

KNOX COUNTY COMMISSION

Special Joint Meeting Knox County Commission and Budget Committee

Tuesday - November 20, 2012 - 5:00 p.m.

A special joint meeting of the Knox County Commission and the Knox County Budget Committee was held on Tuesday, November 20, 2012, at 5:00 p.m., at the County Courthouse, 62 Union Street, Rockland, Maine. The Human Resources Consultant was present to record the minutes of the meeting.

Commission members present were: Carol L. Maines, Commissioner District #1, Richard L. Parent, Jr., Commissioner District #2, and Roger A. Moody, Commissioner District #3.

County staff present included: County Administrator Andrew Hart, Finance Director Kathy Robinson, Register of Probate Elaine Hallett, Register of Deeds Lisa Simmons, Systems Administrator Mike Dean, Sheriff Donna Dennison, Chief Deputy Tim Carroll, EMA Director Ray Sisk, DA Geoff Rushlau, Prosecutorial Assistant Shane Riley, Airport Manager Jeff Northgraves, and Communications Director Linwood Lothrop (*left at 5:55pm*).

Budget Committee members present were: Ann Matlack, Henry Carey, Bob Duke, Lawrence Nash, Dorothy Meriwether, Bill Jones, Elizabeth Dickerson, and Randy Stearns.

Also present were: Chris Farley, Fire Chief, Town of Camden (*left at 5:55 pm*); Tom Johnston, Fire Chief, Town of Washington (*left at 5:55 pm*); Barry Norris, Fire Chief, Town of Union (*left at 5:55 pm*); George Chappell from the *Courier Gazette*, and Steve Betts from the *Bangor Daily News*.

Special Meeting – Agenda Tuesday – November 20, 2012 – 5:00 p.m.

- I. 5:00 Meeting Called To Order** (Chair Bob Duke for the Knox County Budget Committee, Commission Chair Roger Moody for the Knox County Commission)
- II. 5:01 Public Comment**
- III. 5:06 Approve Minutes** (Chair Bob Duke for the Knox County Budget Committee, Commission Chair Roger Moody for the Knox County Commission)
 1. Minutes of the Joint Budget Meeting of November 15, 2012.
- IV. 5:08 Budget Committee/Commission Comment**
- V. 5:15 Budget Review**
 1. Department Budgets - any Department Needing Further Review
- VI. 6:00 Final Vote on all Department Budgets** (in preparation for Public Hearing)
- VII. Adjourn**

I. Meeting Called to Order

The November 20, 2012 joint meeting of the Knox County Budget Committee and the Knox County Commission was called to order by Budget Committee Chair Bob Duke and Commission Chair Roger Moody at 5:06 p.m.

II. Public Comment

Chair Bob Duke asked for public comment if there be any. No members of the public asked to speak.

III. Approve Minutes

1. Joint Budget Meeting of November 15, 2012.

- There are no minutes due to illness in the Office. They will be ready for approval at the Public Hearing on Tuesday, December 11, 2012.

IV. Budget Committee/Commission Comment

Administrator Hart referenced additional handouts:

- A new listing of Budget Committee Members, adding Henry Carey and showing the representative for Rockland still vacant. Ann indicated that the three who were write-in candidates have been re-elected. Lizzie indicated that Rockland should be appointing someone soon, and reminded everyone that this will be her last month serving on the Budget Committee.
- An email from Time and Tide.
- A memo from Knox-Lincoln Conservation District.
- A revised Budget; Administrator Hart outlined changes and answered questions.
- A handout showing the impact on the budget with both the 1.7% COLA and the 2% STEP, with just the 1.7% COLA, and with just the 2% STEP.

V. Budget Review

The net budget, excluding Communications and 301 Park Street (Bond and additional expenses), is up only \$15,000, 0.24%. Committee members discussed that this still includes taking \$175,000 out of surplus both years (2012 and 2013). The County was at the maximum amount of surplus last year, and using the \$175,000 brings the County to the 20% level that is required by statute. The surplus, though, could be used to reduce the tax burden to the towns.

Committee members weighed in on the recommended wage increases. The point was made that the Budget Committee does not have the authority to approve or disprove the 2% STEP increase, but the Committee could vote to remove the corresponding amount (or another amount) from the budget.

Administrator Hart reminded everyone that the Wage Study began with a request by the union to look at wages, because they felt they were low. The Organizational Study was done first, and positions were eliminated knowing that the savings would likely be needed for wage adjustments once the Wage Study was completed. After many hours of discussion, the Budget Committee and the Commission approved the recommendations, and they would have been fully implemented January 1, 2012 if not for the glitch in the notice period. The new Compensation Program has been approved by both unions, and if we don't follow through with the COLA and STEP, we may face grievances and legal issues that could cost more than the amounts being requested for salary increases.

There was discussion about the overlay which has been at 2% for a long period of time (it can be set up to 2% by statute). The overlay is normally discussed in March when the Commissioners set the mill rate, and is not under the purview of the Budget Committee. It is calculated after the Budget is approved. The surplus is invested, and the interest shows in the Finance Budget. Finance Director Kathy Robinson noted that the level of surplus helped us earlier this year with the Bond Rating and the resulting low interest rate. Budget Committee members requested that the Commission review lowering the overlay for 2013.

There was some discussion about Midcoast Economic Development District Budget, the Knox-Lincoln Soil & Water Conversation District Budget, and Time & Tide RC&D Budget. Several members expressed concern about the value that Time & Tide provides to Knox County.

VI. Final Vote on all Department Budgets

Committee Chair Bob Duke asked that the Communications Budget be addressed first prior to the time that Linwood Lothrop needed to leave the meeting.

Communications Dept: Bill Jones motioned to approve the Administrator's recommended budget of \$988,341 (adjusted by \$1). Lawrence Nash seconded. A vote was taken with 8-0-0 in favor (Matlack, Meriwether, Duke, Nash, Dickerson, Jones, Carey and Stearns). The motion passed.

Administration and Information Technology: Commissioner Moody recommended a transfer of money from the Legal Reserve (with a balance of \$145,000) such as \$25,000+ to get Legal up to \$40,000-50,000. Administrator Hart provided the numbers for the last two years and 2012 YTD. There is \$793,860 in Surplus after the \$175,000 deduction for the 2013 budget. After discussion, it was decided to postpone any change in moving money from the Legal Reserve until the following year's budget. Bill Jones motioned to approve the Administrator's recommended budget of \$446,925. Ann Matlack seconded the motion. There was further discussion about the legal line and Legal Reserve. A vote was taken with 5-1-2 with in favor (Matlack, Meriwether, Jones, Carey and Stearns), opposed (Duke), and abstained (Nash and Dickerson).

Building Maintenance: Randy Stearns motioned to approve the Administrator's recommended budget of \$195,942. Lawrence Nash seconded the motion. A vote was taken with 8-0-0 in favor (Matlack, Meriwether, Duke, Nash, Dickerson, Jones, Carey and Stearns). The motion passed.

Building Maintenance: New Building: Randy Stearns motioned to approve the Administrator's recommended budget of \$49,318. Lawrence Nash seconded the motion. A vote was taken with 8-0-0 in favor (Matlack, Meriwether, Duke, Nash, Dickerson, Jones, Carey and Stearns). The motion passed.

District Attorney: Randy Stearns motioned to approve the Administrator's recommended budget of \$391,370. Dorothy Meriwether seconded the motion. A vote was taken with 8-0-0 in favor (Matlack, Meriwether, Duke, Nash, Dickerson, Jones, Carey and Stearns). The motion passed.

Emergency Management Agency: Ann Matlack motioned to approve the Administrator's recommended budget of \$68,154. Bill Jones seconded the motion. A vote was taken with 8-0-0 in favor (Matlack, Meriwether, Duke, Nash, Dickerson, Jones, Carey and Stearns). The motion passed.

Finance: Randy Stearns motioned to approve the Administrator's recommended budget of \$262,120. Dorothy Meriwether seconded the motion. A vote was taken with 8-0-1 in favor (Matlack, Jones, Duke, Meriwether, Dickerson, Carey and Stearns) and abstained (Nash). The motion passed.

Probate Court: Dorothy Meriwether motioned to approve the Administrator's recommended budget of \$141,855. Lawrence Nash seconded the motion. A vote was taken with 8-0-0 in favor (Matlack, Meriwether, Duke, Nash, Dickerson, Jones, Carey and Stearns). The motion passed.

Registry of Deeds: Randy Stearns motioned to approve the Administrator's recommended budget of (\$138,794). Lawrence Nash seconded the motion. A vote was taken with 8-0-0 in favor (Matlack, Meriwether, Duke, Nash, Dickerson, Jones, Carey and Stearns). The motion passed.

Sheriff's - Patrol Division: Dorothy Meriwether motioned to approve the Administrator's recommended budget of \$1,713,886. Bill Jones seconded the motion. A vote was taken with 8-0-0 in favor (Matlack, Meriwether, Duke, Nash, Dickerson, Jones, Carey and Stearns). The motion passed.

Debt Service: Randy Stearns motioned to approve the Administrator's recommended budget of \$247,354. Lawrence Nash seconded the motion. A vote was taken with 8-0-0 in favor (Matlack, Meriwether, Duke, Nash, Dickerson, Jones, Carey and Stearns). The motion passed.

Grants:

- **Knox-Lincoln Cooperative Education**

Dorothy Meriwether motioned to approve the amount of \$55,662. Lawrence Nash seconded the motion. A vote was taken with 7-0-1 in favor (Matlack, Meriwether, Duke, Nash, Dickerson, Jones, and Carey) and abstained (Stearns). The motion passed.

- **Knox-Lincoln Soil & Water District:**

Lawrence Nash motioned to approve the amount of \$19,810. Randy Stearns seconded the motion. A vote was taken with 7-0-1 in favor (Matlack, Meriwether, Duke, Nash, Dickerson, Carey, and Stearns) and abstained (Jones). The motion passed.

- **Mid Coast Economic Development District:**

Dorothy Meriwether motioned to approve the amount of \$14,245. Elizabeth Dickerson seconded the motion. A vote was taken with 6-1-1 in favor (Matlack, Meriwether, Duke, Dickerson, Jones, and Carey), opposed (Nash) and abstained (Stearns). The motion passed.

- **Time & Tide RC & D**

Bill Jones motioned to approve \$0 funding. Dorothy Meriwether seconded the motion. A vote was taken with 5-3-0 in favor (Meriwether, Duke, Jones, Carey and Stearns) and opposed (Matlack, Dickerson, and Nash).

- **Mid-Coast Regional Planning Commission**

Lawrence Nash motioned to approve the amount of \$2,500. Ann Matlack seconded the motion. A vote was taken with 6-0-2 in favor (Matlack, Meriwether, Nash, Dickerson, Jones, and Carey) and abstained (Duke and Stearns).

Insurance: Randy Stearns motioned to approve the Administrator's recommended budget of \$91,894. Lawrence Nash seconded the motion. A vote was taken with 8-0-0 in favor (Matlack, Meriwether, Duke, Nash, Dickerson, Jones, Carey and Stearns). The motion passed.

Airport: Lawrence Nash motioned to approve the Administrator's recommended budget of \$67,446. Randy Stearns seconded the motion. There was discussion about the removal of the \$25,000 for capital reserve, extra costs of electricity due to geothermal, wildlife encounters, and the opinion by some members that the airport should be self-sustaining. A vote was taken with 7-1-0 in favor (Matlack, Meriwether, Nash, Dickerson, Jones, Carey, and Stearns) and opposed (Duke). The motion passed.

Public Hearing: The Public Hearing will be held on Tuesday, December 11, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. in the Jury Assembly Room at the Knox County Courthouse.

VII. Adjourn

A motion was made by Lawrence Nash to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Randy Stearns. A vote was taken with all in favor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Carol Maines to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Richard Parent. A vote was taken with all in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Bouchard
Human Resources Consultant

The Knox County Budget Committee and the Knox County Commission approved these minutes at their joint meeting on December 11, 2012.