

COMMISSIONERS MEETING

January 3, 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, January 3, 2024, A. D. at 5:00 P. M.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

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

County Manager Greg 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

01-03-24

ITEM

- 1 TO SELECT A COUNTY COMMISSIONER CHAIRPERSON FOR 2024**
Commissioner Clark nominated Commissioner Dutremble. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.
Commissioner Ring commented that she is also interested in being Chair.
Vote 3-2 with Commissioner Ring and Commissioner Chenette opposed.
- 2 TO SELECT A COUNTY COMMISSIONER VICE CHAIRPERSON FOR 2024**
Commissioner Dutremble nominated Commissioner Andrews as vice-chairperson for 2024.
Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. Vote 3-2 with Commissioner Ring and Commissioner Chenette opposed.
- 3 PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY ITEM(S)**
None
- 4 TO SELECT A WORKFORCE CENTER DIRECTOR FOR 2024**
Commissioner Andrews nominated Commissioner Clark to serve as the Workforce Center Development Director for 2024. Commissioner Ring seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
- 5 TO SELECT A SOUTHERN MAINE REGIONAL PLANNING REPRESENTATIVE FOR 2024**
Commissioner Chenette nominated himself as the SMPRC Board member. Commissioner Ring seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

6 TO REVIEW AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETINGS-

a. Commissioners' Regular Meeting of December 20, 2023

Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the minutes. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 4-1 with Commissioner Chenette abstaining.

7 TO ADOPT ROBERT'S RULES OF GOVERNANCE FOR CONDUCTING 2024 COMMISSIONER MEETINGS

Commissioner Clark motioned to adopt Robert's Rules of Governance for conducting the 2024 Commissioners' meetings. Commissioner Andrews seconded the meeting. Vote 5-0.

8 TO SELECT A DAY AND TIME FOR CONDUCTING REGULAR COUNTY COMMISSIONER MEETINGS FOR 2024

1st and 3rd Wednesdays beginning at 5:00 P.M.-following dates: January 3, January 17, February 7, February 21, March 6, March 20, April 3, April 10, May 1, May 15, June 5, (*Thursday, June 20th if needed), *July 10 (July 17th if needed), August 7, (August 21st if needed), September 4, September 18, October 2, October 16, November 6, November 20, December 4, December 18.

*Wednesday, June 19th is Junteenth

*July 3 is the first Wednesday

Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays beginning at 4:30 and meeting only once in June, July and August unless needed. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Chenette commented that he believed all have seen that giving a half an hour grace period has been helpful in increasing engagement with our constituents. To go backwards seems wrong, he continued. He added that he thought we should push it back even further like Cumberland County who meets at 5:30. Commissioner Chenette stated that he was yet to hear justification why we would ratchet it back. My constituents want to make government more accessible to them, he continued. We have seen that 5:00 has been successful for working Mainers who have a hard time getting here at 5:00.

Commissioner Clark commented that he had not seen a significant increase in public participation. He added that when he was a Selectmen, the only thing that brought people out was when the issue was controversial. Commissioner Clark reminded all that the opportunity for people to contact their commissioners are abundant whether it be by Zoom, e-mail and/or telephone.

Commissioner Ring stated that from her experiences, when the Commissioners met at 7:00 p.m. there was a decent attendance. She added that there are a lot of taxpayers that don't get home to even turn on Zoom until 5:00 so that little bit of leeway would be helpful.

Vote 3-2 with Commissioner Ring and Commissioner Chenette opposed.

9 TO REVIEW AND ADOPT POLICIES FOR 2024 AS FOLLOWS:

a. **MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT RATE** (manager recommends '24 IRS rate 67 cents)

Commissioner Clark motioned to adopt the mileage reimbursement rate of 67 cents as recommended by the County Manager. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Ring asked why are we doing 67 cents and not the State

rate? That is a lot of money to be reimbursed. Commissioner Dutremble explained we have always followed the IRS rules. Commissioner Ring stated that she would like to see us use the State rule. Vote 4-1 with Commissioner Ring opposed.

- b. **MEALS ON COUNTY BUSINESS RATE** (manager recommends increase of \$5.00 to \$15.00-breakfast, \$20.00 lunch, \$25.00 dinner or \$60.00 per diem)
Special note:* When the event you are attending includes any of the meals you are required to take part in the meal. If you are staying at a hotel that provides breakfast, you must utilize the breakfast provided by the hotel. In these instances, the amounts stated above will be deducted from the per diem rate. *RECEIPTS REQUIRED***
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the recommended amounts for meals: \$15.00 for breakfast, \$20.00 for lunch and \$25.00 for dinner or a per diem of \$60.00.
Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
- c. **POLICE/ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTS** (manager recommends '21 rate \$20.00)
Commissioner Clark motioned to accept the fee of \$20.00 for police/accident/incident reports as recommended by the County Manager. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
- d. **BACKGROUND CHECKS FEES** (manager recommends Sheriff's '23 rate of \$20.00)
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the fee of \$20.00 as recommended by the Sheriff for background checks. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
- e. **NOTARIZATION/ATTESTATION FEES** (manager recommends '20 rate of \$5.00/\$10.00)
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the rates of \$5.00 for notarization fee and \$10.00 for attestation fees. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

10 TO APPROVE TREASURERS' WARRANT(S)

- a. Approve treasurer's warrant dated December 20, 2023 in the amount of \$618,527.80
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant in the amount of \$618,527.80.
Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
- b. Approve treasurer's warrant dated December 27, 2023 in the amount of \$619,892.01
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant in the amount of \$619,892.01.
Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

11 HEAR ANY REPORTS OF THE COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Chenette stated that for his constituents listening in, his virtual office hours are Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. He added that he is looking forward to hearing comments monthly.
Commissioner Clark wished everyone a Happy New Year.

12 HEAR ANY REPORTS OF THE COUNTY MANAGER

None

13 NEW BUSINESS

- a. To review and seek approval of Acton/Shapleigh Contract Deputy Agreement

County Manager Zinser explained that both towns have approved these contracts. This is an opportunity for the Board to ask any questions. This Agreement covers the cost of the deputy, explained the County Manager.

Commissioner Chenette motioned to accept the Agreement. Commissioner Ring seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Clark stated that he will vote to approve this (Agreement) tonight but we have talked in the past to have a more general overview of these contract deputies. We should be aware of what we want to do in the future.

County Manager Zinser replied that this will be on the first meeting in February.

Vote 5-0.

b. To review and seek approval of Good Works Program-

The County Manager stressed that we are not really looking for approval on this program. He explained that this just supplements our strategy, but we want to make you aware of what is going on. We have been working with Michael Thompson owner of Good Works Program. He continued that some of our hiring roadblocks have been relocation and housing of individuals as well as transportation in general. This program, continued County Manager Zinser, simply will be complementing what we are already doing. And is another tool in our toolbox. This is bringing in U.S. citizens who want to work.

Deputy County Manager/H.R. Director Corliss further explained that they have been looking at different avenues of recruiting. There is no public transportation in Alfred. This program provides transportation. Our attorney reviewed the entire program.

Mike Thompson, owner of Good Works, approached the Board. He informed all that he was an EMT and Firefighter. Originally, he formed his company in Maine to house those with risks. Now, in addition he has expanded the company to do offshore recruiting. Employers who have solid entry level jobs with chances for advancement are having issues hiring, explained Mr. Thompson. He will start with recruiting (employees) from the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

Mr. Thompson continued that his company provides full, inclusive housing with furnished units. Additionally, we provide round-the-clock transportation. My roots have always been in public safety. We have extensive marketing experience, he stated.

We work with other companies such as Shaw Bros. and Genest Concrete.

Commissioner Ring asked Mr. Thompson how does he fund this (business)?

Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Corliss interjected that the County worked through the process. Good Works already has the housing and we went to see it. The employees will rent from Mr. Thompson (Good Works). The rates are reasonable.

Commissioner Dutremble asked who pays for the moving costs?

Mr. Thompson replied that his company will pay for their airfare. We used Maine State Housing Authority rates. These are single room occupancy with shared common spaces. We will charge nominally for transportation.

Mr. Thompson continued that this is an extension of what Good Works already does. He added that he believes this program has merit.

Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Corliss added that in full disclosure, Mr. Thompson will receive the \$1,000 referral bonus directly from the County.

Commissioner Ring asked don't we already offer that?

Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Corliss replied, yes, the same amount.

She further explained if that we have an individual that applies from Saco, they can also rent from him.

Commissioner Ring asked how long have you been operating this program?

Mr. Thompson replied in 2016 and then basic recruiting in 2021 where our focus has been for at-risk housing.

Commissioner Ring replied that this sounds lovely but her concern was that we would have Good Works hire our people and H.R. now has nothing to do.

Deputy County Manager/H.R. Director Corliss replied that these applicants will have to go through the same process. We will set it up via ZOOM. They have to pass the physical once they get here and they have to be presented to the Commissioners, she explained. We will have to have someone working with him through the process.

Mr. Thompson further explained that this (program) is offered as a compliment to what the County does for hiring as we have a different base to work with.

Commissioner Ring asked if they will speak English?

Mr. Thompson replied, yes, we will run assessments.

Commissioner Chenette stated that he had a couple of clarifying questions.

Commissioner Chenette asked how much was budgeted for the referral bonuses?

County Manager Zinser replied that we have never needed to budget the money.

Commissioner Chenette then asked how many (new hires from Good Works) are we anticipating? The County Manager replied, 10 to 12 people.

Commissioner Chenette asked what happens if they are here and quit and work somewhere else?

Mr. Thompson replied that if they are paying rent and following the rules, they could stay in their housing.

Commissioner Clark asked can they stay a certain amount of time?

Mr. Thompson replied that they can stay as long as they want. We have relationships with landlords.

Commissioner Ring asked Mr. Thompson where is most of his housing?

He replied in Biddeford.

Commissioner Andrews asked if Mr. Thompson has enough properties to bring in 10-12 people?

Mr. Thompson replied yes, he has set a building aside for this project.

Commissioner Chenette stated that while he appreciates the good will and intentions, the market sometimes dictates and maybe at some point you might want to sell your property. What happens to those people?

Mr. Thompson replied that they sign a lease and an agreement for transportation. He added that he is very serious about keeping people housed and that he doesn't see my goals changing.

- c. To review and seek approval of bids for (8) eight police cruisers for Sheriff's Office

Commissioner Ring asked out of the 8 vehicles are any for contracts? Sheriff King replied that two are for contract deputies and six are for the county.

Sheriff King added that this is keeping with our regular rotation.

Commissioner Ring responded that she understands but doesn't agree with it. Several vehicles in the Sheriff's Office are under 50,000 miles. She added that the Sheriff will need to give taxpayers a break. There are some vehicles not being used. What are the two gray vehicles for? You want 6 white and 2 gray on your bids.

Sheriff King replied that there are two vehicles that are not white. Commissioner Ring asked why? Sheriff King replied that his office is inundated with traffic complaints they (gray vehicle) are better for traffic control. Commissioner Ring asked is it assigned to a deputy and does he work traffic? Sheriff King responded, no, he works regular patrol.

Commissioner Ring added that from her perspective she understands it is more cost effective for the vehicles to be the same color. She asked on top of the \$43,000 cost for each vehicle, how much to set them up? Sheriff King responded about \$12,000.00.

County Manager Zinser informed all that the Sheriff's Office vehicle reserve is about \$200,00.00.

Sheriff King added that it is very difficult to get vehicles. Ford has now placed restrictions on ordering.

Commissioner Ring replied that she understood. With the number of staff we have, are we looking to expand our staffing, she added.

Sheriff King responded that there are three School Resource Officer grants they are hoping to fill.

Commissioner Ring asked and they don't pay for the vehicles?

County Manager Zinser stated that the school district will be responsible for a portion of the vehicle and so will we in the summer months.

Commissioner Chenette asked which eight vehicles will be replaced?

Sheriff King responded that he doesn't have that information but we would take a look at the mileage and condition of the cars.

Commissioner Chenette asked and we know there are eight that meet that criteria?

The County Manager stated yes, six for the Sheriff's Office and two for the contract deputies.

Commissioner Dutremble stated that the mileage does not reflect the wear and tear of the engine as lots of times they are idling. Also, if the State Police pull out of rural patrol, you might need more vehicles.

Sheriff King agreed and added that it is good that we have an ample amount of vehicles in the event of a crash, etc.

Commissioner Ring motioned to accept Arundel Ford's bid of eight (8) vehicles with the understanding that two (2) are for contracts in the amount of \$42,427.00 each.

Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

Commissioner Clark asked when will these arrive?

Commissioner Ring answered it says on the paperwork the end of February.

d. Introduce Deputy Manager/H.R. Director Linda Corliss to seek approval of the following new hire(s):

i. Andrew Dumond in the position of Corrections Officer in the Sheriff's Office with a date of hire of January 2, 2024

Commissioner Ring motioned to approve the hiring of Andrew Dumond in the position of Corrections Officer in the Sheriff's Office with a date of hire of January 2, 2024.

Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

Deputy County Manager/H.R. Director Corliss reported the number of Corrections Officers is up to 48 full-time with fourteen scheduled to go to the academy in January.

14 OLD BUSINESS

None

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

None

16 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).

None

17

ADJOURN

Commissioner Clark motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.
Vote 5-0. Meeting ended at 6:00 p.m.