

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

February 5, 2025

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, February 5, 2025, A. D. at 4:30 P. M.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

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

County Manager Greg 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

02-05-2025

ITEM

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

Janet Drew addressed the Board via Zoom and asked what the response of the county will be as far as immigration issues and use of the jail. I hope we will protect our neighbors and communities, she stated.

2 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS:

- a. Commissioners' meeting of January 15, 2025
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the minutes of January 15, 2025.
Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 4-1 with Commissioner Dutremble abstained as he was not present.

3 TO APPROVE TREASURER'S WARRANTS

- a. Warrants to be approved on January 15, 2025 in the amount of \$655,832.71
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
- b. Warrants to be approved on January 22, 2025 in the amount of \$912,428.43
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
- c. Warrants to be approved on January 29, 2025 in the amount of \$580,679.72
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

4 TO HEAR ANY REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Dutremble informed all that he received a call asking to put a certain person's name on the new building (1st Responders). He asked, if we thinking of making a Wall of Fame as more will ask?

County Manager Zinser replied that we are going to have plaques. We can talk about a memorial wall. The plaza was designed to be a memorial type of plaza for 1st Responders (including the bricks) but it is not on our radar. As far as naming the building, the County Manager stated that he has received some (requests) also. The Commissioners need some credit for the amount of money they put over there, he added. We will also hear from Rachel regarding sponsorships through the First County Foundation). We could maybe look at someone in the County, Manager Zinser commented for naming rights. Before we consider other names outside the county, we should look at the county first.

We as a Board need to be careful, he cautioned, but we should talk to the Foundation to find out their take on sponsorship, naming rights, etc.

Commissioner Dutremble asked if they should have some kind of directive.

County Manager Zinser asked if the Board would like to do that now?

Commissioner Chenette replied that he would like to hear from the Foundation first. He added that maybe a component of the memorial wall or something but, that this is not in our fund structure to set up something new. Families of individuals might want to support that. If anyone is reaching out to us, we are still early in the process.

5 NEW BUSINESS

a. Approve position and hiring of reserve Medical Director (pending)

County Manager Zinser explained that this (job description) is based off from our other medical director that we had in the county (vaccine center). It is a generically worded job description. We are proposing hiring a reserve person. The Recovery Center is required to have a Medical Director, he explained. There is a general desire of the county departments that are dealing with medical issues to sit back and look at how we deal with medical issues now. There is a desire to create our own medical division, stated the County Manager. Therefore, we would possibly not have contracts. Every time you contract out something there is another layer of bureaucracy, explained County Manager Zinser. He continued that he is requesting that the Commissioners approve the job description. We have gone through the hiring process, and we will talk about that next.

Commissioner Chenette asked if this position will start out as a reserve (position) during the construction process and would we be treating it like a consultant position until the building is open and then move to full-time?

The County Manager explained that as we move forward, we look at the jail and services provided. We pay for a doctor, nurse practitioners and nurses now at the jail. If we have an MD on, we can look at ways to maximize our staff.

Commissioner Chenette clarified that the decision today is to approve the hiring of a reserve employee.

County Manager Zinser replied, yes.

Commissioner Ring commented that the jail did have their own medical department many years ago. Once we decided to contract that out, the budget went up. She added that she is very interested in this.

Commissioner Chenette motioned to approve the MD reserve position.

Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

Deputy County Manager/H.R. Director Corliss presented Jessika Morin in the position of reserve Medical Director with a date of hire of February 10, 2025. Commissioner Ring motioned to hire Jessika Morin in the position of reserve Medical Director. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0. County Manager Zinser informed all that her rate of pay will be \$175 per hour.

b. Development Director Rachel Stansfield to give update

County Manager Zinser explained that Rachel has been getting the Foundation going and getting grant monies for the County.

Development Director Rachel Stansfield addressed the Board and stated that lots of progress has been made in the last 18 months. She continued that successes include merging two Boards into one. The First County Foundation was established and materials were put together for tax exemption. Another team effort was the groundbreaking ceremony with about 100 people in attendance.

Another success is the Case for Support that was given to you. Director Stansfield explained that she is working with a consultant to get this together. She added that currently this is a one-person foundation with a Board of five people. She expressed to the Commissioners that she welcomes their feedback. This document is a building block of launching a more comprehensive campaign for the next two to three years. Rachel explained that the County Manager's big push is to outfit the buildings.

Director Stansfield also encouraged the Commissioners to check out the website. She added that constructive criticism is welcome. Also, you will see a donate button. This all migrates with our donor database.

Development Director Stansfield informed all the grants that we've gotten to date: \$300,000 from Maine Recovery Council and \$36,000 from Firehouse Subs to outfit AEDS in all of the cruisers. She continued that she has an LOI into Maine Health Access for a one-year grant and then a 2-year grant that would line up with the opening of the facilities.

Director Stansfield continued that she is working with her Board on development. She has a recruitment plan to bring on more members as we can have up to twelve in our bylaws. She explained that they are looking for corporate partners; people who can help us get to that multi-million-dollar goal. County Manager Zinser commented that he is learning about the nuances of raising money and campaigning. He added that it is a big learning curve for me. He thanked Rachel.

Commission Chair Richard Dutremble stated that he had looked at the website. He thanked Rachel for her work on it and added that it is very informative. We don't thank you enough, commented Commissioner Dutremble.

Director Stansfield replied that the site is just coming together now.

She added that there are actual videos of site work on there.

Commissioner Clark echoed Commissioner Dutremble's remarks. You did an excellent job. The materials provided are first rate.

Commissioner Chenette thanked Rachel also. Is it accurate that as we are planning our campaign, we haven't really engaged anyone with this packet yet? Development Director Stansfield replied that this packet is not external. She encouraged the Commissioners to circulate this document among your peers and colleagues and gather their feedback. Then we will build a live campaign. County Manager Zinser said that one of the things we do need is your help to get people's feedback. We also need help finding community-oriented people to be on the Board. We don't necessarily need people in recovery or public safety just Community minded people that believe in these projects. The County Manager asked the Commissioners to communicate these names to Rachel.

Commissioner Chenette commented that \$1 million can be a little scary but so many aspects have been presented here. This is very exciting and we appreciate all the work you have done.

Commissioner Ring stated that no matter where she goes people are talking about this. The doctor's offices are very interested. Thank you for everything you have been doing. Commissioner Ring added that she is very proud of the way this is going. People are amazed at the speed we are going.

Development Director Rachel Stansfield replied that this is good for me to know, too. She added that she can come up with one-pagers to distribute when you are out.

- c. To schedule tax abatement denial appeal (recommended date of March 19, 2025)

Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the date of March 19, 2025 to hear the tax abatement denial appeal request. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

- d. Review and approve bid for VR simulators

County Manager Zinser reported that Chief Fire Administrator Rod Hooper and a group of building committee members include Corporal Anthony Ciampi from Biddeford P.D., Chief Deputy Jeremy Forbes, Captain Kevin Chabot from Wells P.D., Chief Jack Clements from Saco P.D. and Chief Fire Administrator Rod Hooper reviewed the RFP's. The company chosen by the team is Axon. They also provide body cameras to the Sheriff's Office. The CDS monies cover the first five years and in year six there will be a licensing fee.

Chief Fire Administrator Rod Hooper added that this is a good system to start out with. Technology will change in five years, he added.

Commissioner Chenette asked if this is for the training center, why are we purchasing it now?

The County Manager replied due to the grant performance period. The grant is about two years old. The building will be enclosed probably by March. We can perhaps be in there by December of this year. By the time the equipment is ordered we won't get it until May. We can use it here and in EMA and at the Sheriff's Office.

Commissioner Chenette stated that he was curious how much money is left and do we have a full outline of all the equipment you will need?

Chief Fire Administrator Rod Hooper responded that the Draeger burn tower is coming out of the same fund. Another RFP will be going out for mechanical

type equipment for law enforcement (room configurations). CDS funding is taking care of that list.

He continued that at the next meeting he will have a proposal from a vendor for EMS training equipment. We have a FEMA grant for the generator, kitchen- logistic side of operations.

County Manager Zinser added that they can send out the lists to the Board so that they will have a general awareness.

Commissioner Chenette stated that he asked in case there is a gap that we need to be on the lookout for.

County Manager Zinser replied that there are a lot of the gaps that come from shutting down current Layman Way Recovery Center and opening the new building. We do have these costs identified. It will cost \$3 million to outfit these buildings. We will share that information with you.

Commissioner Ring motioned to approve the bid for the virtual reality training system from Axon Enterprises, Inc. in the amount of \$96,651.00.

Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion adding payment will be through monies in the CDS grant. Vote 5-0.

- e. Review and approve recommended bid for audio/video equipment in the Probate courtroom

County Manager Zinser explained that he has had several conversations with Register of Probate Carol Lovejoy regarding this. It is needed. Connectivity Point is who they have requested. It is the middle of the road bidder and the same company as we have here.

County Manager Zinser explained that the money is in Probate's budget. Things came up so she is using the money allotted for high density storage and will ask for this in the 2026 budget as the audio/video system is more of a need.

Commissioner Ring motioned to approve the purchase of the new audio/video system from Connectivity Point in the Probate courtroom in the amount of \$47,948.86. Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion. Vote 5-0

Commissioner Clark asked about the delivery date.

Register of Probate Lovejoy replied that she hasn't talked to them about it yet but we will have to close courtroom for installation.

Commissioner Chenette commented to Register of Probate Lovejoy that he appreciated her bringing this forward and finding a solution as it is critical that all can hear in court.

6 OLD BUSINESS

- a. Review and approve Findings of Fact (Hockney) –

Commissioner Clark motioned to approve signing the Findings of Fact for Map/Lot 017-017.

Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 4- 1 with 1abstaintion. (Commissioner Dutremble abstained as he was not here.)

Couty Manager Zinser informed the Commissioners that he has looked at the first draft of the 2026 budget and it reflects a 10% increase without factoring in any commodities.

9% is wages and benefits. He continued that we are starting to bargain with

MSEA next Wednesday and FOP next Thursday. FOP conversation will also include whether they will have one union or two.

The County Manager explained that the budget hasn't gone to the Department Heads yet to add what they need. He told the Commissioners that he is toying with the idea of getting them the wages and benefits budget sooner. Maybe you have some thoughts and ideas.

Commissioner Chenette asked that along those lines, is there a way for us to get us an updated budget committee sheet? Kathy will get a copy out to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Chenette commented on the lack of involvement with the Budget Committee. He stated that he finds that a lot of folks do not know that they have a role to play in the county government. There is a severe shortage of individuals that participate in this committee. The clear line of power over the budget process is deeply concerning to me.

We should be taking more of a leadership role in letting folks know about the process.

Commissioner Chenette continued that he does not believe that the budget committee really has a platform to get the word out. We need to encourage that participation. Sharing on our social media feed is absolutely all right to do so.

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)

None

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

Susan Wiswell, a member of the Budget Committee, commented that she totally agrees with Commissioner Chenette regarding getting people involved in the budget committee process.

County Manager Zinser stated that we have encountered a lot of confusion. Folks do call us. The budget committee is made up of mostly elected officials. The public want to get on, but elected officials have more seats.

Janet Drew asked (via Zoom) what happens if somebody is brought to the jail with an immigration issue what is the county's stand?

She also asked where does the housing part of ARPA stand?

County Manager Zinser replied that half a million for housing was funded with ARPA money.

The county of York will comply with all lawful orders that are received. We are commanded to hold (an inmate) if an order is received.

The County Manager further explained that the Sheriff's Office is not going out on immigration raids. We don't enforce immigration laws but will act on ICE

detainers that are properly executed. However, added County Manager Zinser, we would respond to any call for assistance as we always do. Commissioner Clark added to the housing issue comment that we supplied \$750,000 to Mainspring in Kittery who opened six units.

Chris (?) via Zoom, spoke about property concerns on private roads. He stated that from researching this it seems to be more of a county commissioner role. If this committee recommends ending easements, etc. do you know what this does to budgets and emergency services, etc.?

County Manager Zinser explained that function was removed from the counties in the 70's. Perhaps, he continued, it still exists in unincorporated plantations but in York County, we do not have a road commissioner. There are no budgetary impacts for us here in the county. We do get calls from surveyors and lawyers looking for information regarding abandoned roads. We have invested a lot of time and money in going through our records to understand what we have. We have helped several people to find documents. We can certainly help you with that. York County Registry of Deeds is wonderful, stated the County Manager.

9 ADJOURN

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

Meeting adjourned at 5:51 p.m.