

## COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

**April 1, 2026**

The regular meeting of the York County Commissioners was held on Wednesday, April 1, 2026, at 4:30 PM at the York County Government Building in Alfred.

### COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Richard R. Dutremble  
Richard Clark  
Robert Andrews  
Donna Ring  
Justin Chenette

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

County Manager Greg Zinser, Deputy County Manager/HR Director Linda Hutchins-Corliss, Facilities Director Rick deRochemont, EMA Director Art Cleaves (via Zoom), EMA Deputy Director Megan Arsenault, District Attorney Kathryn Slattery, YCDA Office Manager Jennifer Kern, Register of Deeds Nancy Hammond, Deputy Register of Deeds Wendy Caiazzo, Sheriff William King, Deputy Chief Jeremy Forbes, Jail Administrator Lori Marks, RTC Director Roger Hooper and Finance Director Lori Lemieux were present at the meeting.

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### ITEM

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

None.

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

- a. Commissioners' meeting of March 4, 2026

Commissioner Clark had two changes to the March 4, 2026, minutes. Line 39 remove the extra \$ and line 97 change he to she.

**MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the minutes of March 4, 2026, as amended.**

**Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried 4:0 with Commissioner Chenette abstaining**

- b. Commissioners' meeting of March 18, 2026

**MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the minutes of March 18, 2026, as presented.**

**Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried 5:0**

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

- a. Warrants to be approved on March 18, 2026, in the amount of \$2,799,257.19

**MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the warrant dated March 18, 2026, in the amount of \$2,799,257.19. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried 5:0**

- b. Warrants to be approved on March 25, 2026, in the amount of \$1,665,204.34

**MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the warrant dated March 25, 2026, in the amount of \$1,665,204.34. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried 5:0**

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

None.

#### **5. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Deputy County Manager/HR Director Linda Hutchins-Corliss to present new hires/transfers:
  - i. To seek hiring approval of Jayme Lappin in the position of Reserve Public safety Instructor II in the Regional Training Center office with an effective date of April 13, 2026.

**MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the hiring of Jayme Lappin in the position of Reserve Public Safety Instructor II in the Regional Training Center office with an effective date of April 13, 2026. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried 5:0**

- ii. To seek hiring approval of Steven Langelier in the position of Reserve Public Safety Instructor II in the Regional Training Center with an effective date of April 13, 2026

**MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the hiring of Steven Langelier in the position of Reserve Public Safety Instructor II in the Regional Training Center office with an effective date of April 13, 2026. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried 5:0**

- iii. To seek hiring approval of Emily Dewitt in the position of full time Finance Generalist in the Finance Office with an effective date of April 21, 2026

Commissioner Ring inquired whether the position was salaried or hourly. Director Hutchins-Corliss responded that it is an hourly position replacing an employee who transitioned to another role within the Finance Department. Commissioner Ring also asked if this position received 41 days of PTO which Director Hutchins-Corliss confirmed.

**MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the hiring of Emily Dewitt in the position of full-time Finance Generalist in the Finance office with an effective date of April 21, 2026.**

**Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried 5:0**

- iv. To seek hiring approval of Dr. Mark D. Lim in the position of Reserve Medical Director in the York County Recovery Center with an effective date of April 2, 2026.

Discussion ensued regarding the position also overseeing the jail medical services. The position was amended to the reserve York County Medical Director as opposed to reserve Medical Director in the York County Recovery Center.

Commissioner Clark asked where the funding for the position would come from. County Manager Zinser replied that the funds are already budgeted in the current fund and are also included in the proposed budget, utilizing existing funds designated for this type of position.

Commissioner Ring asked what department the position falls under. County Manger Zinser replied it is under the Regional Recovery Center.

Commissioner Chenette asked for clarification on the reserve portion of the position compared to a regular position. Director Hutchins-Corliss explained that the individual would initially be used as a consultant to assist with setting up the recovery center and the jail. He also asked whether the position was intended to become full-time. County Manager Zinser explained that the role is not expected to be full-time, even once the system is fully implemented. The position is anticipated to require approximately 5 to 15 hours per week, depending on workload, transitioning from policy drafting and development for the jail and recovery center to ongoing medical and supervisory oversight as required for such programs.

**MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the hiring of Dr. Mark D. Lim in the position of York County Medical Director with an effective date of April 2, 2026. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried 5:0**

- v. To seek hiring approval of Shawn Sanborn in the position of full time Patrol Deputy in the Sheriff's office with an effective date of April 6, 2026

Commissioner Ring asked whether the rehire included a signing bonus. Director Hutchins-Corliss responded that there is no signing bonus for a rehire and that the individual must be hired under the previously approved policy, at Step 5. Director Hutchins-Corliss noted a recent change to the corrections sign-on bonus practice, stating that any employee who resigns and is rehired within one year will no longer be eligible for a sign-on bonus. She explained that this policy was not in effect at the time of the most recent hire but will apply moving forward.

**MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the hiring of Shawn Sanborn in the position of full time Patrol Deputy in the Sheriff's office with an effective date of April 6, 2026. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried 5:0**

- b. To Begin FY 2027 budget review
  - i. County Manager Zinser to give overview and review administration budgets

County Manager Zinser provided an overview of the proposed county budget, noting that commissioners did not have initial questions or comments. Commissioners have had the budget for approximately one week and are generally familiar with its structure, costs, and revenues.

The proposed budget reflects an overall increase of approximately 9.18% over the prior year, with a projected tax impact increase of 9.99%. The County Manager stated that, while not ideal, the increase compares favorably to those seen in other cities and towns and is on the lower end of current budget trends.

Key cost drivers in the budget include energy costs and, most significantly, the funding of the Recovery Center and the Training Center, which represent the largest impacts. The budget proposes only one new position, a Facilities Technician in the Facilities Department, to begin in January 2027. All other changes reflect a combination of increases and decreases across departments. Wages, benefits, and certain training expenses have increased, as expected.

Reviewing the Supplemental section, the County Manager explained the proposed county assessments based on the 2026 state valuations, which are ultimately sent to municipalities. He emphasized the importance of understanding valuation changes, as they directly affect how the tax burden is distributed among towns. This year, valuation shifts and municipal revaluations mean some towns will pay a larger share than in prior years.

The proposed budget represents a \$2.463 million increase in county taxes. The budget remains under the LD 1 limit, which would technically allow for an increase of up to 15.61% based on current assessments. Significant valuation increases were noted, including a \$635 million increase in Saco, resulting in a larger share of the county tax burden for that city. Similar upward valuation shifts were noted for Kittery and Biddeford. The County Manager reported having spoken with Saco's City Manager, who indicated their municipal budget increase was roughly in line with the county's proposal at that time.

County Manager Zinser concluded by inviting high-level questions from the board and outlined the plan to proceed with department-by-department budget reviews, beginning with the Sheriff's Office, followed by administrative budgets as time permits.

Commissioner Ring expressed disappointment that, as of April 1, the County was reviewing the budget without having received the FY25 audit. She stated that receiving the audit prior to the budget process had been her past experience and felt strongly that the absence of audited financial information limited the commissioners' ability to fully evaluate the budget.

County Manager Zinser responded that the audit was submitted the previous night to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse to meet the required federal deadline. He indicated that the general fund audit should be available for commissioner review in the coming weeks. He explained that the delay is largely due to a shortage of auditors statewide and regionally, noting that this situation is not unique to the County. The audit process began in November, and the timeline is driven by auditor availability, ongoing questions, testing, and internal control reviews, rather than a fixed completion date. He stated there is little leverage to accelerate the process and acknowledged the frustration, emphasizing that the issue has become the norm rather than an exception.

The County Manager also noted that RHR Smith's work has been thorough and of good quality, and he had no concerns with their performance. He explained that the County had only one response during the last audit bid process and cautioned that rebidding could risk receiving no proposals. The audit is a sizable

engagement, costing approximately \$50,000, and the limited auditor pool has impacted many municipalities and counties.

Commissioner Chenette asked about expectations and timelines communicated to the auditor. County Manager Zinser explained that the audit process involves multiple stages, fieldwork, follow-up questions, testing, and reviews, and does not operate on a guaranteed timeline. Commissioner Dutremble added that widespread auditor retirements over recent years have contributed significantly to current delays and that similar backlogs are occurring elsewhere.

Commissioner Ring raised concern about the designation of surplus without an audit being finalized. Commissioner Dutremble responded that adjustments or corrections can be made if audit results differ from preliminary figures. County Manager Zinser added that all financial information reflected in reports is already in the County's system and would ultimately align with the audit, and staff can provide detailed reports or answer questions as needed in the interim.

County Manager Zinser concluded by reiterating that the County met the federal audit deadline, which is critical from a compliance standpoint, particularly given the volume of federal funds administered by the County.

ii. Major Lori Marks to present the jail budget

County Manager Zinser introduced Jail Administrator Lori Marks and provided a high-level overview of the proposed jail budget. He reported that the county assessment for the jail is projected to increase by approximately 7%, while the overall jail budget reflects a more moderate increase of 5.7% over the prior year.

He explained that staffing levels are being budgeted consistent with prior years and in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement, with no significant changes in positions. Revenues for the jail are generally stable, with some increases and reductions offsetting one another, resulting in no major revenue shifts overall.

County Manager Zinser highlighted that cost increases occur primarily outside of wages and benefits, noting rising expenses for computer software, propane, electricity, inmate medical care, and food services. He emphasized that these increases are largely driven by higher commodity and energy costs, rather than operational changes.

He then turned the presentation over to Jail Administrator Lori Marks to review the jail budget in detail.

Jail Administrator Lori Marks thanked the commissioners and offered to review the jail budget either line by line or by focusing on areas requesting increases. She stated that there are four primary areas where increases are requested, noting that many other costs, such as utilities and insurance, are largely outside departmental control due to external market increases.

Administrator Marks explained that requested increases are largely driven by inflation and rising commodity costs, similar to the prior year. The key requested increases include:

- Food Service: Increased due to higher overall food prices.
- Inmate Supplies: Increased to reflect inflation and higher supply costs; Administrator Marks noted ongoing efforts to control costs by researching alternative vendors and options.

- Uniforms and Safety Equipment: Increased due to higher costs for required equipment and uniforms.
- Food and Beverage: A small increase requested to cover limited staff-related events such as Corrections Week, a holiday gathering, and providing food during audits or Department of Corrections inspections.

County Manager Zinser clarified that the food and beverage line item is listed as Line 50325 on the first page of the budget.

County Manager Zinser further explained an increase in computer software expenses (Line 50362), noting that it reflects implementation of the new Motorola Records Management System, which will also appear in the Sheriff's Office budget. He stated that the system was the result of a year-long bid process and represents good value for its cost, providing a substantial upgrade from the county's previous system.

Commissioner Ring asked about a 7% increase shown under department head wages and whether a standard cost-of-living adjustment was included. County Manager Zinser explained that non-union employees are budgeted for a 4% cost-of-living increase, and that the apparent 7% reflects how wages are calculated across both fiscal and calendar years, including step and longevity adjustments. He noted that the budget uses a daily rate calculation, meaning actual increases vary depending on hire date, step increases, and timing within the fiscal year. Finance Director Lori Lemieux and County Manager Zinser confirmed that this methodology is applied consistently across all departments and explains variations seen in wage lines.

Commissioner Chenette asked about the pre-employment screening budget, noting that only approximately \$1,000 had been spent to date despite a \$16,000 budgeted amount. He questioned whether the full amount was expected to be spent and whether screening services could be shared with the County to avoid duplication.

Jail Administrator Lori Marks explained that the jail's hiring process operates somewhat independently due to its unique staffing challenges. She noted that certain screening tools previously used, such as polygraphs and mental health evaluations, had not been utilized over the past year due to staffing shortages and operational constraints. She stated that the department is now considering implementing new or alternative screening tools, which would likely result in increased costs in the upcoming fiscal year.

County Manager Zinser clarified that hiring is handled through Human Resources, but jail staff are subject to additional considerations not applied to general fund employees. He explained that traditional screening tools such as polygraphs and psychological exams are costly and have not reliably predicted future performance. The County is instead discussing with the union a new approach involving periodic, random integrity-based reviews of correctional officers throughout the year. He compared the concept to random drug screening and stated that this approach may be more effective in addressing issues proactively. Costs associated with this new process are reflected in the budget request.

Commissioner Ring asked about a proposed \$140,000 increase in food service costs and whether it was contractual. Administrator Marks explained that food service operates on a sliding-scale contract based on a per-meal cost, which fluctuates with inmate population levels. Lower inmate counts result in higher per-meal costs. She reported an average weekly cost of approximately \$12,500 for inmate meals, assuming current trends continue.

Administrator Marks reported that the average daily inmate population has recently been lower, averaging approximately 155 inmates, compared to prior levels closer to 190. County Manager Zinser noted that this decline could negatively impact costs in future years.

Commissioner Chenette asked about a 20% increase in inmate supplies and whether that increase reflected anticipated inmate population growth. Administrator Marks clarified that inmate supplies include required items such as hygiene products and paper goods, not food or clothing, which are separate line items. The increase reflects higher supply costs rather than inmate growth.

Commissioner Dutremble asked about state revenue projections, noting uncertainty in final figures. County Manager Zinser stated that revenue assumptions were kept flat due to uncertainty, describing projections as conservative. He noted pending legislation that could increase jail funding by adjusting the base amount and tying increases to CPI, which would be a significant benefit if approved.

When questioned by Commissioner Ring, County Manager Zinser also discussed boarding revenues from Oxford County, stating the County is conservatively estimating those revenues. Administrator Marks explained that Oxford County inmates typically average 15–20 inmates, occasionally up to 50, and while not a major driver of costs, they help offset per-meal food expenses. Costs associated with housing Oxford inmates are covered through a daily boarding rate.

Commissioner Chenette asked about employee training and development expenditures, noting lower spending to date compared to the budgeted amount. Administrator Marks explained that the majority of training costs are related to Maine Criminal Justice Academy training for new hires, with additional training occurring as opportunities or promotions arise. She noted there is no fixed training template, and expenses vary year to year.

The discussion concluded with acknowledgments and no further questions.

Commissioner Clark expressed concern about the small font size and poor readability of the budget documents. County Manager Zinser explained that additional requested details, including year-to-date figures, have required more columns, which compresses the layout. Commissioner Clark requested that future budget documents be presented in a larger font. County Manager Zinser acknowledged the issue and noted that expanded page formats or larger paper may be needed to balance readability with added detail.

iii. Sheriff William King to present budget

Sheriff King thanked the commissioners and emphasized that his department kept budget requests to a minimum, recognizing other financial pressures facing the county. He noted that most line-item increases and decreases are contractual or unavoidable operational changes.

Key points included:

- Computer Software: A major cost driver is the new Flex system replacing IMC, budgeted at \$55,900.
- County Vehicle Maintenance: Requested an increase to \$35,000, citing a consistent pattern of exceeding this line in prior years and the need for a more realistic allocation.
- Equipment & Technical Hardware: A 37% increase reflects the need to replace outdated cruisers and body cameras.
- Minor Equipment: Adjustments in this line are primarily contractual.

Sheriff King concluded by inviting questions and noted that the Chief Deputy was present to assist.

Commissioner Ring raised concerns regarding the Sheriff's request to purchase seven additional vehicles, noting that several vehicles are currently not in service. She cited inventory showing six 2026 vehicles and two 2025 vehicles parked and not yet deployed, with only two 2025 vehicles recently placed into service. Commissioner Ring stated that approving additional vehicles would result in approximately 15 vehicles requiring upfitting, with setup costs exceeding \$10,000 per vehicle. She expressed concern about vehicles with low mileage (under 70,000 miles) remaining idle for extended periods and suggested this year may present an opportunity for cost savings to taxpayers by delaying additional purchases. Commissioner Ring also questioned whether the cost of vehicle upfitting contributes to overruns in the county maintenance budget.

Sheriff King responded that the department follows a long-standing vehicle replacement and rotation plan that has proven effective. He emphasized that maintaining spare vehicles prevents service interruptions caused by accidents or mechanical failures, including the possibility of multiple vehicles being taken out of service simultaneously. He noted that law enforcement vehicles experience significantly greater wear than personal vehicles, and that 70,000 miles of police use is not comparable to typical civilian driving. Vehicles generally require replacement after approximately 100,000 miles due to the demands of police operations. Sheriff King urged the Commissioners not to abandon the established rotation, stating that doing so could result in vehicle shortages in future years.

County Manager Zinser provided additional clarification, noting that vehicle purchases approved in a given budget year are typically delivered a year or more later, meaning vehicles currently arriving were approved in a prior cycle. He explained that the County maintains a successful vehicle resale program, with retired vehicles sold at auction and proceeds deposited into the Sheriff's vehicle reserve fund. These funds are generally sufficient to cover the cost of upfitting new vehicles, reducing budgetary impact. He further stated that the Sheriff's maintenance budget has increased primarily due to rising insurance deductibles associated with frequent accidents, particularly deer strikes, which now carry a deductible of approximately \$2,500 per incident. A new budget line has been established to track vehicle repair insurance deductibles, estimated at approximately \$50,000 annually. Having spare vehicles allows uninterrupted service while damaged vehicles are repaired. County Manager Zinser noted that the County has previously agreed to a practice of purchasing seven vehicles per year, which supports fleet stability and operational readiness.

Commissioner Ring asked whether the County currently has contracts in place with all labor unions. County Manager Zinser confirmed that contracts are in place and noted that the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) contract was front-loaded. He stated that the two-year contract value totaled a 13% increase, which included the previously approved increase.

Commissioner Ring asked specifically about the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). County Manager Zinser clarified that the current COLA for the FOP is 4%. When asked about Corrections, he stated their increase is believed to be 3% or 4%, though the exact structure may vary by contract year, and he offered to provide confirmation.

Commissioner Ring then raised a separate concern regarding the listing of Andrew Buckland as a Reserve Court Security Officer, stating he was not hired for that role and believed he had previously served as a Reserve Corrections Officer. She stated she was unaware of any reserve court security officers and expressed concern that corrections training differs significantly from court security or law enforcement duties.

County Manager Zinser responded that the Board had approved a policy several years ago allowing reserve officers within the Sheriff's Office to perform any reserve function for which they are properly trained and qualified, including corrections, deputy, or court security roles. He stated that as long as training standards are met, reserves may serve in those capacities. He acknowledged he would need to locate the specific policy for confirmation and offered to follow up.

Commissioner Ring requested to review the policy if it exists, noting her concern about role transfers and training distinctions. County Manager Zinser reiterated that he would look into the matter and provide additional information.

Commissioner Chenette requested clarification regarding two budget line items. First, he asked about the Weapons and Munitions line, noting that there were no FY25 actual expenditures and inquired whether this was a newly created line item in the FY26 budget.

County Manager Zinser clarified that while the line item itself is new, the expense is not. He explained that weapons and ammunition costs were previously charged to a different budget line, which was consistently overspent. The creation of the new line item was intended to better track those costs, particularly in response to increased ammunition prices.

Commissioner Chenette also asked for clarification on the "Other Miscellaneous Supplies" line item. County Manager Zinser stated that staff would review that line item and provide a breakdown of the expenses included, after which the information could be discussed further.

Commissioner Dutremble reviewed the vehicle inventory and noted that more than 20 vehicles show over 50,000 miles. Based on his experience, he stated that vehicles sitting idle may reflect higher effective wear and mileage than reported. He referenced the previous budget year when the Budget Committee reduced vehicle purchases from seven to six, noting that the long-standing intent of purchasing seven vehicles annually has been to avoid fleet shortages caused by breakdowns.

Sheriff King added that the department is actively recruiting and currently has several vacancies. He stated that newly acquired vehicles will be assigned to incoming personnel, supporting operational needs.

Commissioner Ring provided historical context, stating that for many years the Sheriff's Office operated under a five-vehicle rotation. Due to budget constraints, the rotation was later reduced to three vehicles per year, creating a backlog. She noted that the increase to seven vehicles annually was implemented as a means of catching up, not expanding fleet size. Commissioner Ring stated that the department now appears caught up, with approximately 21 positions requiring vehicles, of which 16 are frontline patrol officers. She emphasized she supports fully equipping frontline staff but questioned whether the seven-vehicle rotation remains necessary.

County Manager Zinser disagreed with some of the position and vehicle counts, explaining that as union contracts and internal cost allocations change, the County will be purchasing vehicles and charging internal rental costs, which must be accounted for in the rotation. He acknowledged that resale income contributes to costs but clarified that the County must front the purchase costs before those revenues are realized over time. He also stated that a formal, consistent vehicle rotation did not exist in earlier budgets, and that adoption of the current methodology required significant discussion and approval due to prior fleet management challenges.

Sheriff King added that the established rotation proved effective during the COVID-19 period, noting that while other jurisdictions struggled to maintain operational vehicles, the County remained adequately equipped.

iv. District Attorney Kathryn Slattery to present budget

District Attorney Slattery presented the District Attorney's Office budget, noting that overall increases are modest. She reported an increase in the Legal Research line item due to contractual costs. She also noted a significant reduction in postage expenses resulting from increased use of online and electronic processes.

She stated that software and software maintenance costs have increased slightly, but emphasized that aside from these items, the office is not requesting any major new expenditures and is focused on maintaining status quo operations.

District Attorney Slattery also acknowledged the efforts of staff, noting that the office relocated to a new facility three years ago, which required significant adjustment. She stated that the office is now undergoing another major transition with the implementation of electronic court filing (e-file). She described the transition as a substantial change in workflow and commended staff for their dedication and adaptability during the process.

District Attorney Slattery concluded by expressing appreciation for her staff's efforts and indicated her willingness to answer any questions.

Commissioner Chenette questioned the relationship between a reported increase in overtime expenditures (approximately 150%) and a decrease in staff wages and asked whether the office is adequately staffed or compensating for vacancies through overtime.

District Attorney Slattery stated she was not prepared to provide a detailed explanation at that time. She noted the office has experienced prolonged understaffing due to long-term absences and ongoing recruitment challenges. Several positions remain vacant, and overtime has been necessary to ensure required work continues.

Commissioner Clark asked whether the decrease in general wages was attributable to staffing losses or the hiring of new employees at lower pay rates.

District Attorney Slattery responded that the office has had several significant retirements in recent years. She indicated that replacement staff were hired afterward and deferred further details to County Manager Zinser.

County Manager Zinser thanked the District Attorney for her patience during the prolonged heating repair issues at the Biddeford office. He expressed concern with the county's reliance on leased space and noted the county does not own the Biddeford building, limiting control over maintenance and repairs. County Manager Zinser stated the county takes pride in maintaining its owned facilities but does not have the same control or responsiveness when subject to a landlord. He characterized the Biddeford office as a marginal and problematic long-term solution, citing the heating system outage that has persisted for approximately two months.

County Manager Zinser explained that county staff have provided supplemental heaters and continued coordinating repairs, which are now scheduled for completion on April 8, weather permitting. He noted landlord scheduling and weather delays have prolonged the repair timeline.

He further explained that under current law, the county is unable to purchase property outside of Alfred, which prevents acquisition of land or buildings in Biddeford. He referenced prior discussions regarding the modernization of county government and the need to consider legislative changes that would allow the county to purchase property closer to the courthouse.

Commissioner Dutremble asked how the county acquired other properties it owns.

County Manager Zinser responded that county-owned properties are located in Alfred, where land ownership is permitted. He explained the historical legislative limitations related to the courthouse relocation and requested assistance from county attorneys in identifying any potential legal remedies or legislative solutions.

Commissioner Ring asked about the significant reduction in postage expenses.

District Attorney Slattery explained that the office previously mailed discovery materials but has transitioned to providing electronic links, resulting in substantially lower postage costs.

District Attorney Slattery reported she met with the York County Children's Advocacy Center prior to the meeting. She stated the CAC is operating under new leadership with new forensic interviewers, the facility improvements are complete, and interviews resumed during the week of March 9. She reported operations have returned to normal and expressed confidence in the current staff and direction.

v. EMA Deputy Director Megan Arsenault to present budget

EMA Deputy Director Megan Arsenault reported that the proposed EMA budget includes some increases but remains largely stable despite significant accomplishments since the last budget cycle. These include expanded community outreach, continued mitigation and coastal resilience initiatives, and development of special teams, including the newly established Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

Since the prior budget season, EMA added 65 new special team members, primarily volunteers with some paid reserve staff. These teams were activated 79 times in 2025. To support these efforts, EMA is requesting increased funding related to special teams, reserve accounts, reserve employees, and equipment maintenance.

Deputy Director Arsenault also noted recent changes at FEMA and confirmed an anticipated \$100,000+ reduction in one federal grant in future performance periods. In response, EMA has begun succession planning to protect core positions. As part of that effort, the budget includes a request to shift one EMA Division Coordinator position from Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) funding to county funding, while continuing to maximize federal grant usage where possible.

Commissioner Chenette asked whether the current budget included any anticipated dredge-related costs and expressed concern about potential unfunded obligations if federal or state support does not materialize.

Deputy Director Arsenault confirmed that no dredge-related expenses are included in the proposed budget and that the county is currently relying on grant opportunities rather than county funds.

County Manager Zinser provided extensive background, stating that the dredge program is a large-scale and complex undertaking enabled primarily through federal disaster (Category B) funding. He explained that the original assumptions about dredge operations changed significantly, and that without federal funding, the county currently lacks resources to operate or further develop a dredge program. County Manager Zinser stated there is no dedicated dredge funding in the budget and described the costs as potentially reaching tens of millions of dollars, including substantial engineering and permitting expenses.

County Manager Zinser emphasized that future progress would depend on continued federal funding, including a pending DHS funding bill that could provide administrative resources. He stated that if the Board wished to pursue a formal county role, additional staffing and budgetary commitments would be required.

Commissioner Chenette asked whether municipal user fees were expected to offset dredge costs and whether anticipated revenues should be reflected in the budget.

County Manager Zinser clarified that charging municipalities was originally discussed by a proposed dredge authority, not as a county initiative. Due to federal funding requirements and lack of a viable external entity, the county retained responsibility. He noted that prior dredge projects in Wells, Saco, and Old Orchard Beach exceeded \$5 million, with significant engineering costs, and that municipal willingness to fund future dredging remains uncertain.

Commissioner Chenette stated that strategic analysis is needed to understand what funding is being pursued for routine erosion maintenance versus long-term beach stabilization and to identify any funding gaps. He suggested additional board-level discussion or subcommittee review.

County Manager Zinser agreed, stating future conversations should begin with municipalities to assess willingness to commit funding. He cited Barnstable County as an example of a dedicated dredge program funded annually but emphasized that municipal participation would be essential.

EMA Director Arthur Cleaves outlined a phased approach:

- Phase 1: Category B disaster response work (budget neutral)
- Phase 2: Dependent on CDS grant funding for engineering
- Phase 3: Potential long-term solutions, including an intergovernmental agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers and possible local taxation to support ongoing maintenance

Director Cleaves noted efforts to pursue 10-year permitting to streamline future dredge work.

In response to questions, County Manager Zinser and Director Cleaves confirmed there are no anticipated county costs to store the dredge, with the Town of Wells providing free storage and maintenance support at this time.

Commissioner Clark stressed that dredging services cannot continue without clear municipal buy-in and financial commitment. He stated that the county should not assume unilateral responsibility for projects that primarily benefit individual communities.

Commissioner Chenette agreed, noting that some municipalities already budget for beach nourishment and suggesting a follow-up meeting with Saco, Old Orchard Beach, and Wells to evaluate future commitment and partnership.

County Manager Zinser concluded that discussions with participating municipalities are anticipated over the coming months, particularly if additional grant funding is secured.

Commissioner Chenette stated that upcoming discussions with municipalities will be important as towns are currently developing their budgets. He noted that without clear communication, municipalities may not set aside funds for future dredge work, potentially missing an opportunity to plan for anticipated costs.

County Manager Zinser responded that municipalities should be planning for dredge-related costs regardless of county involvement. He suggested an initial collaborative step could include municipalities contributing toward funding a staff position to reduce the burden on EMA and support coordination efforts. County Manager Zinser emphasized that EMA staff continue to actively pursue additional CDS grant requests and maintain regular communication with the federal delegation. He stated that if new funding is secured, the county would likely allocate resources to hire a position to help manage and advance the program, which would also support future discussions with municipalities once funding is available.

Commissioner Dutremble commented that he had originally been lobbied to support the dredge program with assurances that state legislation and funding would follow. He noted that an initial funding expectation of approximately \$760,000 did not materialize and expressed concern that promises were made without follow-through. He stated this underscores the need for effective project management and realistic funding commitments.

vi. Register of Deeds Nancy Hammond to present budget

County Manager Zinser expressed appreciation for the work of the Deeds Department and for his working relationship with the Register and Deputy Register. He noted that the county is reducing some archival support previously associated with Paige Lilly, contract archivist, who continues to assist on a limited basis. Paige is currently helping Andrew O'Neill, Records Management Specialist, coordinate with the Maine State Archives and address matters related to an executed Memorandum of Understanding.

County Manager Zinser stated that Andrew O'Neill is expected to provide an update to the Board in May regarding ongoing archival work. He noted that the transition is progressing as planned and that there were no significant issues to report at this time.

Register of Deeds Nancy Hammond reported that her department is not requesting any major budget increases and stated that current staffing levels are working well. She noted that upgrades are being planned to support improvements to the department's database, with associated equipment costs to be funded through the Preservation Account, resulting in no impact to the operating budget.

Register Hammond highlighted work completed during the past fiscal year related to the Fraud Commission, including the development of a public informational pamphlet providing guidance on fraud concerns and resources. She noted the pamphlet has been well received.

Register Hammond also discussed recent legislation affecting revenue, including implementation of the real estate transfer "mansion tax," which is expected to increase revenues. She reported that the state had temporarily retained an additional 0.8% of the county's transfer tax, which is expected to end at the close of the current fiscal year. A proposal to make that increase permanent was unsuccessful, and the county is anticipated to receive its full 10% share by the end of 2027.

County Manager Zinser thanked Register Hammond for her assistance during the legislative session, particularly regarding LD 2124, noting that the bill ultimately shifted funding responsibility to the state's general fund rather than impacting county funds. He stated that the bill passed and described the outcome as favorable.

#### Budget Clarification

Commissioner Ring raised a question regarding an apparent discrepancy in the elected official salary figures, noting inconsistencies when calculating totals for different portions of the fiscal year.

County Manager Zinser acknowledged the concern and stated that staff will review the figures to determine whether an error exists.

Discussion ensued regarding the open house series offered by the Register's office.

#### vii. Facilities Director Rick deRochemont to present budget

County Manager Zinser introduced Facilities Director Rick deRochemont and noted that the proposed facilities budget reflects rising operational costs, including electricity and other commodities necessary to keep county buildings functioning. County Manager Zinser also stated that the budget includes a proposed increase in Director deRochemont's base pay to bring it more in line with other department heads, citing the scope and responsibility of his work.

Director deRochemont explained that most increases in the facilities budget are largely beyond departmental control and are driven by higher costs for utilities, electrical supplies, cleaning supplies, and general maintenance. He noted additional needs associated with operating the training center now that it has been in use, as well as preparations for a new building expected to come online later in the year. He emphasized that the apparent overall increase is not attributable to one specific item.

County Manager Zinser highlighted concerns about fuel and electricity costs. He noted that the county used its heating fuel allotment earlier than usual this season and anticipates increased costs going forward. Electricity costs were described as significantly higher with limited ability to mitigate them. County

Manager Zinser also referenced ongoing plumbing and mechanical issues at the courthouse, including recent pump failures impacting the geothermal system, noting that some repairs may be covered by reserves but warrant long-term planning.

Commissioner Ring asked about a \$37,500 increase in heating repair costs.

Director deRochemont clarified that the increase applies to the two newer buildings, not the courthouse. He explained that the new, all-electric buildings require quarterly preventive maintenance on numerous individual units and air exchangers, resulting in higher service costs compared to traditional rooftop systems.

County Manager Zinser added that vendor costs, filters, and materials have increased overall and that recent courthouse pump repairs were separate and not included in the cited increase.

In response to questions, County Manager Zinser explained that certain operational maintenance costs—such as elevator inspections, water systems, and septic—were intentionally centralized in the facilities budget for clarity, while utilities like electricity for the training center are billed directly to that department to better track true operating costs.

Commissioner Chenette asked whether there were any anticipated facilities expenses related to the pantry building included in the budget.

County Manager Zinser responded that routine operational costs for the pantry building are handled within the facilities budget and that recent renovations have been completed, including new flooring, paint, and donated freezers and coolers. He stated there are no major capital repairs included in the current budget.

Director deRochemont confirmed that the facilities budget covers routine maintenance only and does not include major upgrades such as roofing or large system replacements.

County Manager Zinser noted that preliminary, high-level discussions are underway regarding a potential future food hub project, which could involve replacing the existing building. He emphasized these discussions are very preliminary and long-term.

County Manager Zinser stated that the budget includes a request for an additional maintenance position to address increased workload associated with expanded facilities. He noted that while one position has been proposed, additional staffing may be needed in the future and that the current request reflects a phased approach to growth.

County Manager Zinser emphasized the importance of maintaining county buildings to a high standard and ensuring they are welcoming and well cared for. He stated that the exterior condition of county facilities reflects the quality of internal operations and expressed strong support for funding building and grounds maintenance.

County Manager Zinser highlighted the value of the grounds maintenance position, noting that building appearance is an important county asset. He explained that while full funding for these positions is warranted, the proposed budget reflects a measured approach by spreading costs where feasible. He

acknowledged concerns raised about compensation and staffing commitments and stated that these roles represent significant responsibilities that merit appropriate pay.

#### viii. Administration Budget Overview and Discussion

County Manager Zinser introduced the administration budget and highlighted key factors contributing to changes. He explained that a notable increase in general wages reflects the transfer of the position held by Rachel Stansfield, Chief Advancement Officer, from the Layman Way Fund to the General Fund, noting the move was a housekeeping correction rather than a new cost. He also noted that a Finance Compliance Specialist position will be funded for six months by the General Fund and six months by ARPA.

County Manager Zinser clarified that an apparent increase in department head wages was the result of a position reclassification or movement, not a percentage-based pay increase. Associated increases in FICA and Medicare were described as mandatory and tied directly to payroll changes.

He reported that legal expenses are projected to increase due to ongoing and anticipated needs, including medical and insurance-related legal matters requiring specialized counsel. Audit services were also identified as a significant expense, now shown as a separate line item due to cost and transparency considerations.

Overall, County Manager Zinser stated that the administration budget reflects internal reallocations rather than expanded staffing or new programs, with payroll adjustments aligned to existing compensation policy.

#### MEDATS Payroll Clarification

Commissioner Ring asked for clarification regarding positions listed under the MEDATS IT Director and whether those were state employees.

County Manager Zinser clarified that the listed MEDATS positions are county employees whose salaries are 100% reimbursed through MEDATS. He explained that the county manages payroll and employment administration on MEDATS' behalf, receives full salary reimbursement, and charges MEDATS an additional \$40,000 annually to cover administrative costs and potential liability exposure.

#### Treasurer Budget

County Manager Zinser noted that the Treasurer's budget line was reset to \$500 in accordance with county policy, in anticipation of a possible leadership change. He explained that the amount is included regardless of whether future changes are determined by referendum.

#### Public Agencies and Scheduling

County Manager Zinser stated there are no changes to funding for public agencies, noting these are longstanding statutory or policy-based contributions, including those required under the County Extension Act.

He reviewed the meeting schedule, noting a meeting planned for the following Wednesday with flexibility to schedule additional sessions as needed prior to Budget Committee review.

## Medical and Dental Insurance Discussion

County Manager Zinser reviewed projected medical and dental insurance increases, warning that utilization rates—particularly associated with county and jail operations—are significantly higher than average. He advised the Board to anticipate continued cost increases.

Commissioner Ring commented that if insurance costs increase substantially, non-union employees should potentially be required to contribute a higher share of premiums, noting perceived disparities.

County Manager Zinser responded that benefit levels are the result of collective bargaining agreements and that comparing union and non-union benefit costs is complex due to trade-offs in retirement, wages, and other benefits. He stated that the county has, in prior years, absorbed additional costs through side agreements when feasible and is open to doing so again at the Board's direction. He emphasized that any adjustments should be considered carefully within the broader bargaining framework.

### c. Approval and acceptance of Forfeited Assets – ADDENDUM AGENDA ITEM

**MOTION: Commissioner Ring moved that now comes the County of York, Maine, by and through its legislative body, the York County Board of Commissioners, and does hereby grant approval pursuant to 15 M.R.S.A. § 5824(3) & § 55826(6) to the transfer of 50% of the above captioned Defendant(s) in Rem #1, namely \$1,229.00 U.S. Currency, or any portion thereof, on grounds that the York County Sheriff's Department did make a substantial contribution to the investigation of this or a related criminal case.**

**WHEREFORE, the York County Board of Commissioners does hereby approve of the transfer of the Defendants in Rem, or any portion thereof, pursuant to 15 M.R.S.A. § 5824(3) & § 55826(6) by vote of the Commissioners on or about April 1, 2026. Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion. Motion carried 5:0**

## 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) 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 leave of absence extension request. 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 moved to approve the request for an extension of a leave of absence for a period until May 30, 2026. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried 5:0**

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

None.

**9. ADJOURN**

**Motion: Commissioner Clark moved to adjourn. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

**Motion carried 5:0**

Meeting adjourned at 6:59pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Murray  
Executive Assistant to the County Manager