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2  
3 **COMMISSIONERS' MEETING**

4 **January 7, 2026**

5 At a regular meeting of the County Commissioners of the County of York, begun and holden at the York  
6 County Government Building in Alfred, within and for the County of York, being held on Wednesday,  
7 January 7, 2026, A. D. at 4:30 P.M.

8  
9 **COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

10  
11 Richard R. Dutremble  
12 Richard Clark  
13 Robert Andrews  
14 Justin Chenette  
15 Donna Ring

16  
17 **COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:**

18 None

19  
20 County Manager Greg Zinser, Deputy County Manager Linda Hutchins-Corliss, Sheriff William King,  
21 Chief Jeremy Forbes, Facilities Director Rick deRochemont, Finance Director Lori Lemieux (via Zoom),  
22 EMA Director Arthur Cleaves (via Zoom), Deputy EMA Director Megan Arsenault, Emergency  
23 Preparedness Coordinator Chris McCall, Fire Administrator Rod Hooper, and Communications Specialist  
24 Catherine Derby were present at the meeting:

25  
26 **YOU ARE INVITED TO RISE AND SALUTE THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES**

27  
28 **ITEM**

29  
30 **1. TO SELECT A COUNTY COMMISSIONER CHAIRPERSON FOR 2026**

31  
32 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to nominate Commissioner Dutremble as Chair.**  
33 **Commissioner Ring seconded the motion.**  
34 **Motion carried 5:0**

35  
36  
37 **2. TO SELECT A COUNTY COMMISSIONER VICE CHAIRPERSON FOR 2026**

38  
39 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to nominate Commissioner Andrews as Vice Chair.**  
40 **Commissioner Ring seconded the motion.**  
41 **Motion carried 5:0**

42  
43 **3. PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY ITEM(S)**

44  
45 None.

46  
47 **4. TO SELECT WORKFORCE CENTER DIRECTOR FOR 2026**  
48

49 **MOTION: Commissioner Andrews moved to nominate Commissioner Clark as Workforce Center**  
50 **Director. Commissioner Ring seconded the motion.**  
51 **Motion carried 5:0**

52  
53 **5. TO SELECT A SOUTHERN MAINE REGIONAL PLANNING REPRESENTATIVE FOR**  
54 **2026**

55  
56 **MOTION: Commissioner Andrews moved to nominate Commissioner Ring as Southern Maine**  
57 **Planning and Development Commission Representative. Commissioner Chenette seconded the**  
58 **motion.**  
59 **Motion carried 5:0**

60  
61 **6. TO SELECT A MCCA BOARD REPRESENTATIVE**

62  
63 **MOTION: Commissioner Dutremble moved to nominate Commissioner Chenette as MCCA Board**  
64 **Representative. Commissioner Ring seconded the motion.**  
65 **Motion carried 5:0**

66  
67 **7. TO SELECT A REPRESENTATIVE TO MCCA RISK POOL**

68  
69 **MOTION: Commissioner Dutremble moved to nominate Commissioner Chenette as MCCA Risk**  
70 **Pool Representative. Commissioner Ring seconded the motion.**  
71 **Motion carried 5:0**

72  
73 **8. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS**

74  
75 a. Commissioners' meeting of December 3, 2025  
76 Commissioner Clark made the following changes: Page 2, Add MCCA before budget process  
77 "Commissioner Dutremble reported that the State's *MCCA* budget process is currently underway and  
78 stated that the assessment of each county is expected to be reduced by approximately 2%."  
79 Page 5, Add heating/cooling before units "The well pump, now 20 years old, is expected to fail, and the  
80 courthouse's 88 *heating/cooling* units require frequent repairs."  
81 Page 6, Change can to cannot "...employees, including reserve staff, *cannot* volunteer for similar duties."  
82

83 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the minutes of December 3, 2025, as amended.**  
84 **Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**  
85 **Motion carried 5:0**

86  
87 b. Commissioners' meeting of December 17, 2025

88  
89 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the minutes of December 17, 2025, as presented.**  
90 **Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**  
91 **Motion carried 3:0 with Commissioners Ring and Dutremble abstaining**

92  
93 **8. TO ADOPT ROBERT'S RULES OF GOVERNANCE AS A GUIDE FOR CONDUCTING**  
94 **2026 COMMISSIONER MEETINGS**

95  
96 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to adopt Robert's Rules of Governance as a guide for**  
97 **conducting 2026 Commissioner meetings. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

98 **Motion carried 5:0**

99

100

101 **10. TO SELECT A DAY AND TIME FOR CONDUCTING REGULAR COUNTY**  
102 **COMMISSIONER MEETINGS FOR 2026**

103 1<sup>ST</sup> and 3<sup>RD</sup> Wednesdays beginning at 4:30pm on the following dates:  
104 January 7, January 21, February 4, February 25, March 4, March 18, April 1, April 8, May  
105 6, May 20, June 3, June 17 if needed, July 1, July 15 if needed, August 5, August 19 if  
106 needed, September 2, September 16, October 7, October 21, November 4, November 18,  
107 December 2, December 16

108

109 County Manager Zinser noted there were two changes to the agenda since it was sent last Friday and an  
110 addendum was necessary. Item 16 was added at HR's request to review an additional leave of absence.  
111 Item 10 at his request, requesting a change to the February meeting schedule: instead of meeting on  
112 February 4 and February 18 (first and third Wednesdays), he asked to move the second meeting to  
113 February 25, making February meetings on the first and fourth Wednesdays. This change is a personal  
114 request to align with school vacation.

115

116 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to set the dates and times of 2026 regular Commissioners'**  
117 **meetings as presented noting that circumstances change and meetings can be rescheduled, or**  
118 **additional meetings posted if necessary.**

119 **Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

120 **Motion carried 4:1 with Commissioner Chenette opposing**

121

122 **11. TO REVIEW AND ADOPT POLICIES FOR 2026 AS FOLLOWS:**

123 a. **MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT RATE** (Manager recommends the 2024 rate of .67)

124

125 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the mileage reimbursement rate for 2026 as**  
126 **presented. Commissioner Ring seconded the motion.**

127 **Motion carried 5:0**

128

129 b. **MEALS ON COUNTY BUSINESS RATE** (\$15.00-breakfast, \$20.00 lunch, \$25.00  
130 dinner or \$60.00 per diem)

131 **\*Special note:** When the event you are attending includes any of the meals, you are  
132 required to take part in the meal. If you are staying at a hotel that provides  
133 breakfast, you must utilize the breakfast provided by the hotel. In these instances,  
134 the amounts stated above will be deducted from the per diem rate. **\*RECEIPTS**  
135 **REQUIRED\***

136 **Upon request, the County Manager may adjust the reimbursement rates based on**  
137 **prevailing circumstances.**

138

139 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the meals on county business rate for 2026 as**  
140 **presented. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

141 **Motion carried 5:0**

142

143 c. **POLICE/ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTS** (Manager recommends 2021  
144 rate of \$20.00)

145

146 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the police/accident/incident rate for 2026 as**  
147 **presented. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**  
148 **Motion carried 5:0**  
149

150 **d. BACKGROUND CHECKS FEES (manager recommends Sheriff's 2023 rate of**  
151 **\$20.00)**  
152

153 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the background check fees for 2026 as**  
154 **presented. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**  
155 **Motion carried 5:0**

156 **e. NOTARIZATION/ATTESTATION FEES (manager recommends 2020 rate of**  
157 **\$5.00/\$10.00)**  
158

159 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the notarization/attestation fees for 2026 as**  
160 **presented. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**  
161 **Motion carried 5:0**  
162

163 Commissioner Donna Ring referenced Maine Statute MRSA 30-A §421, which authorizes counties to  
164 charge administrative fees for civil process services. Currently, the county charges \$5 for these fees. The  
165 statute permits an increase up to \$25.

166  
167 Commissioners discussed the potential revenue benefit and agreed that the county should adjust the fee  
168 schedule to reflect the maximum allowed amount.  
169

170 **MOTION: Commissioner Ring moved to increase administrative fees through civil process by**  
171 **\$25.00 as permitted by statute. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**  
172 **Motion carried 5:0**  
173

174 **12. TO APPROVE TREASURER'S WARRANTS**

175 **a. Warrants to be approved on December 17, 2025, in the amount of \$861,774.27**  
176

177 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the warrant dated December 17, 2025, in the**  
178 **amount of \$861,774.27. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**  
179 **Motion carried 5:0**  
180

181 **b. Warrants to be approved on December 24, 2025, in the amount of \$1,838,757.95**  
182

183 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the warrant dated December 24, 2025, in the**  
184 **amount of \$1,838,757.95. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**  
185 **Motion carried 5:0**  
186

187 **c. Warrants to be approved on December 31, 2025, in the amount of \$610,769.59**  
188

189 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the warrant dated December 31, 2025, in the**  
190 **amount of \$610,769.59. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**  
191 **Motion carried 5:0**  
192

193 **13. TO HEAR ANY REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
194

195 Commissioner Clark shared that he received an email earlier today informing him of the passing of  
196 Commissioner Betty Johnson from Waldo County. Betty served as a commissioner for about 15 years, and  
197 Commissioner Clark worked with her for the last nine years on the Coastal County Workforce Board. He  
198 noted that many others may have met her at various functions. Commissioner Clark described her as a  
199 lovely woman who worked very hard for many years, contributing significantly to her town and county.  
200 He expressed that she will be missed.

201  
202 Commissioner Chenette noted that although the topic was not on the agenda, he wanted to revisit the  
203 discussion about repurposing the courthouse. Since the last meeting, he has received feedback from  
204 constituents expressing interest in holding a public hearing or similar event to gather public input. He  
205 emphasized the importance of planning for public participation and suggested forming a stakeholder  
206 committee, possibly after the public hearing, to explore scenarios and develop recommendations for the  
207 board. Commissioner Chenette stressed keeping this issue at the forefront and determining when to  
208 schedule these steps.

209  
210 County Manager Zinser acknowledged that courthouse repurposing has not been a top priority but agreed  
211 to prepare and share a public hearing notice. He emphasized caution in approaching the issue, noting that  
212 the discussion stems from an offer by Sanford Housing to swap buildings. County Manager Zinser  
213 explained that if the board agrees to the swap, it could significantly increase affordable housing in the  
214 area. However, if the board is not interested in the swap, there is no need to consider alternative uses for  
215 the courthouse, as staff would remain in the current building. He clarified that the decision is narrowly  
216 focused on whether to proceed with the building exchange.

217  
218 Commissioner Ring asked whether there is a breakdown of the budgetary cost to maintain the building.  
219

220 County Manager Zinser responded that there is a lot going on, and they are working on it as time permits.  
221 He emphasized that an immediate answer is not necessary but acknowledged that communications are  
222 coming in. County Manager Zinser stated he will draft a carefully crafted notice, share it for input before  
223 posting, and expects this to happen sometime in February.

224  
225 Commissioner Dutremble noted that recent media reports have highlighted challenges faced by some  
226 county governments. He emphasized that York county government is currently in the best financial  
227 position it has been in 20 years. In 2007, the county had a negative fund balance of \$1.2 million; today,  
228 the fund balance is approximately \$8 million. He reported that the county has expanded services for  
229 taxpayers, including the opening of a new training center this spring and the anticipated opening of the  
230 recovery center in October or November. Commissioner Dutremble highlighted that the county was the  
231 first county incorporated in Maine and continues to lead by example in providing services to taxpayers.  
232 He expressed pride in completing projects over his 20-year tenure and announced that he will not seek re-  
233 election.

234  
235 County Manager Zinser acknowledged Commissioner Dutremble's comments and expressed concern  
236 about recent negative media coverage of other counties across the state. He emphasized that our county  
237 should not be grouped into that category, noting that we are financially strong and actively investing in  
238 major regional projects, including the recovery center, training center, and customary county functions.  
239 County Manager Zinser highlighted that the county will also be covering the upfront costs of the Old  
240 Orchard Beach dredging project, estimated at \$5-\$6 million, while awaiting federal reimbursement. He  
241 explained that this is why the county is pursuing a line of credit as a precaution, given potential delays in  
242 federal funding. He stated that internal discussions are underway regarding how best to communicate  
243 these facts publicly and requested commissioner feedback before any messaging is released. County

244 Manager Zinser stressed the importance of transparency and timely response to counter negative  
245 perceptions.

246  
247 **14. NEW BUSINESS**

- 248  
249 a. Deputy County Manager/HR Director Linda Hutchins-Corliss to present new hires/transfers:  
250 i. To seek hiring approval of Matthew Beerworth in the full-time position of Patrol Deputy  
251 in the YC Sheriff's office with an effective date of January 12, 2026.

252 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the hiring of Matthew Beerworth in the position**  
253 **of Patrol Deputy in the Sheriff's office with an effective date of January 12, 2026. Commissioner**  
254 **Andrews seconded the motion.**

255 **Motion carried 5:0**

- 256 ii. To seek hiring approval of Alexandria Staples in the full-time position of Finance  
257 Compliance Specialist in the Finance office with an effective date of January 12, 2026.

258  
259 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the hiring of Alexandria Staples in the position**  
260 **of Finance Compliance Specialist in the Finance office with an effective date of January 12,**  
261 **2026. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

262 **Motion carried 5:0**

- 263 iii. To seek hiring approval of Jackson Schramm in the position of Reserve Public Safety  
264 Instructor II in the YC Regional Training Center office with an effective date of January 8,  
265 2026.

266  
267 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the hiring of Jackson Schramm in the position**  
268 **of Reserve Public Safety Instructor II in the YC Regional Training Center office with an effective**  
269 **date of January 8, 2026. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

270 **Motion carried 5:0**

- 271 iv. To seek hiring approval of Rosario Cordoglio in the position of full-time Court Security  
272 Officer II in the Sheriff's office with an effective date of January 26, 2026.

273  
274 Commissioner Ring raised concerns regarding a recently rewritten position, questioning whether the  
275 changes were made specifically for an individual who initially applied for a part-time role and, within six  
276 weeks, transitioned into a full-time position. Commissioner Ring noted that the individual is a second  
277 cousin of the Sheriff and expressed discomfort with the perception that the position may have been  
278 tailored for this candidate.

279  
280 HR Director Hutchins-Corliss assured the Commissioners that the position was not created for a specific  
281 individual and that the hiring process followed standard HR procedures. She acknowledged that the  
282 individual was not the preferred candidate initially but confirmed that the process was fair and compliant.  
283 HR Director Hutchins-Corliss also addressed questions about reclassification of existing positions,  
284 explaining that reclassification will occur once the new hire is in place. She noted that this approach is  
285 consistent with past practice, where adjustments for similar positions are made collectively after filling  
286 the role.

287  
288 Commissioner Chenette sought clarification on the hiring process for the recently discussed position. He  
289 asked whether the individual was considered an internal candidate for a publicly posted position and

290 requested HR Director Linda Hutchins-Corliss to walk through the steps of the process to ensure  
291 understanding.

292  
293 HR Director Hutchins-Corliss explained the hiring process for the position in question. The role was  
294 originally part-time and became vacant when the previous employee moved to a reserve position. The  
295 candidate was not an internal applicant, as he resides in Texas, but had worked for the county several  
296 years ago as a corrections officer.

297  
298 Due to limited qualified applicants for the part-time posting and concerns that part-time hires often leave  
299 for full-time opportunities, HR recommended converting the position to full-time. The candidate  
300 submitted a letter of interest for the full-time role and went through the standard hiring process, including  
301 reference checks and background checks, despite his prior employment with the county. HR Director  
302 Hutchins-Corliss noted that eight applications were received, but only two were considered qualified, and  
303 the selected candidate met the necessary qualifications.

304  
305 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the hiring of Rosario Cordoglio in the position**  
306 **of full-time Court Security Officer II in the Sheriff's office with an effective date of January 26,**  
307 **2026. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**

308 **Motion carried 4:1 with Commissioner Ring opposing**

309 b. To Review and Approve Waterboro Law Enforcement Agreement

310  
311 County Manager Zinser presented the Waterboro Law Enforcement Agreement, noting that similar  
312 agreements for Acton and Shapleigh will be reviewed at the next meeting. He explained that this  
313 agreement reflects significant changes in how such contracts are structured, addressing concerns about  
314 staffing and vehicle use.

315 Key changes include:

- 316 • **Staffing Flexibility:** The agreement now specifies "up to 80 hours per week" rather than a fixed  
317 number of hours. This allows the Sheriff's Office to adjust coverage based on staffing availability  
318 while maintaining its primary patrol responsibilities. If fewer hours are provided, the town is  
319 billed only for actual hours worked.
- 320 • **Vehicle Provision:** Previously, towns purchased vehicles upfront. Under the new model, the  
321 county will purchase vehicles and lease them to towns at an hourly rate (approximately \$9 per  
322 hour), calculated based on the vehicle cost over three years and 2,080 annual hours. Upfitting  
323 costs will be added to the lease value.
- 324 • **Operational Consistency:** Vehicles will remain part of the county fleet and will not be designated  
325 exclusively for a specific town, reducing disputes over vehicle use.

326 County Manager Zinser emphasized that these changes aim to improve flexibility, transparency, and cost  
327 management while continuing to meet contractual obligations.

328  
329 Commissioner Ring sought clarification on whether towns still receive law enforcement coverage when  
330 contract deputies are reassigned. County Manager Zinser confirmed that calls are always responded to  
331 and prioritized, and routine patrols continue to cover those areas when contract deputies are unavailable.  
332 County Manager Zinser noted that the only significant changes to the Waterboro agreement were the "up  
333 to 80 hours" language and the shift to county-owned, leased vehicles. He also mentioned that language  
334 regarding vehicle maintenance was removed since it is now the county's responsibility. Commissioner  
335 Ring expressed support for standardizing contract language across towns, acknowledging the  
336 administrative challenges these agreements present.

337

338 **MOTION: Commissioner Chenette moved to approve the Waterboro Law Enforcement Agreement**  
339 **as presented. Commissioner Ring seconded the motion.**  
340 **Motion carried 5:0**

341 c. Training Center Update

342  
343 Fire Administrator Roger Hooper reported significant progress toward opening the York County Regional  
344 Training Center and outlined current and future programming plans. The center will focus on four core  
345 areas: EMS education and training, law enforcement, fire/rescue, and wellness and resiliency.

346 Key updates include:

- 347 • EMS Program: A position for EMS Program Manager has been posted, with four applicants. The  
348 first priority will be applying for state licensing as an EMS training center, enabling expansion  
349 into advanced programs such as paramedic training in partnership with the community college.
- 350 • Wellness and Resiliency: Two public safety instructors, Matt Leach and Jill Belleard, are leading  
351 this program. A steering committee of psychologists, doctors, and public safety professionals has  
352 been formed. Initiatives include *Project Homefront*, aimed at supporting first responders and their  
353 families.
- 354 • Fire Training: The first Firefighter I Academy class began Saturday with 28 students—the largest  
355 class in 20 years. Forty applications were received, with some declined due to lack of fire  
356 department affiliation.
- 357 • Law Enforcement Training: Work continues to expand offerings, including collaboration with the  
358 community college to bring its criminal justice program to the center. An updated MOU with the  
359 college is expected later this month.
- 360 • Near-Term Goals: Finalize agreements with the college, secure EMS licensing, expand  
361 corrections and 911/dispatch training, and plan an opening ceremony for May (pending  
362 congressional schedules).
- 363 • Community Outreach: The center is active on Facebook and has a dedicated website listing  
364 training schedules. Programs include the Sheriff's Citizens Police Academy and partnerships with  
365 TD Bank and AAA for senior driving safety.

366  
367 Fire Administrator Hooper emphasized that schedules would evolve monthly and noted strong community  
368 support and engagement as the center moves toward full operation.

369  
370 Commissioner Clark commended the progress on the Regional Training Center, noting that the building  
371 looks excellent and expressing appreciation for the efforts of Fire Administrator Hooper, the County  
372 Manager, and the construction teams. He then asked for clarification on the process and timeline for  
373 obtaining licensure as a Maine EMS training center, requesting details on the steps involved.

374  
375 Fire Administrator Hooper explained that obtaining licensure as a Maine EMS training center will take  
376 approximately 9 months to one year. The process requires developing specific policies, securing  
377 accreditation, and maintaining affiliation with a college, hence the partnership with York County  
378 Community College. Additionally, a qualified program manager must be in place to meet Maine EMS and  
379 accreditation board criteria.

380  
381 Fire Administrator Hooper noted that achieving licensure will allow the county to operate its own EMT  
382 training programs rather than functioning as a satellite under Southern Maine Community College. This  
383 change will streamline administration and give the county greater control over program development and  
384 delivery.

385

386 Commissioner Ring asked whether the Regional Training Center website is separate from the county's  
387 website. Fire Administrator Hooper confirmed that it is part of the county site and can be accessed at  
388 <https://www.yorkcountymaine.gov/rtc>  
389

390 Commissioner Dutremble asked whether there are plans for the Regional Training Center to become a  
391 certified law enforcement academy in the future. Fire Administrator Hooper responded that discussions  
392 are underway with the Maine Criminal Justice Academy (MCJA), and a meeting is scheduled to explore  
393 this possibility.  
394

395 County Manager Zinser confirmed that discussions with the Maine Criminal Justice Academy (MCJA)  
396 are ongoing and productive. He noted that MCJA has requested the county to host another part-time  
397 officer certification course in February, which the county can accommodate, with another session already  
398 scheduled for June or July.  
399

400 County Manager Zinser acknowledged that offering the full 18-week law enforcement academy would  
401 represent a significant shift from long-standing state practices and bureaucracy. He emphasized that the  
402 county's goal is not to replace MCJA but to supplement and expand training opportunities. Conversations  
403 with MCJA have been positive, and Zinser expressed confidence that progress will continue. He also  
404 mentioned exploring additional opportunities with federal law enforcement agencies.  
405

#### 406 d. EMA's Community Emergency Response Team Update 407

408 EMA Deputy Director Megan Arsenault provided an overview of the Community Emergency Response  
409 Team (CERT) program, which York County EMA relaunched in January 2025 after completing "Train the  
410 Trainer" certification in late 2024. CERT trains community volunteers to assist before, during, and after  
411 emergencies, supporting first responders and municipalities.  
412

#### 412 Key Highlights:

- 413 • Team Growth: CERT has grown to 42 active, trained, and credentialed members from across York  
414 County, representing diverse backgrounds including EMTs, firefighters, retired healthcare  
415 professionals, and community volunteers.
- 416 • Roles and Functions:
  - 417 ○ Non-disaster roles: Public outreach, preparedness education, staffing first aid booths,  
418 crowd management, and assisting with large event planning.
  - 419 ○ Disaster roles: Basic first aid, utility control, small fire suppression, light search and  
420 rescue, shelter support, traffic and crowd control, debris removal, donations management,  
421 and emergency communications.
- 422 • Training:
  - 423 ○ Basic CERT curriculum covers preparedness, medical skills, disaster psychology, radio  
424 use, and incident management.
  - 425 ○ Ongoing monthly training and specialized courses such as CPR, Stop the Bleed, mass  
426 feeding, and de-escalation techniques.
- 427 • Community Engagement: CERT participated in events like Kennebunkport's National Night Out  
428 and continues outreach through tabling events and social media.

#### 429 Accomplishments in First Year:

- 430 • 3 credentialed CERT instructors (Megan Arsenault, Scott Gagne, Stephanie Collins).
- 431 • Hosted three 21-hour CERT Basic Training Academy cohorts.
- 432 • Assisted with two major public safety events: Old Orchard Beach Fireworks (75,000 attendees)  
433 and Kennebunkport Christmas Prelude.
- 434 • Conducted 11 outreach events and 9 team trainings/exercises.

- 435       • Maintained 42 active members.  
436 Goals for 2026:  
437       • Host two CERT Basic Training Academies (spring and fall), possibly a third if time allows.  
438       • Train additional course instructors from within the team for greater involvement.  
439       • Establish a field leadership program for CERT Team Leads to strengthen emergency leadership  
440       skills.  
441       • Expand municipal awareness of CERT as a resource.  
442       • Continue monthly skills sessions and exercises to maintain readiness.  
443       • Recruitment process includes a volunteer interest form, brief interview, paperwork, and  
444       background check. A QR code and EMA contact information are available for sign-ups.

445 EMA Deputy Director Arsenault emphasized that CERT has exceeded expectations in its first year and  
446 will continue to grow as a vital resource for York County emergency preparedness.  
447

448 Commissioner Chenette expressed appreciation for the CERT program and requested a breakdown of the  
449 current 42 active members by commissioner district to assist with outreach efforts. He also asked about  
450 the ideal number of participants for active CERT membership. EMA Deputy Director Arsenault  
451 responded that while there is no minimum requirement for CERT classes, maintaining consistent  
452 participation typically requires a larger pool of volunteers. With 42 active members currently, the program  
453 aims to approximately double that number over the next one to two years to ensure adequate coverage.  
454 She agreed to provide the requested district-level membership data to commissioners.  
455

456 Commissioner Dutremble noted that York County EMA is recognized as the best in the State.  
457

458       e. Contract Ratification – FOP (executive session first – §405 (6)(D) union negotiations  
459

460 **Motion: Commissioner Clark motioned to enter executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6)**  
461 **(D) to consider a leave of absence extension request. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**  
462 **Motion carried 5:0.**  
463

464 **Motion: Commissioner Clark motioned to come out of executive session. Commissioner Andrews**  
465 **seconded the motion.**  
466 **Motion carried 5:0**  
467

468 **Motion: Commissioner Chenette moved to approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement between**  
469 **the County of York and the Fraternal Order of Police. Commissioner Andrews seconded the**  
470 **motion.**  
471 **Motion carried 5:0**  
472

473       f. Schedule poverty abatement for February 4, 2026  
474

475 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to schedule the poverty abatement hearing for February 4,**  
476 **2026. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**  
477 **Motion carried 5:0**  
478

## 479 15. OLD BUSINESS

480  
481 None.  
482

483 **16. TO CONDUCT AN EXECUTIVE SESSION ON PERSONNEL ISSUES PURSUANT**  
484 **TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (A), ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY OR**  
485 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (C), LABOR**  
486 **NEGOTIATIONS PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (D) AND CONSULTATION**  
487 **WITH LEGAL COUNSEL PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (E), REVIEW OF**  
488 **CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (F)**  
489

- 490 a. Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405 (6) (A) Personnel matters – Leave of absence  
491 extension I  
492 b. Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405 (6) (A) Personnel matters – Leave of absence  
493 extension II  
494

495 **Motion: Commissioner Clark motioned to enter executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6)**  
496 **(A) to consider 2 leaves of absence extension request. Commissioner Ring seconded the motion.**  
497 **Motion carried 5:0.**  
498

499 **Motion: Commissioner Clark motioned to come out of executive session. Commissioner Andrews**  
500 **seconded the motion.**  
501 **Motion carried 5:0**  
502

503 **Motion: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the first request for an extension of a leave of**  
504 **absence for a period until April 12, 2026. Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion.**  
505 **Motion carried 5:0**  
506

507 **Motion: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the second request for an extension of a leave of**  
508 **absence for a period until March 20, 2026. Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion.**  
509 **Motion carried 5:0**  
510

511 **17. PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY ITEM(S)**  
512 None.  
513

514 **18. ADJOURN**

515 **Motion: Commissioner Clark motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.**  
516 **Motion carried 5:0**  
517

518 Meeting adjourned at 6:13pm.  
519

520 Respectfully Submitted,  
521

522 Patricia Murray  
523 Executive Assistant to the County Manager  
524

1  
2  
3 **COMMISSIONERS' MEETING**

4 **January 21, 2026**

5 The regular meeting of the York County Commissioners was held on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at  
6 4:30 PM at the York County Government Building in Alfred.

7  
8 **COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

9  
10 Richard Clark  
11 Robert Andrews  
12 Justin Chenette  
13 Donna Ring

14  
15 **COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:**

16 Richard R. Dutremble

17  
18  
19 County Manager Greg Zinser, Deputy County Manager Linda Hutchins-Corliss, Sheriff William King,  
20 Facilities Director Rick deRochemont, Finance Director Lori Lemieux, EMA Director Arthur Cleaves (via  
21 Zoom), Deputy EMA Director Megan Arseneault, and Regional Training Center Director Rod Hooper  
22 were present at the meeting.

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

25  
26 **ITEM**

27  
28 **1. PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY ITEM(S)**

29  
30 None.

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

- 33  
34 a. Commissioners' meeting of January 7, 2026

35  
36 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to table the approval of the minutes of January 7, 2026.**

37 **Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion.**

38 **Motion carried 4:0**

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

- 41 a. Warrants to be approved on January 7, 2026, in the amount of \$1,806,107.45

42  
43 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the warrant dated January 7, 2026, in the**  
44 **amount of \$1,806,107.45. Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion.**

45 **Motion carried 4:0**

- 46  
47 b. Warrants to be approved on January 14, 2026, in the amount of \$1,072,280.55

49 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the warrant dated January 14, 2026, in the**  
50 **amount of \$1,072,280.55. Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion.**  
51 **Motion carried 4:0**

52

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

54

55 Commissioner Clark reported that a ceremony was held earlier at the York County Regional Training  
56 Center, where the County Manager and the President of York County Community College signed  
57 agreements supporting collaboration between the two entities. He noted strong attendance, including the  
58 County Manager and Director Rod Hooper, who oversees the facility. Commissioner Clark shared that the  
59 building is nearly complete, with only minor punch list items remaining, and that classes are already  
60 underway. He described the event as a positive milestone for both the county and the college.

61

62 Commissioner Andrews expressed strong enthusiasm for the new programs at the York County Regional  
63 Training Center, noting that it will have a meaningful impact on residents across York County. He  
64 emphasized that the educational opportunities offered there will allow individuals to pursue skills and  
65 achievements they may not have previously thought possible, ultimately improving lives for many years  
66 to come.

67

68 Commissioner Ring stated that she is proud of how York County has used its ARPA funds (funding the  
69 construction of the Regional Training Center and the Recovery Center) and extended special thanks to  
70 County Manager Greg Zinser and Regional Training Center Director Rod Hooper for their significant  
71 contributions to the project. Commissioner Ring underscored that their work is deeply appreciated and  
72 has greatly benefited the citizens of York County.

73

74 Commissioner Chenette echoed the positive sentiments of others, praising county leadership. He noted  
75 that statewide, York County is gaining recognition from legislators and county officials for its  
76 accomplishments, partnerships, and efficiency. He highlighted that the project being completed ahead of  
77 schedule demonstrates the dedication of county administrators and staff. Commissioner Chenette  
78 concluded by expressing excitement for what will come next and confidence that York County's success  
79 will inspire similar efforts elsewhere.

80

81 County Manager Zinser expressed appreciation for the kind words shared by the commissioners but  
82 emphasized that the accomplishments at the Recovery Center and Training Center were truly a team  
83 effort. He noted that many individuals across the county contributed at various stages of the projects, and  
84 he wanted to ensure that everyone's role was recognized. County Manager Zinser stressed that the success  
85 should not be attributed to him alone, credit belongs to the entire county team. He closed by offering  
86 thanks for the acknowledgment.

87

88 **5. NEW BUSINESS**

89

- 90 a. Deputy County Manager/HR Director Linda Hutchins-Corliss to present new hires/transfers:  
91 i. To seek hiring approval of Jeffrey Cullen in the full-time position of Reserve Public  
92 Safety Instructor II in the YC Regional Training Center office with an effective date of  
93 February 9, 2026.

94

95 **MOTION: Commissioner Clark moved to approve the hiring of Jeffrey Cullen in the position of**  
96 **Reserve Public Safety Instructor II in the YC Regional Training Center office with an effective date**  
97 **of February 9, 2026. Commissioner Ring seconded the motion.**

98 **Motion carried 4:0**

99 b. To Review and Approve Acton-Shapleigh Law Enforcement Agreement

100

101 County Manager Zinser presented the Acton–Shapleigh Law Enforcement Agreement, noting it is similar

102 to the recently approved (January 7, 2026) Waterboro agreement. The contract takes effect January 1,

103 2026, and updates the vehicle-use provisions to a lease-style, hourly billing model. Under this approach,

104 the towns pay only for the hours the county is present, the vehicle cost is divided to establish an hourly

105 rate, and billing reflects actual usage. County Manager Zinser noted this structure also eliminates

106 complaints about seeing county vehicles in other towns during overtime.

107

108 **MOTION: Commissioner Ring moved to approve the Acton-Shapleigh Law Enforcement**

109 **Agreement as presented. Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion.**

110 **Motion carried 4:0**

111 c. Policy Discussion – hiring candidates between 16 and 17 years old

112

113 County Manager Zinser explained that the county has been discussing whether to allow the hiring of

114 individuals under age 18, a practice not traditionally used but now relevant due to increasing interest from

115 younger applicants seeking part-time or seasonal work, particularly in outdoor facilities, groundskeeping,

116 EMA and similar tasks.

117

118 After reviewing county policies, County Manager Zinser noted that there is no explicit prohibition against

119 hiring 16- or 17-year-olds, although doing so would be a change from past practice. He referenced a

120 memo prepared by Deputy County Manager/HR Director Linda Hutchins-Corliss outlining the

121 considerations and attaching relevant child labor law restrictions. These laws specify prohibited tasks for

122 minors, including:

123 • Operating heavy machinery

124 • Roofing

125 • Excavation or demolition work

126 • Driving motor vehicles

127 • Working with explosives

128 • Working in confined spaces

129

130 County Manager Zinser emphasized that as long as the county avoids assigning minors to these restricted

131 activities, hiring younger candidates for appropriate roles would be permissible. Deputy County

132 Manager/HR Director Hutchins-Corliss clarified that the roles under consideration are *reserve positions*,

133 such as summer help and support roles across various county departments.

134

135 Commissioner Ring stated that while the idea of hiring 16- and 17-year-olds has potential benefits, there

136 are also concerns. She emphasized that nearly every county office handles confidential information,

137 making it challenging to place teenagers in administrative environments without risking accidental

138 exposure.

139

140 Commissioner Ring further noted that younger workers often require more training and closer supervision

141 than typical employees, which places additional demands on staff who may not be prepared or willing to

142 take on that responsibility. Reflecting on prior summer help, she recalled that overseeing younger workers

143 could be difficult and time consuming. Because of these factors, she stressed that the county must be very

144 deliberate and careful about the roles delegated to minors and must remain mindful of the increased  
145 oversight burden placed on existing staff.

146  
147 Deputy County Manager/HR Director Linda Hutchins-Corliss explained that the county is considering  
148 specific, appropriate placements for 16 and 17year old candidates, emphasizing that any assignments  
149 would be carefully selected and closely supervised. She provided an example of a current 17year old  
150 applicant interested in Emergency Management, where opportunities include helping with general public  
151 education efforts, assembling informational packets for community events, and similar nonsensitive tasks.  
152 She stressed that minors would never work alone and would always be supervised by staff.

153  
154 Deputy County Manager/HR Director Hutchins-Corliss noted that reserve positions do not exist in  
155 departments such as Probate, Deeds, the District Attorney's Office, or the Sheriff's Office, so minors  
156 would not be placed there. Additional possibilities being considered include summer help for outdoor  
157 tasks, such as gardening or grounds support, particularly for students in local agricultural programs.  
158 Overall, she reiterated that the county would be highly selective about where minors are placed to ensure  
159 their experience is both appropriate and educational.

160  
161 Commissioner Ring stated that if the county intends to hire a minor for a reserve or seasonal position, she  
162 will want to review a clear job description outlining the specific tasks the individual would perform. She  
163 emphasized that any such position must have a well-defined scope of duties before moving forward.

164  
165 Deputy County Manager/HR Director Hutchins-Corliss explained that the minor being considered would  
166 be brought in under a Disaster Assistance Responder (DAR) "reserve general" position. She added that, if  
167 the Commissioners prefer, the county can prepare a specific task-based job description tailored to that  
168 individual's duties. She stated that doing so would not be a problem and could be provided as requested.

169  
170 Commissioner Andrews shared that his own early work experiences were positive and influential, thanks  
171 to adults who guided him. He noted that opportunities for teens can be meaningful and beneficial, and he  
172 encouraged the county to embrace efforts that positively impact young people in the community.

173  
174 Commissioner Chenette said he valued work opportunities at that age and asked how the proposed reserve  
175 roles differ from a paid internship, suggesting an internship structure might offer stronger résumé benefits  
176 for youth.

177  
178 Deputy County Manager/HR Director Hutchins-Corliss explained that the county does not currently have  
179 internship programs, other than in the District Attorney's Office, so the proposed roles would be placed  
180 under an existing DAR reserve classification. She noted that internships are typically structured and  
181 goal-oriented, whereas these reserve opportunities would be occasional, supervised tasks such as assisting  
182 EMA with educational outreach or basic office help that avoids confidential material. She emphasized  
183 that minors would only participate when specific opportunities arise, rather than on a fixed weekly  
184 schedule, and placing them under the DAR category also ensures proper workers' compensation  
185 coverage.

186  
187 County Manager Zinser noted that while the county offers structured internships in the DA's Office, the  
188 roles under discussion would be reserve-type positions, not internships. He suggested focusing youth  
189 opportunities in appropriate departments such as the Training Center, EMA, or Facilities, where tasks are  
190 hands-on and low-risk. Departments handling sensitive information, like Probate or the DA's Office,  
191 would not be suitable. He emphasized that hires would still follow standard processes and that minors'

192 duties must be assigned carefully. County Manager Zinser added that these reserve workers could help  
193 support workload needs while giving teens valuable workforce exposure.

194  
195 Commissioner Ring clarified that she was not opposed to hiring minors but wanted to note the concerns  
196 she raised. County Manager Zinser agreed, stating that some departments are more appropriate for youth  
197 placements than others. Commissioner Ring then asked whether hiring minors would affect the county's  
198 liability insurance, and County Manager Zinser replied that it would not create any additional liability  
199 beyond what the county already has. Deputy County Manager/HR Director Hutchins-Corliss added that as  
200 long as minors follow the normal hiring process, including approval for DAR placements, there are no  
201 insurance issues.

202  
203 County Manager Zinser further noted that hiring teens is comparable to youth working in other jobs,  
204 provided child labor rules are followed. He highlighted the Training Center as an excellent opportunity to  
205 engage interested students, particularly those from Sanford's vocational and firefighting programs, and  
206 expose them to hands-on learning experiences that build enthusiasm for future careers.

207  
208 Commissioner Chenette asked how the county would make youth reserve opportunities visible to local  
209 high school students. County Manager Zinser suggested posting and advertising the positions rather than  
210 soliciting individuals. Deputy County Manager/HR Director Hutchins-Corliss noted they can add  
211 information to the website and share a flyer with school guidance and employment coordinators, using  
212 existing contacts. Commissioners agreed this would help broaden awareness. County Manager Zinser  
213 confirmed no policy change is required, as current policy does not prohibit hiring minors; this is simply a  
214 departure from past practice.

215  
216 Commissioner Clark expressed support for hiring young people from nearby communities whenever the  
217 opportunity arises, stating that it is the right thing to do.

218  
219 Commissioner Chenette asked if a motion was needed. County Manager Zinser explained that no motion  
220 is needed because no policy prohibits hiring someone under 18, noting that the application only asks if the  
221 applicant is 18 or older but does not require it. He said the matter was being brought to the  
222 Commissioners because it would be a deviation from past practice, and staff wanted to ensure the Board  
223 was comfortable with that.

224  
225 d. 2027 Budget Goals and Objectives

226  
227 County Manager Zinser reported that the current budget is on target, crediting strong fiscal management  
228 by department heads. FY27 budget development has begun, and wage and benefit increases will follow  
229 existing union and non-union contract terms, generally in the 3-4% range.

230 He highlighted two major cost pressures for FY27:

- 231 1. Significant energy cost increases - The county's electricity rates have more than tripled following  
232 the expiration of a favorable five-year contract. This is expected to add roughly \$350,000 in new  
233 annual costs, particularly affecting large facilities like the jail and the new Training Center.  
234 2. New buildings coming online - The Regional Training Center will move from a half-year to a  
235 full-year budget, adding an estimated \$300,000 in additional operating costs.

236  
237 County Manager Zinser also warned of potential lost revenue due to proposed state legislation that would  
238 further reduce the county's share of the real estate transfer tax, possibly a \$300,000 annual impact. Jail  
239 funding remains uncertain and is expected to follow the same challenges of prior years.

240

241 He concluded that aside from wages, benefits, energy, and new facilities, no other major issues are  
242 anticipated yet, and department-level requests (including any personnel additions) are still unknown at  
243 this early stage.

244  
245 Commissioner Chenette asked how projected Training Center revenue would factor into the FY27 budget  
246 as the facility comes fully online. County Manager Zinser explained that the Training Center's operational  
247 costs (staffing, consumables, utilities) are included in the county budget, but training program revenue is  
248 handled separately, in a dedicated account used to offset training costs and keep courses self-sustaining.  
249 He noted that future net revenue, particularly from commercial or private-sector training rentals, could  
250 help subsidize training for public safety agencies, but those figures are not yet known.

251  
252 County Manager Zinser emphasized that while operational expenses will increase as the center grows,  
253 training programs themselves have always been self-sufficient and will continue to be. He expects outside  
254 entities and potentially state agencies to generate rental income once programming is established. He also  
255 updated commissioners on ongoing development efforts, noting that the county has already secured  
256 roughly \$500,000 in committed funding and support, not including food pantry donations.

257  
258 Commissioner Chenette also asked about past compensation discussions for the Probate Judge. County  
259 Manager Zinser confirmed that the county granted the judge an additional 10-12 days last budget cycle  
260 and that he continues to meet regularly with the judge, including regarding current legislative efforts to  
261 shift probate judges to state employment, a proposal County Manager Zinser described as problematic  
262 and potentially harmful to local access and accountability.

263  
264 Commissioner Clark cautioned that the county should take a conservative approach going into the  
265 upcoming budget cycle, noting significant unknowns about the full operating costs of both the new  
266 Training Center and the Recovery Center. He emphasized that expenses will almost certainly rise but that  
267 the magnitude is still unclear.

268  
269 Commissioner Ring agreed, stating there is not yet enough concrete information to make firm judgments.  
270 County Manager Zinser responded that the discussion at this stage is not about specific numbers but about  
271 overall direction. He explained that the county has detailed preliminary cost models for both the Training  
272 Center and the Recovery Center and will bring forward a responsible budget. The Recovery Center will  
273 be phased in, beginning with detox and a 30-day program for the first six months before expanding,  
274 because implementing all components at once is not feasible.

275  
276 Commissioner Chenette acknowledged the need to wait for clearer information before making major  
277 decisions.

278  
279 County Manager Zinser added that current public health funding levels are sufficient to support detox and  
280 a 30-day program without revenue, and more accurate long-term projections will become available in the  
281 following year as operations stabilize. He committed to sharing detailed modeling and continuing  
282 discussions as the budget process moves forward.

283  
284 Commissioner Chenette recommended that the Commission take an active position on Representative  
285 Gattine's emergency shelter bill by sending a formal letter to the county's legislative delegation. He noted  
286 that when the Commission collectively signs onto a letter, it carries meaningful weight and strengthens  
287 legislators' ability to advocate in Augusta. He asked that staff return at the next meeting with the specific  
288 financial impact of the proposed shelter tax changes on York County so a letter can be drafted.

289 He emphasized that while the County Commissioners Association advocates on statewide issues, local  
290 voices, especially from elected county officials, tend to be more influential with legislators. He  
291 encouraged each commissioner to share the letter directly with the legislators in their districts, as personal  
292 outreach is often more effective than messages delivered solely through a lobbyist.  
293

294 County Manager Zinser agreed, stating he would prepare a draft letter for the next meeting and  
295 acknowledged the importance of following advocacy concerns with direct communication to the  
296 Legislature.  
297

298 **6. OLD BUSINESS**

299  
300 None.  
301

302 **7. TO CONDUCT AN EXECUTIVE SESSION ON PERSONNEL ISSUES PURSUANT**  
303 **TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (A), ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY OR**  
304 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (C), LABOR**  
305 **NEGOTIATIONS PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (D) AND CONSULTATION**  
306 **WITH LEGAL COUNSEL PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (E), REVIEW OF**  
307 **CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (F)**  
308

309 a. Enter into executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (F) review of confidential  
310 records pursuant to Title 1, Section 402-paragraph 3 (Public Records) Q- "Security plans,  
311 staffing plans, security procedures, architectural drawings or risk assessments prepared for  
312 emergency events that are prepared for or by or kept in the custody of the Department of  
313 Corrections or a county jail if there is a reasonable possibility that public release or  
314 inspection of the records would endanger the life or physical safety of any individual or  
315 disclose security plans and procedures not generally known by the general public.  
316 Information contained in records covered by this paragraph may be disclosed to state and  
317 county officials if necessary to carry out the duties of the office of the officials or the  
318 Department of Corrections under conditions that protect the information from further  
319 disclosure."  
320

321 **Motion: Commissioner Clark motioned to enter executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6)**  
322 **(F) review of confidential records pursuant to Title 1, Section 402-paragraph 3 (Public Records) Q-**  
323 **"Security plans, staffing plans, security procedures, architectural drawings or risk assessments**  
324 **prepared for emergency events that are prepared for or by or kept in the custody of the Department**  
325 **of Corrections or a county jail if there is a reasonable possibility that public release or inspection of**  
326 **the records would endanger the life or physical safety of any individual or disclose security plans**  
327 **and procedures not generally known by the general public. Information contained in records**  
328 **covered by this paragraph may be disclosed to state and county officials if necessary to carry out**  
329 **the duties of the office of the officials or the Department of Corrections under conditions that**  
330 **protect the information from further disclosure." Commissioner Ring seconded the motion.**  
331 **Motion carried 4:0.**  
332

333 **Motion: Commissioner Clark motioned to come out of executive session. Commissioner Ring**  
334 **seconded the motion. Vice Chair Andrews noted no action was taken.**  
335 **Motion carried 4:0**  
336

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

338 None.

339

340 **9. ADJOURN**

341 **Motion: Commissioner Ring motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion.**

342 **Motion carried 4:0**

343

344 Meeting adjourned at 6:33pm.

345

346 Respectfully Submitted,

347

348 Patricia Murray

349 Executive Assistant to the County Manager

350

DRAFT



## COUNTY OF YORK

*Robert L. Andrews*  
*Vice-Chairperson*  
*District 1*

*Richard R. Dutremble*  
*Chairperson*  
*District 2*

*Justin Chenette*  
*District 3*

*Donna L. Ring*  
*District 4*

*Richard Clark*  
*District 5*

45 Kennebunk Road  
Alfred, Maine 04002

Ph: (207) 459-2500  
Fax (207) 324-9494

[www.yorkcountymaine.gov](http://www.yorkcountymaine.gov)

*Gregory T. Zinser*  
*County Manager*

*Patricia A. Murray*  
*Assistant to the Manager*

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

*Lorene B. Lemieux*  
*Finance Director*

February 5, 2026

Dear Members of the York County Legislative Delegation,

We are writing to express concerns with LD 2124 and to respectfully urge you to vote Ought Not To Pass. We would also ask that, at a minimum, additional clarification be provided regarding the fiscal and structural impacts of this proposal on county governments.

In the State of Maine, county Registries of Deeds collect two primary fees: recording fees and the real estate transfer tax. With respect to recording fees, those were recently adjusted pursuant to 2025 legislation with an effective date of January 1, 2026. The fees were designed to cover the increasing cost of doing business, considering the last increase was seen in 2011.

With respect to the real estate transfer tax, during the closing days of the last legislative session, the budget process redirected 0.8% of the county's 10% share of the tax to Maine State Housing Authority Affordable Housing Programs for a two-year period. Additionally, that same legislation provided an exemption from transfer tax for sellers AND buyers when the purchase qualifies under the first-time homebuyer incentive, an exemption whose fiscal impact remains unknown. An additional concern that was brought forth at that time was the justification for the seller to be exempt, hence additional tax revenue loss by the state's decision.

At the time, the assumption was that the scheduled adjustment in recording fees would offset the reduction in transfer tax revenue to counties. For York County, this assumption does not hold true. The real estate transfer tax represents a significantly larger portion of our overall revenue structure, and the loss of that revenue is not made whole by the recording fees.

LD 2124 proposes to fundamentally alter the approach that was just enacted. Specifically, it proposes redirecting 1.8% from the Counties' portion for the purpose of funding emergency shelters. The bill makes the reduction permanent, rather than temporary. Using 2025 figures, this would result in a direct annual revenue loss of approximately \$244,000 to York County.

Beyond opposing the bill outright, there are significant questions that remain unanswered. For example, the existing 0.8% reduction that went into effect September 2025 is scheduled to sunset in July 2027. There would need to be reconciliation between prior legislative action and the proposed LD 2124.

One could look at the proposal and arrive at the conclusion that without changes the County would have to continue foregoing the 0.8% for housing affordability and then an additional 1.8% to fund emergency shelters thereby resulting in a collective 2.6% reduction which would result in a much higher revenue reduction. Clarification on how these percentages interact is essential.

If the expectation is that this proposal will result in a meaningful funding increase for emergency shelters, the reality is quite different. The amounts involved are relatively small when considering emergency shelter costs. In practice, this proposal simply shifts limited funds from one unit of government to another without creating new resources.

York County is one of the highest volume registries in the State. If our projected impact is roughly \$244,000, and let's assume Cumberland County's would be \$300,000. When factoring in the remaining counties, the aggregate collection would be approximately 1.2 million. We know from past discussions that it costs far more to operate a shelter than that.

One must also ask where that money will go since York, along with several other counties, do not have a shelter. This legislation also ignores current and past conversations related to York County and a potential role for shelter services.

The delegation should also understand real estate transfer tax functions operationally. Currently, of the 100% of the tax collected, 90.8% of the tax is reconciled and remitted to the State, while 9.2% remains with the County. Despite receiving only 9.2% of the transfer tax, counties—and Registries of Deeds in particular—perform a vast amount of the work associated with collecting the tax. This includes ensuring the correct completion of the state form and adherence to Statutes surrounding calculating the appropriate tax due. Counties are responsible for reconciliation, public interaction, and coordination with attorneys and filers from across the State and Nation to uphold our statutory responsibilities for collecting and remitting payments.

In short, counties perform nearly all the administrative and front-line work while receiving a small fraction of the revenue, and LD 2124 would further erode that limited share.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee to vote Ought Not To Pass on LD 2124, or at the very least to address the significant fiscal and structural concerns outlined above.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

York County Commissioners

---

Richard R. Dutremble, Chair

---

Robert L. Andrews, Vice Chair

---

Justin Chenette, Commissioner

---

Donna L. Ring, Commissioner

---

Richard Clark, Commissioner



## COUNTY OF YORK

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*Assistant to the Manager*

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

*Lorene B. Lemieux*  
*Finance Director*

January 27, 2026

Dear Members of the Housing and Economic Development Committee,

We are writing to express concerns with LD 2124 and to respectfully urge you to vote Ought Not To Pass. We would also ask that, at a minimum, additional clarification be provided regarding the fiscal and structural impacts of this proposal on county governments.

In the State of Maine, county Registries of Deeds collect two primary fees: recording fees and the real estate transfer tax. With respect to recording fees, those were recently adjusted pursuant to 2025 legislation with an effective date of January 1, 2026. The fees were designed to cover the increasing cost of doing business, considering the last increase was seen in 2011.

With respect to the real estate transfer tax, during the closing days of the last legislative session, the budget process redirected 0.8% of the county's 10% share of the tax to Maine State Housing Authority Affordable Housing Programs for a two-year period. Additionally, that same legislation provided an exemption from transfer tax for sellers AND buyers when the purchase qualifies under the first-time homebuyer incentive, an exemption whose fiscal impact remains unknown. An additional concern that was brought forth at that time was the justification for the seller to be exempt, hence additional tax revenue loss by the state's decision.

At the time, the assumption was that the scheduled adjustment in recording fees would offset the reduction in transfer tax revenue to counties. For York County, this assumption does not hold true. The real estate transfer tax represents a significantly larger portion of our overall revenue structure, and the loss of that revenue is not made whole by the recording fees.

LD 2124 proposes to fundamentally alter the approach that was just enacted. Specifically, it proposes redirecting 1.8% from the Counties' portion for the purpose of funding emergency shelters. The bill makes the reduction permanent, rather than temporary. Using 2025 figures, this would result in a direct annual revenue loss of approximately \$244,000 to York County.

Beyond opposing the bill outright, there are significant questions that remain unanswered. For example, the existing 0.8% reduction that went into effect September 2025 is scheduled to sunset in July 2027. There would need to be reconciliation between prior legislative action and the proposed LD 2124.

One could look at the proposal and arrive at the conclusion that without changes the County would have to continue foregoing the 0.8% for housing affordability and then an additional 1.8% to fund emergency shelters thereby resulting in a collective 2.6% reduction which would result in a much higher revenue reduction. Clarification on how these percentages interact is essential.

If the expectation is that this proposal will result in a meaningful funding increase for emergency shelters, the reality is quite different. The amounts involved are relatively small when considering emergency shelter costs. In practice, this proposal simply shifts limited funds from one unit of government to another without creating new resources.

York County is one of the highest volume registries in the State. If our projected impact is roughly \$244,000, and let's assume Cumberland County's would be \$300,000. When factoring in the remaining counties, the aggregate collection would be approximately 1.2 million. We know from past discussions that it costs far more to operate a shelter than that.

One must also ask where that money will go since York, along with several other counties, do not have a shelter. This legislation also ignores current and past conversations related to York County and a potential role for shelter services.

The delegation should also understand real estate transfer tax functions operationally. Currently, of the 100% of the tax collected, 90.8% of the tax is reconciled and remitted to the State, while 9.2% remains with the County. Despite receiving only 9.2% of the transfer tax, counties—and Registries of Deeds in particular—perform a vast amount of the work associated with collecting the tax. This includes ensuring the correct completion of the state form and adherence to Statutes surrounding calculating the appropriate tax due. Counties are responsible for reconciliation, public interaction, and coordination with attorneys and filers from across the State and Nation to uphold our statutory responsibilities for collecting and remitting payments.

In short, counties perform nearly all the administrative and front-line work while receiving a small fraction of the revenue, and LD 2124 would further erode that limited share.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee to vote Ought Not To Pass on LD 2124, or at the very least to address the significant fiscal and structural concerns outlined above.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

York County Commissioners

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Richard R. Dutremble, Chair

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Robert L. Andrews, Vice Chair

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Justin Chenette, Commissioner

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Donna L. Ring, Commissioner

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Richard Clark, Commissioner