

Maine
Cumberland **County**

CUMBERLAND COUNTY FINANCE COMMITTEE
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Wednesday, October 13, 2021

The County Finance Committee held their meeting on Zoom.
The public may watch the YouTube video on [cumberlandcounty.org/live](https://www.cumberlandcounty.org/live)

5:30 PM

Call to Order 5:32 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Cumberland County Commissioners:

Commissioner Susan Witonis, District #2

Finance Committee Members:

Lee Pratt, Town of Gorham, District #1

Paul Tworog, Town of Bridgton, District #1

Dustin Ward, Town of New Gloucester, District #2

Robert Vail, Town of Cumberland, District #3

Jocelyn Leighton, City of South Portland, District #4

County Staff:

Jim Gailey, County Manager

Alex Kimball, Deputy Manager of Finance and Administration

Don Brewer, HR Director

Public Comment Received

There was no public comment.

Amendments to the Agenda

There were no objections.

1. Approval of Minutes – September 29, 2021

Robert Vail so moved, and Lee Pratt seconded the motion to approve the minutes from September 29, 2021.

A Roll call vote was taken and the motion passed, 5-0.

Yes: Lee Pratt, Robert Vail, Paul Tworog, Jocelyn Leighton, Dustin Ward

2. Overview of information requested form last meeting

a. Enterprise Accounts

Chair Ward asked for clarification regarding summer contracts for Sheriff's office. County Manager Gailey explained that they're contracts with towns to provide Sheriff Deputy support during the summer months. Deputy Manager of Finance and Administration Alex Kimball explained that these are bid positions that are roving positions and not necessarily shift work.

Jocelyn Leighton asked about the Civil Deputies, why no employees? And Domestic Violence (DV) grant? Deputy Manager Kimball explained that Civil Deputies is longer in the enterprise account but he felt like he needed to leave that item in. He explained that the DV employee is a County Employee that manages the implementation of the DV grant and works part time and funded through the general fund. The grant was also recently renewed.

Chair Ward asked the group if they had questions about the Cross Insurance Arena (CIA). Paul Tworog asked if they could relate their expenses to their revenues. Deputy Manager Kimball explained that the CIA is on a fiscal year budget so reporting is skewed. County Manger Gailey offered that the CIA budget is usually forecasted out 16 months and the basis for the revenue generation. Bob Vail asked if the CIA is self-sustaining. County Manager Gailey said that the County usually has a subsidy, the CIA has historically paid for itself up until 2013 when the arena was coming back from renovations and the Pirates hockey team left. County Manager Gailey speculated that had the pandemic not occurred, the CIA would have come close to making budget in 2019/2020. Paul Tworog sought clarification regarding who was responsible for building improvements, Spectra or the County, County Manager Gailey stated that the County is responsible for paying for building improvements. Jocelyn Leighton asked how the County would utilize ARPA funds toward the CIA, County Manager Gailey stated that there would be a possible air lock and purchase of a generator to enable the CIA to serve as an Alternative Care Site.

Paul Tworog asked if there was a summary of County Grants how much was spent? Deputy Manager directed Committee members to page 25 and went over the different reoccurring grants that the County receives in addition to smaller one time grants.

b. Department Staffing

Bob Vail commented that overall, the County looked like a stable workforce. Chair Ward asked about the Deeds Department and how the workforce was reduced. County Manager Gailey said that the Department is now supported by technology and documents are available electronically via a database.

Bob Vail asked what role the planners do in the Emergency Mgmt. Agency

(EMA). County Manager Gailey said that they do preparation planning for emergency and natural disasters. Bob Vail asked who the point person was for each community, County Manager Gailey said that each community had a local point person for their community that works with the three County EMA planners, deputy director and director. Currently, they're working with the towns to have an all hazards plan in place, to be eligible for reimbursement of Federal Funds in the event of disaster. Bob Vail asked whether or not the County had considered consolidating emergency services for certain regions. County Manager Gailey noted that it has been a past discussion that has been met with some resistance due to the historical nature and strong identity of fire departments. Bob Vail offered that the Town of Cumberland and North Yarmouth are discussing the potential of joining the Fire Departments for cost saving reasons and would be interested in the potential savings if the County consolidated emergency operations.

Chair Ward thanked Bob Vail for his comments.

c. Payroll & Benefit Scenarios – Benefits a Percentage of Salary

Jocelyn Leighton asked if there was a COLA or hazard pay for County Employees. County Manager explained that employees were going to receive a 3% COLA and Corrections Officers received hazard pay when applicable, during an outbreak, etc. Bob Vail asked about termination pay of around \$400,000. Deputy Manager Kimball explained that the termination pay was for unused leave pay upon the separation of an employee. It is also used for year-end sick and leave cash outs per union and personnel policy. Bob Vail was surprised that there was no ordinance that required a buffer in the termination account.

d. Salaries of Employees 2021

Chair Ward asked about salary increases, merit and COLA pay, how is that determined? County Manager Gailey explained that employees do not receive merit pay but do receive a step after every 5 years. HR Director Don Brewer stated that new employees receive a performance review after the first 6 months and then annually thereafter.

e. Top 2021 salary changes

Bob Vail asked how employees' salaries are determined for incoming employees who replace higher salary with more seniority. Determining the new salary is based on a number of factors mainly offering a wage that is competitive. Bob Vail asked how the County was dealing with succession planning, HR Director Brewer offered that there are a number of factors regarding succession planning and sometimes advancement in certain areas may or may not have more restrict schedules and less seniority.

3. Overview of questions for the five department for October 20th meeting

Chair Ward wanted to look at the top 5 budgets, ask 4 questions relating to salaries, health insurance, taxes, tax stabilizations and ARPA funds.

The first Department discussed was the Sheriff's Department. Jocelyn Leighton asked about the wellness initiative and why there was a \$10,000 increase. County Manager Gailey explained that this would cover the cost of a psychologist for peer support, and this initiative was actually cut because the County offers a robust EAP service to all employees. Chair Ward asked what contributed to the revenue increase, Deputy Manager Kimball explained that it is a catchall and varies because it's a combination of different fee and records requests specific to the Sheriff Department. Jocelyn Leighton asked about the unspent training budget, it was explained that it probably went towards the purchase of a piece of equipment instead at year-end. Chair Ward asked about items that were removed - \$30,000 for a FOIA clerk and separate purchase of body cameras and cruiser cameras, and increase on call pay of \$100 per week. As there was no implementation plan, these items were not approved and removed from the budget.

Lee Pratt asked if the County uses encumbrances, Deputy Manager Kimball stated they did not. Gas usage was underreported as a result of incorrect coding for the gas cards used by the Sheriff's Department. Deputy Manager Kimball said that increasing gas prices was worrisome making it hard to budget. County Manager Gailey explained that the County was unable to lock in gas prices because they do not have gas pumps like many municipalities. Chair Ward asked for clarification about their role regarding recommendations as a committee, County Manager Gailey stated they could make recommendations regarding the bottom line, Deputy Manager Kimball stated that they are welcome to recommend certain line item adjustments.

Prior to 7:00pm, Jocelyn Leighton excused herself from the Committee to attend a separate meeting.

The Finance Committee discussed the Law Enforcement (LEC), Chair Ward asked about the full time detective position that was cut. County Manager Gailey said that position would have been paid 50% out of the general fund and 50% grant which was not yet obtained to support the funding of that position. Chair Ward, asked about the increase for of ammunition, Deputy Manager Kimball explained that it was linked to the increase in cost. Chair Ward asked about the how the Cumberland County Jail budget was created, Deputy Manager Kimball explained that in 2008-09 the State of Maine enacted the Board of Corrections, requiring that all County jails shifted to a fiscal year budget to align with the State of Maine. The BOC was disbanded, the State still provides funding, but the County Jail remains on a fiscal year while the County will eventually move to a fiscal year as well. Paul Tworog

asked about Medical Services and why such a significant increase, Deputy Kimball explained that the costs of medical staff increased and the cost of medications increased particularly those that treat Hepatitis C and HIV.

The Department moved on to discuss the CCRCC, Chair Ward asked about account 6152 regarding a training increase. Deputy Manager Kimball stated that the training available was more reasonably priced. County Manager Gailey offered that part time staff positions are slowly being reduced and the CCRCC will be staffed with only full time positions.

The Department discussed Facilities Department, page 56, Lee Pratt asked about the new Facilities Director and the new line items in the Parking Garage. County Manager stated that the Facilities Director has stripped out a lot of the facilities line items and put them in the Garage Budget which is why there are a lot of decreases as items are being transferred. Chair Ward asked about the dip in salaries at the garage, County Manager explained that there were some vacancies and some retirements that contributed to the dip but there were no cuts. Paul Tworog asked about salaries to benefits percentage is 48% Deputy Manager Kimball explained that facilities has employees with lower wages in relation to the benefits offered. Bob Vail asked if the County considered outsourcing, County Manager stated that the demand for custodial services was too high right now to be feasible. Electrical work was covered by 2 FT positions and with a time and materials service contract.

The Committee discussed the District Attorney's (DA's) Department, Paul Tworog asked about the discrepancy regarding the part time positions which Deputy Manager Kimball stated he would correct. Paul Tworog asked about Restorative Justice Services, Deputy Manager Kimball offered that this particular topic was important to the DA and that the DA could speak further about this program at the October 20th meeting. He also explained that COVID effected the deferred disposition program, where a person could pay a fine to the court and be monitored for a determined length of time and not go to jail. As a result of COVID, this project was not possible with the backlog in the Courts which contributed to the reduction in revenues. As the Court works through the backlog of cases, the revenue is expected to increase as this service is offered again. County Manager Gailey offered that there are 20 assistant District Attorneys that are paid by the State of Maine, approximately 36 employees that County employs who provide support to the 20 ADA's.

The Committee discussed the IT Department, page 45, Paul Tworog commented that he was surprised that the IT staff was so small. Chair Ward asked what the plan was for staffing going forward. County Manager Gailey stated that the plan was to contract with different Towns for GIS services.

Chair Ward asked whether the Committee would be interested in hearing from all of the Department heads at the next meeting, the Committee agreed that it would be helpful to hear from everyone. Lee Pratt so moved, and Bob Vail seconded the motion to hear from all of the Department Heads. Roll call vote was taken and the motion passed, all in favor, 4-0.

Yes: Bob Vail, Paul Tworog, Lee Pratt, and Chair Ward.

4. Adjournment 7:35 p.m.

Lee Pratt so moved, and Paul Tworog seconded to adjourn. Roll call vote was taken and the motion passed, all in favor, 4-0.

Yes: Bob Vail, Paul Tworog, Lee Pratt, and Chair Ward.

The next meeting is on October 20, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.