

# COMMISSIONERS MEETING

May 15, 2024

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, May 15, 2024, A. D. at 4:30 P. M.

## COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

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

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

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

05-15-2024

### ITEM

- 1 PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY ITEM(S)**
- 2 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS:**
  - a. Commissioners' meeting of May 1, 2024  
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the minutes. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 4-1 with Commissioner Ring abstaining as she was not present.
- 3 TO APPROVE TREASURER'S WARRANTS**
  - a. Warrants to be approved on May 1, 2024 in the amount of \$683,122.48  
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner Andrews seconded the warrant. Vote 5-0.
  - b. Warrants to be approved on May 8, 2024 in the amount of \$693,437.87  
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

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

Commissioner Dutremble informed all that at the Maine County Commissioners Association meeting last week it was stated that Counties have been instructed to send their jail budgets as soon as possible. Commissioner Dutremble added that everyone needs to talk to their legislative people as there is no funding for the county jails but the prisons got millions.

County Manager Zinser replied that he has not received any e-mail to send the jail budget.

Commissioner Chenette commented that it might be helpful to have a public conversation around jail funding and maybe invite legislators. He added that unless you sit on that committee you are not aware of what is happening. We need to do our individual engagement.

Commissioner Dutremble responded that was done last time and we got nowhere.

We didn't have too much support from the Governor's office.

He added that it is imperative for us to explain this matter to our legislative people.

**5 NEW BUSINESS**

a. Deputy County Manager/H.R. Director Corliss to present the following new hires and/or transfers:

i. Austyn Crain in the position of Corrections Officer in the Sheriff's Office with a date of hire of 5-20-2024-

Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the hiring of Austyn Crain in the position of Corrections Officer in the Sheriff's Office with a start date on May 20, 2024. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION- Commissioner Ring asked what the starting pay was. Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Corliss responded that it was \$21.67 plus shift differential. Vote 5-0.

~~ii. Kalaeb Fenoff in the position of full-time Maintenance Technician I in the Facilities Department with a date of hire of May 13, 2024 (removed)~~

iii. Gary Stiles in the position of part-time Maintenance Technician II in Facilities with a date of hire of June 3, 2024

Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the hiring of Gary Stiles in the position of part-time Maintenance Technician II in the Facilities Department with a start date of June 3, 2024. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION- Commissioner Ring asked what the starting pay would be. Deputy County Manager/H.R. Director Corliss replied that it would be \$18.57 per hour. Vote 5-0.

iv. Emma Condon to transfer from Legal Secretary to Trial Manager with an effective date of transfer of June 10, 2024

Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the transfer of Emma Condon from Legal Secretary to Trial Manager in the District Attorney's office with a date of transfer of June 10, 2024. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION- Commissioner Ring asked since she was hired in December 2023 how does that affect the probationary period? Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Corliss replied that she will start a new one and she is okay with that. There is a letter in her hiring packet explaining that matter. Vote 5-0.

- b. To review and consider homeless funding options-
- County Manager Zinser explained that he had a meeting with the Hub and referred to the Agreement (proposal) included in the Commissioners' packets from the Homeless Response Hub. Manager Zinser went on to explain that a lot of the non-profits support homelessness. If approved by the Commissioners, the money would go to the York County Community Action for disbursement. Discussion-Commissioner Chenette asked the County Manager if there are existing programs? County Manager Zinser replied, yes. Commissioner Chenette inquired about the \$15,000 in administrative costs and questioned if this is just to cover staff costs? County Manager Zinser responded staff and the recording that goes along with it. He explained that he asked about it but they could not reduce the fee.
- Commissioner Chenette stated that he thinks this is wonderful. He commented that instead of dividing up the diversion and placement amounts he feels they should be together and the funds not divided in order to maximize them. Commissioner Ring stated that she agreed with Commissioner Chenette. She added that it would be nice to know how many people these funds will serve and she supports his recommendations.
- Commissioner Andrews also agreed and stated that combining the two makes sense as for a smaller amount a person can get their car fixed, that keeps them employed and then we are able to keep them in their homes.
- Commissioner Clark agreed and stated that keeping people in their homes has value. It makes sense to look at each item on a case-by-case basis that someone else will administer. If people lose their housing, a lot of things fall out of place.
- County Manager Zinser stated that we will get a report from them and that he will reach out to them with the Commissioners' suggestion offering more flexibility with the funds.
- Commissioner Chenette stated that addresses his concern to give them the maximum amount of flexibility.
- Commissioner Chenette accepted the proposal from the York County Homeless Response Hub. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

- c. To discuss four days/10-hour work week-
- County Manager Zinser explained this matter has been discussed and is already being done by FOP and that we are in discussions with NCEU. We recognize that it might work in some departments and not in others.
- Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Corliss stated that they have been "kicking this concept" around for a couple of years. A number of municipalities already participate in this. Most close for a day and this is not an option for us, she explained. We get more inquiries from people about a 4-day work week and remote work.
- She continued that they conducted a trial period with non-union first as they are the easiest to ask to participate. H.R. Director Corliss added that she and the County Manager are open to talking to MSEA.
- Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Corliss continued that they have researched other municipalities and counties. She said that Cumberland County has been doing this for a year.

Director Corliss explained that they chose people- hourly, salary, manager, and a department leader to participate in the 4 day/10 hour work week. She continued that they met a couple of times to see what is working and what issues might arise.

The Finance Department was involved also. We found it is workable in some situations but not in all.

Deputy County Manager/H.R. Director Corliss commented that the hardest person that struggled with it was herself. The expectation of a department leader is that they would always be connected.

Non-Union hourly and salaried felt for work/life balance this was beneficial. She stressed that all are still working 40 hours per week. Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Corliss explained this will also be beneficial for example for the Sheriff's Office employees where they have people who work three shifts having someone in H.R. to meet with employees before or after their shift.

Deputy County Manager/H.R. Director Corliss continued by explaining that people on the trial gave up their holidays if their day off fell on their day off.

She continued that there is no overtime for 10-hour workdays. Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Corliss added that she has checked with the

Department of Labor. Also, she informed all that one who works a 10-hour day, also gets charged for 10 hours when they take a vacation day.

She added that this is a flexible, alternative schedule. We do not want to force anyone into this 10-hour day/4-day workweek.

The District Attorney's office is highly in favor of this as it would eliminate overtime, stated County Manager Zinser.

Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Corliss mentioned rotating days off were taken by one employee during the trial period. She doesn't think that worked.

She added that she would like a check-in period at six months.

DISCUSSION- Commissioner Ring commented that after reading the report provided, she has a lot of concerns with this 10-hour workday. Unless we can do it for all employees, she stated, she does not think it is fair.

Commissioner Ring continued that it was said that there are some departments/positions that won't be allowed to do it like the receptionist who is the lowest paid.

Non- union employees are afforded some great benefits and great insurance benefits better than the Unions. This is going to create a greater divide than we already have, stated Commissioner Ring.

Deputy County Manager /H.R. Director Corliss responded that there are four separate Unions that all have collective bargaining units. They negotiate their benefits.

Commissioner Ring replied that she understood and that she believed if the flexible work schedule was offered to them, they would take it.

Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Corliss stated that we cannot just change their work week.

Commissioner Ring asked how this is going to affect the citizens? We need to be available.

She continued by saying to Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Corliss that she is a salaried employee. We have hired more people for you and for Finance. It is never enough, commented Commissioner Ring.

Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Corliss explained that within the four unions, there are different priorities. She added that they are open to offering it to MSEA.

Commissioner Ring asked would you increase their hours to 8 hours a day as they now work 7.5 hours per day.

County Manager Zinser stated that the Fraternal Order of Police has 10-hour workdays. He added that they are negotiating this (work hours) with the corrections officers Union.

The County Manager added that we are in favor of introducing the concept with MSEA.

He continued that some municipalities doing this are reducing the number of hours they are open. We are not doing that, stated the County Manager.

Those on the 4 day/10hour workday will work Monday to Thursday or Tuesday – Friday.

County Manager Zinser stated that he is perfectly happy to send a letter to MSEA to sit down and discuss.

Commissioner Ring informed all that the H.R. Policy states that non-union employees work five days a week. They won't need as many days off if they work a four-day work week, so we have to consider that. She continued by stating that lots of things would have to be changed in the policy before implementation.

County Manager Zinser replied that one also needs to look at benefits in other Union contracts and how it is accumulated and paid out.

He would ask for a motion if that were something the Board wants to talk about.

Commissioner Chenette stated that one of the things he has noticed is that a number of municipalities have moved in this direction. He continued that this can also benefit the public as some municipalities structure evening hours to be accessible to working Mainers in York County.

County Manager Zinser responded that this is an apples and oranges comparison. The majority of municipalities have reduced the number of days that they are in the office, but we are proposing to expand the number of hours we are in the office. These employees (working the 10-hour days) work until 6:00 or 6:30 at night. This makes them able to hit various shifts.

We don't have public per se to register cars, license dogs but more public facing is the Sheriff's Office.

Commissioner Chenette replied that he wouldn't compare but others are working a 40-hour work week and extend hours until 7:00. If each department has different hours, how do we promote hours to the public?

Commissioner Chenette asked wouldn't it be a good idea to work through some of the possible issues before the trial period. He added that he feels that we need a plan first and it concerns him.

County Manager Zinser explained that the plan is for non-union as we tend to be flexible. In Deeds, there can't be a couple of employees that do it so in some instances it might be all or none. He added that everyone will be getting an opportunity for conversations. We have to bargain. County Manager Zinser stated that he is open to having everyone in the county on this and added that there is no monetary exchange here. It is a work/life balance.

Commissioner Clark stated that it is more humane for the employees as well as a hiring tool. He added that he understood where there could be individual

cases where someone needs to be home earlier. Commissioner Clark continued that he thought we should work towards this. He commented that he has some heartburn over taking people's holidays away. He stated that he would get a Department of Labor ruling on that.

Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Corliss replied that she will review that further. Commissioner Dutremble informed all that the city of Biddeford has a 4-day week and people are not complaining about it. He added that this is not the first time the county has tried to do this.

Commissioner Ring stated that she thinks we should try to work through these items before implementing. She added that she would like the County Manager to conduct a survey.

County Manager Zinser stated that one union (FOP) already does it and in the other situation, it is front and center conversation.

He added that the best approach would be for him to reach out to MSEA and have them survey their members. We cannot just change someone's working day so it will take a lot of conversation such as how it affects seniority, etc.

County Manager Zinser added that those are some the issues and why he said it can't happen overnight. We know that the same terms as non-union isn't going to happen for the Union, stated the County Manager.

Commissioner Chenette said to Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Corliss that he appreciates her sharing her experience and is curious if we should think about a potential trial excluding department heads or elected officials from that option.

It works to offer department heads this arrangement in municipalities where they are all closed for one day, but he wonders how it would work here where the department head needs to be here 5 days a week.

Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Corliss replied that they have worked very hard to make sure there are backups in place.

County Manager Zinser responded that office managers provide full coverage in all departments. He cautioned the Board to realize the difference between elected and appointed department heads.

Commissioner Ring stated that she is not ready to vote on this and would like more time. She asked what the rush is to vote on this tonight.

Commissioner Clark responded that he is fine if we bring this item back to the next meeting but that he will vote for it.

Commissioner Dutremble reminded everyone that we only have one meeting in June.

Commissioner Ring asked why is there such a big rush? It is not going to cost us anything. She requested we bring it up in July as she and Commissioner Andrews will not be present at the June meeting.

Commissioner Chenette asked why do we have to start the four-day work week on July 1<sup>st</sup>?

County Manager Zinser responded because employees are already doing it, so it is a programming issue.

Commissioner Clark added that the start of the fiscal year is a good time to start.

Commissioner Clark motioned to bring this issue to vote at the June 5, 2024, Commissioners' meeting. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 3-2 opposed (Commissioner-Ring and Commissioner Chenette opposed).

- d. To discuss and seek approval for Dredge Memorandum of Agreement with the Town of Wells-  
County Manager Zinser informed all that the dredge is in Wells Harbor. Commissioner Ring motioned to approve the Dredge MOA with the Town of Wells. Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
- e. To discuss and seek approval for a Memorandum of Agreement for storage of dredge with the Town of Wells-  
County Manager Zinser asked for this item to be tabled. There was a last-minute question that arose we need to answer and work through. Commissioner Chenette motioned to table this matter. Commissioner Ring seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
- f. To review and seek approval of Dredge RFP-  
County Manager Zinser explained that the County is bringing on a dredge partner. We aren't using Federal money now, but we might be in the future, so, we are following the Federal process.  
Whomever we select could turn into a longer-term agreement.  
Commissioner Chenette asked the County Manager if in his conversations with EMA Director Cleaves, would the current folks who have been assembling and painting be open to filing a bid?  
County Manager Zinser replied, yes, he does think so.  
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the RFP and authorize the County Manager to move forward. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

**6 OLD BUSINESS**

- a. To review and accept Findings of Facts for Nathan Johnson of Limington  
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the Findings of Facts.  
Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 4-1 with Commissioner Ring abstaining.

**7 TO CONDUCT AN EXECUTIVE SESSION ON PERSONNEL ISSUES PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (A), ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY OR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (C), LABOR NEGOTIATIONS PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (D) AND CONSULTATION WITH LEGAL COUNSEL PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (E), REVIEW OF CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (F)**  
None

**8 PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY ITEM(S)**  
None

**9 ADJOURN**  
Commissioner Clark motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m.