

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES**

Maine
Cumberland **County**

Monday, April 11, 2021

CALL TO ORDER 5:36 PM

The Board of Commissioners for Cumberland County, Maine met for their regularly scheduled meeting at the Cumberland County Courthouse in the Peter Feeney Conference Room, the meeting was called to Order by Chair Susan Witonis.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ATTENDANCE

Present:

Commissioner Susan Witonis, Chair
Commissioner James Cloutier
Commissioner Stephen Gorden
Commissioner Thomas Coward
Commissioner Neil Jamieson

Absent:

County Staff:

James Gailey, County Manager
Alex Kimball, Deputy Manager of Finance and Administration
Katharine Cahoon, Administrative & Special Projects Coordinator
Liz Blackwell-Moore, Public Health Manager
Sandra Warren, Compliance and Audit Manager
Kristin Styles, Director of Community Development
Kevin Joyce, County Sheriff

County Guests:

Mark Swann, Director of Preble St

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Chair Witonis requested a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of March 14, 2022. A motion was made by Commissioner Jamieson and seconded by Commissioner Cloutier.

A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously in favor, 5-0.

INFORMATIONAL REPORT/PRESENTATIONS

2021 District Attorney Annual Report

2021 Violence Intervention Partnership Annual Report

Community Corrections Center Lease Memo from the Sheriff's Office.

Chair Witonis asked Sheriff Kevin Joyce to give a summary regarding the opportunity to lease the Community Corrections Center (CCC) as discussed with the Maine Department of Corrections (MDOC) to provide Transitional Housing in Portland. The CCC is currently vacant with no plans to open soon due to limited staffing and not enough inmates to justify using it. Sheriff Joyce went over the terms and services that the County Sheriff's office would and would not provide as outlined in his memo. Chair Witonis asked if the Sheriff's office would be at risk of losing State Jail Funding, the Sheriff explained that receiving revenue from the lease agreement would not jeopardize jail funding if the Jail continued to spend a portion (30%) of their Jail operating budget on the CCC. that the County currently receives. Should the Commissioners' support the MDOC's use of the CCC, the remaining obstacle would be receiving approval from the County's current insurance provider. Commissioner Cloutier asked if other facilities are doing a similar type of prerelease, Sheriff Joyce stated that Waldo County is doing transitional housing and the City of Bangor has transitional housing contracted with the Department of Corrections.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Cloutier and seconded by Commissioner Gorden to approve the consent agenda.

A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously in favor, 5-0.

Yes: Commissioners, Coward, Cloutier, Gorden, Jamieson and Witonis

- 22-030 Authorize the County's Assessing Contract with the Town of Falmouth, July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2025.**
- 22-031 Authorize the County's Communications Contract with the Town of Baldwin, July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2025.**
- 22-032 Appoint Commissioner Stephen Gorden as a County Delegate to the GPCOG General Assembly and amend Item 22-009 Committee Assignments for 2022.**

ARPA BUSINESS**22-033 Authorize \$365,000 with the Towns of Cumberland, Falmouth and Yarmouth for a Tri-Town Regional Crisis Project.**

County Manager Gailey gave an overview of the development of the Tri-Town Regional Crisis Project that is a collaboration with 3 different Towns. The executive staff worked with the Towns to craft a solution where the Mental Health services provided would be through an outside party for a 5 year contract for 2 staff. An RFP seeking health services has been drafted and will be released upon approval of Item 22-033. The progress of the services rendered will be monitored by the County's Public Health Director Liz Blackwell-Moore. The County will provide the initial funding of the contract using ARPA funds for the first year and the Towns will increase their contributions each subsequent year and will fully fund the contract in the 5th year of 2026.

County Manager Gailey explained that this project would serve as a pilot for County services that could be expanded to other municipalities.

Commissioner Gorden requested that the County consider funding this project with non ARPA funds and make it a permanent part of the County Budget.

Chair Witonis stated that she supported the project and encouraged Sheriff Joyce to look at exploring a similar project to serve the Lakes Region area utilizing funding from the State.

A motion was made by Commissioner Jamieson and seconded by Commissioner Cloutier to authorize \$365,000 with the Towns of Cumberland, Falmouth and Yarmouth for a Tri-Town Regional Crisis Project.

A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously in favor, 5-0.

Yes: Commissioners, Coward, Cloutier, Gorden, Jamieson and Witonis

22-034 ARPA Second Reading of Tier 1 project applications.

Compliance and Audit Manager Sandra Warren requested that the Commissioners approve the Tier 1 project applications reviewed by the ARPA Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Cloutier confirmed that the total ARPA funds available for public projects was around \$11 million, and the final recommended amount of funding was \$7.1 million or 65% and that additional funds of \$26 million would be available in round two (second tranche), Compliance Manager Warren confirmed that was correct. He summarized that \$30 million would be available for public funding? Compliance Manager Warren confirmed that that amount was correct. The projects that were delegated to Tier 3 and 4 were deemed to be more speculative and not ready for production. Commissioner Cloutier asked about housing for elderly, the theory behind the increase in construction in affordable housing for elderly and it's nexus related to the ARPA program. Compliance Manager Warren stated that the seniors were at a higher risk of exposure during the pandemic and more adversely affected. Similarly, seniors are typically on a fixed income and with inflation have been negatively economically impacted. Compliance Manager Warren added that Affordable Housing for seniors is easier to develop while multifamily housing, which there is a greater need, has a lot of barriers that the State of Maine is attempting to address.

A motion was made by Commissioner Jamieson and seconded by Commissioner Cloutier to accept the recommended Tier 1 ARPA projects.

A motion for amendment was made by Commissioner Cloutier and seconded by Commissioner Gorden to approve the amount awarded to the Preble Street Food Hub be increased from the recommended amount of \$1.5 million to \$2.5 million.

Commissioner Cloutier stated that the Preble St program offers a much needed service, food to low income people. He continued and said that other municipalities including Westbrook, City of Portland, and the City of South Portland are not currently contributing financially. Funding for this type of project is important because of the important role that it plays in the community. Commissioner Cloutier added that he felt this was the most important application the County had received because it the Federal program that subsidizes low income families and children has ended and this will help to take it's place.

Chair Witonis asked County Manager Gailey why he chose not to fund the full project request. County Manager Gailey stated that the Preble St program provides invaluable services to the region. The decision for the partial funding award was based on the County Commissioners previous decision to partially fund 2 major homelessness projects in the Fall of 2021. The projects addressing homelessness included a new City of Portland Shelter, a new Shelter in Cooks Corner Brunswick

area and a regional Homelessness survey which all received 50% of their requested funding. County Manager Gailey used the same metric to apply it to the Preble St application based on the assumption that remaining funding would come from other sources. Commissioner Jamieson agreed with County Manager Gailey's approach and by partially funding current applicants, it guarantees that the "wealth is spread out" and that other future projects will receive funding.

Commissioner Gorden asked how much additional funding the Preble St program received. Preble St Director Mark Swain offered to answer the Commissioners questions. He stated that \$15 million was raised for a separate shelter project and he cannot approach the same donors for more funds. The food hub is budgeted for \$8 million, total funds raised include \$2.4 million and borrowed \$2 million for mortgage for a total of \$4.2 million and an additional \$1.5 million committed from the County Commissioner for a total of \$6.7 million. Commissioner Jamieson asked if South Portland would commit funds to the project, Director Swain stated that he was not sure.

A vote was called to approve the proposed amendment and the motion failed, 1-4.

Yes: Commissioner Cloutier

No: Commissioners, Coward, Gorden, Jamieson and Witonis

A vote was called to approve the motion as originally proposed and the motion passed unanimously in favor, 5-0.

Yes: Commissioners, Coward, Cloutier, Gorden, Jamieson and Witonis

22-035 Approve the Sixth Amendment to Jail Health Services Agreement between Armor Correctional Health Services, Inc. and Cumberland County using ARPA funds.

County Manager Gailey stated that the amendment presented to the Commissioners was to allow wage encases for Armor Health/Dana, a private correctional health provider, has experienced very high turnover. According to the pay classification presented by Armor Health and it was agreed that wages could be increased to the 80th percentile on the payscale for different staff. The medical physician was contracted at 6 hours a week but is working 32 hours to make up for the staffing shortage. Given the additional hours that the medical physician is willing to commit to, a short term pay increase for the medical physician as an incentive to continue to cover the staffing

shortage.

Commissioner Gorden suggested that the item include an amendment to allow the County Manager to increase employee pay without need to go before the County Commissioners. The amendment was not discussed further.

Commissioner Cloutier asked why the separate amendment was not included in an existing contract with the County. Deputy Manager of Finance and Administration Alex Kimball answered that it was a separate amendment to allow for the use of ARPA funds.

Commissioner Gorden asked how this contract would be funded in the future. Deputy Manager of Finance Kimball stated that it would not be funded with ARPA funds and will create a budget hit in the future. There is uncertainty regarding staffing

Sheriff Joyce spoke about the matter and stated that Armor Health provided a vital service to the Jail especially when inmates are sick and they have been extraordinarily sick due to the pandemic.

Commissioner Cloutier requested that a staffing update be provided at 90 days especially with the new COVID variant.

A motion was made by Commissioner Jamieson and seconded by Commissioner Coward to approve the Sixth Amendment to Jail Health Services Agreement between Armor Correctional Health Services, Inc. and Cumberland County using ARPA funds.

A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously in favor, 5-0.

Yes: Commissioners, Coward, Cloutier, Gorden, Jamieson and Witonis

NEW BUSINESS

22-036 Approve the Community Development 2022-2026 Five Year Consolidated Plan, included an updated Citizen Participation Plan and 2022 Annual Action Plan.

Community Development Director Kristin Styles introduced the County's Five Year Consolidated Action plan to be submitted to the Housing and Urban Development. The study revealed that housing, homelessness, mental health and substance use are major issues and worker shortages are a market issue. The goal of the strategic plan

aligns with the County's goal of assisting low and moderate income individuals and low and areas where low and moderate income individuals live. She referenced Aaron Shapiro had a theory that goals should be broad and encompass needs that are specific to certain areas. She highlighted the funding goals identified by the Municipal Oversight Committee (MOC) which will continue to support the creation and rehabilitation of affordable housing, create and improve public services, create and improve public infrastructure and facilities, support economic development, and support community planning.

The Citizen Participation Plan has changed in the last year especially during an emergency and where it is posted. The plan will be posted online where as in the past the plan was posted in libraries, but libraries were inaccessible as they were closed during the pandemic.

Director Styles stated that her department had not received the final budget from HUD and expect to hear back from HUD by May 16, 2022 while the plan is required to be submitted by May 15, 2022. The proposed spending plan is based on estimates from the previous year of \$1.5 million. \$759,000 will be allocated to CDBG which is released every December. And two set aside communities, Bridgton \$200,000 and South Portland \$441,000 which is allocated to projects of their choosing while the County's projects must be approved by the Commissioners. The process and scoring criteria remain the same as previous years. She noted that this year was unique in that there was an abundance of funding sources and funds remained in the Development Application. The solution to utilize the remaining funds was to create a pot of money available to prior year CDBG applicants to address increasing costs in their construction. The plan is available on the CDBG website and the agenda packet, 29 projects have been selected and depending on the amount of funds allocated from HUD may or may not affect the amount of funds awarded.

Director Styles continued, the amount of funds available for the HOME consortium funds include the program income of \$150,000 and \$384,000. Commissioner Jamieson asked about funds allocated to Habitat to Humanity for \$90,000. Director Styles stated that it is program that provides emergency home repairs for low income homeowners.

This is the first reading and public comment period, no vote was taken.

22-020

Authorize the Sheriff's Office to accept the Violence Against Women Grant from Through These Doors to reimburse up to 50% of the current detective position from 2022 to 2024.

Sheriff Joyce presented this item citing the importance of it's role to address domestic violence which has gone up 10% in the areas that are patrolled. The grant will allow the Sheriff's office to fund the position of a detective to allocate 50% of their time to do follow up on domestic violence incidents and crimes against people. The estimated amount is \$150,000.

A motion was made by Commissioner Cloutier and seconded by Commissioner Jamieson to authorize the Sheriff's Office to accept the Violence Against Women Grant from Through These Doors to reimburse up to 50% of the current detective position from 2022 to 2024

A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously in favor, 5-0.

Yes: Commissioners, Coward, Cloutier, Gorden, Jamieson and Witonis

22-037 Approve the bid award to Quirk Auto, Augusta, Maine, to purchase (8) eight Patrol Vehicles for \$269,966.40 and (1) one CID Vehicle for \$33,138.80 to replace older fleet vehicles.

A motion was made by Commissioner Jamieson and seconded by Commissioner Gorden to approve the bid award to Quirk Auto, Augusta, Maine, to purchase (8) eight Patrol Vehicles for \$269,966.40 and (1) one CID Vehicle for \$33,138.80.

A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously in favor, 5-0.

Yes: Commissioners, Coward, Cloutier, Gorden, Jamieson and Witonis

22-038 Approve the Sheriff's Office to accept the grant of \$4,500 and match requirement of \$1,125 from the 2022 BHS DRE/FP Training and Call-Out Grant.

Sheriff Joyce presented this item from the Bureau of Highway Safety (BHS) Drug Recognition Program (DRE) to train law enforcement personnel to identify drugs. There is a new synthetic drug that is 20 to 100 times more potent than fentanyl, out of State training is beneficial due to being able to identify the myriad of types of drugs that might not be prevalent in Maine. The grant will also financially support the call out of the personnel while they are at training.

A motion was made by Commissioner Cloutier and seconded by Commissioner Coward to approve the Sheriff's Office to accept the

grant of \$4,500 and match requirement of \$1,125 from the 2022 BHS DRE/FP Training and Call-Out Grant.

A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously in favor, 5-0.

Yes: Commissioners, Coward, Cloutier, Gorden, Jamieson and Witonis

22-039 Proclamation for May 1 – May 7, 2022 as Public Service Recognition Week.

A motion was made by Commissioner Cloutier and seconded by Commissioner Coward to proclaim May 1 – May 7, 2022 as Public Service Recognition Week.

A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously in favor, 5-0.

Yes: Commissioners, Coward, Cloutier, Gorden, Jamieson and Witonis

22-040 Proclamation for May 1 – May 7, 2022 as National Correctional Officer Week.

A motion was made by Commissioner Jamieson and seconded by Commissioner Cloutier to proclaim May 1 – May 7, 2022 as National Correctional Officer Week.

A vote was called and the motion passed unanimously in favor, 5-0.

Yes: Commissioners, Coward, Cloutier, Gorden, Jamieson and Witonis

COMMENTS FROM THE COUNTY MANAGER

County Manager Gailey shared that the Regional Communications Center employees had received some Statewide recognition. Erin Wolfe, received a “Silent Hero” award and wanted to congratulate her for her commitment. Supervisor Scottie Frank was recognized by the State of Maine as the Supervisor of the Year. Supervisor Franklin also assisted with a 23 mile long car chase that involved a team of individuals consisted of Rachal Beal, Jack Bueler, Sam King, Nicole Dexter, Allison Labonte, and Jennifer Skinner.

COMMENTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE STAFF

Sheriff Joyce shared that Corrections Officer hiring had improved slightly, 12 new people were hired and 5 are going through the academy and received 1 notice of

retirement. A few additional stressors on staff are performing hospital detail for inmates and currently handling an extradition of an individual to Massachusetts who is refusing to go. The Sheriff stated that the past 2 months have been draining on the staff given the limited resources and staffing available.

COMMENTS FROM THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

The Commissioners did not have anything to add Commissioner Cloutier who was curious about the work that Consolidated Communications is doing and was wondering if Director of Public Affairs Travis Kennedy could provide an update at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Cloutier and seconded by Commissioner Coward to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 pm.