

# KNOX COUNTY COMMISSION

## **Regular Meeting**

**Tuesday – December 13, 2016 – 2:00 p.m.**

The regular monthly meeting of the Knox County Commission was held on Tuesday, December 13, 2016, 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: County Administrator Andrew Hart, Administrative Assistant Candice Richards, Chief Deputy Tim Carroll, Sheriff Donna Dennison, Jail Administrator John Hinkley, Communications Director Linwood Lothrop, Airport Manager Jeff Northgraves, and Director Kathy Robinson.

Others in attendance: Bruce Flaherty from the Spirit of America Foundation; Appleton residents Nancy and Carolyn Brown (*left at 2:11 p.m.*); Washington resident Mildred Melguard (*left at 2:11 p.m.*), Commissioner-Elect Sharyn Pohlman, and Courier Publications Reporter Dan Smith (*arrived at 2:08 p.m.*).

### **Regular Meeting – Agenda Tuesday – December 13, 2016 – 2:00 p.m.**

- I. 2:00 Meeting Called To Order**
- II. 2:01 Presentation**
  - 1. Recognition of Volunteerism – Spirit of America Awards.
- III. 2:15 Public Comment - Public Comment during other portions of the meeting will only be granted by permission of the chair.**
- IV. 2:30 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 November 8, 2016.
    - iii. Minutes of Special Commission Meeting of November 8, 2016.
    - iv. Minutes of Special Commission Meeting of November 16, 2016.
    - v. Minutes of Special Commission Meeting of December 1, 2016 (Executive Session).
    - vi. Minutes of Special Commission Meeting with the Municipalities of December 1, 2016.
    - vii. Monthly Written Departmental Reports.
    - viii. Reserve Withdrawals.
- V. 2:35 Action Items**
  - 1. Act to Approve the Step 16 Special Bonuses Based on the Recommendation of the County Administrator.
  - 2. Act to Approve Revised Job Descriptions for Patrol Administrator and Patrol Supervisor.
  - 3. Act to Approve a Release of Easement to Regional School Unit #13 (RSU #13) at the Knox County Regional Airport.
  - 4. Act to Approve and Authorize the Chair to Sign the Request for Lease Assignment and Consent and Assignment for Transfer of Hangar #43 from Richard and Barbara Parsons Joint Trust to Keith and Dawn Daggett.
  - 5. Act to Approve and Authorize the Chair to Sign the Request for Lease Assignment and Consent and Assignment for Transfer of Hangar #49 from Pete (deceased) and Deanna Smith to Richard and Barbara Parsons Joint Trust.
  - 6. Act on Appointments to the Knox Regional Communications Center Executive Board for 2017.
  - 7. Act to Close the Knox County Administrative Offices at Noon on Friday, December 23, 2016.
  - 8. Act on Appointment of a Commissioner to the Strategic Plan Sub-Committee.
  - 9. Act on 2017 Budget Vote Implementation.
- VI. 2:55 Discussion Items**
  - 1. Discussion of Memo to the Commission on Response to Public Comment.
  - 2. Discussion of Sheriff's Office Providing ACO Services to Municipalities of Knox County.
- VII. 3:10 Other Business**
- VIII. 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 reminded everyone that meetings are now televised and asked everyone to refrain from having side conversations.

**II. Volunteer Recognition Presentation.**

Administrator Hart briefly spoke about each award recipient before handing out their certificates:

Nancy Brown – Town of Appleton: Ms. Brown has been involved in numerous town activities, including the Mildred Stevens Williams Memorial Library, the Appleton Historical Society, Appleton Bicentennial Committee, Appleton Sesquicentennial Committee, Appleton Memorial Association, 4-H, reading with kindergarten students, acting as archivist at the Appleton Historical Society, library volunteer, as well as other activities and duties.

Walter Rich – Town of Union: Mr. Rich served in the military for many years and also served with a local Boy Scout Troop. He’d been an active member of the original Chamber of Commerce, Union Fair Trustee, Union Corporation for Better Housing, Town Budget Committee, Planning Board, Appeals Board, and 911 Committee. In the time since Mr. Rich was recognized by the Town of Union, he has unfortunately passed away. The award will be given to Jay Feyler to present to Mr. Rich’s family.

Priscilla Packard – Town of Washington: Ms. Packard is the Overseer of the Evening Star Grange #183 and has been involved with the grange for many years. She is a member of the scholarship committee and Ladies Guild. She collects an average \$100’s worth of cans and bottles and redeems them so that the money can be donated to either the local food pantry or the Pope Memorial Animal Shelter in Thomaston. Ms. Packard was unable to attend so her friend Mildred Melguard accepted the award on her behalf. Ms. Melguard stated that Ms. Packard helps the elderly even though she’s 82 and is very modest about her activities.

**III. Public Comment**

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

**IV. 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 November 8, 2016.
- iii. Minutes of Special Commission Meeting of November 8, 2016.
- iv. Minutes of Special Commission Meeting of November 16, 2016.
- v. Minutes of Special Commission Meeting of December 1, 2016 (Executive Session).
- vi. Minutes of Special Commission Meeting with the Municipalities of December 1, 2016.
- vii. Monthly Written Departmental Reports.
- viii. Reserve Withdrawals

- A motion was made by Commissioner Richard Parent to approve the consent items as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carol Maines.

Commissioner Moody asked Director Lothrop about a helicopter doing a propane lift to the generator at the tower site above the Snow Bowl because he said he thought an ATV could do it instead. Director Lothrop responded that it’s possible to use an ATV, but the Snow Bowl staff doesn’t want the County to do that so he had to use the helicopter instead.

- A vote was taken with all in favor.

**Reserve Withdrawals:**

Forfeiture Money – Federal	200008-12680	\$13,061.50
	Total	\$13,061.50

**V. Action Items**

1. Act to Approve the Step 16 Special Bonuses Based on the Recommendation of the County Administrator.  
The Special Bonus is for employees that were on Step 16 in 2015 and did not receive a Step increase in 2016. If they receive the bonus, they receive it at the end of the year. The bonuses are budgeted in the annual budget at 2% in case the bonus is later approved at the full 2%. There are 9 employees that fall into this category this year. The total amount is \$7,356.75.
  - A motion was made by Commissioner Carol Maines to approve the Step 16 Special Bonuses based on the recommendation of the county administrator. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Roger Moody. A vote was taken with two in favor (Commissioners Maines and Moody) and one opposed (Commissioner Parent).
  
2. Act to Approve Revised Job Descriptions for Patrol Administrator and Patrol Supervisor.  
As was discussed during the 2017 budget process, the Sheriff's Office decided to go back to having a patrol administrator position, which means going from having four supervisors, down to three. The change will help correct some chain of command struggles that the department has dealt with in 2016 without a patrol administrator. When there was no patrol administrator, the supervisors took on some of the duties of that position, but now that the position is being restored, the job descriptions for both positions need to be revised to reflect the actual duties that will be performed by each. The changes were proposed by Chief Deputy Carroll and Sheriff Dennison, and then approved by the Position Classification Committee. The Grades of the employees affected by the changing job descriptions will not go up or down, so the budgeted amount is still accurate.
  - A motion was made by Commissioner Richard Parent to approve the revised job descriptions for Patrol Administrator and Patrol Supervisor. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carol Maines. A vote was taken with all in favor.
  
3. Act to Approve a Release of Easement to Regional School Unit #13 (RSU #13) at the Knox County Regional Airport.  
Airport Manager Jeff Northgraves explained that RSU13 was looking into their options for building new schools and they discovered that there was an old easement on the property where the old elementary school is. The easement was for the use of the land for the airport when it was under the control of the Navy. The purpose of the easement was to provide water through pipes that ran through the property. Now the property uses public water so those pipes aren't even used. The FAA has determined that the County can release that easement.
  - A motion was made by Commissioner Carol Maines to approve a release of an easement to Regional School Unit #13 at the Knox County Regional Airport. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Richard Parent. A vote was taken with all in favor.
  
4. Act to Approve and Authorize the Chair to Sign the Request for Lease Assignment and Consent and Assignment for Transfer of Hangar #43 from Richard and Barbara Parsons Joint Trust to Keith and Dawn Daggett.  
Hangar #43 has been sold and this step transfers the land lease to the new owner. Commissioner Moody asked how people find out if hangars are for sale. Airport Manager Northgraves answered that individuals will sometimes contact him to ask if there are any up for sale, there's also a real estate agent that handles those and lists them, and those selling their hangars sometimes advertise it themselves.
  - A motion was made by Commissioner Richard Parent to approve and authorize the Chair to sign the Request for Lease Assignment and Consent and Assignment for transfer of hangar #43 from Richard and Barbara Parsons Joint Trust to Keith and Dawn Daggett. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carol Maines. A vote was taken with all in favor.

5. Act to Approve and Authorize the Chair to Sign the Request for Lease Assignment and Consent and Assignment for Transfer of Hangar #49 from Pete (deceased) and Deanna Smith to Richard and Barbara Parsons Joint Trust.

Hangar #49 has been sold and this step transfers the land lease to the new owner.

- A motion was made by Commissioner Richard Parent to approve and authorize the Chair to sign the Request for Lease Assignment and Consent and Assignment for transfer of hangar #49 from Pete (deceased) and Deanna Smith to Richard and Barbara Parsons Joint Trust. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carol Maines. A vote was taken with all in favor.

6. Act on Appointments to the Knox Regional Communications Center Executive Board for January 1, 2017 - December 31, 2018.

At the KRCC Users Group meeting on October 19, 2016, the Users Group voted to recommend Craig Cooley from Rockport PD for the Law Enforcement seat, Rusty Barnard from Rockland and Thomaston EMS for the EMS seat, and Camden Fire Chief Chris Farley for the Fire seat. These are two-year terms, expiring on December 31, 2018.

- A motion was made by Commissioner Carol Maines to appoint Craig Cooley to the Law Enforcement seat, Rusty Barnard to the EMS seat and Chris Farley to the Fire seat, for two year terms on the KRCC Executive Board, ending on 12/31/18. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Richard Parent. A vote was taken with all in favor.

7. Act to Close the Knox County Administrative Offices at Noon on Friday, December 23, 2016.

Almost every year the request is made to close at noon on Christmas Eve if it falls within the work week. This year Christmas Eve is on a Saturday but Administrator Hart asked if the Commission wished to close early on the 23<sup>rd</sup> because Clerk of Courts Eileen Bridges had informed him that the State Courts will all be closing at Noon on Friday, December 23. Administrator Hart recommended following suit with the Courts and explained that this would not be considered a holiday, but rather an early closing. The decision of whether or not to close before Christmas will be decided annually by the Commission.

- A motion was made by Commissioner Richard Parent to close the Knox County Administrative Offices early at noon on Friday, December 23, 2016. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carol Maines. A vote was taken with all in favor.

8. Act on Appointment of a Commissioner to the Strategic Plan Sub-Committee.

Administrator Hart explained that when the Commission did his annual performance evaluation, one of the goals he was given for 2016 was to "establish a strategic planning process in coordination with Department Managers to establish goals for the County Administrator and Department Managers for their respective departments." In an effort to meet this goal, Administrator Hart said that he has met with department managers to discuss long range planning. Some departments already have comprehensive written plans, such as the Airport, while some others have no formal long range plan. Since there is no long range plan for the County as a whole, the best next step is to form a Strategic Planning Group that will meet a few times in the January - March 2017 timeframe to develop a county-wide vision. He said he planned to select five to six department managers to participate in this process and would also like to have one Commissioner be appointed to the Group as well. Once the Group has drafted a Vision for Knox County as a whole, Administrator Hart will have department managers review the draft and then bring it to the Commission. Once finalized, the Knox County Vision will provide a frame of reference for departments to move forward with their own strategic planning efforts. He said that he would like to establish a long term plan for the County that will encompass the next three years - until 1/1/2020. The goal is to have the Plan complete by June 30, 2017.

Commissioner Parent suggested that the Commission should wait until January to act because there will be a new commissioner. Administrator Hart explained that he had placed this item on the December agenda because he was hoping to have the group start meeting in January.

Commissioner Maines felt that 3 years was too short of a period for a strategic plan. Administrator Hart said that this was just to get the process started and that there was no reason it couldn't be extended out further later on. He added that he will be meeting with outgoing Commissioner Moody next week to discuss his thoughts on the future of the County before his term ends on 12/31/16.

- A motion was made by Commissioner Carol Maines to table this item until the January 10<sup>th</sup> Regular Commission meeting to appoint a commissioner to serve on the Strategic Plan Sub-Committee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Richard Parent. A vote was taken with all in favor.

9. Act on 2017 Budget Vote Implementation.

At the 12/8 public hearing on the 2017 budget proposal, the Communications budget was cut by \$40,000 and \$16,250 was cut from the Patrol budget. The Commission wanted to discuss how to proceed with the deputy communications director position and how to fund it, as well as whether to do anything about the funds cut from the Patrol budget.

Communications Budget

Communications Director Lothrop was asked for his opinion and recommendation. He said he had reservations about whether using his reserve funds for recurring operating funds is appropriate. He said that since he keeps a pretty tight budget, there isn't enough non-personnel services in his budget to cut \$40,000 without eliminating a position from his staff. The Budget Committee didn't seem to understand that the \$71,000 increase that brought his budget up by 7% had nothing to do with the deputy director position. It had to do with the increases in worker's comp, retirement, health insurance, and the reclassification of the dispatchers and dispatch supervisors. There's nothing that can be cut except a personnel position. He stated that he felt like the Budget Committee had already made their decision before he ever entered the room and didn't feel like he was listened to. If the reserves are used to fund the deputy position, it will significantly lower his reserve funds which could create a problem later if there are any unanticipated large expenses. However, the KRCC really needs that position and if he has to use the reserves to do it, then that's probably what the County will have to do. He added that he planned to work with the KRCC Executive Board in the coming year to perhaps re-label funds since the Budget Committee just sees it as a pot of free money sitting there.

Administrator Hart voiced agreement with Director Lothrop's assessment and suggested that at the next quarterly budget meeting the KRCC Executive Board attend to educate the Budget Committee about KRCC staffing and undesignated fund balances and what that's set up for. He said that he didn't understand why the Committee said at the November 17<sup>th</sup> meeting that they didn't support the deputy director position, and then at the public hearing on December 8<sup>th</sup> they said that wasn't true. He said that didn't make any sense because he and Director Lothrop wouldn't have done all that research that was presented to the Committee at the December 8<sup>th</sup> hearing if the Committee hadn't said those things at the November 17<sup>th</sup> meeting and asked for more information. The Committee got bogged down in policy and they have no right to do that. There's nothing wrong with asking questions but some of them dig in to areas they shouldn't. The Committee members need to be communicating with their towns since they are the users of the communications system. The Committee members seem to be speaking for themselves and not for their town.

Commissioner Moody noted that the Commission was unanimously in favor of the budget presented by the county administrator and next year when the Committee sees the deficit in the Communications budget, they'll have to take responsibility for that.

Commissioner Maines stated that the Budget Committee vote on the budget was very disappointing. Not only did they not listen to all three of the commissioners, but they didn't listen to Administrator Hart, Director Lothrop, or the Executive Board, all of whom supported the budget. The argument was that public safety often asks for the latest and greatest technology and that was the reason for why the budget was too high, but this kind of department needs the latest technology because of what it does.

Commissioner Parent commented that some of the Committee members seemed to be changing their minds but in the end voted with the rest of the Committee against the Commission, which was disappointing.

- A motion was made by Commissioner Richard Parent to take \$40,000 from communications undesignated fund balance to restore the funding cut by the Knox County Budget Committee. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carol Maines. A vote was taken with all in favor.

#### Patrol Budget

Commissioner Moody asked what should be done about the funding cut for patrol computers. Chief Deputy Carroll thanked the Commission for having supported the Sheriff's request for the funding for laptops because they are so badly needed. The department needs to follow a laptop replacement schedule that makes sense. Drug forfeiture funds could be used to pay for things like that, but a lot of the funds have been used each year to offset the patrol budget by putting it towards vehicles used by the Sheriff's Department. Staff still need equipment to effectively do their jobs and can't use forfeiture to fund everything. He warned that it is going to catch up with the County that the department will still need equipment but suddenly there's no more forfeiture funds left. The money will run out.

Commissioner Moody asked if Sheriff Dennison will be asking the Commission for the \$16,250 to be transferred from forfeiture funds at the next Commission meeting. Chief Deputy Carroll said that the laptops are in such bad shape that they really can't wait to have them replaced. Systems Administrator Mike Dean had rated them all to see which laptops are in the worst condition and need to be replaced first. The department will start by just replacing six laptops with the funds that were included in the 2017 budget, and then see if they need forfeiture funds for the rest.

Commissioner Parent suggested that the Commission should wait for Systems Administrator Dean to be present before making any decisions. Chief Deputy Carroll agreed.

## **VI. Discussion Items**

1. Discussion of Memo to the Commission on Response to Public Comment.  
This agenda item is a follow-up to the June 28, 2016 Citizen Request for Knox County government to Adopt New Work Rules Under Section 2.14 of the Knox County Personnel Policy Handbook and that was further explained in Mr. Theodore Berry's public comments at the July 12, 2016 Commission Meeting. HR Consultant Laurie Bouchard researched these items and the Commission had been given a summary of her findings. Many of these items will appear in the Proposed 2017 County of Knox Personnel Policy Handbook that will be effective January 1, 2017 once approved in January by the Commission.
2. Discussion of Sheriff's Office Providing ACO Services to Municipalities of Knox County.  
Chief Deputy Tim Carroll explained that the Sheriff's Office gets a lot of calls for Animal Control Officer (ACO) services. It seems to be tough for municipalities to hang on to an ACO. The towns have also found it difficult to find an ACO once they are without one, so the Sheriff's Office has been looking at possibly providing that service to the municipalities. He said that Sergeant Matthew Elwell had researched what the towns have for ACO budgets. Some of the funds goes to the shelters to pay for the animals that get taken there. If the towns pay the SO their ACO funds, the County can provide that service without increasing their county taxes. There are some logistics that still need to be worked out but the budgeted numbers from the towns show that the Sheriff's Office can start providing for the

towns that want it. The County would contract with the towns for the service like the Shellfish Warden agreement. There would have to be money for training and it would mean extra wear on the vehicles. He clarified that ACO's only deal with domesticated animal issues (dogs, cats, etc.) and wild animals are under the jurisdiction of the Fisheries & Wildlife Service. There may be some issues with putting animals in the patrol vehicles but they usually aren't taken far – usually just to the animal's owner's home or the shelter. The department is still working out whether it makes sense for patrol to handle those types of duties for the towns, but Chief Deputy Carroll just wanted to give the Commission an update.

## VII. Other Business

### Commissioner Roger Moody

Commissioner Maines wanted it noted that this was Commissioner Moody's last meeting since his term ends at the end of the month. She said that he has been a commissioner for the past eight years and asked him to share what he considers high points during those eight years.

Commissioner Moody welcomed Commissioner-Elect Sharyn Pohlman who was present at the meeting and will be taking his place on January 1<sup>st</sup>. He said that he thinks that the County is in a pretty good place after the eight years he has served as commissioner. The terminal building at the airport and the public safety building are both in place. The Commission has dealt with a lot of complicated issues. The Wage and Compensation study and the IT study were all really important. He said that he was pleased with the diligence of the county administrator and department heads in implementing the recommendations that came out of those studies. There were a large number of repairs made to the Courthouse, which is very important because of the history of the building and it is a part of the Commission's legacy. A 911 addressing system has been established on Criehaven and there have been many improvements made at the airport. He said he was pleased that the department heads seem to work much more as a team than they used to. He said that he has enjoyed working with his fellow commissioners, being able to disagree respectfully, but mostly be on the same page most of the time.

Commissioner Parent commented that he was elected at the same time as Commissioner Moody and has tended to rely on Commissioner Moody's background and knowledge and would miss him dearly. He called Commissioner Moody a great friend and great commissioner. Commissioner Maines agreed.

## VIII. 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 3:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Candice Richards  
Administrative Assistant

**The Knox County Commission approved these minutes at their regular meeting held on January 10, 2017.**