

1 **COMMISSIONERS MEETING**

2 **February 7, 2024**

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6 YORK,ss

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8 At a regular meeting of the County Commissioners of the County of York, begun and
9 holden at the York County Government Building in Alfred, within and for the County of York,
10 being held on Wednesday, January 17, 2024, A. D. at 4:30 P. M.

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13 **COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

- 14
- 15 Richard R. Dutremble
- 16 Richard Clark
- 17 Robert Andrews
- 18 Justin Chenette
- 19 Donna Ring
- 20

21 County Manager Greg Zinser was present at the meeting.

22
23 **YOU ARE INVITED TO RISE AND SALUTE THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES**

24
25 **02-07-2024 ITEM**

26
27 **1 PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY ITEM(S)**

28 Janet Drew addressed the Board via Zoom to state that the Board of Visitors report
29 will be out in a couple of weeks. She added that she is excited to hear Emily
30 Flinkstrom’s report as she supports the efforts of helping with homelessness and
31 feels it is a major problem.

32
33 David Plavin from Save our Shores addressed the Board and stated that the last
34 storms have devastated the coast. He informed all that the SOS Board is looking at
35 a short-term business plan to get the dredge into the water by November. We
36 understand there is an ownership issue to work through, but we don’t want to
37 explain to people why the dredge is still sitting in the parking lot in Saco. He
38 added that they do have a plan and just need to work out the logistics with the
39 County.

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41 **2 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS:**

- 42 a. Commissioners’ meeting of January 17, 2024
- 43 Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the minutes of January 17, 202
- 44 Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

45
46 **3 TO APPROVE TREASURER’S WARRANTS**

- 47 a. Warrants to be approved on January 17, 2024 in the amount of \$517,406.81

- 48 Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner
49 Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
50 b. Warrants to be approved on January 24, 2024 in the amount of \$627,038.51
51 Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner
52 Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
53 c. Warrants to be approved on January 31,2024 in the amount of \$941,403.32
54 Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner
55 Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
56

57 **4 TO HEAR ANY REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY**
58 **COMMISSIONERS**

59 None
60

61 **5 NEW BUSINESS**

- 62 a. Emily Flinkstrom and Megan Shapiro-Ross to give update on Mainspring
63 collaboration
64 County Manager Zinser introduced Emily and Megan.
65 Emily Flinkstrom stated that it has been over two years since she was there to
66 pitch Maine Spring and that they are continually grateful for the
67 Commissioners' support. To remind all, she explained that Maine Spring is a
68 collaborative of service providers brought together. Emily Flinkstrom added
69 that they have brought together way more partners than they thought they
70 would.
71 Fairtide is the organization that she runs to provide affordable housing. There is
72 a thrift store that has moved to a new facility. Ms. Flinkstrom introduced Megan
73 Shapiro-Ross to inform all more about Footprints, the program that she runs that
74 assists with food insecurity. Ms. Shapiro-Ross explained that they have three
75 employees and have seen a 134% increase in need.
76 They now have a pet food pantry and in the new building will have a culinary
77 kitchen to teach cooking and nutrition classes and provide meals. They will also
78 have a prepared food program. They are participating in a pilot program for
79 Feed America where there will be an app. that families can order food on as
80 well as lockers to pick their food orders up.
81 Emily Flinkstrom continued that they will be working with York County
82 Community Action and will have a full-time WIC program on site.
83 Kittery and Marshwood will hold adult education classes in the new facility.
84 Emily continued that they are currently administering general assistance for the
85 town of Kittery and most likely will soon be doing the same for the Town of
86 Eliot.
87 They are also talking with Pine Tree Legal about offering free legal advice.
88 Emily added that they also hope to have programs for victims of domestic
89 violence. There is a local bank that is interested in funding literacy courses.
90 Maine Health will be at the new facility two to three days a week to provide free
91 medical care, explained Ms. Flinkstrom as well as mental and behavioral health
92 services and Veteran's services.
93
94 Ms. Flinkstrom explained that the central intake/assessment process needs to be
95 allowed to be shared which is not what we do now. This would also allow us to
96 collect aggregate data so we can address poverty as a whole rather than having a
97 silo approach.

98 Emily Flinkstrom continued that the budget has risen to \$6.3 million with \$4.1
99 being raised already. She reminded all that 16 units of affordable housing in
100 conjunction with Maine Housing is also happening.

101
102 Commissioner Clark stated that there was a huge crowd at the groundbreaking
103 and there was great buy in from the community.

104 Commissioner Andrews commended them on having showers in their facility
105 for homeless people. He added that recently, he was at a homeless shelter in
106 Manchester where he learned that homeless people like having lockers for the
107 items they cannot keep with them.

108
109 Commissioner Chenette asked what the process is to give housing to a homeless
110 person/persons.

111 Emily Flinkstrom replied that there is a coordinated effort in the State to have an
112 assessment tool that is given to the person(s) and then there is prioritization that
113 takes place and the list is developed from that.

114 Currently, she explained, they have close relationships with York County
115 Shelter Programs and Cross Roads Housing in N.H.

116
117 The Commissioners thanked and congratulated Emily Flinkstrom and Megan
118 Shapiro-Ross.

- 119
120
121 b. Introduce ~~Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Corliss~~, County Manager Zinser to seek
122 approval for the hiring/transfer of the following individuals:

- 123
124 i. Esmeralda Laporte in the full-time position of Corrections Officer in
125 the Sheriff's Office with a date of hire of February 5, 2024

126 Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the hiring of Esmeralda
127 Laporte in the full-time position of Corrections Officer in the Sheriff's
128 Office with a date of hire of February 5, 2024. Commissioner Andrews
129 seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

- 130 ii. Ernesto Beia in the full-time position of Corrections Officer in the
131 Sheriff's Office with a date of hire of February 12, 2024

132 Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the hiring of Ernesto Beia in
133 the full-time position of Corrections Officer in the Sheriff's Office
134 with a date of hire of February 12, 2024. Commissioner Andrews
135 seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

- 136 iii. Paul LaBrecque in the reserve position of DAR III in EMA with a date
137 of hire of February 12, 2024

138 Commissioner Clark motioned to approve Paul LaBrecque in the
139 reserve position of DAR III in EMA with a date of hire of February 12,
140 2024. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.

141 DISCUSSION: Commissioner Ring asked who do these positions
142 report to? County Manager Zinser replied to Director Cleaves and
143 Deputy Director Arsenault. She asked if we have 1's and 2's?
144 Deputy EMA Director Arsenault explained that 1 is the highest and
145 would have a higher level of qualifications so 3 is more like a
146 generalist. Vote 5-0.

- 147 iv. Debra Ham to transfer from Deeds to Probate Clerk I with a date of
148 hire of February 12, 2024

149 Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the transfer of Debra Ham to
150 a Probate Clerk 1 in the Probate Department. Commissioner Andrews
151 seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

152 c. ~~Deputy County Manager/H.R. Director Linda Corliss~~ County Manager Zinser
153 to announce Years of Service Employee recognition awards for 2022 and 2023
154 County Manager Zinser explained that it was decided to do this differently and
155 that he and Deputy County Manager Corliss will schedule time to deliver the
156 awards to the employees and will also make the Commissioners aware if they
157 would like to attend. The County Manager informed all that the Sheriff would
158 present his Years of Service Awards this Friday at his Awards Ceremony
159 beginning at 3:00 p.m.

160 d. Discussion of contract deputy program
161 County Manager Zinser reminded the Commissioners that he had informed
162 them awhile ago of concerns that he and Sheriff King had regarding the
163 contract deputy agreements. There were minor differences within the contracts.
164 For example, one town wanted a deputy backfilled when their contract deputy
165 is out. The Sheriff has long told all that this service provided by his office is
166 not its' mission. The mission of the Sheriff's Office is to provide countywide
167 protection.

168 County Manager Zinser continued that in the last contract signed, the issues
169 were worked out with more control within the contract.

170 There was a mutual non-renewal of Parsonsfield's contract deputy agreement
171 and Deputy Cyr has gone back to county patrol. That area is now patrolled by
172 the State Police. We believe that we have solved the problems. We have
173 contracting towns that are very grateful for this service.

174 Commissioner Dutremble shared that while on a vacation he was given a
175 compliment regarding the Contract Deputy in Acton/Shapleigh by residents of
176 one of those towns. The resident stated that they were very pleased with the
177 Deputy who was contracted to be in their town.

178 Commissioner Ring stated that there was always only one contract for all the
179 contract deputy agreements and then about 12-14 years ago, that changed. She
180 continued that it is difficult to administer six to eight different contracts.

181 Commissioner Ring stated that she is not a great supporter of contract deputies
182 but for now, that is what is working.

183 Sheriff King stated that he continues to tell the towns that our core mission is
184 to provide patrol services to all towns that do not have a police department and
185 they have accepted this.

186
187 Commissioner Clark thanked the Sheriff and County Manager for the update
188 and work done.

189
190 Commissioner Chenette asked for an update on State coverage.

191 Sheriff King replied that they have a close relationship with the Southern
192 Regional District/Troop A. He stated that the redistricting went well and he is
193 confident that the citizens of York County are getting adequate police services.
194 Commissioner Chenette replied that it continues to be concerning as the
195 discussion of policing in rural portions of York County continues.

196 County Manager Zinser stated that neither he or the Sheriff have been informed
197 of any changes.

198 Commissioner Dutremble informed all that at a Hearing Last week, it was clear
199 that everyone wants certain funds. MCCA has a lobbyist keeping track of this

200 Bill for us. He added that the State Police did not spend all of their budget and
201 are looking for more personnel.

- 202
203 e. Sheriff King/ Registrar Hammond to speak on fraudulent deed issues
204 County Manager Zinser stated that this is a very concerning issue. Sheriff
205 King is here to discuss this issue as is Register of Deeds Nancy Hammond via
206 Zoom.

207 Sheriff King explained that he, the District Attorney, County Manager and
208 Register of Deeds Nancy Hammond have met to discuss this matter.

209 He added that he and Register Hammond also met with the FBI and filed a
210 report on their website. These matters are very difficult to solve. The FBI
211 explained that they try to stop the money from the fraudulent land/property
212 sales from being sent out of the United States as it is often sent overseas.

213 Sheriff King told of three instances in which land was sold by someone who
214 was not the owner of the property.

215 Sheriff King informed all that he and Register of Deeds Hammond recently
216 met with Senator Henry Ingwersen about the need for legislation. New York,
217 Florida and Hew Hampshire have such legislation. There is a draft version of
218 legislation in the Revisor's office currently. Sheriff King distributed a copy of
219 the draft legislation to the Commissioners.

220 He stated that there is a need for more proof of ownership and gave an example
221 of having an enhanced Notary signature to include a fingerprint or that real
222 estate agents must pay a surety bond and/or out of state sellers pay a refundable
223 fee.

224 Sheriff King informed all that they are working on a news story with Channel
225 13 on this topic. He added that Register of Deeds Nancy Hammond created a
226 draft to hand out to property owners to alert them about this matter.

227
228 Register Hammond stated that the biggest issue is making sure the information
229 is out there. Unfortunately, she stated, many victims are out of state and not
230 aware anything is transpiring with their property.

231 She stated as keeper of the public records, she wants to try to help them secure
232 their property to the best of their ability.

233
234 Commissioner Dutremble asked will this legislation be enacted this year, if
235 passed? Sheriff King replied, yes.

- 236
237 f. To review and approve bid for jail sewer upgrade
238 County Manager Zinser explained that the specifications were advertised and
239 that three bids were submitted. He introduced Facilities Manager Rick
240 DeRochemont who referred to the memo given to the Commissioners. He
241 stated that six to seven parties developed plans and a few visited the site.
242 Manager DeRochemont explained that Bullet Point Engineering conducted the
243 actual bidding process for us as it was part of their contract as the engineer.
244 We met with the bidder afterward to review their bid. He added that a
245 contingency was added.

246 Commissioner Ring motioned to approve the purchase of the jail sewer grinder
247 to Phelan Construction, LLC in the amount of \$1,374,883.00. Commissioner
248 Chenette seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

249 County Manager Zinser specified that the funds to purchase this item would
250 come out of the jail capital account.

251 g. EMA request for Disaster Declaration
252 Deputy Director Megan Arsenault gave the Board an update on the disaster
253 declaration using a PowerPoint presentation.
254 She stated that damages in York County range from \$15 million to \$20 million.
255 Deputy Director Arsenault explained that they are working with Maine
256 Emergency Management Agency to get the numbers. She added that there
257 have been some challenges with individual submissions.
258 (POWERPOINT PRESENTATION ATTACHED AS RECORD)
259 Commissioner Chenette asked if the RAVE system was used in OOB and
260 EMA Deputy Director Arsenault said it was.
261 He asked who will be in touch with those who submitted disaster forms?
262 Deputy Director Arsenault said she has gone to some of their homes and will
263 make sure that all are contacted.
264 Commissioner Chenette asked about resiliency and what can York County
265 EMA do to assist so that these disasters do not keep happening?
266 Deputy Director Arsenault replied that the towns are talking about areas that
267 get hit often. They are working on mitigation plans such as asking the D.E.P.
268 to allow higher seawalls.
269 EMA Director Cleaves commented that there will be a meeting on March 7th to
270 discuss.
271 Commissioner Ring asked why the homeowner's property insurance wouldn't
272 cover their damages.
273 EMA Deputy Director Arsenault explained that some are not insured or
274 underinsured. Therefore, any monies after insurance payments would be what
275 the homeowner would put in a claim for.
276 Commissioner Ring asked why wouldn't one have property insurance?
277 Deputy Director Arsenault replied that perhaps it is too expensive or some do
278 not have flood insurance so their damages might not be covered by their
279 homeowners' policy. She continued that there are ancillary services that are
280 covered by MEMA, also.
281 DISCUSSION: Commissioner Chairperson Dutremble, on behalf of all the
282 Commissioners, thanked EMA for the work that they do.
283
284 Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the Disaster Declaration.
285 Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
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287 **6 OLD BUSINESS**

288 a. Dredge discussion
289 County Manager Zinser explained that after the recent storms, the coastline has
290 been decimated. Commissioner Chenette had requested that this item be put on
291 the agenda. He continued that the process has been lengthy and that the
292 Government is questioning whether the purchase of the dredge with ARPA
293 funds is an allowable use. We answered all of their questions and are waiting
294 to find out if they will allow the transfer of the dredge.
295 Commissioner Chenette asked the County Manager if he needed any other
296 assistance. The County Manager replied that he feels that we have answered all
297 of their questions sufficiently. We submitted the answers last Friday and have
298 not heard back yet.
299 Commissioner Chenette stated that they should let us know if there are any
300 lingering issues; correct?
301 County Manager Zinser replied, yes.

302 Commissioner Ring commented that we purchased with ARPA funds that we
303 could have used elsewhere, a dredge in the amount of \$1.5 million. Should we
304 look at any other options we might have?
305 County Manager Zinser responded that this disaster has created a potential
306 silver lining for York County. He continued that he and Art had a meeting and
307 that there is no debate that the dredge needs to be operational. We may be able
308 to operationalize the dredge in six months. The County could take over and
309 use its undesignated funds to buy the equipment. We could front the money
310 and run it through the Declaration. The Dredge Authority, stated the County
311 Manager, is a bit away from getting the dredge operational as they want to use
312 it as collateral.
313 County Manager Zinser commented that it is a big IF but that they are meeting
314 with the individual who performed the inspection on the dredge to have a
315 general conversation with him. He reminded all that we were told we could not
316 run a testing lab and a vaccination center and get them underway as quickly as
317 we did.
318 The County Manager continued that there are two avenues with one being the
319 disposition of the dredge and the other using the Federally declared disaster to
320 possibly operationalize the dredge sooner.
321 Commissioner Chenette asked what happens when the disaster money runs
322 out? Will the taxpayers be on the hook to pay for it?
323 County Manager Zinser responded that it will allow us to use our own funding
324 within the Disaster Declaration within the confines of Federal law. He
325 reminded all that we are still dealing with disasters from 2015. This is an
326 opportunity to get it going and take care of critical needs. It could most likely
327 take three to four years from now before the disaster is fully repaired.
328 Commissioner Chenette asked if it would be helpful to involve the regional
329 authorities to brainstorm this.
330 County Manager Zinser responded that it would be helpful to have a
331 conversation with whomever we would assign it to through EMA.
332 Commissioner Chenette replied that it impacts those who have been working
333 with erosion issues for quite some time.
334 County Manager Zinser and EMA Director Cleaves agree that more
335 investigation is needed.
336 Kevin Roche from Save Our Shores addressed the Board and stated that this
337 sounds like good news and that he totally agrees the goal is to get it working.
338 We have a third option, he suggested. He stated that the Authority has had
339 conversations regarding outsourcing.
340
341 County Manager Zinser informed the Commissioners that in other old
342 business, there is a tentative agreement with the Teamsters. He explained that
343 there was a series of circumstances on their part that delayed bargaining.
344 Also, he stated that NCEU requested to get to the table early to begin
345 bargaining for their next contract.
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349 **7 TO CONDUCT AN EXECUTIVE SESSION ON PERSONNEL**
350 **ISSUES PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (A), ACQUISITION OF**
351 **REAL PROPERTY OR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PURSUANT**

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TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (C), LABOR NEGOTIATIONS PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (D) AND CONSULTATION WITH LEGAL COUNSEL PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (E), REVIEW OF CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (F)

None

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

None

9 ADJOURN

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

DRAFT