OXFORD COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES

March 17, 2020

Meeting Convened
At the Court of Oxford County Commissioners begun and held at Paris, Maine within and for the County of Oxford at 9:00 am on Tuesday, March 17, 2020 being a regular session, there were present:

Timothy Turner       Chairman
Steven Merrill        Commissioner
David Duguay          Commissioner
Tom Winsor           County Administrator

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Agenda Adopted
The agenda was adopted as written. However, the Chair noted that the agenda may be flexible as the day goes on to accommodate discussion regarding COVID-19.

Minutes Approval
The following action occurred regarding sets of minutes of previous meetings:

March 5 approved with amendments

Public Comment
Oxford Fire Chief Paul Hewey, Oxford Police Chief Michael Ward, Oxford Selectman Scott Hunter, and Oxford Town Manager Butch Asselin expressed their concerns for ongoing public safety communication equipment issues on Streaked Mountain and questioned why their letter to the Commissioners dated January 2, 2020 regarding the matter was not responded to.

Commissioner Turner, who is on the RCC Governing Board, said that the Commissioners are aware of the issue and that there is currently an RFP for a communications study.

Deputy Communications Director Geff Inman noted that a call would be taking place on Friday, the 20th, with agencies who have responded to the RFP and assured them that their concerns will be addressed.

Commissioners Duguay also added that the towns can help by making sure their select boards are aware of the issues as well, as this years’ budget committee will need to be in support of equipment replacement which could cost between $1,000,000 - $2,000,000.

County Administrator Tom Winsor apologized for not responding to the letter sent in January. He confirmed that the letter was received and reviewed at that time.

Sentiment in Honor of Bill Haynes of Waterford
The Commissioners recognized Bill Haynes of Waterford for his many years of service to the Oxford County community.
Commissioner Merrill recalled his outstanding basketball skills and shared memories from high school.

Commissioner Duguay noted that he participated regularly in AVCOG planning days and enjoyed bringing the information he learned there back to his community in Waterford.

Commissioner Turner expressed his gratitude for all that Bill did for the community.

County Administrator Tom Winsor added that he was known as the “Mayor of Waterford” and participated in nearly every committee, event, etc. in some way or another.

Bill passed away on March 8 and he will be greatly missed. A copy of the Commissioners’ sentiment is attached to these minutes.

**Department Heads**
Department heads met with the Commissioners to discuss a variety of topics, some being unique to specific departments and other topics being of concern to several or all departments.

Commissioner Turner asked the department heads if they would be able to continue operations if the county closed the buildings to the public due to COVID-19. All departments will be able to continue business, at least in a modified version.

The Commissioners then voted to close the building to the public at noontime today, March 17, until further notice to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the building. It was noted that Executive Assistant Abby Shanor would send out a press release immediately following the meeting.

**Sheriff’s Report**
Sheriff Chris Wainwright and Chief Deputy Jim Urquhart spoke with the Commissioners regarding departmental matters.

The Sheriff shared updates on the purchase of new police vehicles and upgrading the HVAC system in the jail.

The Commissioners then authorized the purchase of 30 weapon units up to $27,000, less trade-ins allowance, from the equipment line with funds being transferred from the drug account to cover the cost.

The Commissioners then authorized an additional full-time corrections position.

The Commissioners approved updates to the Sheriff’s Clerk job description.

The Commissioners approved updates to the Sheriff’s Administrative Assistant job description.

The Commissioners entered an executive session (1 M.R.S.A. § 405-6 A) to discuss a personnel matter re a temporary assignment of a Sheriff’s Deputy. No action was needed upon returning to open session.
The Sheriff then briefed the Commissioners on operational concerns resulting from COVID-19. The Commissioners authorized the purchase of three trailers and emergency equipment up to $25,000 in total to help the Sheriff’s Department prepare.

**Lunch Recess**
The Commissioners continued the meeting in open session through lunch. They did not recess.

**Treasurer’s Report**
Treasurer Beth Calhoun distributed written reports.

The Treasurer also expressed her concern for the expected lack of revenue due to COVID-19, especially since it was announced that the Casino would be closed for at least two weeks. She asked that big purchases that were considered non-urgent wait until revenue becomes steadier.

It was also noted that the Commissioners would close on the 2020 tax anticipation note at the April 21 meeting.

**Personnel Updates and Actions**
The Commissioners approved an employment application form with amendments.

The Commissioners approved an emergency policy booklet as a response to the COVID-19 impact. It was noted that Executive Assistant Abby Shanor would distribute the booklet to all employees via email immediately following the meeting.

**Items for Discussion and Action – Considered as Time Permits Throughout Meeting**
The Commissioners discussed the following and acted only as underlined.

1. Received update from Maine County Commissioners Association
2. Received Administrator’s Report

**Adjournment**
The Commissioners adjourned at 2:02pm.

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Timothy G. Turner, Chairman

Steven M. Merrill Commissioner

David A. Duguay Commissioner

**Notes:**
1) These minutes are intended to be a brief description of meeting actions to provide, in a general sense only, an account of what was discussed.

2) Unless otherwise noted, all votes taken by the Commissioners were unanimous.