 2025, meeting minutes:

- 36 • Page 3, Line 132: Add the word "County" so the sentence reads:
37 *"partial funding in FY27 and full County funding thereafter."*
- 38 • Page 5, Line 204: Spell out the acronym MainePERS so it reads:
39 *"Maine Public Employees Retirement System (MEPERS)."*

40
41 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the minutes of November 19, 2025, as amended.**

42 **Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

43 **Motion carried 5:0**

44
45 **3. TO APPROVE TREASURER'S WARRANTS**

46
47 a. Warrants to be approved on November 19, 2025, in the amount of \$2,160,979.63

48
49 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the warrant dated November 19, 2025, in the**
50 **amount of \$2,160,979.63. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

51 **Motion carried 5:0**

52
53 b. Warrants to be approved on November 26, 2025, in the amount of \$836,053.57
54

55 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the warrant dated November 26, 2025, in the**
56 **amount of \$836,053.57. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**
57 **Motion carried 5:0**
58

59 **4. TO HEAR ANY REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**
60

61 Commissioner Dutremble reported that the State's MCCA budget process is currently underway and
62 stated that the assessment of each county is expected to be reduced by approximately 2%.
63

64 **5. NEW BUSINESS**

65 a. To hear abatement denial appeal for Gretchen and Keith Benggio of Cornish
66

67 County Manager Zinser explained that the Commissioners would conduct a formal hearing on the
68 Benggio abatement denial appeal. Gretchen Benggio was sworn in and presented her case, noting
69 concerns about a July 2025 assessment increase of \$110,000 and requesting a reduction from \$694,000 to
70 approximately \$584,000. She reported recent discussions with the town assessor regarding a possible
71 adjustment to \$604,000.
72

73 Commissioners asked clarifying questions about the appeal process and negotiations with the town. The
74 appellant expressed concern about future tax impacts and provided historical assessment data.
75

76 Bob Konczal, the town's assessor agent, was sworn in, confirmed a misclassification error, and
77 recommended a revised valuation of \$604,400, with a taxable value of \$579,400 after the homestead
78 exemption. He noted that the Cornish Select Board must vote on the abatement at its December 10, 2025,
79 meeting.
80

81 Commissioners agreed to table the hearing pending the town's formal decision. If an agreement is reached
82 and approved, the appellant may withdraw the appeal; otherwise, the hearing will be reopened.
83

84 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to table the abatement denial appeal hearing for Gretchen**
85 **and Keith Benggio of Cornish until December 17, 2025. Commissioner Andrews seconded the**
86 **motion.**

87 **Motion carried 5:0**
88

89 b. Deputy County Manager/HR Director Linda Hutchins-Corliss to present new hires/transfers:
90

91 i. To seek hiring approval of Kellie Brazier in the position of Full-time Maintenance
92 Technician I in Facilities with an effective date of January 5, 2026
93

94 Deputy County Manager/HR Director Linda Hutchins-Corliss confirmed this is not a new position but a
95 replacement for a vacancy. Commissioner Clark asked about work location and staffing levels; it was
96 noted that assignments are flexible and that filling this position will help maintain coverage across
97 buildings, though additional staff may be needed in the future.
98

99 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the hiring of Kellie Brazier in the position of**
100 **Full-time Maintenance Technician I in Facilities with an effective date of January 5,**
101 **2026. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

102 **Motion carried 5:0**

- 103
104 ii. To seek transfer/promotion approval of Dan Hotaling from Full-time Maintenance
105 Technician grade V to Full-time Maintenance Supervisor grade VI with an effective date of
106 December 8, 2025

107
108 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the transfer/promotion of Dan Hotaling from**
109 **Full-time Maintenance Technician grade V to Full-time Maintenance Supervisor grade VI with an**
110 **effective date of December 8, 2025. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

111 **Motion carried 5:0**

- 112
113 iii. To seek hiring approval of Michael Robbins in the position of Full-time Patrol Deputy in
114 the Sheriff's Office with an effective date of December 22, 2025

115
116 Commissioner Clark discussed certification requirements for a candidate from New Hampshire. It was
117 confirmed that New Hampshire law enforcement certification is reciprocal with Maine, requiring only
118 completion of a Maine laws class. Commissioner Ring also noted that the candidate should relocate to
119 York County within six months. The candidate currently resides in Gilmanton Ironworks, New
120 Hampshire.

121
122 **MOTION: Commissioner Ring moved to approve the hiring of Michael Robbins in the position of**
123 **Full-time Patrol Deputy in the Sheriff's Office with an effective date of December 22, 2025, with the**
124 **condition that he relocate to York County within six months of hire. Commissioner Chenette**
125 **seconded the motion.**

126 **Motion carried 5:0**

- 127
128 iv. To seek hiring approval of Scott Gagne in the position of Full-time Training and
129 Response Coordinator in the EMA Office with an effective date of December 4, 2025

130
131 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the hiring of Scott Gagne in the position of Full-**
132 **time Training and Response Coordinator in the EMA Office with an effective date of December 4,**
133 **2025. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

134 **Motion carried 5:0**

- 135
136 c. To seek administrative termination due to MCJA non-compliance for the following effective
137 December 4, 2025:

- 138
139 i. Jennifer Garcia, Reserve

140
141 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the administrative termination of Jennifer**
142 **Garcia, Reserve Correctional Officer, with an effective date of December 4, 2025. Commissioner**
143 **Andrews seconded the motion.**

144 **Motion carried 5:0**

- 145
146 ii. Allison Millard, Reserve

147
148 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the administrative termination of Allison**
149 **Millard, Reserve Correctional Officer, with an effective date of December 4, 2025. Commissioner**
150 **Andrews seconded the motion.**

151 **Motion carried 5:0**

iii. Dennis Ring, Reserve

MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the administrative termination of Dennis Ring, Reserve Correctional Officer, with an effective date of December 4, 2025. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.
Motion carried 5:0

iv. Jennifer Simoneau, Reserve

MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the administrative termination of Jennifer Simoneau, Reserve Correctional Officer, with an effective date of December 4, 2025. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.
Motion carried 5:0

v. Chris Saiauski, Reserve

MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the administrative termination of Chris Saiauski, Reserve Correctional Officer, with an effective date of December 4, 2025. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.
Motion carried 5:0

d. Approval of EMS Program Administrator Position

County Manager Zinser introduced the proposal to create an EMS Program Administrator position as the next step in staffing the Regional Training Center. He noted that the position is included in the current budget under EMS certifications and that funds for wages and benefits are already allocated. Hiring an individual is preferred over contracting to meet licensing standards and achieve certified training center status. Pending board approval, the position will be posted promptly to advance the consortium license process. Fire Administrator Roger Hooper addressed questions from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Chenette expressed support and inquired about anticipated revenue to offset costs and whether a market analysis had been conducted. Administrator Hooper stated that revenue will come through tuition in partnership with York County Community College, though specific figures and tuition-sharing details are still under negotiation.

Commissioner Ring would like to see the benefit package reviewed for any new positions.

MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the EMS Program Administrator Position. Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion.
Motion carried 4:1 with Commissioner Ring opposing.

e. Alfred Courthouse Discussion

County Manager Zinser led a discussion on the Alfred Courthouse, noting that the building is oversized for current needs and faces major repair issues, including the bell tower, brick repointing, and a failing geothermal HVAC system. He shared that Sanford Housing proposed a building swap over a year ago, offering the newer Springvale Courthouse in exchange for Alfred, which they would redevelop into 55+ housing, childcare facilities, and additional units using historic preservation funding. Departments affected by a move expressed support, though legislative approval may be required. County Manager Zinser emphasized that while operational savings from a swap would be modest, the primary benefit

would be avoiding significant capital repair costs at Alfred. Current rental income of \$35,000–\$40,000 could likely transfer to Springvale.

Commissioners provided input on the proposal. Commissioner Ring acknowledged the historical significance of Alfred but suggested that a swap may be the best financial option and recommended taxpayer input. Commissioner Chenette requested schematics, square footage comparisons, maintenance details, and rental analyses for both courthouses, and proposed a public visioning session with detailed visuals. Commissioner Dutremble confirmed long-standing geothermal issues and asked about renovation costs, agreeing that public input is important. Commissioner Clark expressed strong reservations, citing the courthouse's historical and practical value, concerns about dismantling the courtroom, moving records from the county seat, and losing property that could be costly to replace later. He stated that the large parking lot on Route 111 should be retained and warned against giving up assets that may gain value in the future. Commissioner Andrews asked whether locating the facility in Springvale instead of Alfred, the county seat, would present a problem. County Manager Zinser confirmed that county buildings can be located outside Alfred.

Facilities Director Rick deRochemont explained that the geothermal system was misconfigured from the start, uses outdated Freon, and requires full replacement at an estimated cost of \$200,000. The well pump, now 20 years old, is expected to fail, and the courthouse's 88 heating/cooling units require frequent repairs. Renovations for a move to Springvale would be minimal, involving cubicle relocation, carpet cleaning, and some door replacements. Commissioners also discussed the Child Advocacy Center, which is facing certification issues and the County has shifted services to Cumberland County Advocacy Center. Commissioner Chenette stressed the need for clear communication and suggested involving the District Attorney to reassure constituents.

The board agreed that public input is essential regarding the courthouse swap. Commissioners proposed holding a public hearing or visioning session to engage residents and groups such as the historical society. County Manager Zinser will prepare a cost comparison and additional data for review before any decisions are made.

f. Letter from EMA to Maine Congressional Delegation

County Manager Zinser introduced the topic of a letter to the federal delegation regarding FEMA delays and invited EMA Director Arthur Cleaves to provide context. Director Cleaves explained that three approved emergency protective measure projects in Saco, Wells, and Old Orchard Beach, intended to install small berms for protection, have been stalled in FEMA's Environmental and Historical Preservation review since April. Despite permits already being secured from the Army Corps of Engineers and DEP, FEMA has not coordinated with these agencies, causing unnecessary delays. The federal shutdown further compounded the issue, and the projects have now been pending for nearly nine months. Director Cleaves warned that additional review by the Secretary of Homeland Security for projects over \$100,000 could add 60–90 days, pushing completion beyond the March dredging season. He stressed the urgency of action, noting ongoing efforts with FEMA Region 1 and Senator Collins' office, and requested any additional support to help move the process forward.

Commissioner Chenette thanked EMA Director Cleaves for preparing the letter and expressed concern that federal delays, particularly the additional review by the Secretary of Homeland Security, are jeopardizing the ability to use the dredge, a critical tool for protecting coastal communities. He stressed that the situation is urgent and that the next storm could result in the loss of more homes if action is not taken. Chenette emphasized the need for the congressional delegation to prioritize this issue and suggested also sharing the letter with state legislators to apply additional pressure. He called this an "all-hands-on-deck" moment, noting that constituents are frustrated by the lack of progress and that the

commission has shown leadership, but the federal government is “dropping the ball.” He urged immediate action to ensure the dredge can be deployed this season.

MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the letter to the federal delegation regarding FEMA project delays and authorize its submission. Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion. Motion carried 5:0

6. OLD BUSINESS

a. Information regarding Part-time employment and volunteering

County Manager Zinser addressed a question raised by Commissioner Clark at the previous meeting regarding whether a part-time or reserve employee could also volunteer for the pantry. County Manager Zinser confirmed that Clark was correct, employees, including reserve staff, cannot volunteer for similar duties. He acknowledged that this had not been considered initially but noted it does not significantly impact current operations for the remainder of the month. County Manager Zinser stated that the issue has been discussed with the employee and will be revisited in the new year to determine the best course of action after the busy season.

7. TO CONDUCT AN EXECUTIVE SESSION ON PERSONNEL ISSUES PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (A), ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY OR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (C), LABOR NEGOTIATIONS PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (D) AND CONSULTATION WITH LEGAL COUNSEL PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (E), REVIEW OF CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (F)

a. Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405 (6) (A) Personnel matters – leave of absence extension

Motion: Commissioner Clark motioned to enter executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (A) to consider a personnel matter. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.

Motion carried 5:0.

Motion: Commissioner Clark motioned to come out of executive session. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.

Motion carried 5:0

Motion: Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the first discussed employee’s leave of absence extension through February 2, 2026. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.

Motion carried 5:0

Motion: Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the second discussed employee’s leave of absence from December 11, 2025, through January 26, 2026. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.

Motion carried 5:0

8. PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY ITEM(S)

Susan Wiswell asked if the Commissioners had received the annual report from the Jail Board of Visitors and asked if there were any questions. Commissioner Ring noted she had not yet read the report but

would reach out if needed. Ms. Wiswell encouraged commissioners to email her with any questions.
County Manager Zinser commented that the report appeared straightforward and thanked Ms. Wiswell for her work.

9. ADJOURN

Motion: Commissioner Clark motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Ring seconded the motion.

Motion carried 5:0

Meeting adjourned at 5:44pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Murray

Executive Assistant to the County Manager