

The County of Cumberland is committed to providing quality services to all citizens equitably, in a responsive and caring manner.

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

MINUTES

August 13, 2007

The Board of Cumberland County Commissioners, Esther B. Clenott, Richard J. Feeney and Malory Shaughnessy convened a meeting at the Cumberland County Courthouse in the Peter J. Feeney Conference room.

Chairman Feeney called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and the following business was conducted.

Minutes of the Cumberland County Special Meeting on July 23, 2007 were read and approved unanimously and the Regular Meeting of July 23, 2007 were read and approved unanimously.

Comments from the County Manager:

Peter Crichton, County Manager, reported on 4 items: 1) He introduced Scott Tilton, the new administrator for the Town of North Yarmouth, who replaced Scott Seaver. 2) He gave an update on the Human Services new criteria and the discussions taking place. There was a productive meeting prior to the Commissioner's meeting today with over 15 agencies to discuss the new funding criteria. It is fair to say that in large part this new criteria is being motivated by what is happening with the funding constraints of the County. There have been a number of meetings with these agencies to ask for their input and we have developed four priorities for the funding. a) The funding will be directed towards the prevention and delivery of services having to do with mental health, substance abuse, and domestic violence. b) The funding will be for region wide programs that are not necessarily related to the categories mentioned above. c) Efforts to reduce recidivism at the jail. (The jail is the biggest part of the County's budget and represents 65% of the County assessment to municipalities, and is becoming more and more of a challenge for us with the lack of funding from the State). d) Food and shelter for people who are in need of that critical safety net. He added that he will be suggesting to the Budget Advisory Committee and Commissioners a reduction in funding for the Human Service agencies from \$287,000 to \$187,000. 3) The FY08 Budget process has started. Department heads have submitted their department requests and will be meeting with the County Manager's budget team to consider the requests. The manger hopes to meet with individual members from the Budget Advisory Committee to review those requests. The revenue stream is narrowing because of the real estate market being down. In addition, we have put a self imposed cap on how many inmates we can take in because we have found with the mental health issues and substance abuse issues that having more than 500 inmates on a regular basis is a huge problem. 4) In terms of the jail, at

the last meeting of the Maine County Commissioners Association which he and Commissioner Shaughnessy attended, a committee was formed to look at county corrections across the state and try to have a more unified county jail system to find better ways to manage the jail's costs efficiently and effectively. Hopefully, we can produce savings that can then go back to the counties, as well as provide property tax relief.

Comments from the Commissioners:

Commissioner Clenott:

Commissioner Clenott continues to be busy with the children's sports team from Shinagawa as part of her responsibility for the City of Portland. She has also been involved with attending meetings with County personnel and is preparing for the upcoming tax abatement hearings in Harpswell.

Commissioner Shaughnessy:

Commissioner Shaughnessy commented that in the case of the Human Services agencies, we have targeted criteria for funding of the Human Services agencies to more effectively meet the needs that the Commissioners see. She has grave concerns about municipalities having to cut human services funding because of their school budgets and other things that are increasing in their budgets. As a county, we need to look across the region and see what those needs are.

Chairman Feeney:

Chairman Feeney commented that part of the reason for the new human services criteria is to find out which agencies can directly affect what we are trying to do at the jail, especially in the promotion of recidivism. One of the things the Commissioners are going to have to consider is how much pain is going to be felt and where that pain is going to be spread. We certainly do not want the pain to be spread only onto the employees and to the departments of county government. A political question that is being explored and will need to be addressed by the Commissioners during the budgetary process is: are we ready to consider exceeding LD1? What is the message the Commissioners would be sending out to the public, who are asking the Commissioners to stay within the limits of LD1? These questions are very serious and have to be answered. It is a very serious challenge for us all.

Informational Item

Chairman Feeney asked if there were any comments from the public.

Mike Shea a citizen of Scarborough, a business owner in Scarborough, and former member of our county law enforcement is concerned about the current negotiations with the Sheriff's Deputies. His concern is the age of the officers who are 60 years old chasing 16 and 17 year old youths. His question to the Commissioners is what is the plan and where is this going? They are working without a contract. He is concerned about their retirement plan having to wait until 60 plus to retire. Chairman Feeney reported while negotiations are going on, the Commissioners and County Manager cannot discuss the contract.

Chairman Feeney asked if there were any more comments from the public. Don Foss a citizen and taxpayer of Raymond, who is currently a member of the Teamster Local 340, represented the group of deputies attending the meeting. He indicated they are concerned that from their standpoint the negotiation process is not going well at all. Through the media, they noticed hundreds of thousands of dollars that are being spent on county projects such as the Civic Center expansion study and an additional building being built for office space. They are concerned their needs are not being met and the money is going for other projects. In 2006, when they voted the contract in, it was their understanding there was light at the end of the tunnel and the retirement issue would be addressed.

Chairman Feeney indicated to Officer Foss that in regards to the Civic Center, there are four entities that are involved in the study and the County's portion is \$44,000 and that money was in the CIP and has been for a number of years. This study was proposed to put an end to whether the Civic Center can be rebuilt or whether there is going to be a new civic center. Chairman Feeney indicated to Officer Foss that the Commissioners have the highest esteem for them and will work to the end to do the best that can be done.

The County Manager reported on the new addition. They are interviewing developers who would make the investment, minimizing what the County would have to pay. This is a space needs issue that goes back 9 years and was identified both in the 2001 and the 2006 Strategic Plans. In regards to the retirement plan, the 2006 Strategic Plan did come back with a recommendation to have an affordable special retirement plan.

Paul Thorpe, a resident and taxpayer of Gorham and a deputy for the County indicated his concern is for the safety of the citizens and the deputies. When you have one deputy responsible for the citizens of six towns, it is ludicrous. It is a safety issue for the deputies. The crime rate is up in Maine and the deputies are overloaded. The deputies are getting older and starting to burn out. Hopefully, the Commissioners will look into this situation. Brian Ackerman, Detective at the Sheriff's Office, indicated he didn't mind killing himself for 25 years on the job because he has put his job first for the citizens of Cumberland County. All he asks is that he does not have to do this job when he is 60 years old. They are asking that the Commissioners drop the retirement age to 25 years of service. They certainly will work at another job somewhere after they retire from the County. This job is very stressful and he started when he was 20 years old and can do the job for 25 years, but asks consideration to drop the retirement age so they will be able to work at a less stressful job. Gerard Brady, Detective at the Sheriff's Office, indicated he has been working for the County for 27 years and is approaching 50 years old and there is no retirement plan for 25 years of service. It is very frustrating and stressful and they are working the extra shifts for the deputies who are out on injuries. He indicated the retirement plan is very important to the deputies and they need an earlier retirement age. Commissioner Clenott thanked the deputies for attending the meeting.

Action Items:

**07 – 088 Approval, Cumberland County Regional Communications
Department – Chebeague Island Communications Contract**

Chairman Feeney asked the County Manager for comments.

The County Manager indicated this is a new contract and Bill Holmes, Director of the Regional Emergency Communications Center will present the item. He concurs with the recommendation.

Mr. Holmes indicated he would be remiss if he didn't acknowledge the presence of the entire Sheriff's patrol unit attending the meeting. Several years ago, he had the pleasure of working with the patrol unit.

Mr. Holmes reported the Town of Chebeague Island became Maine's newest town effective July 1, 2007. As they established their town, one of the aspects to consider was emergency communications service. The Town of Chebeague Island has reviewed the proposed two year contract and has approved the proposal. This proposed contract is for Fire/Rescue emergency communications service at the rate of \$5.16 per capita for the first year and \$5.32 per capita for the second year. Revenue for the first year is \$1,548 and \$1,956 for the second year. The contract expires on June 30, 2009. A discussion followed.

Commissioner Shaughnessy made a Motion that the Commissioners approve the Emergency Communications Contract with the Town of Chebeague Island for a period of 2 years to expire on June 30, 2009. Commissioner Clenott seconded the Motion. All voted unanimously.

07 – 089 Approval, CRIMES Data Sharing Compatibility Project Grant Application

Chairman Feeney asked the County Manager for comments.

The County Manager reported this is a grant proposal having to do with the District Attorney's Office. John Joy, IT Director, Elizabeth Trice, Grants and Special Projects Coordinator are working in conjunction with the District Attorney. He concurs with the recommendation.

Ms. Trice indicated Stephanie Anderson, District Attorney, came to her with the grant and the deadline is August 17, 2007. The Maine Justice Assistance Council, on behalf of the national Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) is soliciting proposals to fund projects that develop and strengthen effective law enforcement and prosecution strategies to combat crimes against women. It was proposed by Stephanie Anderson to apply for \$48,000 to purchase and install an updated CRIMES computer system that will allow for tracking of crime data, improved charge, bail, and sentencing decisions, and allow for future data sharing with other agencies. The grant is a matching grant; the County's match will be \$16,000 that will be used to purchase a new computer server and to do training of staff. This money will come from the \$44,000 in the DA's CIP funds. A discussion followed.

Commissioner Clenott made a Motion that the Commissioners grant permission to apply for the Violence Against Women Act funds and accept the funds if awarded and the County's match will be \$16,000 from the DA's CIP funds. Commissioner Shaughnessy seconded the Motion. All voted unanimously.

07 – 090 Approval, A/C Unit for the Domestic Violence Area of the Cumberland County Courthouse

Chairman Feeney asked the County Manager for comments.

The County Manager asked Bruce Tarbox, Facilities Manager, to present the agenda item and concurs with the recommendation.

Mr. Tarbox reported this is a replacement for the existing leaking and inefficient water source heat pump located in the Domestic Violence area of the Cumberland County Courthouse. It is too costly to repair. We need to provide adequate temperature control in the Domestic Violence area at the courthouse. We need to replace the water-cooled heat pump with a Trane 3-1/2 ton water source heat pump. Vibration isolators and circuit balancing valve will ensure the proper water flow through the new unit. A zone valve will open when the thermostat calls for heating or cooling allowing water to flow through the condenser. There were two bidders: Mechanical Services, Inc. at \$10,495 and W.H. Demmons, Inc. at \$8,560. He is recommending W.H. Demmons, Inc. in the amount of \$8,650. They met all specifications and have done work for us in the past. He did put into the CIP account #71-705-7552 \$15,000 for this project and is recommending the \$6,000 be set aside for electrical work to be done by out sourcing and in-house. A discussion followed.

Commissioner Shaughnessy made a Motion that the Commissioners spend the amount of \$8,560 to W. H. Demmons, Inc. from the CIP account #71-705-7552 holding off \$6,000 set aside for electrical work to be done in-house or outsourced from that same account. Commissioner Clenott seconded that Motion. All voted unanimously.

07 – 091 Approval, Cumberland County Sheriff’s Office Commissions

Commissioner Clenott made a Motion that the Commissioners renew the following commissions Peter Beliveau, George Lee Bradbury, Thomas Caron, Charles Richard Elliott, Andrew Feeney, Erik Frigon, Regan Goan, David A. Hall, Kevin J. Joyce, Paul Pettengill, Randall G. Staples, Thomas Philip Williams from the Cumberland County Sheriff’s Office; Barry Cushman from Portland, Bruce Flanders, Michael J. Peacock, and Paul Martin from Yarmouth. Commissioner Shaughnessy seconded the Motion. All voted unanimously.

There being no further business Chairman Feeney made a Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 PM. Commissioner Clenott seconded the Motion. All voted unanimously.

ATTEST:

**Barbara M. Buckley
Deputy Clerk**

The next regular Commissioners meeting will be held at 6:00 PM on Monday, August 27, 2007, in the Peter J. Feeney Conference Room, 1st floor Annex, at the Cumberland County Courthouse.