

KNOX COUNTY COMMISSION

Special Joint Meeting Knox County Commission and Budget Committee

Thursday – November 3, 2011 – 5:00 p.m.

A special joint meeting of the Knox County Commission and the Knox County Budget Committee was held on Thursday, November 3, 2011, at 5:00 p.m., at the county courthouse, 62 Union Street, Rockland, Maine. The Administrative Assistant was present to record the minutes of the meeting.

Commission members present were: Carol L. Maines, Commissioner District #1, and Roger A. Moody, Commissioner District #3. *Commission members not present: Richard L. Parent, Jr., Commissioner District #2.*

County staff present included: County Administrator Andrew Hart, Administrative Assistant Candice Richards, Sheriff Donna Dennison, Chief Deputy Timothy Carroll, Airport Manager Jeff Northgraves, and Finance Director Kathy Robinson.

Budget Committee members present were: Ann Matlack, Bob Duke, Lawrence Nash, Randy Stearns, Dorothy Meriwether, Tina Plummer, Bill Jones, Mason Johnson. *Budget Committee members not present: Elizabeth Dickerson.*

Also present were: Eric Galant, Director of the Mid-Coast Regional Planning Commission; Mark Hedrich, Chairman of the Board of the Knox-Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation District; Professor Mark Hutchinson of the University of Maine Cooperative Extension; and Jan MacDonald, treasurer for the Knox-Lincoln County Extension Service.

Special Meeting – Agenda

Thursday – November 3, 2011 – 5:00 p.m.

- I. 5:00 Meeting Called To Order** (Chair Ann Matlack for the Knox County Budget Committee, Commission Chair Roger Moody for the Knox County Commission)
- II. 5:01 Approve Minutes** (Chair Ann Matlack for the Knox County Budget Committee, Commission Chair Roger Moody for the Knox County Commission)
 1. Minutes of Budget Review Meeting of October 27, 2011.
- III. 5:03 Election of Officers** (Budget Committee)
 1. Chair
 2. Vice Chair
 3. Secretary
- IV. 5:05 Budget Review**
 1. Mid-Coast Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC) (pg. 28)
 2. Knox-Lincoln Cooperative Extension (pg. 28)
 3. Knox-Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation District (pg. 28)
 4. Time & Tide RC & D (pg. 28)
 5. Airport (pgs. 29-31)
 6. Sheriff's Office Patrol Division (pgs. 25-27)
- V. 6:30 Adjourn**

I. Meeting Called to Order

The November 3, 2011 joint meeting of the Knox County Budget Committee and the Knox County Commission was called to order by Budget Committee Chair Ann Matlack and Commission Chair Roger Moody.

II. Approve Minutes

1. Joint Budget Meeting of October 27, 2011.

Chair Ann Matlack asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

- Lawrence Nash motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Bob Duke seconded. A vote was taken with 8-0 in favor (Plummer, Matlack, Meriwether, Duke, Nash, Johnson, Jones, and Stearns). The motion therefore passed.
- Commissioner Maines motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Moody seconded. A vote was taken with 2-0 in favor (Maines and Moody). The motion therefore passed.

III. Budget Committee Election of Officers (*taken out of order*)

1. Chair:

- Dorothy Meriwether nominated Bob Duke as chair. The nomination was seconded by Randy Stearns.
- Tina Plummer nominated Ann Matlack as chair. The nomination was not seconded.
- A vote was taken on the nomination of Bob Duke as chair with 5-0-3 in favor. The motion therefore passed.
 - In favor: 5 (Johnson, Meriwether, Nash, Jones, Stearns)
 - Opposed: 0
 - Abstained: 3 (Duke, Matlack, Plummer)

2. Vice-Chair:

- Lawrence Nash nominated Ann Matlack as vice-chair. She declined the nomination.
- Ann Matlack nominated Dorothy Meriwether as vice-chair. She declined the nomination.
- Randy Stearns nominated Lawrence Nash as vice-chair. The nomination was seconded by Mason Johnson. A vote was taken with 7-0-1 in favor. The motion therefore passed.
 - In favor: 7 (Johnson, Meriwether, Jones, Matlack, Plummer, Duke, Stearns)
 - Opposed: 0
 - Abstained: 1 (Nash)

3. Secretary:

- Lawrence Nash nominated Bill Jones as secretary. The nomination was seconded by Bob Duke.
- Bill Jones nominated Randy Stearns as secretary. The nomination was not seconded.
- A vote was taken on the nomination of Bill Jones as secretary with 7-0-1 in favor. The motion therefore passed.
 - In favor: 7 (Johnson, Meriwether, Nash, Matlack, Plummer, Duke, Stearns)
 - Opposed: 0
 - Abstained: 1 (Jones)

IV. Joint Meeting with the Budget Committee for Review of the Proposed 2012 Budget.**Program Grants:**Mid-Coast Regional Planning Commission

MCRPC Director Eric Galant explained that the MCRPC is based in Rockland and is a non-profit organization made up of municipal officials. MCRPC has helped a lot of communities with land use issues, primarily ordinance development (marijuana dispensaries, methadone clinics, flood plans, zoning, transportation, driveway standards, and comprehensive planning). He said that they also answer questions and give advice on land use. MCRPC does not represent developer interests but instead helps businesses who want to know the demographics of the area and future trends. The funding request is for \$2,500, which has remained the same for several years and has not increased. Mr. Galant said that he had approached Waldo County for funding as well, but Waldo is divided into three regions/sections and do not provide MCRPC any money because the entire County does not fall under one District.

The request was for \$2,500.

Administrator recommends \$2,500 – same as 2011 amount.

Straw vote:

No one was opposed

Knox-Lincoln County Extension Service

Jan MacDonald introduced herself as the treasurer for the KLCES. She said that the organization was asking for \$55,662 in funding, which is up \$1,091 from 2011. Lincoln County was already paying that higher amount last year so KLCES was hoping to get Knox County up to the same contribution amount.

Lawrence Nash asked if the County was required to fund the Extension Service per Maine Statute. Mark Hutchins responded that he was correct. The funding amount, however, is up to the County.

The mission of the Extension Service can be broken down into three categories: Education, Research, and Outreach. They have 16 offices in the State of Maine but also do some international work.

Commissioner Moody asked if it would be possible to get a pie chart to show the expenditures for services that the organization delivers to just Knox County. Ms. MacDonald and Mr. Hutchinson explained that this would actually be very difficult to do because of the way staff and resources are distributed. Ms. MacDonald offered to come up with some numbers showing how many individuals are

assisted in the various programs but Commissioner Moody said that wasn't really what he was looking for. Bill Jones commented that by funding the organization, the County is essentially buying into a network of resources so it's not easily broken down by County because someone with a question may get referred to a member of the organization who is physically in another county.

Bob Duke commented that in comparison with other organization or departments requesting funding, the KLCES has increased very little at all over the last few years and that this is a good deal for the County.

The request was for \$55,662 (increase of \$1,091 over the 2011 amount).

Administrator recommends \$54,570 – same as 2011 amount.

General consensus was to grant at least the amount KLCES received last year and the Committee will later decide whether to give KLCES the higher amount as requested, and therefore pay the same amount as Lincoln County:

Knox-Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation District

Mark Hedrich of the Knox-Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation District explained that he represents one of 16 districts in the State of Maine. KLSW offers educational programs and technical assistance, as well as grant projects, a lot of which is done through the DEP (Department of Environmental Protection). KLSW recently received a lot of recognition from the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) for their work. The organization may have to move out of its current office space which may end up having an impact on the budget. The organization's board is made up of volunteers.

The request was for \$20,587 (increase of \$1,166 over the 2011 amount).

Administrator recommends \$19,421 – same as 2011 amount.

Consensus was to fund it but unclear which amount. (Bill Jones recused himself from participating in the consensus since he receives assistance from them)

Time & Tide RC & D

No representative for the organization showed up for the meeting. It was noted that Time & Tide also had not submitted their request on time. They did eventually send in a request for \$3,625. It was unknown why there was no representative in attendance.

Bob Duke felt that Time & Tide provides some services that are not duplicated by other agencies. But he felt it was rather difficult to an organization that may or may not continue to exist and did not show up to defend the request.

Mark Hedrich of the Knox-Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation District spoke up and said that Time & Tide is made up of a non-governmental counsel but their staff was cut back rather significantly and currently without an office location. He added that he was aware that there are a lot of projects that Time & Tide has been working on.

Administrator Hart commented that he felt that since Time & Tide did not hand in their request on time and did not bother to show up to defend their request, they should not receive funding.

Consensus was to not fund the request.

Departmental Budgets:

Airport

Airport Manager Jeff Northgraves explained that the commodities have gone up while the revenue has gone down rather significantly – it's down about \$20,000. He said that he has to dip into surplus to cover the 2011 bills. He is hoping to get someone in to run the café soon. Four individuals had been in this week to look at the space. He is also looking at ways to lower electricity costs since that keeps going up. Fuel costs are also going up. He had asked to have his administrative assistant go to 32 hours since she is currently working part-time (28 hours). She already has benefits so the only cost is just the increase in hours. Think she will earn her pay because she has set up a new system of getting people parking to pay their fees. She also sells advertising space on the boards up in the airport.

Dorothy Meriwether asked about the \$2,000 in the advertising line. She asked if the amount there was related to increasing advertising costs with newspapers. Jeff said that the \$2,000 was not for advertising in newspapers, but rather it was for hats, shirts, cups, etc. with the airport name/logo/etc. on it. The kind of advertising Dorothy was thinking of is done in conjunction with Augusta Airport and Cape Air.

Bill Jones commented that he did not understand why the airport was hurting so badly for revenue. It had been previously said that building hangars will increase revenue so he wondered why the airport hasn't built more hangars. The airport should be profitable or at least break even.

Manager Northgraves responded that the Town of Owls Head thinks that if the County builds more hangars, the Town will lose money because the airport sits on the Town's land and uses the Town's aquifer. The town has slowed down the process thereby preventing hangars from being built. The Maine DEP and the Owls Head planning board have prevented two other individuals from building hangars that were planning to.

A few members of the Budget Committee were confused by the amount in the Building Repairs and Maintenance line, which was shown as a negative \$5,996. Manager Northgraves explained that it was a negative number because it's an expenditure line but the County received a refund of \$9,758 from Efficiency Maine because the new terminal building was so "green" so that was put back into the line. Expenses have been applied against the credit. The money wasn't put into surplus because that's not usually how it's done – it's usually put into a reserve account or directly into the budget.

Comments by Committee members:

Bill Jones - need to cut somewhere so we become closer to cutting even.

Ann Matlack – has confidence in the department head

Lawrence Nash – comfortable with the budget

Bob Duke – shares Bill's concern that feel we had a very optimistic budget last year but the terminal is driving the costs and not got a handle on that yet. Have a lot of confidence in Jeff.

Mason Johnson – need to "tune it up" a little bit.

Commissioner Maines asked Manager Northgraves if there were other issues besides the economy affecting the airport, such as weather issues. Manager Northgraves said that weather was definitely a factor. It was a bad winter last year in terms of the amount of snow that fell and the airport spent a lot on gas because of all the plowing.

Commissioner Moody asked about the \$6,000 for landscaping since the Commission had fairly recently awarded landscaping/hardscaping bids being paid for out of the 2011 budget. Manager Northgraves answered that the Town of Owls Head is still pressuring the County a lot about landscaping, in part because the mulch that was put down did not work out. The weeds are still growing like crazy through the mulch and it is hard to keep up with the weeding. He said that he hopes to take out the mulch and put in sod with the \$6,000, which would then be maintained by mowing it.

Administrator Hart pointed out that the business plan had called for more personnel so that combined with the revenues going down are the two driving factors in the budget going up.

Manager Northgraves commented that the APAC is looking at the business plan periodically anyway to see if the County is continuing on the right path. Most of what was put into action with the business plan were things that cannot be undone if it was later decided that something in the plan shouldn't have happened, like building hangars, building the terminal, hiring more staff, etc. It would mean having to tear buildings down and firing staff.

Sheriff's Department – PATROL

Sheriff Dennison began by explaining that her department tried to make cuts in the 2012 budget because of the economy, the referendum bond, and she wanted her staff to be able to have the wage increases that the wage study recommended. 2011 has been a hard year with needing to increase shifts and needing to use money in other budget lines to pay for all the necessary overtime. The department is now up to staff but at one point the department was down three deputies which put a lot of pressure on the rest of the staff to keep all of the shifts covered because it's a public safety issue. The vehicle fuel costs have jumped up a lot this year too. Chief Deputy Carroll commented that the cruisers the department is purchasing now are a lot more fuel efficient than previous vehicles so the gas prices may have gone up but the department is buying less gallons of gas. The department also does not have many 4-wheel drive vehicles, which traditionally use more fuel.

Randy Stearns asked why the deputies take the vehicles home. Chief Deputy Carroll explained that it's mostly because of response time. If a deputy was at home or on his way in to work when getting called in to respond to a situation, it takes too much time to go all the way to the office to pick up a vehicle before responding. Several deputies do not have other deputies living nearby so response time of the other deputies is absolutely critical. Mason Johnson commented that this gets discussed every year and has been for the last sixteen years. He said that the County has tried to figure out what would be a better way, a cheaper way, etc. and it gets complicated because not having their vehicles at their residence slows down response time. Bob Duke commented that all counties in Maine do it this way.

The Sheriff commented that a lot of times the officers respond straight to the call from their residence and don't always go to the office until they necessarily need to because they are all so spread out. They also do a lot of their work in the car and don't go to the office until maybe hours later when they need to. Lawrence Nash added that if it's a domestic call, there just isn't time to wait for a deputy to go to the office to get a vehicle to respond with. It's a sign of the changing of the times.

Upcoming Joint Budget Meetings

Administrator Hart briefly went over what was going to be discussed at the next few budget meetings. This prompted a discussion of the personnel services being worked on as part of the compensation study. Several members of the Budget Committee voiced their confusion at the path that the Commission seemed to be taking with implementing the study's recommendations. Both Administrator Hart and Commissioner Maines commented that not all the data is in yet so it was difficult to say with certainty where all employees fell in terms of whether or not they were making the right level of pay. The Budget Committee was reminded that the rest of the data should be ready soon, which would then be discussed with the Committee at a later meeting.

V. Adjourn

- A motion was made by Bob Duke to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Randy Stearns. A vote was taken with all in favor.
- A motion was made by Commissioner Maines to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Moody. A vote was taken with all in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Candice S. Richards
Administrative Assistant

The Knox County Budget Committee and Knox County Commission approved these minutes at their joint meeting on November 10, 2011.