

**KNOX COUNTY COMMISSION
KNOX COUNTY BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**Joint Quarterly Budget Meeting
Knox County Commission and Budget Committee**

Thursday – September 8, 2016 – 5:00 p.m.

A Quarterly Budget Meeting of the Budget Committee was held on Thursday, September 8, 2016, 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: Commissioner Carol L. Maines, District 1 and Roger A. Moody, District 3. *Commissioners not present: Richard L. Present, District 2.*

County staff present included: County Administrator Andrew Hart, Finance Director Kathy Robinson, Building Maintenance Supervisor Don Decker, and Administrative Assistant Candice Richards.

Budget Committee members present were: Bill Jones, Lawrence Nash, Dorothy Meriwether, Bob Duke, Shawn Levasseur, Nicholas Lapham, Gerald Zwick, and Terry Pinto (*arrived at 5:44 p.m.*). *Budget Committee members not present: Randy Stearns.*

Others present: Steve Jones of Building Envelope Specialists (*left at 5:50 p.m.*); and Travis Whitehead, Vice President of Knowles Industrial Services (*left at 5:50 p.m.*).

**Special Meeting – Agenda
Joint Quarterly Budget Committee Meeting
Commission Hearing Room
Thursday – September 8, 2015 – 5:00 p.m.**

- I. 5:00 Meeting Called To Order** (Chair Dorothy Meriwether for the Knox County Budget Committee, Commission Chair Roger Moody for the Knox County Commission)
- II. 5:01 Approve Minutes** (Chair Dorothy Meriwether)
 - 1. Minutes of the Joint Quarterly Budget Meeting of May 26, 2016.
- III 5:05 Discussion Items**
 - 1. Building Envelope Project
 - 2. Cupola Copper Roof Repair
 - 3. Jail Budget
- IV. 5:25 Quarterly Budget Review**
 - 1. Review of 2nd Quarter of 2016 (A. Hart)
 - 2. Review Projects / Items of 2016 Budget (A. Hart)
 - 3. Review Budget Calendar for 2017 Budget Process
- V. Adjourn**

I. Meeting Called to Order

The September 8, 2016 joint quarterly meeting of the Knox County Budget Committee and the Knox County Commission was called to order by Budget Committee Chair Dorothy Meriwether and Commission Chair Roger Moody at 5:00 p.m.

II. Approve Minutes

1. Joint Quarterly Budget Meeting of May 26, 2016.

- Bob Duke motioned to approve the minutes. Bill Jones seconded the motion. A vote was taken with all in favor.

Commissioner Moody noted that the Commission had already approved the minutes at a prior Commission meeting.

III. Discussion Items:

1. Building Envelope Project

Administrator Hart introduced Steve Jones from Building Envelope Specialists and Travis Whitehead from Knowles Industrial Services. Both Mr. Jones and Mr. Whitehead were present to do a presentation on the Courthouse repairs and discuss future regular maintenance for the building.

Mr. Jones went through a series of photographs, showing some examples of the major issues that the project had set out to correct. As part of the project, the remaining windows replacements were completed, and preservation methods were put in place around all of the windows. With proper maintenance in the coming years, the repairs completed as part of this project will essentially be a 100-year fix. Going forward, the recommendation is to have the facilities manager, currently Don Decker, look at the building twice a year with binoculars – once in the spring and once in the fall. He will look for spots where any deterioration might be taking place, which you can spot just from water stains. If adjustments need to be made, BES can do that. All of the soft joints in the building have been replaced and should last a very long time; however, it is always possible that one could come apart early. If the building is checked twice a year, problems will be caught long before they become major issues. He added that every product used in the repairs is spelled out in the drawings generated by BES for the project, so even if BES isn't involved down the road when more repairs are needed, the information of what was used in the past and what needs to be used in the future.

Mr. Whitehead explained that since the cocking starts to deteriorate after about eight years, he suggested redoing the cocking on one side of the building every two years, starting eight years from now. That way, each side of the building has the cocking replaced once every eight years. Having that kind of schedule is beneficial because it means you have a masonry experts looking at the building every two years. Mr. Whitehead recommended putting a day in a bid to do the re-cocking to have them look over the rest of the building. Funds should be set aside to cover any deterioration in the soft joints. Properly re-pointed mortar joints should last 35 to 50 years.

Commissioner Moody suggested putting aside \$10,000 a year to help fund upcoming maintenance. Mr. Whitehead responded that Commissioner Moody's suggestion is a good approach and that a lot of organizations fund it that way.

2. Cupola Copper Roof Repair

Administrator Hart explained that four sections of the downspouts on the cupola's roof have to be replaced. He had asked for estimated prices from three companies that do just copper work in order to get data on what repairs might cost. The Coastal Copper estimate came in around \$52,000, which was the lowest of the three estimates. The other two were significantly higher. The Administration Office applied for a grant for \$25,000 (since that was the most you can receive) from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. The County wasn't awarded the whole \$25,000 requested, but did get a grant for \$17,500. The plan is to put the project out to bid later this fall and then do construction in the spring of 2017 as soon as the weather allows.

Finance Director Robinson was asked to email the Budget Committee how much was left in the building maintenance reserve account.

There was some confusion and some heated discussion about the building maintenance reserve account, its uses, how funds end up in the account, and what role, if any, that the Budget Committee plays with regards to its use. Administrator Hart clarified that this reserve account has been in place for a long time and helps to fund courthouse building maintenance projects. It is critical for projects that come up unexpectedly that were not budgeted for. The Commission replenishes the reserve account from the undesignated fund balances at the end of the year.

3. Jail Budget

Administrator Hart reminded everyone that this year will be the second time the Budget Committee will review the jail budget now that the budget is no longer under the control of the Board of Corrections (which no longer exists). For the 2016 budget, the jail budget was increased by 3%, which was the most the County could do because of current legislation. One of the major issues with the jail budget is the control system. The Department of Corrections (DOC) has given the jail a variance for two years in order to find a way to repair or replace the control system, but the estimate to do so is around \$775,000, which is obviously way too large of an amount to put into the 2017 budget. Another option would be to do a lease purchase like the County did with the repairs to the Courthouse, or to go out to bond for the funds. The County has discussed with the Two Bridges Jail in Wiscasset about Knox County changing its jail to be a female re-entry and a 72-hour hold facility, which would mean paying Two Bridges Jail to house Knox's inmates, but that was projecting out to be more expensive than what the County doing right now, so that idea has been put on hold. Administrator Hart said that he was trying to find out what the payment on a lease/purchase might be if the County did one for \$1 million. If the payment is too high, it won't be possible to do that because there is a limit set by law to how much the jail's budget can be increased each year. If the County isn't able to find a way to correct the control system issue, it's unknown what will happen in two years when the variance expires.

Budget Committee members wanted to know what could be done about the funding issues for the jail or how they could help. Both Administrator Hart and Commissioner Moody expressed frustration with trying to solve the jail problem, not just for the Knox County Jail, but really the entire jail system. The SMRT facility study report says that the County needs to get certain things done, but there's no funding to do it. Plus there is always the possibility that the state could take the jail system over again, and if the County were to do a lease/purchase for the jail in the meantime, the County would still be stuck making the payments. The legislature messed up when they wrote the law and the counties are stuck with it until the law is changed.

IV. **Quarterly Budget Review:**

1. Review of 2nd Quarter of 2016

Administrator Hart briefly reviewed the two Year-to-Date reports for January to July of 2016 that showed revenues and expenses broken down by department. Most of the airport revenue comes in at the end of the year so those lines are going to appear below where they should be. Finance Director Robinson was asked if she had any concerns about where the numbers are at this point in the year. She said no.

2. Review Projects / Items of 2016 Budget

Administrator Hart briefly ran through the list of projects completed this year:

- a. Courthouse Building Envelope repairs (including installing windows)
- b. Carpet replacement by the Registry of Deeds
- c. Removal of dead/dying trees

3. Review Budget Calendar for 2017 Budget Process

Administrator Hart briefly reviewed the proposal schedule approved by the Commission in August. There was a brief discussion about the need to "stay on task" at the budget review sessions so meetings aren't dragged out longer than they need to be. Everyone was urged to read the materials supplied by the department managers prior to the meetings. There was some debate on how much information needed to be rehashed for the benefit of newer Budget Committee members.

Administrator Hart let everyone know that the Commission had voted to send invitations to submit budget requests to the same four program grant organizations as last year: Mid-Coast Regional Planning Commission, Knox-Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation District, Knox-Lincoln Counties Extension Service, and the Midcoast Economic Development District (MCEDD).

V. Adjourn

- Bob Duke motioned to adjourn the meeting. Bill Jones seconded. A vote was taken with all in favor.
- Commissioner Carol Maines motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Roger Moody seconded. A vote was taken with all in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 6:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Candice S. Richards
Administrative Assistant

**The Knox County Commission & Budget Committee approved these minutes
at the Joint Budget meeting on October 20, 2016.**