

Sagadahoc County Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 11, 2017

A regular meeting of the Sagadahoc County Commissioners was held at 3:00 pm Tuesday, July 11, 2017, in the Commissioners' Meeting Room of the County Courthouse, 752 High Street, Bath, Maine 04530.

Present: Chair Carol Grose; Vice-Chair Charles Crosby, III; Commissioner Max Dawson; County Administrator Pamela Hile; Sheriff Joel Merry; Chief Deputy Brett Strout; Facilities Manager, Dennis Fraser; EMA Director Sarah Bennett; Assistant to the County Administrator, Mary Kay Blatz

I. Chair Grose called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. and established the presence of a quorum.

II. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

III. Consent Agenda:

1. Approval of Minutes for June 13, 2017
2. June 2017 Financial Statements (Unaudited)
3. Departmental Reports (Written)
4. Upcoming Meeting(s):
 - a.) Regular Meeting at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 8, 2017
 - b.) Meeting at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 22, 2017 IF NEEDED

Upon motion by Vice-chair Crosby, and second by Commissioner Dawson, the consent agenda was unanimously approved as presented .
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IV. Department Reports

1. Maintenance and Buildings – Dennis Fraser

Dennis Fraser reported that the DA's Office modification is in process with the electrical updates complete. Next steps will be HVAC and constructing the new entry wall. The contractor will be starting the building process in early August. Dennis also reported that ongoing projects include the striping of the parking lot, and the installation of two higher efficiency heat pumps, one in the Communications center and one on the third floor. These two pumps are replacing three which will be a significant cost-savings to the County.

2. Sheriff's Office / Jail Update – Sheriff Joel Merry

Sheriff Merry reported that June was busier than previous months. In addition to regular business, the Department participated in a statewide Click-It-Or-Ticket initiative, part of a nationwide seatbelt enforcement which was funded through a grant from the Bureau of Highway Safety. This year's grant of approximately \$25,000 covered a two-week period at the beginning of summer for aggressive enforcement of seatbelt violations. The State reports that Sagadahoc County wrote the highest number of tickets for seatbelt

violations at 306 summonses issued which shows that the need for enforcement is still high. There have been 3 fatalities in the County this year and it is proven that seatbelts save lives, giving value to this initiative.

The Sheriff reports that he received a letter today from the Patten Free Library, thanking the Transport Department for their efforts in bringing a work crew to help with moving books to the Winter Street Church; an example of many ways that the Department is active and visible in the community.

There are currently 141 inmates at Two Bridges Regional Jail, 26 of which are from Sagadahoc County. Sheriff Merry also updated the Commissioners regarding a bill that passed in the Legislature, increasing state funding by \$3.8 million, to be shared between the 15 county jails. The bill was passed unanimously by the Criminal Justice Committee and received overwhelming support in both the House and Senate, but is currently sitting on the Appropriations desk due to lack of funding, with the option to carry it over into next year. Legislation was also passed to increase the cap from 3% to 4%. In response to Vice-chair Crosby's inquiry into the status of TBRJ's current surplus, Administrator Hile reports that a portion of the surplus will most likely be necessary to cover expenses in the upcoming year. Sheriff Merry also reported that Sagadahoc County is one of only four counties that have not increased taxes for the purpose of jail funding in 10 years, in part due to monies raised through boarding agreements with other counties. Administrator Hile also reports that the HR committee continues to search for a new Jail Administrator, looking to close the application process on the 14th of this month.

In response to Chair Grose's request for an update on the Woolwich robberies, the Sheriff reports that the situation is still under investigation but a suspect has been identified and they are close to making an arrest.

Sheriff Merry reports that the application process has been closed for the Deputy position with four strong applications received. The process will continue to move forward and the Sheriff will keep the Commissioners updated.

V. Business Items

1. Status of Maintenance Vehicle

In response to the Commissioners' request to review options related to the Maintenance vehicle, Administrator Hile, along with Dennis Fraser report the cost to install new wiring, new battery terminals and an in-line fuse is estimated at \$400-\$500. Because there is a \$1,000 deductible, this will not be covered by insurance. In addition, the sander is not operating (the motor has frozen up) and the estimated cost to repair it is \$1,200 -\$1,300. In addition, the Commissioners were presented with a list of all of the work that must be done in order to pass the next state inspection and while there is not a specific estimate, it is anticipated that the work will cost several thousand dollars. No immediate action is necessary, as Dennis is currently utilizing the County van when needed; however, one option would be to proceed with the planned replacement of the transport pickup truck, which would be paid for with corrections reserve funds (the current balance is in excess of \$197,000). The existing vehicle could then be transferred for use by Dennis as there are sufficient funds in the maintenance vehicle reserve fund to cover the cost of converting it for sanding and plowing. The vehicle currently has approximately 100,000 miles on it, but the relative infrequency of use by maintenance should give us another few years to build the replacement reserve account. Other options would be to invest money into the repairs needed to the existing maintenance vehicle; begin to get quotes for a new(er) vehicle; and/or explore lease-purchase options.

In response to a request by Commissioner Dawson, we have determined that the transport truck is ½ ton, while the current maintenance truck is ¾ ton. This would necessitate the installation of a new sander and plow, with a very preliminary estimate for an equipment/installation cost of \$10,130. The County currently has \$19,500 in the Maintenance Vehicle reserve fund, which is more than adequate to cover this expense. It is also anticipated that sale of the current truck/equipment could slightly offset this cost. The new plow and sander could then be transferred to a different vehicle when the time comes for any subsequent replacement.

Upon **motion** by Vice-chair Crosby and second by Chair Grose, the Commissioners **voted unanimously to authorize purchase the snow plow and accessories for no more than the quoted \$10,130 after entertaining additional bids.**

Upon **motion** by Vice-chair Crosby and second by Chair Grose, the Commissioners **voted unanimously to authorize the Sheriff to proceed to get bids on a new truck for the Transport Department.**

Upon **motion** by Vice-chair Crosby and second by Chair Grose, the Commissioners **voted unanimously to authorize the sale of the current Maintenance vehicle and all equipment to the highest bidder, or for a trade-in for the new Transport vehicle or in exchange for equipment storage.**

2. Transfer of Personnel/ Appointment of EMA Deputy Director

Interviews for the position of EMA Deputy Director were held on June 20th. Four candidates were selected, and follow-up discussions took place with the top two applicants. The individual that was selected by EMA Director Hicks as her clear choice was Matt Fournier. Matt has worked in the Communications Center for approximately ten years, and is currently a supervisor. For the past two years he has expressed an increasing interest in the Emergency Management field and has completed a number of FEMA classes. His experience as a dispatcher also provides a great deal of knowledge concerning the roles of the various departments during an emergency situation. Matt understands that the position will result in a reduction in both pay and benefits; however, he feels strongly that this is the line of work he wishes to pursue and that the Deputy Director's position will allow him to continue to make a positive contribution to Sagadahoc County. Administrator Hile respectfully requests the Commissioners consideration of this transfer, and if approved, their consideration for approval for the Communications Director to begin the hiring process to fill the vacated position.

Upon **motion** by Vice-chair Crosby and second by Commissioner Dawson, the Commissioners **voted unanimously to authorize the transfer of Matt Fournier to the position of EMA Deputy Director, as well as to authorize the Communications Director to begin the hiring process for a replacement to the resulting vacancy.**

3. Appointment of Administrative Assistant for Probate Department

Administrator Hile reported that the Probate Department has interviewed five candidates for the 20 hour/week Administrative Assistant position. Taylor Cole was

selected as the top choice for the position, in large part due to her solid customer service experience that will serve the Probate office well in its dealings with the public. Administrator Hile respectfully requested the Commissioners' consideration of this candidate for appointment to this position, contingent upon successful completion of a background check.

Upon **motion** by Vice-chair Crosby and second by Chair Grose, the Commissioners **voted unanimously to authorize the hiring of Taylor Cole to the position of Part-time Administrative Assistant in the Probate department.**

4. **Appointment of Member to the Board of Health**

Administrator Hile respectfully presented a request on behalf of the Board of Health that the Commissioners appoint the Claudia Hatch to the position of BOH Mental Health Representative, filling a vacated position with a term ending 6/30/2019.

Upon **motion** by Vice-chair Crosby and second by Chair Grose, the Commissioners **voted unanimously to authorize the appointment of Claudia Hatch to the Board of Health with a term ending 6/30/2019.**

5. **Authorization to Execute Electricity Contract**

Administrator Hile reported that the current contract for electricity – capacity and energy expenses – will expire later this year. She has looked closely at rates/trends, and reports that capacity costs are rising tremendously (almost doubling) and will remain high for the next several years. (Forward Capacity prices are set by auction each year and are currently in place through June 2021.) Energy expense, on the other hand, has been decreasing significantly since our last contract, which will offset the capacity cost increase. If the County were to lock in prices today, the combined cost would be reduced by \$6,405 over the term of four years. While it is unlikely that this will change significantly between now and November 1st; we will continue to monitor for the best possible pricing, Administrator Hile respectfully requested that the Commissioners authorize her to execute a contract through Maine Power Options for a three or four year period beginning in November 2017 at such time as the pricing is optimal.

Upon **motion** by Vice-chair Crosby and second by Chair Grose, the Commissioners **voted unanimously to authorize the execution of an energy contract through Maine Power Options for the period beginning in November of 2017.**

6. **2017 Municipal Tax Warrant**

Administrator Hile presented for the Commissioners' review and action, the County's 2017 Tax Assessment, which reflects the amount included in the recently adopted FY 2017-18 budget. The individual warrants will be sent to the City/Towns by July 15th, with a September 1st due date and November 1st penalty date.

Upon **motion** by Vice-chair Crosby and second by Chair Grose, the Commissioners **voted unanimously to approve the Municipal Tax Warrant for the sum of \$8,522,172 dollars for the 2017-2018 fiscal year.**

VI. County Administrator's Report

Available for review upon request

VII. Coastal Counties Workforce

Commissioner Crosby reports that the funds are being held by the State and is unsure about when those funds will be available for project use.

VIII. Adjournment

Upon **motion** by Chair Grose and second by Commissioner Dawson, the Board voted by **unanimous acclamation to adjourn the meeting at 3:55 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Kay Blatz, Assistant to the Administrator