

1 **COMMISSIONERS MEETING**

2 **April 5, 2023**

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5 *YORK,ss*

6
7 At a regular meeting of the County Commissioners of the County of York, begun and
8 holden at the York County Government Building in Alfred, within and for the County of York,
9 being held on Wednesday, April 5, 2023 A. D. at 5:00 P. M.

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12 **COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

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14 Richard R. Dutremble
15 Richard Clark
16 Robert Andrews
17 Justin Chenette
18 Donna Ring
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21 County Manager Gregory Zinser and Deputy County Manager Linda Corliss were present at the
22 meeting.

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

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27 **04-05-2023 ITEM**

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29 **1 PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY ITEM(S)**

30 None

31
32 **2 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS:**

- 33 a. Commissioners' regular meeting of March 15, 2023
34 Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the minutes. Commissioner
35 Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
36 b. Commissioners' special meeting of March 29, 2023
37 Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the minutes. Commissioner
38 Andrews. Vote 5-0.

39
40 **3 TO APPROVE TREASURER'S WARRANTS**

- 41 a. Warrants to be approved on March 15, 2023 in the amount of \$499,896.05
42 Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner
43 Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
44 b. Warrants to be approved on March 22, 2023 in the amount of \$467,126.56
45 Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner
46 Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
47 c. Warrants to be approved on March 29, 2023 in the amount of \$630,225.43

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49 Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner Andrews
50 seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
51

52 **4 TO HEAR ANY REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY**
53 **COMMISSIONERS**

54 Commissioner Chenette gave an update from his recent meeting as a member of the
55 executive board of Southern Maine Regional Planning and Development
56 Committee. He informed all of a few initiatives being worked on to include Safe
57 Street Grants as well as a hub grant.

58 Commissioner Chenette added that SMRPDC is also submitting a request to the
59 legislature for additional funding in the amount of \$200,000 for this commission.
60 Tracey Gare of Kennebunkport.

61
62 Commissioner Dutremble informed all that he is a member of MCCA's legislative
63 policy committee and 1,600 bills have been submitted so far. One is jail funding
64 and he urged all to get in touch with their legislator to urge them to assist with
65 getting additional funding.
66

67 **5 CONTINUATION OF PROPERTY TAX DENIAL ABATEMENT**
68 **APPEAL**

69 a. Usher v. Town of Buxton
70

71 Commissioner Chenette motioned to take this matter off the table. Commissioner
72 Ring seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
73

74 County Manager Zinser explained that Buxton Town Assessor Gingras explained
75 that this property was not assessed additionally. It was not put into any special
76 category. The County Manager added that the Town of Buxton did send us another
77 comparable property and that Mr. Gingras sent in one sheet of paper and that
78 additional documentation was received from Mrs. Usher's attorney. The
79 Commissioners have all of this information.

80 Mrs. Usher asked to speak. She addressed the Board and stated that her attorney
81 sent a letter as to why the property sent in by the Town of Buxton isn't comparable
82 to her property. She explained that the square footage is different and that property
83 has a pool and more land. Also, that property is being assessed at a lower square
84 foot value than her house is. Mrs. Usher stated that the comparable home is being
85 assessed at \$206.15 a square foot while her home is assessed by the town at \$247
86 square foot. This is not equal or fair, she stated. Mrs. Usher stated that she is just
87 asking for fair and equal treatment and that she believes the appraisal done by
88 Heather Cote was fair.
89

90
91 Commissioner Chenette asked was it correct that Heather Cote's assessment was at
92 \$525,000? Mrs. Usher responded, yes.
93

94 Commissioner Ring asked Mrs. Usher if it was ever explained to her why the
95 difference was charged in square footage (between her property and the
96 comparable property sent in by the town of Buxton)?
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Mrs. Usher responded, never.

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Commissioner Chair Dutremble stated that this Board must determine if it is fair or unfair.

Commissioner Ring stated that from her perspective, she doesn't understand why they are charged different amounts per square foot.

County Manager Zinser explained that it depends on how you do the math. Inputs into the valuation will result in a higher number of which to divide into.

The comparable property has more structures as opposed to Mrs. Usher's property. Therefore, it is divided into a larger number.

Mrs. Usher replied that the square footage on that property vs. her house is quite significant. They have more land, more square footage.

Commissioner Chenette commented that we have two numbers- Heather Cote's certified appraisal of \$525,000 and the town assessor at \$619,000. That is a \$94,000 difference and that is the rub for me. That does make me question the \$619,000 figure. He continued that doesn't mean Ms. Cote's is more accurate but needs to be weighed into consideration.

Commissioner Dutremble stated that the town assessment will always be different from the town's assessment.

Commissioner Ring stated that she is not convinced by the town how the square foot charge is different and that she is not comfortable with the difference.

Commissioner Clark commented that the statute says that we have to assume the town's assessment is correct unless the appellant proves to us that the town is wrong. He added that he fails to see how the properties are comparable in many ways but that assessing is not a science. He added that he is not completely convinced either way.

Commissioner Andrews stated that it is difficult as this is not a sub-division with cookie cutter houses and they are trying to look at this in a fair way for both parties. He motioned to deny the appeal.

Commissioner Dutremble seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Ring stated that she is not comfortable with the difference in the rates. She added that if it was her property, she would be asking the same questions. Commissioner Chenette stated that he agreed with Commissioner Ring. He added that also there is such a discrepancy between the tax assessors vs. the appraiser's.

VOTE- 2-3 (with Commissioners Clark, Chenette and Ring opposed.)

Commissioner Chenette motioned to do a partial abatement with a reduction of \$47,000 from the town of Buxton assessment to a new total of \$572,000.

Commissioner Ring seconded the motion. Vote 4-1 with Andrews opposed.

County Manager Zinser explained that a Findings of Fact will be voted on at a future meeting.

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6 NEW BUSINESS

a. H.R. Director Linda Corliss to seek approval of the following new hires/transfers:

i. Kathryn Mone in the position of full-time Major of Operations in the Sheriff's Office with a date of hire of April 17, 2023- H. R. Director Linda Corliss informed all that Ms. Mone is a former police chief in N. Hampton NH. She added that she had a correction on the date of hire and that it should be April 10, 2023. Commissioner Andrews motioned to approve the hiring of Kathryn Mone in the position of full-time Major of Operations in the Sheriff's Office with a start date of April 10, 2023. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. DISCUSSION- Commissioner Ring asked if this individual lives in York County Maine? H.R. Director Corliss replied, no. Commissioner Ring asked if she will be moving? H.R. Director Corliss replied, not that she is aware of. Director Corliss added that Ms. Mone lives in Durham NH. Commissioner Ring stated that she read about an issue in N. Hampton and wondered if that issue was resolved. H.R. Director Corliss replied that it was. Commissioner Ring asked what Ms. Mone's rate of pay will be? H.R. Director Corliss responded, \$80,000 and that it is a non-union, full time position
Vote 4-1(Commissioner Ring opposed).

a. Doreen Staples to transfer from the D.A.'s office to H.R. in the position of full-time Benefits Specialist with an effective date of transfer of May 1, 2023
Commissioner Ring motioned to approve the transfer of Doreen Staples from the D.A.'s office to H.R. department in the position of full-time Benefits Specialist with an effective date of transfer of May 1, 2023. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

b. Continue FY 2024 budget review

i. Register of Probate Carol Lovejoy to present budget-
County Manager Zinser informed the Board that Carol is looking for a new position.
Register of Probate Carol Lovejoy presented her budget and stated that she increased the revenue by \$100,000. She explained that this is due to increased court filing fees and passport applications. The Biddeford Post Office has stopped accepting passports so the Probate office is very busy with passports. In 2022 we had 176 applications and so far this year we have 92. We charge \$35 for the acceptance fee and \$15 for photos. The costs to the department are \$9.56 to mail so that's why she has asked for an increase in our postage line. Also, Judge Houde's Orders go in thick envelopes resulting in higher postage.
We have about the same number of filings of last year. Register of Probate Lovejoy continued that she would have requested the new position in prior budgets but had no space. Now, we will have space with the D.A. moving out. We would want a Grade 7 employee with a

200 paralegal degree or certificate as they will have to work with Title 18C
201 (our code).

202 Register Lovejoy explained that this person's duties will require research
203 and familiarity with Title 18C rule and that is why a paralegal certificate
204 or degree is required. She added that the Probate department consists of
205 long term employees so they get lots of pto every year and will be
206 retiring in the next 10 years or less.

207 Commissioner Ring questioned the general wages increase of 8.29% and
208 elected officials 8.61% increase. County Manager Zinser explained that
209 the Judge and Register and deputy register- have a longevity and COLA
210 increase of 4% in their budget line and the others as negotiated by
211 contract.

212 He added that there might be possible reclassifications of a couple of
213 employees as well.

214 Commissioner Ring asked if it was correct that the new position is not in
215 reflected in the Probate's budget as presented.

216 County Manager Zinser stated that it was not. Commissioner Ring asked
217 Register Lovejoy if there are people in her office that are qualified?
218 Register of Probate Lovejoy replied that they are trying to promote
219 another with a paralegal degree to a grade 7 so we would have three
220 paralegals in our office.

221 Commissioner Dutremble asked Register of Probate Lovejoy if she was
222 satisfied with her budget? She responded, yes.

- 223
224 ii. District Attorney Kathryn Slattery to present budget-
225 D.A. Slattery addressed the Board and thanked them for their support.
226 She added that it means a lot to have a space. D.A. Slattery continued
227 that it has been a lot of work for Greg, Linda, Rick and Jen Kern.
228 Jennifer Kern has been working as a legal secretary in Biddeford.
229 D.A. Slattery gave statistics on her department's work.
230 She explained that any increases in the budget as presented is largely
231 driven by the need to move to Biddeford.

232 Commissioner Ring asked the D.A. to get those statistics to the
233 Commissioners.

234 Commissioner Dutremble asked D.A. Slattery if she was satisfied with
235 her budget? She replied that she was.

- 236
237 iii. Sheriff William King to present patrol and jail budget
238 Jail Budget-Major/Jail Administrator Nathan Thayer reviewed the jail
239 budget.
240 He stated that the jail budget is the largest budget in county and that
241 many increases are out of his control.
242 Major Thayer explained that while his budget shows a decrease of
243 almost \$40,000 for Workers compensation, many of the other insurances
244 have increased. The cleaning supplies budget line shows a decrease as
245 during COVID we kept a lot on hand so because of how we managed we
246 felt we could decrease this line, explained Major Thayer. Pre-trial costs
247 are contracted services. County Manager Zinser reminded the
248 Commissioners that they previously approved this in August of 2022.
249 Commissioner Ring asked if they increase their staffing? Major Thayer
250 replied that they did.

251 Major Thayer explained that the food services budget is up by \$35,000.
252 He explained that they managed to avoid an increase last year. Cost of
253 food is going up.
254 Commissioner Ring- asked how many positions in the jail are open right
255 now?
256 Jail Administrator/Major Thayer replied that they currently have 46 full
257 time filled and that includes supervisors.
258 Commissioner Ring asked if they are still boarding many people out?
259 Major Thayer replied that they are. He explained that they now house
260 females for York and Cumberland County.
261 County Manager Zinser explained that the state level budget is \$18
262 million and that this number is fixed by statute for all counties.
263 Money is then distributed to each county as percentage of a whole.
264 Typically, we run about 13% of that distribution, he stated.
265 The County Manager added that the number is probably going up again
266 based on some of our projections.
267 He continued that we are limited by the tax cap. Boarding is almost a
268 wash.
269 Commissioner Dutremble informed all that there is a Bill out there for
270 additional funds.
271 Commissioner Ring asked Major Thayer if he has any idea of what he
272 feels he will be expending this year in your budget?
273 Major Thayer replied that this budget is pretty accurate.
274 Commissioner Ring asked if he would be looking at how much of a
275 surplus or deficit we run in our personnel accounts? Personnel fund
276 their own insurances.
277 County Manager Zinser stated that the only savings is a staffing surplus
278 but an overtime deficit.
279 There will be a surplus, stated the County Manager.
280 Major Thayer interjected that the State of Emergency pay results in
281 double time.
282 Commissioner Clark asked about the change in worker's comp.
283 insurance and asked if this was due to a change in experience?
284 It was due to less employees, explained the County Manager but will
285 likely increase as we hire more Corrections Officers.
286 Commissioner Dutremble asked Major Thayer if he is satisfied with his
287 budget? Major Thayer stated, yes, absolutely.
288
289 Sheriff King reviewed his requested budget with the Board. He
290 explained that books and periodicals were under funded last year.
291 Sheriff King continued that there is always lots of training needed.
292 Therefore, he increased the employee training and development line by
293 \$5,000.
294 Other budget line increases, stated Sheriff King include county vehicle
295 maintenance, telephones as landlines, cell phones and air cards gone up
296 for all. He added that his budget shows a vehicles increase of \$10,000 as
297 costs have gone up.
298 Commissioner Ring referred to the vehicle inventory sheet that the
299 Commissioners were provided with. She stated that there was no
300 mileage information on this making it hard for her to determine if the
301 vehicle is on its way out or not.

302 She questioned if it was accurate that there are six vehicles in production
303 that are not on the road yet?
304 Major Mitchell replied, not yet.
305 Commissioner Ring replied, so they are sitting there and how many in
306 this budget?
307 Major Mitchell responded, seven.
308 Commissioner Ring stated that the capital budget was reduced down to
309 three and then it was increased to seven to get caught up. It looks to me
310 you are caught up, she stated.
311 Major Mitchell explained that the new vehicles are slated to take over
312 the 17's and 18's.
313 Commissioner Ring responded that you have your 20s, 21s and 22s.
314 You are looking at 6 right here and you are looking at 7 that's 13
315 vehicles, she commented.
316 Sheriff King stated that this (program) has worked out extremely well.
317 He stated that he would urge the Commissioners not to toy with this.
318 Major Mitchell explained that everything stopped during COVID. We
319 couldn't get 2023 vehicles and we had to go back and buy 2022 vehicles.
320 He explained that the equipment has to be bought and that stopped
321 production so it's a catch up.
322 Commissioner Ring stated that there are alot of vehicles for 17 positions.
323 Commissioner Ring added that the contracts don't count as they provide
324 their own vehicles.
325 County Manager Zinser explained that the (vehicle) rotation is set up 7,
326 7 7 ,6.
327 Commissioner Dutremble commented that he was on the Board when we
328 decided this. This program is good because what happens also is the
329 police deputies a lot of the time are just idling their vehicles so still wear
330 and tear on the vehicles.
331 Sheriff King explained that if the vehicles are usable we are able to sell
332 them
333 Commissioner Ring asked for the mileage on each vehicle.
334 Sheriff King stated that is a lot of work and as soon as we give it to you,
335 it changes. He questioned the purpose.
336 Commissioner Ring explained so we can see which ones have low
337 mileage and which ones don't. Do we really need to buy new vehicles?
338 Commissioner Chenette asked the Sheriff if he felt he had adequate
339 resources to handle FOAA?
340 Sheriff King replied that he would love to see the County at some point
341 take care of those.
342 Commissioner Dutremble informed all that there is a Bill coming
343 addressing that problem.
344 Sheriff King stated often the system is abused where people can get a
345 crash report and the charge is \$20 and some FOAA to get it for free.
346 Commissioner Clark stated that he supports the plan to cycle vehicles in
347 and out and saving a nickel this year will cost you a dime next year.
348 Commissioner Clark asked Sheriff King that since internal combustion
349 engines are on their way out, has he given any consideration to electric
350 vehicle for police use?
351 Sheriff King replied that he has spoken to Sheriff Liberty regarding this
352 and that he doesn't think the infrastructure is here.

353 They don't have vehicles that are pursuit rated yet.
354 Sheriff King replied that he is really willing to look at it. We would
355 have to have a charging station.
356 Commissioner Clark said to Sheriff King he needs to be thinking along
357 those lines and what he needs to be doing for the future.
358 Commissioner Dutremble asked Sheriff King if he was satisfied with his
359 budget?
360 Sheriff King replied that wanted another deputy but is now looking at
361 other alternative, so, yes he is satisfied.
362

- 363 iv. Facilities Manager Rick deRochemont to present facilities budget-
364 Facilities Manager Rick deRochemont informed all that there are a lot of
365 projects and upgrades under way at the Sheriff's Office and this
366 building. Some budget increases are due to the new Biddeford D.A.s
367 office.
368 County Manager Zinser added that they are asking for a new
369 maintenance position thus bringing the number of employees to
370 six plus one part time and looking for one more.
371 Commissioner Dutremble asked Facilities Manager Rick deRochemont
372 if he was satisfied with his budget. He replied that he was.
373 **TAKEN OFF AGENDA***Pending- Megan Gean Gendron to present
374 LWRC. They will be hear at the next meeting on the 12th.
375

376 5 min break.
377 Back in session at 6:47 p.m.
378
379

380 County Manager Zinser stated that the last remaining budget item will be Layman Way.
381 Commissioner Ring asked one more question about the Sheriff's budget regarding
382 requesting court security 3 days a week.
383 County Manager Zinser informed all that this position was requested by Probate. He
384 continued that when the marshalls leave, there will only be one (officer) there. With the
385 addition of this new request, there will be one screening and one in the courtroom.
386 Commissioner Dutremble added that he has had a lot of conversation with some
387 employees who are worried so he supports this request. Commissioner Ring stated that
388 she agrees.
389

390 **7 OLD BUSINESS**

- 391 a. Re-visit Director of Development Position –
392 County Manager Zinser explained to the Commissioners that at one of the prior
393 meetings, they were asked to change the title to Director of Development and
394 Marketing. After further discussions, it was decided that it should be Director of
395 Development. The other item is segregation of funds. Right now, until we figure it
396 out, stated County Manager Zinser, he recommends keeping this position in a
397 separate fund. You need to keep it in a separate fund for recording purposes. His
398 recommendation would be that it continue to be funded with the LATCF fund and
399 backfill with opioid funding and not be part of the general fund.
400 County Manager Zinser explained that this is not what the Board directed so they
401 would need to undo their prior vote and re-vote.

402 Commissioner Clark motioned to rescind the previous vote of the Commissioners.
403 Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
404 Commissioner Clark moved to create the position of Development Director to work
405 with the county raising outside funds and finance through LATCF funds.
406 Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
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410 **8 TO CONDUCT AN EXECUTIVE SESSION ON PERSONNEL**
411 **ISSUES PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. §405 (6) (A), ACQUISITION OF**
412 **REAL PROPERTY OR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PURSUANT**
413 **TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (C), LABOR NEGOTIATIONS PURSUANT**
414 **TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (D) AND CONSULTATION WITH LEGAL**
415 **COUNSEL PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (E), REVIEW OF**
416 **CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (F)**
417 None
418

419 **9 PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY ITEM(S)**
420 Susan Wiswell of Kittery ME, approached the Board and stated that she is a
421 member of the budget committee. She wondered if in the future year have the
422 budget caucus early in the process so new budget members come to our meetings
423 so we don't need to reinvent the wheel.
424 Commissioner Dutremble explained that is the responsibility of your board and that
425 the Commissioners cannot get involved.
426 The County Manager suggested that Susan talk to Joann Putnam, current President
427 of the Budget Committee.
428

429 **10 ADJOURN**
430 Commissioner Clark motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Andrews seconded the
431 motion. Vote 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.



**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
COUNTY OF YORK**

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*Robert L. Andrews
District 1*

*Richard R. Dutremble
Chairperson
District 2*

*Justin Chenette
Vice-Chairperson
District 3*

*Donna L. Ring
District 4*

*Richard Clark
District 5*

*Gregory T. Zinser
County Manager*

*Kathryn A. Dumont
Assistant to the Manager*

*Lorene B. Lemieux
Finance Director*

*Linda M. Corliss
Deputy County Manager
Human Resource Director*

YORK COUNTY PROCLAMATION

There are thousands of Pet Partners therapy animal teams serving in communities across the United States; and

WHEREAS, Pet Partners has designated April 30 as National Therapy Animal Day; and

WHEREAS, Pet Partners therapy animal teams in the Town of Eliot play an essential role in improving human health and well-being through the human-animal bond; and

WHEREAS, Pet Partners therapy animal teams make millions of visits per year in settings such as hospitals, nursing homes, schools and hospice; and

WHEREAS, Pet Partners therapy animal teams interact with a variety of people in our community including veterans, seniors, patients, students facing literacy challenges, and those approaching end of life; and

WHEREAS, these exceptional therapy animals who partner with their human companions bring comfort and healing to those in need.

NOW, THEREFORE, We, the Commissioners of York County, do hereby proclaim April 30, 2023, as:

“National Therapy Animal Day”

in the County of York, and encourage our citizens to celebrate our therapy animals and their human handlers. Further, I publicly salute the service of therapy animal teams in our community and in communities across the nation.

PROCLAIMED AND APPROVED this 12th day of April, 2023.

Commissioner Richard Dutremble, Chairperson

Commissioner Justin Chenette, Vice-Chairperson

Commissioner Richard Clark

Commissioner Robert Andrews

Commissioner Donna Ring