

KNOX COUNTY COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

Tuesday – July 10, 2012 – 2:00 p.m.

The regular monthly meeting of the Knox County Commission was held on Tuesday, July 10, 2012, at 2:00 p.m., at the county courthouse, 62 Union Street, Rockland, Maine.

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: Administrative Assistant Candice Richards, Airport Manager Jeff Northgraves, KRCC Director Linwood Lothrop, Systems Administrator Mike Dean (*arrived at 2:10 p.m.*), Sheriff Donna Dennison (*left at 2:54 p.m.*), and Chief Deputy Tim Carroll.

Others in attendance: HR Consultant Laurie Bouchard; George Chappell of the *Courier Gazette*; Steve Betts of the *Bangor Daily News* (*arrived at 2:08 p.m.*).

Regular Meeting – Agenda Tuesday – July 10, 2012 – 2:00 p.m.

- I. 2:00 Meeting Called To Order**
- II. 2:05 Public Comment** - Public Comment during other portions of the meeting will only be granted by permission of the chair.
- III. 2:20 Consent Items**
 - 1. Approve Consent Items as Presented:
 - i. Agenda - Non Agenda Items Only Permitted if Emergency in Nature.
 - ii. Minutes of Regular Commission Meeting of June 12, 2012.
 - iii. Monthly Written Departmental Reports.
 - iv. Reserve Withdrawals.
 - v. Budget Line Transfers.
- IV. 2:25 Action Items**
 - 1. Act to Award Bid for Two New Patrol Vehicles for the Sheriff's Department.
 - 2. Act to Approve Knox County Post-Issuance Compliance and Monitoring Policy.
 - 3. Act to Approve Amended Job Evaluation and Salary Administration Policy.
- V. 2:45 Discussion Items**
 - 1. Discussion and Review of Amendments to the County of Knox's Personnel Policy Handbook.
 - 2. Update on the Knox County Public Safety Building Project.
 - 3. Update on Meeting with the Municipalities on July 16, 2012.
- VI. 3:00 Other Business**
- VII. Adjourn**

I. Meeting Called to Order

Commission Chair Roger Moody called the regular meeting of the Knox County Commission to order at 2:00 p.m. He commented that Administrator Andrew Hart was not in attendance at the Commission meeting because he was attending a Board of Corrections meeting in Wiscasset.

II. Public Comment

Commissioner Roger Moody asked for public comment. There was none.

III. Consent Items

- 1. Approve Consent Items as Presented:
 - i. Agenda - Non Agenda Items Only Permitted if Emergency in Nature.

- ii. Minutes of Regular Commission Meeting of June 12, 2012.
 - iii. Monthly Written Departmental Reports.
 - iv. Reserve Withdrawals.
 - v. Budget Line Transfers
- A motion was made by Commissioner Richard Parent to approve the consent items as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carol Maines.

Since Airport Manager Northgraves had given the Commission an updated copy of his monthly report just prior to the start of the meeting, Commissioner Moody asked what had been changed in the report. Manager Northgraves answered that when he submitted it the first time, he hadn't had Stantec's report to go with his. He added that Cape Air's June numbers for passengers flying with them was the highest for the month of June on record.

Commissioner Maines asked for an update on the progress with getting the obstruction easements from property owners. She asked what would happen if property owners don't accept the offer made by the County and won't allow an easement. Manager Northgraves replied that it was still a work in progress and that each property owner has been given 30 days to come back with a counter-offer. He added that if property owners are still unwilling to grant an easement, there are other options beyond the negotiations, but he would prefer to not have to go that route. It was noted that these are perpetual easements because those are the only kind the FAA will allow.

Commissioner Moody asked Communications Director Lothrop if there were any major issues or updates in his monthly report since the Commission had only just received it. Director Lothrop responded that the main thing he wanted the Commission to be aware of was that the NextGen 9-1-1 contract (and the bid process) has been challenged by two different vendors. This will delay the County from being able to get the technology for the new facility. It directly impacts the County because the dispatch center wouldn't be able to relocate to the new facility until the new technology is installed. It wouldn't make sense to spend \$50,000 to move old 9-1-1 equipment when the County might have the new equipment in a month or more. It could be another two or three months before anyone knows how the challenge to the bid process will end.

- A vote was taken with all in favor.

2012 Reserve Withdrawals:

Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant	300008-10046	\$129.40
	Total	\$129.40

2012 Reserve Withdrawals:

Airport Projects	461608-14640	\$926.75
Forfeiture Money – State	200008-12870	\$8,797.16
Legal Expense	200008-12650	\$154.50
Unemployment Compensation	200008-12610	\$235.59
	Total	\$10,114.00

IV. Action Items

1. Act to Award Bid for Two New Patrol Vehicles for the Sheriff's Department:
 Chief Deputy Tim Carroll explained that Quirk Auto in Augusta was the low bidder with a price of \$22,758.00. The Sheriff's Department will be purchasing two 2013 Dodge Chargers which will replace two 2008 Chargers. One 2008 Charger will be sold at auction while the second will go to be used by the Sheriff's Deputy assigned to the Airport. The current vehicle at the airport, which is a 2006 Ford

Crown Victoria, will be sold at auction. He added that the Dodge Chargers have been working out very well for the Sheriff's Department and get very good gas mileage.

- A motion was made by Commissioner Richard Parent to award the bid for two new 2013 Dodge Chargers for the Sheriff's Department to Quirk Auto at a bid price of \$22,758.00 per vehicle. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carol Maines. A vote was taken with all in favor.

2. Act to Approve Knox County Post-Issuance Compliance and Monitoring Policy:

Commissioner Moody stated that the IRS has instituted a goal of having tax-exempt issuers adopt a written Post-issuance Compliance and Monitoring Policy. The IRS is monitoring this effort through its Form 8038-G, which has a question that must be completed asking whether or not an issuer has a written post-issuance policy in place. Knox County bond counsel Jim Saffian recommended that Knox County adopt this policy before the issuance of the Knox County bonds (for the Public Safety Building) later this summer.

- A motion was made by Commissioner Richard Parent to approve and adopt the Post-Issuance Compliance and Monitoring Policy as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carol Maines. A vote was taken with all in favor.

3. Act to Approve Amended Job Evaluation and Salary Administration Policy:

HR Consultant Laurie Bouchard explained that there are two changes to the policy as approved by the Commission back in December: there is a change on the experience calculation for prior Knox County experience in the same job, and the other change is the addition of Elected Officials Compensation.

Commissioner Maines asked how often "periodic" is in regards to how often the Commission should look at the elected officials' compensation. Ms. Bouchard responded that she didn't think the Commission needed to do it annually so she had put the frequency as periodic. She added that she thought that every two or three years would be appropriate.

- A motion was made by Commissioner Richard Parent to approve the amended Job Evaluation and Salary Administration Policy as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carol Maines. A vote was taken with all in favor.

V. Discussion Items

1. Discussion and Review of Amendments to the County of Knox's Personnel Policy Handbook.

HR Consultant Laurie Bouchard commented that she and Administrator Hart were just looking for some input from the Commission before the document is given to department heads for their review. After the department heads have had a chance to review the draft, it will be brought back at another Commission meeting for final approval. She explained that many of the changes shown are to make all Knox County documents (including both union contracts with FOP and NCEU and the Personnel Policy Handbook) consistent with wording for various sections. Some of the more important changes noted in the Administrator's explanation to the Commission were:

- Clean-up and consistency with Section 2.14 Work Rules
- Many changes within Section 4.0 Wage and Hour Policies and Practices
- Re-wording of Section 4.2.3 Part-Time Employees
- New wording for 4.4 Compensation Plan and 4.4.3 Wage Adjustments
- New wording for 6.2.1 Health Insurance (non-bargaining)

As Ms. Bouchard took the Commission through the changes in the document, the commissioners had some concerns about wording in a few sections:

Page 12 – Section 2.14 WORK RULES

Commissioner Moody asked about the wording “Failure to follow Department Policy” because the Commission approves County policies but he wasn’t sure who approves departmental policies. He thought that perhaps departmental policies are more guidelines than policies since the Commission approves policy. Airport Manager Northgraves explained that Commission policies are broad in nature while departments have more specific policies. The example he gave was that the Commission might have a policy for safety in County vehicles, but as the Airport Manager, he has a more specific policy that states that employees plowing the runway will wear seatbelts and not have the radio on. Communications Director Lothrop commented that he also has an executive communications board that sets policy for his department. Ms. Bouchard also noted that if there’s a difference between the personnel policy and the Sheriff’s SOP’s (Standard Operating Procedures) then the SOP’s take precedence over the Personnel Policy.

There was a brief discussion about possible word changes to make it more accurate. Ms. Bouchard suggested changing it to “Failure to follow County or Department Policy or Procedure.”

Page 15 – Section 2.15 PERSONNEL FILES (non-bargaining)

The commissioners seemed to have varying opinions about how long discipline should be kept in a personnel file before an employee can request to have it removed. The policy used to say 6 years but the union contracts both say 18 months. Ms. Bouchard said that she felt it should be 3 years, but that would mean it was still worded differently than in the union contracts. Non-union employees might consider that to be unfair. She added that Administrator Hart didn’t see the length of time changing in the union contracts because it’s been set at 18 months for a very long time. The Commission needs to decide if they want the length of time to be 6 years, 3 years, 18 months or some other length of time.

Commissioner Parent stated that he would like to have it consistent with the union contracts, and therefore be at 18 months. Commissioner Moody commented that he thought the term “disciplinary action” is over-broad. He thought that written notation of an oral reprimand could come out of a file sooner, but more severe discipline should probably stay in the file longer. They are reminders to the employee to correct their behavior, so he felt they should stay in the file more than 18 months. Commissioner Maines said that she thought that if someone is terminated because they did something especially wrong, then the County should be keeping the termination/discipline documentation in the file for a long time. Ms. Bouchard responded that once an employee resigns or is terminated, they are no longer employees and cannot request to have anything removed from their file. Employee files are retained by the County for 60 years after the person’s employment has ended.

Ms. Bouchard suggested changing the wording to read that “oral and written reprimands” be removed after 18 months and anything more serious than that would be left up to the County Administrator.

Page 18 – Section 4.2 EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATIONS

The Commission had voted in June to have the policy changed to state that “regular part-time” employees must work 24 hours per week in order to be eligible to get health insurance. Ms. Bouchard asked the Commission to think about what they thought the right number of hours should be for the cut off. She asked if they wanted to keep it at 24 or change it to a different number. If the Commission changed it to 30, two employees who are currently working less than 30 hours per week would have to be grandfathered to keep their benefits. The Commission would also have to decide if employees with less than 30 hours per week (or whatever the cutoff ends up being) would receive the other benefits, such as prorated vacation, holidays, and sick-time (which Ms. Bouchard didn’t think was common practice). The employee just hired at 20 hours for the Registry of Deeds does not get health insurance but is getting pro-rated other benefits. Ms. Bouchard asked if the Commission wanted to think about it before discussing it.

Commissioner Maines commented that it doesn't matter if pro-rated sick time is common among other employers or not – the purpose of sick-time is so employees stay home so they won't get the other employees sick. That benefits the other employees, not just the sick employee.

Commissioner Parent asked if any of the department heads in attendance wanted to comment. Communications Director Lothrop said that he doesn't have any part-time employees because his last one just retired. He said that it's hard to hire part time employees for Dispatch because there is so much training that dispatchers have to do, regardless of how many hours they work. He added that if he did ever have any regular part-time employees, he thought they should get all benefits because they work just as hard as the full-time employees. Sheriff Dennison commented that she didn't have any employees that were "regular part-time". Jail or Patrol employees who are part-time are considered "on-call as needed" and don't receive benefits. Airport Manager Northgraves said that the Sheriff's Deputy working at the Airport and one maintenance person are both "irregular part-time" and it wouldn't work to give them those kinds of prorated benefits. Regular part-time employees, like his administrative assistant, should definitely have benefits.

Commissioner Moody commented that he was curious about the two possibly affected employees and the related costs. Ms. Bouchard said she would take the commissioners' commentary back to Administrator Hart and discuss it with him.

Page 29 – Section 6.1.3 Sick Leave (non-bargaining)

6.1.3.7 (Donated sick-time.) Ms. Bouchard said that she was recommending that for employees to be eligible to receive donated sick time that they must also be eligible for FMLA. It puts some boundaries around the process. She said that she had also looked at policies from local school systems to see how they handle sick-time. She said that she hadn't had a chance to discuss the information with the Administrator, but wanted to tell the Commission about what she had learned. She said that for school system employees to be eligible to draw from the sick-leave bank, employees have to have donated a day to the bank. The school then matches the amount contributed. If the bank becomes depleted before the end of the year, the process repeats. To draw from the bank the employee has to have already used up all of their accumulated sick-leave. It can only be for personal illness, and not for a family member's illness. Any unused time in the sick bank is forfeited at the end of the year.

Commissioner Maines asked why this was confined to non-elected employees since some elected employees accrue sick-leave. Ms. Bouchard said that she wasn't sure why the section was worded that way and that she would ask Administrator Hart. She added that she would also ask him whether or not elected officials who accrue sick-leave are eligible to participate in the sick bank.

Systems Administrator Dean commented that RSU 40 doesn't roll over sick-leave, so employees aren't build up big pools of sick-leave. Knox County employees can carry some sick-time from year to year and have extra to dole

out if someone needs it. With a sick bank you can end up with someone giving out just a little and end up taking a lot.

Ms. Bouchard said that she would talk to Administrator Hart and department managers to get some feedback.

Page 41 – Section 6.5.8 Personal Leave of Absence (LOA)

Ms. Bouchard commented that although she had crossed part of this section out, she was not sure if it should be taken out or not. She said that she had originally thought so, but if the language is removed, it will be different than the language in the union contracts. The Commission has to find a way to balance compassion for the employee with the needs of the County. It's often unknown, when it's a medical leave, how long the employee could be out. Commissioner Moody suggested leaving the section there but maybe rewording it so the language was worded a little clearer.

2. Update on the Knox County Public Safety Building Project.

The Knox County Public Safety Building Project RFP has gone out to bid, and bids are due back on Tuesday, July 17th. They will be opened at the Administration Office at that time and will be reviewed by Gartley & Dorsky. Copies will be provided to Dale Rowley so he can review them as well.

Marcus Communications continues to work on the KRCC Communications piece of the project and the County plans to have a discussion with them on the proposed scope of work to be done as part of the RFP and bidding of the project late next week. The Commission set Tuesday, July 24th at 8:30 a.m. as the date and time for the Special Commission Meeting at which the bid will be awarded.

3. Update on the Meeting with Municipalities on Monday, July 16, 2012.

At the Regular Commission Meeting on June 12th, the Commission set a meeting with the Municipalities for July 16th. A letter of invitation had been sent to town managers and select board chairs in each Municipality of Knox County. The invitation included copies of the Commission meeting minutes from the three similar meetings held in 2009. Municipalities were asked to RSVP, but so far only South Thomaston has responded.

VI. Other Business

VII. Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 3:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Candice Richards
Administrative Assistant

The Knox County Commission approved these minutes at their regular meeting held on August 14, 2012.