



CUMBERLAND COUNTY FINANCE COMMITTEE

The County Finance Committee held their meeting on Zoom. Which can be viewed on YouTube [cumberlandcounty.org/live](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

Wednesday, October 20, 2021

Call to Order 5:33 p.m.

The meeting was called to Order by Chair Dustin Ward who asked committee members to introduce themselves to the attendants.

ATTENDANCE

Cumberland County Commissioners:

Commissioner Susan Witonis, District #2

Finance Committee Members:

Lee Pratt, Town of Gorham, District #1, (Partial Absence)

Paul Tworog, Town of Bridgton, District #1

Dustin Ward, Town of New Gloucester, District #2

Robert Vail, Town of Cumberland, District #3, (Absent, excused)

Jocelyn Leighton, City of South Portland, District #4

Mayor Kate Snyder, City of Portland, District #5 (Member Resignation)

County Staff:

Jim Gailey, County Manager

Alex Kimball, Deputy Manager of Finance and Administration

Bill Trufant, Director of Facilities

Kevin Joyce, Sheriff

Naldo Gagnon, Chief Deputy

Aaron Gilpatric, Director of IT

Melinda Fairbrother-Dyer, Director of Regional Communications

Tami Getchell, Business and Communications Coordinator for D.A.

Jonathan Sahrbeck, District Attorney

Public Comment Received

There was no public comment.

Amendments to the Agenda

There were no objections.

1. Approval of the October 13, 2021 minutes

Jocelyn Leighton so moved, and Paul Tworog seconded the motion to approve the minutes from October 13, 2021.

A Roll call vote was taken and the motion passed, 3-0.

Yes: Jocelyn Leighton, Paul Tworog, Dustin Ward.

2. Discussions with the following Departments:

a. Information Technology

IT Director Aaron Gilpatric gave an overview of the IT Department.

Paul Tworog asked how does the County use GIS, Director of IT Aaron Gilpatric said that is a FT person who has historically supported the GIS use in the 911/CCRCC and the County Sheriff's Department CAD calls. Recently, this work has supported the County's Assessing Department and the regional assessing department.

Jocelyn Leighton asked what other training that IT uses, Director Gilpatric said that it is offered for certain technology training and other nontechnical course for County Employees.

Jocelyn Leighton asked if there is equity and diversity training for employees.

Paul Tworog asked if there are line items that get "charged -Back" to the County, County Manager Jim Gailey said that GIS mapping services are charged back from the municipalities to the County.

b. Facilities

Facilities Director Bill Trufant provided an overview of the Facilities Department which includes overseeing several different buildings and the fleet division.

Paul Tworog asked about Director Trufant's about his assessment of the County Structures, Director Trufant stated that the problems are typical of

the older buildings in Portland, Maine. The County Buildings have their own contracts and are not centralized, he is trying to reduce small contracts and wrap them into larger contracts.

Jocelyn Leighton asked about the Facilities Department recruiting and retention of minorities. Director Trufant said diversity outreach is managed by HR, however they have recently partnered with Catholic Charities for translator services to enable employee's access to training and compliance for OSHA standards.

Chair Ward asked about the Special Projects, Director Trufant said that they're related to lighting upgrades and subsidized by Efficiency Maine.

Chair Ward asked if there was a Capital Improvement Plan, Director Trufant stated that that was something that they were currently doing for the Parking Garage and are exploring on a larger scale in the Spring of 2022, and possibly contracting out for the assessment.

Jocelyn Leighton asked about the cost of supplies and if budget was enough to cover the demand, Director Trufant said he felt confident regarding cleaning supplies however the costs of larger mechanical repairs are increasing and lengthy due to the delay in materials. Deputy Manager of Finance and Administration Alex Kimball said that cost of cleaning supplies were very low in 2019 when the County Buildings were not in use, he was curious to see how that would change as employees return to work. Director Trufant also mentioned that his predecessor had locked a 5 year fuel contract, currently into its second year, at a fixed rate which was fortunate given increasing prices.

Shortly before 6:00 p.m. Committee Member Lee Pratt joined the meeting.

c. District Attorney

District Attorney (DA) Sahrbeck stated that when the pandemic hit, their office was deemed essential and they had to pivot quickly which meant moving from paper to electronic files. Business and Communications Coordinator Tamara Getchell is coordinating this ongoing effort, transitioning their database from Justware to Attorney Manger Software through the Odyssey system is what the State Court System currently uses. His department is reducing the Court's case load by using diversion and prevention strategies.

Anticipating Jocelyn Leighton's question about training programs, DA Sahrbeck stated that all staff attorneys are required to complete continuing legal education during the year, including race and inclusion and equity. A

training of note was an Implicit Bias Training presented by Jarvis Parsons, which demonstrated that in some cases implicit bias may cause harm as result of what prosecutors do not know. Additional initiatives include adverse childhood experiences trainings and sustained trauma, human trafficking trainings, and recognize when people need treatment. 80% of cases relate to substance use, and drug treatment and Cumberland County Veteran Court address a lot of the substance use disorder or mental health disorder to get people into recovery so that it isn't a revolving door.

Jocelyn Leighton thanked DA Sahrbeck for the work that he and his team are doing.

DA Sahrbeck also said that the increase in the technology budget line is to assist with the conversion from paper to electronic files, using scanners and software which should help alleviate staff time and can reallocate their time toward other initiatives.

Dustin Ward thanked DA Sahrbeck and Business Coordinator Getchell for their time.

d. Sheriff Office

Sheriff Kevin Joyce presented a power point that gave an overview of the four different budget areas focusing on Administration, Law Enforcement, Corrections Budget (which is on a fiscal year) and Civil Process. The PowerPoint presentation covered the Department's characteristics that are unique to the County Sheriff. Sheriff Joyce went on to discuss the Departments Budget requests which included a proposal for a Taser and video camera package by Axon, Employee Wellness, and a Domestic Violence (DV) position as a result of 54% increase in DV cases compared to the previous year.

Chief Deputy Naldo Gagnon remarked that because of the DA's work, 4% of the people who are charged with crimes in the Cumberland County are in Jail.

Jocelyn Leighton asked if there was a FOAA clerk, Sheriff Joyce stated that the position was contingent on the purchase of the video cameras, and is hopeful that they will be purchased given that Senator Susan Collins has secured funding for this initiative and is waiting on passage.

Jocelyn Leighton asked about the DV position would it be part time? Sheriff Joyce said that it would be a 20 hour position and would be backfilled by another full time position if it's not funded.

Jocelyn Leighton asked how are people housed in relation to their gender, Sheriff Joyce said that it is how they identify (their gender), a committee looks at the request and will determine how they're housed. Do they have access to hormone therapy or gender affirmed therapy? Sheriff Joyce said that they have access to a full suite of medical services under the 3 million dollar budget line for medical services and as they're nationally accredited, they are required to provide requested medical services.

Chair Ward asked about the 60% vacancies and what does that look like now? Sheriff Joyce clarified that the vacancies are in the Corrections Department. Deputy Manager of Finance Kimball said the County's budgets are based on fully staffed Departments. Sheriff Joyce clarified they have successfully recruited new staff as a result of the employment incentives, which has not been easy.

Chair Ward asked why the Sheriff specifically looked at Axon, Sheriff Joyce said that Axon offers good products and that Tasers are effective tools with a five year shelf life.

Chair Ward asked about the camera and Taser package, does the camera turn on when a Taser is activated? Sheriff Joyce confirmed that is the model of camera that they're looking at to remove ambiguity regarding the absence of video footage at a scene.

Chair Ward thanked the Sheriff and Deputy Chief for their presentation.

e. Regional Communications

CCRCC Director Melinda Fairbrother-Dyer gave an overview of the employees CCRCC, there are 38 CCRCC employees and 6 vacant positions. Call volume was 90,000, with a recent spike in DV cases, and they cover 19 of the 28 municipalities in Cumberland County.

Chair Ward asked how does Director Fairbrother-Dyer envision the framework for mental health resources? Director Fairbrother-Dyer said that some of the types of calls are very challenging and that EAP services are very good but they not readily available. When departing, employees often cite how inaccessible the EAP services are and that they feel that there is a lack of support. Recently, existing employees have felt further strained by the stresses of COVID. Director Fairbrother-Dyer would like to have a physical space that offers employees to take a break. Regarding infrastructure, Director Fairbrother-Dyer noted that all of the 19 municipalities have their own radios, down to the fire, police, and animal control officers, and it's physically impossible to talk to each other on same frequency without the infrastructure in place.

Lee Pratt asked about the revenue stream, is it a contracted rate? Deputy Manager of Finance Kimball stated that revenue is based on population and then based on a per capita rates associated with different services offered to the towns. He noted that the 2023 rates will be different and based on the updated Census results.

Jocelyn Leighton asked Director Fairbrother-Dyer what type of training that they offer? Director Fairbrother-Dyer said that they are required to do a lot of training and a lot of it is virtual, they're required to be trained emergency medical dispatching and are nationally certified, and are required to do continuing education. Would like to be recognized as first responders since their job duties are very similar. Jocelyn Leighton clarified that they are not viewed as first responders? Director Fairbrother-Dyer confirmed that is correct. Employees do not typically retire from this profession because they resign. Chair Ward about the increase in hate crimes and had that been Director Fairbrother-Dyer's experience? Director Fairbrother-Dyer said that they had had a lot of riots and protesting and created a lot of fear for the first responders and are not always aware what type of situation they're responding to as it comes in as an altercation or fight as they're not physically there.

Chair Ward thanked the Director Fairbrother-Dyer for her time.

f. Cross Insurance Arena

General Manager Melanie Henkes, who has been General Manager (GM) for 3 years, and was previously Director of Events. County Manager Gailey stated that GM Henkes is not a County employee but is under the county's Contract with Spectra Management Services, however she is still treated as a County Staff member.

GM Henkes gave an overview the Cross Insurance Arena and the Finance Committee. The document was created in February of 2021, and took a realistic approach giving the financial shape of the CIA at February and March and would be worst case scenario as it was unclear when shows would become available. Normal event load is 100-110, in March of 2021, GM Henkes said the CIA is currently at 98 events and is hopeful that the CIA will not be operating at another huge loss.

Paul Tworog, asked about the repayment line that is omitted from the revenue and loss presentation. County Manager Gailey explained that the bond repayments exists outside of the CIA and are excluded from the operating income report. Paul Tworog stated that it would be more accurate to add in the bond repayments to reflect the true operating costs. Paul

Tworog went on to ask if the County is paying a fixed management fee to the CIA, GM Henkes confirmed that there is a monthly contracted management fee that the County pays to the management company. Paul Tworog asked about the 4th column, budgeting for a loss of four hundred thousand dollar based on an operating loss, is that typical for the CIA? GM Henkes, said that this was normal for an operating year especially prior to the pandemic. Paul Tworog asked about the gross ticket revenue and tenant charges, the difference between the two line items would be Net Rent Income, would that remain the same or be different based on the deal structure. GM Henkes explained that the rent income is based on the contract structure and in the current year, the contracts are co-pro (co-promotion), resulting in an increase in the Surcharge/facility fee which is why the 2019-20 Net Rent Income changed very little even though there more events. Paul Tworog commented on how to capitalize on the sellout shows. GM Henkes agree that sell out show promoters do capitalize on a lot of the revenue streams.

Chair Ward asked if the CIA increased prices or fees and how have they changed? GM Henkes said that the rental fee has gone up, but she has not increased fees and prices to remain competitive with other venues.

Jocelyn Leighton asked if the CIA had received ARPA funding or other private funding? GM Henkes said that they were receiving ARPA funding to offset wages for PT employees, specifically Guest Services and F&B workers. There is a plan to use ARPA funds to purchase a Half House Curtain which would divide the space. Jocelyn Leighton asked for clarification about the increase in minimum wage comment and the effect it had on the budget? GM Henkes stated that there was an increase of \$67K in Net Services Income when the minimum wage was changed from \$11 per hour to \$12.12 per hour and this expense was offset by increasing the rental fee.

Lee Pratt asked if there was a breakdown of Indirect Expenses, if so, is that something that GM Henkes could provide at the next meeting? GM Henkes agreed that was information she could provide.

Paul Tworog requested that debt payments and contract management fee be provided to get a full view of the associated expenses of the CIA. He also commented that given the expenses to operate the CIA, what is the plan or strategy to bring the gap down? GM Henkes explained that the funding from ARPA would help, the Half House Curtain would assist with dividing the space as they're competing with smaller venues like AURA. This setup will appeal to promoters with smaller audiences. County Manager Gailey added that the goal is to maximize the space and getting more events to fill

up the seats.

Chair Ward asked two questions, first, what is the consumer sentiment? And second, how is the CIA handling vaccine mandates and masking? GM Henkes addressed Chair Ward's first question, that she has been tracking consumer spending over the past four years and has a good idea of the average consumer spends at events and it seems like a lot of consumers are spending more. For example the Brothers Osborne Show, \$16.00 was recorded record, the average spent at the Brothers Osborne Show was \$22.00 per person and this is a new trend. Regarding the second question, everything is written in sand at low tide, the mandate is from the Venue's owner or Local Ordinances, in this case the owner is County Manager Gailey who is managing the proof of vaccination, negative test and mask recommendations. Some of the public has responded positively, however she is nervous about customers refusing to comply and needing to issue ticket refunds. County Manager Gailey

Chair Ward thanked the General Manager Henkes for their time.

3. Next Steps

Jocelyn Leighton so moved, and Lee Pratt seconded the motion to meet again on October 28, 2021 to further discuss. Roll call vote was taken and the motion passed, all in favor, 4-0.

Yes: Lee Pratt, Jocelyn Leighton, Paul Tworog, and Chair Ward.

4. Adjourn 8:05 p.m.

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

Yes: Paul Tworog, Lee Pratt, Jocelyn Leighton and Chair Ward.

The next meeting is on October 28, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.