

KNOX COUNTY COMMISSION

Special Joint Meeting Knox County Commission and Budget Committee

Thursday – October 20, 2011 – 5:00 p.m.

A special joint meeting of the Knox County Commission and the Knox County Budget Committee was held on Thursday, October 20, 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. (*Commission members not present: Roger A. Moody and Richard L. Parent.*)

County staff present included: County Administrator Andrew Hart, Administrative Assistant Candice Richards, Chief Deputy Tim Carroll, and Finance Director Kathy Robinson.

Budget Committee members present were: Ann Matlack, Bob Duke (*arrived at 5:20 p.m.*), Lawrence Nash, Randy Stearns, Dorothy Meriwether, Tina Plummer, Elizabeth Dickerson (*arrived at 5:38 p.m.*) and Mason Johnson. (*Budget Committee members not present: Bill Jones.*)

Also present were: Laurie Bouchard, HR Consultant.

Special Meeting – Agenda Thursday – October 20, 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)
 1. Minutes of the Quarterly Budget Meeting of August 11, 2011.
- III. 5:03 **Election of Officers** (Budget Committee)
 1. Chair
 2. Vice Chair
 3. Secretary
- IV. 5:05 **Public Hearing**
 1. Chair Matlack Opens Public Hearing on 2012 Proposed Knox County Budget.
- V. 5:06 **Joint Meeting with the Knox County Budget Committee for the Presentation of the Proposed 2012 Budget** (County Administrator Andrew Hart)
- VI. 5:25 **Presentation of the Knox County Total Compensation/Job Classification Study Review** (Laurie Bouchard-HR Consultant)
- VII. **End of Public Hearing**
 1. Chair Matlack closes Public Hearing.
- VIII. **Adjourn**

I. Meeting Called to Order

The October 20, 2011 joint meeting of the Knox County Budget Committee and the Knox County Commission was called to order by Budget Committee Chair Ann Matlack.

II. Approve Minutes

1. Quarterly Budget Meeting of August 11, 2011.

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

- Lawrence Nash motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Tina Plummer seconded. A vote was taken with 6-0 in favor (Plummer, Matlack, Meriwether, Johnson, Nash, and Stearns). The motion therefore passed.

III. Budget Committee Election of Officers

Chair Ann Matlack asked how the Committee members felt about voting on officers when only 6 of the 9 members were present. She asked each member for their opinion. All agreed it would be better to wait until the entire Committee could be present.

- Lawrence Nash motioned to postpone voting on officers until the next meeting since only 6 of the 9 members of the Committee were present. Tina Plummer seconded. A vote was taken with 6-0 in favor (Matlack, Plummer, Johnson, Nash, Stearns, and Meriwether).

IV. Public Hearing

Question/Comment Period:

The public hearing portion of the meeting commenced at 5:04 p.m. There were no members of the public present at the meeting; as such, Chair Ann Matlack closed the public hearing portion of the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

V. Joint Meeting with the Knox County Budget Committee for the Presentation of the Proposed 2011 Budget.

Overview

County Administrator Andrew Hart gave a brief timeline of the budget process so far. He briefly mentioned some highlights in the proposed budget, which also included some of the increases and decreases over the previous budget.

- CPI increase for 2012 is currently at 4.3%.
- Health insurance costs have not come in from the Health Trust yet. The budget will be adjusted after the information is received.
- 2012 total budget shows a \$329,873 increase over the 2011 total budget. That’s a 5.09% increase.
- 2.55% property growth factor for 2012
- Tax assessment can be \$3,848,218, which is almost \$231,000 under the limit.
- Proposed tax assessment for 2012 is \$6,805,947.
- New section in the budget for the 301 Park Street property. If the bond fails in November, that section will come out of the budget and about \$100,000 will have to be added to the Communications budget for the next five or six years to cover the mandatory upgrades that will still have to be done whether the bond passes or not.
- Insurance – the Risk Management Pool figure has decreased by 8% based on the County’s actual expense for 2011.
- Program Grants – requests were received from Knox-Lincoln Cooperative Extension Service, Knox-Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation District, Maine Coast Economic Alliance (KWRED), and the Mid-Coast Regional Planning Commission. EMDC did not send a request. Time & Tide RC&D also did not send a request but after being contacted after the deadline had lapsed, Time & Tide asked to still be able to submit a request for the 2012 budget.

The following chart shows the increases and decreases over the 2011 budget as relayed by Administrator Hart during his overview of the 2012 budget proposal:

	Personnel	Contractual	Commodities	Capital	Revenues	Overall
Administration / IT	+ 13%	- 27%		+ 100%		+ 4%
Building Maintenance		- 17%	- 4%	- 62%	- 3%	- 33%
District Attorney	+ 8%			- 50%		+ 6%
EMA	+ 12%					+ 10%
Finance	+ 7%					+ 5%
Probate	+ 9%				+ 9%	+ 7%
Registry of Deeds	+ 8%				+ 2%	+ 9%
Sheriff – PATROL	+ 8%	+ 8%		+ 31%	+ 7%	+ 9%
Airport	+ 14%		- 26%	- 40%	- 5%	+ 75%
Communications	+ 12%			+ 52%		+ 13%

VI. Presentation of the Knox County Total Compensation/Job Classification Study Review.

Administrator Hart introduced HR Consultant Laurie Bouchard. He briefly explained the HR projects that Ms. Bouchard has been working on to assist the Administrative Office, including the Total Compensation / Job Classification Study process. The Commission voted to keep Ms. Bouchard on as a consultant for a period of time even once an HR person is hired for the Administrative Office.

Ms. Bouchard introduced herself and briefly explained the outline of the information she intended to share with the Committee. She explained the original need for a Market Survey – to be able to attract and retain a high quality workforce - and the desire for a Position Classification System. She provided an overview of the RFP process and selection of Thornton & Associates, as well as the work that took place. All job descriptions for the County have been updated and approved by the Commission, and there is now a structure of pay grades and salary ranges for each position. A Job Evaluation Committee has been formed to review new or changed positions when necessary.

Thornton & Associates Study

- Market Survey
- Job Descriptions
- Job Evaluation
- Compensation Structure
- Recommendations

Commission Recommendations

- COLAs
- Adjustments to Minimum
- Equity Adjustments

Benefits

There are some areas where the County is paying more than the market (such as in the percentage of health care premiums), but there are some areas where the County is paying less than market (such as dental, life and disability insurances where employees pay 100% of the cost). At an earlier meeting, the Commission decided to leave the benefits as they are for now.

It was mentioned that the Commission discussed the 2001 grandfathering for some employees who continue to receive full family health coverage paid 100% by the County. This creates an inequity between employees. Eliminating the grandfathering would free up dollars to potentially pay for other benefits (such as dental insurance), or helping to fund the pay equity adjustments needed to bring employees up to the market rates for their positions.

Salaries

There are a number of positions where the County is not paying the market rate, primarily in Corrections, Patrol, and Communications. The feeling that these areas were low led to the Study in the first place, and what was originally suspected was validated through the Market Study.

Cost of Living Adjustment

The Commission voted to put two COLAs in the 2012 budget – the 1.4% from the August 2010 CPI-W that applied in January 2011, and a 4.3% COLA based on the August 2011 CPI-W. Thornton & Associates pointed out that if the two COLAs are not processed, many County employees will fall further behind.

Pay Grade Step Plan

The Commission voted to go with a 16-step plan, with Step 8 (midpoint) considered “fully proficient” at the market rate.

Adjustments

The Commission voted to adjust employees below midpoint up to midpoint based on experience in their current jobs and prior related experience (the latter counted at 50%), as the budget allows. However, at the last Commission meeting, there was discussion about adjusting employees all along the 16 Steps, as budget allows, to provide a fair opportunity for adjustment to any employee who is not on the proper step based on his/her experience. Ms. Bouchard explained that right now the County is looking at employee’s past experience to help figure out where employees belong on the Step Plan, so that cost estimates can be calculated.

Committee Comments

- Members of the Budget Committee asked many questions about the Study, the Compensation Structure, and the Commission recommendations, which were answered.
- Some Committee members questioned giving the 1.4% COLA increase in January 2012, as there was an expectation that the 2011 COLA was eliminated forever, not just for one year.
- Some Committee members expressed concern about the dollars needed to fulfill the Commission recommendations, particularly in these tough economic times.

Once prior related experience is factored into the determination of the proper Step for each employee, Ms. Bouchard will be invited back to a future Budget Committee meeting to explain the numbers. Ultimately, the Budget Committee will be asked to vote on the individual department budgets, which will reflect the Commission’s recommendations.

VII. Public Hearing Closed (*taken out of order*)**VIII. Adjourn**

A motion was made by Mason Johnson to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Ann Matlack. A vote was taken with all in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Candice S. Richards
Administrative Assistant

The Knox County Budget Committee and Knox County Commission approved these minutes at their meeting on October 27, 2011.