

COMMISSIONERS MEETING

February 15, 2023

YORK,ss

At a regular meeting of the County Commissioners of the County of York, begun and holden at the York County Government Building in Alfred, within and for the County of York, being held on Wednesday, February 15, 2023 A. D. at 5:00 P. M.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

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

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

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

02-15-2023 ITEM

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

Janet Drew addressed the Board via ZOOM and stated that she is excited to be on the Board of Visitors. She explained that she is a retired nurse and has been involved in getting relief bags together and has spoken with Sheriff King and County Manager Zinser. She said that she hopes we can make progress in healing our community and that she is interested in hearing about the recovery program on the agenda.

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

- a. Commissioners' regular meeting of February 1, 2023
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the minutes. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

3 **TO APPROVE TREASURER'S WARRANTS**

- a. Warrants to be approved on February 1, 2023 in the amount of \$251,520.84
Commissioner Clark. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
- b. Warrants to be approved on February 8, 2023 in the amount of \$2,256,324.20
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Clark asked why the warrant was so high. County Manager Zinser explained there were many yearly insurance contract payments as well as another payment for the dredge.
Vote 5-0.

4 TO HEAR ANY REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Chenette announced that it was National School Resource Officer Day and that he would like to give a shout out to them.

Commissioner Chenette shared that he attended a meeting in Old Orchard Beach through Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission (he is a Board member representing the York County Commissioners). A presentation was given regarding a community resilience program that Old Orchard Beach is participating in surrounding local climate action. They are applying for a \$50,000 grant.

In his role on the executive committee (of SMRPC), Commissioner Chenette informed all that there is a \$250,000 broadband connectivity grant.

He added there is also a micro transit study underway as well as an affordable housing study in Berwick and Kittery.

Commissioner Chenette relayed that he asked the SMRPC board how often they educate County Commissioners and our local delegation. He added that he thought they had a robust conversation about engaging commissioners.

Commission Chair Dutremble commented that he served on the SMRPC Board for 8 years and he is glad to hear they are reaching out to constituents.

Commissioner Dutremble shared that at the recent Maine County Commissioners Association meeting there was a discussion on whether or not we will have a county convention this year. It was discussed whether to have a one- or two-day convention. He will continue to update the Board.

In his role as a member of the MCCA Legislative Policy committee, Commissioner Dutremble informed all that one member is working on a mental health bill.

5 NEW BUSINESS

a. Deputy Manager Linda Corliss to give overview of new county website- County Manager Zinser explained that Katherine Derby is here to unveil the new website.

Deputy Manager Linda Corliss explained that about a year ago, we started reviewing the needs of the website and talked to Department Leaders for their input. She continued that she had reached out to Katherine Derby, Communications and Public Relations to assist the county with this project. Deputy Corliss stated that this new website is more accessible as people transition to iPads, tablets and phones. It is also ADA compliant. Our platform is hooked to our e-mail so some things we would like to do but we can't because of our platform. Deputy County Manager Corliss introduced Katherine Derby who explained it makes sense to change your website every two to three years. Ms. Derby went on to explain that it was necessary to do a complete rebuild. She continued that this site has a responsive design meaning that the screen adjusts based on what type of iPad, tablet or mobile device that one is using.

There will be new enhancements as we go along. She gave kudos to Deputy Manager Corliss who managed this project with all county departments. Commissioner Chenette thanked Katherine and Linda and added that this new website will be helpful for our constituents to better engage with the county. Commissioner Ring stated that she was very pleased to see the address and phone number on the first page.

b. ARPA projects update-dredge, training/recovery buildings

County Manager Zinser reminded the Board that he had forwarded an e-mail to them with an update on the dredge with photos. He informed all that the GPS system is being put in this week. In about another month, the dredge will be complete and then we will have to discuss delivery and storage. Someone here will probably have to go to Baltimore to check everything out, he explained. The County Manager stated that we have not heard from the S.O.S folks. We might need to reach out to them to make sure it is properly stored, etc. Commissioner Ring asked who would go to inspect the dredge. County Manager Zinser replied, someone from the county. Commissioner Ring asked if that is an expense we will have? County Manager Zinser responded, yes, perhaps.

Commissioner Dutremble reminded all that Saco appropriated money for storage.

County Manager Zinser replied that it is less important at this point for us than the physical dredge and who we are going to work with. He continued that it is a County asset that will be covered by our insurance but non-county people will work on it.

Commissioner Chenette asked if we will need to file testimony for Senator Bailey's bill as there is a session going on right now.

Commissioner Dutremble stated that he hasn't seen any LD number yet.

County Manager Zinser reminded all that when the dredge was purchased, the county's involvement at that time was to act as a purchasing agent. It was decided that we hold the dredge until the Commissioners deem it appropriate to lease the dredge. The Board at the time did not want to get into the dredge business. Our role would be to retain ownership of the dredge until an entity capable of owning it and running it existed, explained the County Manager. If the Board wants to deviate from that and send a letter of support, we will have to discuss that. Does the Board wish to take it any further than what was previously discussed?

Commissioner Chenette replied that it is his understanding that there is in the language that a county representative from the County Commission will set on the Board. We do have a vested interest. Beyond that, it seems like there are a lot of logistical questions with SOS and the city. Should there be a committee set up? What are the next steps, he asked.

County Manager Zinser stated that it is up to the Board and it would typically fall to him to organize this and coordinate this and bring something to you to vote on. If the Board wants to deviate, it is fine with him, he said.

Commissioner Chenette replied that he was not suggesting we deviate. Just suggesting that the public knows what is going on. There needs to be public awareness and inclusion.

County Manager Zinser explained that everything will come back to the Board to vote on. He added that he will keep the Board up to date.

As far as a lease, he stated that he doesn't see a big issue and that it would be his job to develop that.

Commissioner Clark stated that we have been working on this for a year and a half plus. He explained that he has been clear from the beginning that there needs to be an entity for this. We are only to supply the funding. We did a lot of things that weren't part of the deal early on. Commissioner Clark said that he thinks an e-mail or a letter needs to be sent to S.O.S. and Saco telling them. He continued and explained that our funding was to existing agencies that had a track record. We told them we would give them the money and that we were not getting involved in the day to day. This project doesn't seem to have this. This worries me, stated Commissioner Clark. It is not our responsibility and not in our best interest to create the authority, he concluded.

County Manager Zinser said that he was happy to move forward and get more information.

Commissioner Ring stated that she would like S.O.S. and the City of Saco to come forward to discuss some of these issues that we have talked about tonight. County Manager Zinser replied that he will ask them where they are with a leasing arrangement and storage for the dredge. He added that he can also ask them to come here.

County Manager Zinser informed all about the progress on the Training and Recovery Buildings. Drawings were circulated to the Commissioners. The County Manager explained that they are on their way for rough estimates to Landry French.

He filled the Board in on the recent meeting before the (Alfred) Planning Board and stated that the meeting went pretty well. The items that came up were traffic and we already have a traffic study being done; septic system and we will be headed back for another meeting with them in April and will have septic design information. Additionally, there were questions about zoning and frontage. We believe we have enough. Some concerns were voiced regarding that in their zoning ordinance they can limit us to 30 beds. We have a 58-bed facility but already have a facility. We have plan B being developed. If necessary, the building can be split in half so we can create another facility if we have to in order to meet their definition, stated County Manager Zinser. He continued that they have asked for a lot of items that aren't planning board related. Those are not necessarily planning board questions but those of curiosity but we will answer them for them, he explained. We are happy to provide this information as it is a big development in this town.

Ambulance service was another issue particularly having enough staffing for the ambulance. We are working with Chief Hooper on that, stated the County Manager. Possible impacts on water was another concern of the town. We are doing additional hydrant flow testing done. A geotechnical report was done, and it is pretty water-rich, stated County Manager Zinser. Many members were in favor and said they hoped that it worked.

Chief Hooper and York County Clinician Jen Ouellette are working on concepts of operations for both buildings.

County Manager Zinser informed all that the training center has a non-profit fund raising Foundation. He explained that the Recovery Center wishes to do so as well. This Foundation will be independent of the county but there will need to be an agreement with the county (approved by the Commissioners). We

have one drafted by the foundation's attorney. Our attorney is looking at it, also, he explained.

County Manager Zinser continued and explained that he has been attending some meetings with the Speaker's office and our program is gaining a lot of traction up there. We believe major corporations might have a big appetite to get involved in this. The Committee discussed bringing on a Director of Development to assist with this.

He stated that he believed this to be an allowable use of our opioid expense money after a quick review. He added that he will be conversing with our lawyer about the feasibility of this.

Committee members believe this is something the Commissioners should be considering and that he concurs.

Commissioner Ring asked how much opioid funds we have? County Manager Zinser clarified that York County as a whole received funds but that some of the funds went to our towns/cities. Right now, we have about \$500,000, he explained. The County Manager stated that he is not anticipating getting a lot of additional funding for a few years.

Commissioner Chenette stated that he has heard from legislators reaching out as to how we are using that money. Could you give us a blurb as to how much we have and will get?

Commissioner Chenette asked if the Director of Development will work for the Foundation or the County?

County Manager Zinser replied, he would think the County but that is something we would have to consider further. He informed the Board that he will be meeting with a director of development in a couple of weeks to further understand and gather information and bring back to them.

He asked the Commissioners if this is something that has merit to them and if they'd like him to pursue this?

Commissioner Chenette replied that he feels it is worth talking about. He continued that he wants to understand what they are capable of doing as a government employee vs. working through the Foundation.

County Manager Zinser agreed and stated that is a question for the attorney.

Commissioner Clark stated that he was a part of this conversation and thinks it is pretty simple. If you need specific work done, you need people who do this type of work. He continued that one can't ask people who already have jobs to take this on. He stated that he is entirely in support of this.

Commissioner Dutremble commented that he agreed with Commissioner Clark. It would be to our benefit to hire this type of person, he said.

County Manager Zinser replied that he will gather information and bring it back for a further conversation.

- c. To seek approval for the following new hires/transfers:
 - i. Diane Hartwig in the position of part-time LEPC Coordinator with a date of transfer of February 21, 2023.-
H.R. Director Corliss explained that Ms. Hartwig is currently a reserve hazmat technician. Diane also had a significant role at the COVID vaccine center, explained H.R. Director Corliss. This LEPC coordinator position is funded by a grant and Ms. Hartwig will work 16-20 hours per week.
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the transfer of Diane Hartwig into the position of part-time LEPC Coordinator with an effective date of transfer

of February 21, 2023. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

- ii. Diane Handlen to transfer from Legal Secretary in the D.A.'s office to Victim Witness Advocate Secretary in the D.A.'s office with an effective date of transfer of April 1, 2023-
Commissioner Ring motioned to approve the transfer of Diane Handlen to the position of Victim Witness Advocate Secretary in the D.A.'s office with an effective date of transfer of April 1, 2023. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
- d. To schedule a Tax abatement denial appeal Hearing (Usher v. Town of Buxton) – recommended date of March 15, 2023
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve holding the above-mentioned Hearing on March 15, 2023. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

6 OLD BUSINESS

None

*****HEARD AFTER ITEM 8*****

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

- a. Executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405 (6) (A) personnel matters
Commissioner Clark motioned to enter into executive session. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
Commissioner Clark motioned to come out of executive session.
Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

Action Taken- Commissioner Clark informed all that they will proceed with preparation of the County Manager's annual evaluation.

*****HEARD BEFORE ITEM 8*****

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

Bonnie Laughlin from Limington thanked the Board for changing their meeting time to a bit later. She commented that she was confused by the agenda as to how the dredge pertained to Saco and the recovery center to Alfred. She asked if there is a way that we can add into the agenda what towns are affected in the agenda items that are brought up to help citizens to understand. Secondly, Ms. Laughlin explained that she has been trying to figure out the ARPA funds in her town. She added that she just now realized that funds come to the county, too. She asked if there was any way that she can see what comes to her town?

County Manager Zinser explained that there are three pots of money- state, county and towns. Every town in York County received money, also. What we do here is

separate from the towns. He continued that the ARPA archive (on the county website) should bring you back to the old web page that includes spreadsheets that are several pages long and show where we directed the funds to various projects. These are county wide projects of which some were discussed tonight.

VIA ZOOM: Janet Drew thanked the Commissioners and stated that there are people out here listening.

Asherah Cinnamon echoed Ms. Drew's comments and said that what you are doing is much appreciated and not going unseen.

9 ADJOURN

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