

COMMISSIONERS MEETING

April 7, 2021

YORK,ss

At a regular meeting of the County Commissioners of the County of York, begun and holden at the York County Government Building in Alfred, within and for the County of York, being held on Wednesday, April 7, 2021 A. D. at 4:30 P. M.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Richard R. Dutremble
Richard Clark
Robert Andrews
Allen Sicard
Donna Ring

County Manager Gregory Zinser and Deputy County Manager Linda Corliss were present at the meeting.

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

APRIL 7, 2021 ITEM

1 PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY ITEM(S) (comments made via ZOOM)

Susan Wiswell asked the status of the Securus contract from the jail that was tabled by the Commissioners at their February 17th meeting. The County Manager and Sheriff King agreed that they will talk about this matter at the next meeting.

Janet Drew thanked all for their work. She stated that she hoped the Commissioners are following up on the incident at the jail that resulted in an inmate's death. She added that she wished to report an idea of partnership between the county and towns to support mental health services in the communities and mental health emergency. The County Manager responded that he anticipates this will become a conversation within the next several months. He continued that he is unaware of a death at the jail. Sheriff King added that he is also unaware of a death at the jail.

Ms. Janet Drew replied that two weeks ago an inmate had an emergency at the jail and died at the hospital. Sheriff King explained that there was a medical emergency at the jail. The person was transported to the hospital and received care and is doing well now. He added that it would be inappropriate for us to continue to speak of this person.

- 2 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS:**
a. March 17, 2021- Commissioner Clark requested language be added on item 3. and motioned to approve with amendments. Commissioner Sicard seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

- 3 TO APPROVE TREASURER'S WARRANTS**
a. Warrants dated March 24, 2021 in the amount of \$723,860.42
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner Sicard seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
b. Warrants dated March 31, 2021 in the amount of \$557,110.39
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner Sicard seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

- 4 TO HEAR ANY REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**
No reports

- 5 TO HEAR ANY REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY MANAGER**
No reports

- 6 NEW BUSINESS**
a. H.R. Director Linda Corliss to seek hiring approval for the following:
i. Alexander N. Markellos in the position of full-time deputy at the Sheriff's Office with a starting date of April 26, 2021.
H.R. Director Linda Corliss presented the above-named requested hire to the Board.
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the hiring of Alexander N. Markellos in the position of full-time deputy with a start date of April 26, 2021. Commissioner Sicard seconded the motion.
DISCUSSION: Commissioner Ring asked what the starting rate of pay is. Director Corliss replied, \$23.55 an hour. Commissioner Ring asked if the candidate is Academy certified to which H.R. Director Corliss replied, yes. Commissioner Ring asked Sheriff King if he recommended this individual as his name was not on anything in the (hiring) packet. Sheriff King responded, yes, he is an outstanding candidate. Vote-5-0.
ii. Justin B. Titcomb in the position of full-time deputy in the Sheriff's Office with a starting date of May 3, 2021.
H.R. Director Linda Corliss presented the above-named for hiring approval. Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the hiring of Justin B. Titcomb with a start date of May 3, 2021. Commissioner Sicard seconded the motion.
DISCUSSION- Commissioner Ring asked the starting rate of pay. H.R. Director Corliss responded, \$25.60.
Vote 5-0.
iii. Michael Lebel in the position of Corrections Officer at the Sheriff's Office with a starting date of May 3, 2021.
H.R. Director Linda Corliss presented the above-named applicant and stated that, if hired, he will attend the 5-20-21 correctional academy-
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the hiring of Michael Lebel in the

position of Corrections Officer with a hire date of May 3, 2021. Commissioner Sicard seconded the motion.

Vote 5-0.

- iv. Approve hiring of Megan Arsenault in the position of Deputy Director of EMA with a starting date of April 12, 2021.

H.R. Director Linda Corliss presented the above-named applicant and explained that Megan has been employed a little over five years with EMA.

Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the hiring of Megan Arsenault into the position of Deputy EMA Director with an effective date of April 12, 2021.

Commissioner Sicard seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION-Commissioner Ring asked what the salary for this position will be. Director Corliss replied \$72,000 annually. Commissioner Ring asked if this is a new position? H.R. Director Corliss replied, yes it was approved by the Commissioners in December of 2020. Commissioner Ring asked if it (position) is in this budget? County Manager Zinser stated that the Commissioners voted to take an old position and convert it into Deputy Director. This is a retitled position.

Vote. 5-0.

- b. Discussion of Commissioner(s) observing Union bargaining sessions- Commissioner Ring explained that she requested to sit in as an observer. She added that the Commissioners received a letter from one of the Unions with concerns as to how negotiations went. She stated that she didn't feel it would hurt for one of us (Commissioners) to observe. We are here to oversee, stated Commissioner Ring. Commissioner Clark remarked that the Board functions as a whole, not as individuals. Commissioner Ring added that we (Commissioners) sit on many committees as individuals. She added that she thought it was worth overseeing periodically. Commissioner Dutremble stated that this is not the first time this person has sent letters to us. Unions don't get there way so they think the County Manager is not bargaining right and that is not true, stated Commissioner Dutremble. Commissioner Ring replied that the Commissioners have negotiated contracts and sat in during negotiations many years ago. Commissioner Dutremble explained that was before we had a county manager. Commissioner Ring replied that she wasn't requesting to negotiate a contract; only asking to observe. Commissioner Sicard commented that he agreed with Commissioner Clark that the role as a Board is to oversee. We meet with the County Manager and the legal team and discuss our offers and they come back and report to us if there are any issues. Jack (Parlon from F.O.P.) stood in front of us and challenged the Board to meet with him directly and that is not our role, stated Commissioner Sicard.

- c. County Manager to introduce fy'2022 budget to Commissioners- County Manager Zinser explained that some of the highlights of the proposed budget are a spending increase over the prior year of .62% (less than 1%.) Wages and benefits are the primary drivers. We are still in or have recently been in negotiations with several of our unions. This results in a .95% increase in the general taxation to cities and towns. County Manager Zinser stated that he feels this is a responsible budget. There are a couple of new requests for positions; one from the Sheriff's Office and one from EMA. We are \$353,000 under our LD-1 limitation.

- i.EMA (via ZOOM)-

This budget has a 6.5 % increase. You will note that the budget reflects full funding of deputy director into the general fund. We thought it is important

to take into account the full cost of operating EMA.

EMA Director Cleaves thanked the Commissioners for their assistance. He continued that they were able to help towns and cities and spent an excess of \$800,000 doing so. All of these funds have been reimbursed. We are now running the vaccination clinic. We've been able to hire a few long-term temps. to help out at the clinic. We've had six (6) emergencies in addition to the pandemic. The only other increase in our budget is the phone line. We are reviewing this, stated Director Cleaves. He informed the Commissioners that EMA has brought in through EMPG, \$238,000 to offset wages. This year it's going up to \$250,000. Homeland Security monies to us will increase to \$155,000. Director Cleaves continued that EMA also receives funding from Seabrook in the amount of \$16,000. \$23,000 for training and mitigation funding in the amount of \$20,000. Director Cleaves reminded all that EMA is also the only agency that pays rent to the county. We have spent \$962,000 on PPE and have now recouped over \$900,000 from FEMA at 100%. We have received an EMA Performance Grant for \$400,000 that will allow us to create a collaboration center with CDC. We will receive an additional \$80,000 in supplemental money earned by a soft match. We also are helping assist towns to get money back in the range of \$500,000.

Commissioner Clark asked if moving wages out of this department and into the general budget will affect getting money from the Federal Government?

Director Cleaves responded that it has no effect at all. Commissioner Clark asked Director Cleaves if leaving his overtime line unchanged is reasonable?

Director Cleaves replied that is very reasonable. During a disaster we can recoup all the money that is spent on overtime. We get reimbursed by FEMA. Any time an event turns into a federal disaster we can recoup overtime costs.

Commissioner Ring asked a question regarding the position that has been moved back into the budget. When they had this position it was not supposed to cost the county any money and now it is.

The County Manager explained that the position was created utilizing \$50,000 from a previous position and \$20,000 from various grants. We opted to put the full amount of these positions into our general fund. That is why I mentioned this up front. Federal funding has nothing to do with it. We won't lose the federal money but this position is integral to EMA. Commissioner Ring replied, but, we are increasing the tax to the York County citizens.

County Manager Zinser agreed.

Commissioner Sicard asked why does EMA pay rent? The County Manager explained they get reimbursed as it is an allowed expense under EMPG.

Commissioner Dutremble asked EMA Director Cleaves in the future how many employees will he need to run his department?

Director Cleaves responded that he is hesitant to say but would estimate six (6) full time positions to do this properly. He addressed Commissioner Ring's earlier question regarding establishing positions using taxpayer money. Director Cleaves stated that it's important that the County has positions belonging to the county in case Federal money dries up.

Commissioner Dutremble asked EMA Director Cleaves if he is satisfied with his budget? He replied that he is very satisfied and that it is relatively flat funded.

Commissioner Clark moved to approve fy'2022 EMA budget in the amount of \$639,781.00 Commissioner Sicard seconded the motion. Vote 4-1.

(Commissioner Ring opposed). Commissioner Ring stated that she doesn't think we should be approving these budgets yet. We don't have an audit nor have we reviewed current expenditures. We have no background and supporting documentation. Commissioner Dutremble replied that we have expenses up to January and will have the audit next week. Commissioner Sicard added that we have until the end of April to get this budget to the Budget Committee. At this time, our votes are tentative.

The County Manager directed the Commissioners to go to new requests. These are over and above the (EMA) budget you approved. Director Cleaves explained that the new, requested position will make it possible fulfill the needs of the towns with mitigation preparedness. County Manager Zinser added that York County EMA is a very busy organization in this county. Compared to other EMA organizations, no one else does what we do.

Commissioner Ring asked the hourly rate of this position. County Manager Zinser replied, \$23 per hour. Commissioner Ring clarified that none of this is in the EMA budget? County Manager replied, no, but, it is included in the overall budget (summary). Commissioner Ring asked how the hourly wage was determined? County Manager Zinser explained that they looked at similar positions in other counties and talked with the EMA Director and H.R. Director. Commissioner Ring asked if they get accruals up front? H.R. Director Corliss replied that there is a probationary period but PTO does get credited up front. They are not allowed to utilize it for 6 months unless approved by a manager. If they were out sick during a probationary period, they'd get the time off utilizing their PTO.

Commissioner Ring replied that she does not understand the hourly employee getting paid 41 days up front. County Manager Zinser replied that is what the non-union manual states. Commissioner Ring stated that the county should be looking at that particular policy as it is a very costly thing. Our salaries are very generous, stated Commissioner Ring. That type of time off is costing this county a lot of money, she continued. I would want to see a review of that policy before I would approve any new positions, stated Commissioner Ring.

Commissioner Dutremble commented that this position is really needed to help cities and towns to get their monies back from the Federal government.

Commissioner Clark stated that over the years prior to Art when Bob Bohlmann was York County's EMA Director, York County suffered a couple of major floods as well as several significant coastal storms. The process of applying for relief has been made much smoother by the EMA folks. This directly benefits the tax- payer. I will vote for this without any concern.

Commissioner Sicard echoed support of the county's EMA. It is the most professional and most efficient EMA organization we have on a county level. He added that he was at the Mass Vaccination site recently while, at the same time, 5,000 to 10,000 people were still without power due to a storm. EMA Director Cleaves was running the (vaccination) site and taking calls about power outages.

Commissioner Clark moved to approve the EMA Specialist position. Commissioner Sicard seconded the motion. Vote -4-1 (Commissioner Ring opposed)

ii. Facilities Director, Rick deRochement to present budget.

County Manager Zinser reported that this budget shows a 4.85% increase in wages and benefits and some additional funds for heating repairs and water usage fees and plowing and sanding.

Facilities Manager Rick DeRochemont stated that many of the line items are contracts such as for trash disposal, water usage and heating and plumbing. The

renewed contracts with increases include upgraded filters due to COVID. Commissioner Clark asked if there are small capital needs in our facilities? Facilities Manager deRochemont replied that there are expenses at courthouse including the cupola. Pavement is in disrepair in all of our facilities. We looked at costs last year, stated Rick deRochemont. This (cost) would come out of capital improvements. More infrastructure type repairs.

Commissioner Clark questioned the increase in water usage fees. Facilities Manager Rick deRochemont explained that the costs have progressively gone up over the years and that he hadn't increased that budget line. He added that he has reached out to the water district to see if maybe there are some meter repairs and replacements needed. Commissioner Sicard referred to the increase of \$10,000 in heating repairs and asked if this was at a specific building? Mr. deRochemont replied that contract includes the courthouse, government building and food pantry. Filters added are much better for filtering air. We discovered at the Food Pantry some units were never looked at and had not been serviced since 1992. Commissioner Ring asked do we perform all the maintenance on the Food Pantry Building and they pay no rent?

Commissioner Dutremble replied, that is correct. Commissioner Ring commended Facilities Manager, Rick deRochemont on the work that he and his 5 full time and 1 part time staff do.

Commissioner Dutremble noted that the cleaning supplies budget line decreased again. Facilities Manager deRochemont replied that they now use chemical feed systems and changed some vendors to save money. Commissioner Dutremble asked how the geo-thermal at courthouse was working? The Facilities Manager replied that it is working but there have been some challenges such as several failed pumps, freon leak and a crack in the lines. We installed a system through Trane that sends out alarms.

We also signed up for a Trane program where they monitor and supervise and go through your system twice a year.

Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the facilities budget in the amount of \$578,860.00 . Commissioner Sicard seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

iii. Sheriff William King to present budget.

County Manager Greg Zinser explained that this budget's increases (wages and benefits and phone costs) are very similar to other departments. Phone costs are up 2.93% due to a revised share allocation. The Sheriff's Office currently has 4 vacancies. This department has a new position request at the courthouse that the manager will discuss later.

Commissioner Ring stated that with so many open positions, has your budget been adjusted to hire new level positions? She added that she didn't see any decreases (in the budget) even though there are 6 high paying positions vacant. The County Manager replied that we might be able to go through and do some reductions. He added that this is something we can present as we move on in the budget process. But, stated County Manager Zinser, we need to be cognizant where we lie with the bargaining process. Also, he stated that he didn't think it would result in a very large savings but there may be some. Sheriff King reminded all that some individuals might come with buy backs. The current new hire would come under the '21 budget, stated the County Manager. But, we need to be conservative for many reasons.

Commissioner Ring asked about the vehicles inventory. County Manger Zinser stated that there is a program we instituted years ago where six or seven new vehicles are purchased each year.

Commissioner Sicard asked Sheriff King about the rural patrol situation in Hollis last

year with the State Police.

Sheriff King stated it is not an annual MOU and there has been no discussion with them wanting to give up Hollis.

Commissioner Ring asked how the Watchguard system was going.

Sheriff King responded that the system has been purchased and is being installed.

Commissioner Ring asked if there was a monthly fee and if you have staffing for someone to maintain documentation. Sheriff King replied that it is pretty easy and downloads by itself. We only access it when there is a complaint.

Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the Sheriff's Office budget in the amount of \$3,218,926. Commissioner Sicard seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

Jail Budget- Sheriff King stated that most increases are due to contractual obligations. Cleaning supplies decreased \$10,000 and the Sheriff stated that he would assume that's because EMA did a lot of the cleaning. Sewage/septic decreased because we purchased trash cans in the cells. The budget shows plumbing increases as we incurred lots of repairs. Commissioner Sicard commented that with the inmate number down, the medical contractor still wants 3% even though they are dealing with less people?

Acting Jail Superintendent Dan Bean responded that we will see an increase in population so we need to look at possible impact. Commissioner Sicard asked if the agreement with Cumberland County is still on track? Sheriff King replied it was working well and we are waiting for paperwork from them to sign an extension. Commissioner Dutremble asked Sheriff King if he was satisfied with this budget. Sheriff King replied, yes.

Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the jail budget in the amount of \$11,199,281.00. Commissioner Sicard seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

S.O. New request- courthouse security officer-

County Manager Greg Zinser explained that a special deputy (or civil) has been at the courthouse for the past year. This gives our county folks more assistance to handle situations that the judicial marshals aren't there to handle. Even though the State will be leaving, we will still have an active courthouse. Probate has a lot of cases going through, stated the County Manager. Sheriff King added that having a deputy at the courthouse provides some stability. Commissioner Ring asked what department is the position going under? County Manager Zinser replied, the civil process division. Sheriff King agreed as this position will be providing more security.

Commissioner Ring argued that it could be considered a law enforcement position and therefore, be put under FOP. The County Manager responded that we are pretty confident that this position wouldn't be able to be absorbed by that Union. Really, what we are talking about is a sworn deputy but Deputy Grovo will be overseeing their daily activities. Commissioner Ring replied that she would question that and recommended checking the statutes and mandatory training.

County Manager Zinser replied that we are not talking about swearing them in as a civil deputy. They'd be a sworn officer but assigned to civil. Sheriff King added that he has not seen or heard that County Patrol wants to do court security. The County Manager explained that it is up to the Sheriff where it is assigned. Commissioner Ring asked would the position be placed in the civil process budget? County Manager Zinser explained that budget supports itself. Commissioner Ring stated that she would like to see a civil process expenditure. She questioned new positions being put in civil process and not funded by civil process funds. County Manager Zinser stated that it is part of the general fund. Commissioner Ring replied it would have to be a separate

department. You are asking to fund a part of a budget with part of tax- payer money.

We are not talking about them being paid out of the civil fund, stated the County Manager. Commissioner Ring asked where would we reflect that? County Manager Zinser replied, under the Sheriff's budget. Commissioner Ring asked if this person would receive an additional vehicle? The County Manager replied, no.

Commissioner Sicard clarified that this position will be an armed security guard not someone trained in law enforcement that has to go to the academy.

The Sheriff responded they will be someone who is armed and is a former law enforcement officer and does annual online training. He doesn't have a police radio or respond to calls.

Commissioner Ring asked does that mean you have an individual in the position that you are going to just put into this job? County Manager Zinser stated, no, it will be posted.

Commissioner Ring stated that particular position at the courthouse was never posted. County Manager Zinser stated that the state law allows the Sheriff to assign special deputies. This position is being funded through the reimbursement process at this point.

Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the new position. Commissioner Sicard seconded the motion. Vote 4-1 (Commissioner Ring opposed).

7 OLD BUSINESS

- a. Commissioners to review and approve Findings of Fact for tax abatement hearing #03172021.

County Manager Zinser asked the Commissioners if they had any questions? Commissioner Clark voiced a concern regarding reason #6 and requested that something along the lines of the following be added to it "*reason was due to ZOOM element did allow for participation from the City of Sanford.*"

Commissioner Clark moved to amend #6 to state that due to technical difficulties with ZOOM, the City of Sanford couldn't hear us. Then, approve the Findings of Facts and have the County Manager sign them. Commissioner Sicard seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

- b. H.R. Director, Linda Corliss to request to extend the County Coronavirus Leave that expired on March 31, 2021.

H.R. Director Linda Corliss explained that she is requesting an extension on the leave that expired in December of 2020. She continued that in January, some parts were re-established to provide tax credits but full reimbursement was not reactivated. She continued that the Commissioners approved a mirror program in January and voted to extend it another 3 months. I am seeking an extension until June 30, 2021. The majority of usage was close contact or potential symptoms.

Commissioner Clark voted to extend the policy through 6-30-21 and make it retro back to the first of April. Commissioner Sicard seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

Commissioner Sicard asked if there has been any discussion now that vaccinations are out about making it mandatory for them to come to work if they've been vaccinated.

H.R. Director Linda Corliss replied that a memo was recently sent out by the County Manager if you've been vaccinated and travel or are deemed a close contact, you can come back to work.

County Manager Zinser added that administration recently attended an online seminar put on by the Commissioners' Risk Pool and making it mandatory for employees to be vaccinated is fraught with legal issues.

Commissioner Sicard stated that some businesses are offering cash incentives.

H.R. Director Corliss stated that has been looked at and can creates bias. She added that we are encouraging all employees to get the vaccine.

Commissioner Ring asked about the County's new Facebook page. H.R. Director Linda Corliss stated that a former employee in IT had controls for our Facebook and still does so we are transferring to a new Facebook page and also adding an Instagram as well as LinkedIn. Social media will be improved and more Transparent. Our improved Facebook will be beneficial for recruiting purposes, also. Director Corliss encourages department leaders to get more involved in getting information about their departments out.

Commissioner Clark asked if the Board should meet again on April 7th as the budget has to get to the committee by the first of May.

After a brief discussion it was decided to meet next Wednesday at 3:00 p.m.

Commissioner Clark motioned to meet at 3:00 next Wednesday, April 14th.

Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

- 8 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)**
None

9 PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY ITEM(S)

Janet Drew stated that she didn't hear parts of the budget and wondered if there was any mention of mental health? County Manager Zinser stated that a copy of the budget can be e-mailed to Ms. Drew. As far as mental health goes, and substance abuse treatment, both are handled at the jail through the jail medical provider. MAT program was added last year and we also have Layman Way Recovery Center.

10 ADJOURN

Commissioner Clark motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Sicard seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

