COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

October 21, 2026

The regular meeting of the York County Commissioners was held on Wednesday, October 21, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. at the York County Government Building in Alfred.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:
Richard Clark
Robert Andrews
Justin Chenette
Donna Ring

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:
Richard R. Dutremble

STAFF PRESENT:
County Manager Greg Zinser, Facilities Director Rick deRochemont, EMA Director Art Cleaves, EMA Deputy Director Megan Arsenault, EMA Mitigation and Finance Manager Laurie Ewing, EMA Response Manager Scott Gagne, EMA Logistics Coordinator Jason Cote, Finance Director Lori Lemieux, and Sheriff William King.

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

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

None.

2. **MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS**

   a. Commissioners' meeting of October 7, 2026

MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the minutes of October 7, 2026, as presented. Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion.
Motion carried 4-0

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

   a. Warrants to be approved on October 7, 2026, in the amount of $624,907.06

MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the warrant dated October 7, 2026, in the amount of $624,907.06. Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion.
Motion carried 4-0

   b. Warrants to be approved on October 14, 2026, in the amount of $1,757,504.80

MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the warrant dated October 14, 2026, in the amount of $1,757,504.80. Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion.
Motion carried 4-0

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

None.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. EMA Staffing Updates

County Manager Zinser announced the upcoming retirement of Art Cleaves, Director of Emergency Management Agency (EMA), effective January 1, 2027. He noted that the retirement date had been adjusted to support operational continuity through the upcoming holiday and vacation season. County Manager Zinser advised that Megan Arsenault, Deputy Director EMA, will serve in an acting capacity following Mr. Cleaves' retirement while the County evaluates next steps and begins the recruitment process. He expressed appreciation for Mr. Cleaves' nearly 12 years of service, recognizing his leadership, dedication, and contributions to the growth and advancement of the EMA, and accepted his retirement with regret.

Commissioners Ring, Chenette, Clark, and Andrews expressed their appreciation for Art Cleaves' years of dedicated service to York County and the Emergency Management Agency. They commended his leadership, professionalism, commitment to public service, and the significant contributions he has made to the County and its communities. The Commissioners thanked Mr. Cleaves for his service and extended their best wishes for a well-deserved retirement.

b. Discussion of Governmental Affairs Advisor – possible appointment of employee

County Manager Zinser recommended appointing Art Cleaves to a new Governmental Affairs Advisor role upon his retirement as EMA Director. He explained that the position would support the development of the County's Coastal Resilience Program, dredging initiatives, intergovernmental partnerships, and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement initiative. Mr. Zinser stated that the role would provide continuity and help further develop these programs while new EMA leadership transitions into place, noting that funding sources are available and the position would not create an additional cost to the County.

Commissioner Ring inquired whether the proposed position would be a full-time role with benefits and questioned the anticipated length of the appointment. County Manager Zinser indicated the full-time position would likely be a term appointment of approximately two to three years to allow for program development.

Commissioner Chenette expressed support for retaining Mr. Cleaves in an advisory capacity to provide continuity and leadership for the Coastal Resilience Program and related initiatives. He suggested further consideration of the position title, noting concerns that "Governmental Affairs" may carry a lobbying connotation.

Commissioner Ring expressed concern regarding the duration of the appointment and requested additional clarification regarding the position's duties and scope.

County Manager Zinser stated that the role would focus on program development and relationship-building efforts and agreed to return with a formal job description and recommended title for the Board's consideration.

MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to appoint Arthur Cleaves as Governmental Affairs Advisor effective January 1, 2027. Commissioner Ring seconded the motion.
Motion failed 2-2 with Commissioners Ring and Chenette opposing

c. Review letter from Pete Tranchemontagne, Sanford resident and City Councilor, regarding interim recovery/housing resources

County Manager Zinser discussed a letter from Sanford City Councilor Pete Tranchemontagne regarding homelessness and recovery services. He advised that reopening Layman Way is not feasible due to staffing, operational, permitting, and funding constraints, but noted that York County continues to provide support through existing resources and mutual aid efforts. He also highlighted the County's new treatment and recovery center, which is expected to begin offering detoxification and outpatient services in early 2027.

Commissioner Chenette thanked Councilor Tranchemontagne for his advocacy and suggested inviting Sanford officials to tour the County's treatment and recovery center and other County programs to increase awareness of available and forthcoming services. County Manager Zinser agreed to extend the invitation.

Commissioner Clark highlighted the County's support for housing and homelessness initiatives, including funding for Mainspring housing projects and other affordable housing efforts. He emphasized that homelessness is a regional and statewide challenge requiring broader state involvement and noted that the County has taken meaningful steps within its available resources.

Commissioner Ring noted York County's financial support for the Sanford Housing Authority and Commissioner Chenette suggested updating Sanford officials on the County's contributions toward housing initiatives. Commissioner Ring also stated that homelessness should be addressed at the state level and emphasized the need for expanded mental health services. County Manager Zinser reported that the Housing Authority is expected to close on a property soon and agreed to provide follow-up information to Sanford officials.

6. OLD BUSINESS

None.

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) 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)

None.

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

None.

9. ADJOURN

MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to adjourn. Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0

Meeting adjourned at 4:59 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Murray, Executive Assistant to the County Manager