

Penobscot County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes March 17, 2020 2277
9:00 AM Commissioners Peter Baldacci, Andre Cushing & Laura Sanborn 34°

Public Comment – None

HR/EMA Updates –

- HR Director Erika Honey and Brad Nuding, Assistant Director of EMA provided updates on the COVID-19 pandemic and what arrangements are in place for Penobscot County employees.
- Social Distancing Guidelines for Work –
 - Avoid in-person meetings (use online conferencing, email or phone when possible even when people are in the same building)
 - Unavoidable in-person meetings should be short, in a large meeting room where people can sit at least three feet from each other; avoid shaking hands
 - Eliminate unnecessary travel and cancel or postpone non-essential meetings, gatherings, workshops and training sessions
 - Limit recreational or other leisure classes, meetings, activities, etc. where close contact with others is likely (Group Fitness classes have been cancelled in our Wellness Center)
- Director Honey reports that use of county space by outside agencies be suspended until further notice (i.e. bankruptcy court, mediation)
- Director Honey stated that if any employee exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 (respiratory illness, including high fever of 100.4° or more, signs of a cough, shortness of breath, and a sore throat), employees should be sent home. Employee would use available earned time, sick, holiday or vacation leave. Director Honey is looking for you to expand employees to use time for childcare and family care.
- Director Honey is requesting consideration that official, non-essential travel suspended for the next 30 days. As well all employees should review and understand recommended travel advisories issued by the CDC. That any employee that has travelled to a tier 3 area, there will be a mandated 14 day quarantine period. Any employee that has travelled to a tier 1 or 2 will be accessed on a case-by-case situation. The employee must speak to their department director and Human Relations to discuss what, if any, isolation is necessary.
- Director Honey is requesting consideration that Penobscot County and Commissioners suspend all non-essential meetings and gatherings until further notice.
- IT department has been working diligently in furthering setup of department remote capabilities and is prioritizing those departments. Unfortunately, there are some systems that must have a person in house to use (such as our Payroll software).
- IT Director, Cliff Warren reported that the main objective he's trying to provide is a means in which remote meetings can take place. We pay about \$2700 a year for remote capabilities to support our end users. The application used is for meeting management,

HR/EMA Updates – Continued:

etc. document sharing – video and audio. This is bound by the number of channels are saved for the Sheriff's office, PRCC, Administrator Collins and Director Honey. Director Warren is going to talk to Register Bulay and Judge Faircloth to see if there is anything they would need in which this could supplement what they do have.

- Director Honey is requesting for consideration allowing flexible schedules for work (i.e. early mornings, late evenings, and weekends) for employees to provide care for family members. We will be reaching out to our Union Reps to consider flexible work schedules.
- Current cleaning practices for now are cleaning/wiping down of hand-rails, elevator buttons/surfaces, door handles, glass doors and bathrooms after work hours. Director Honey is requesting that these get done during work hours as well. There is recommendation that a full time employee work during day time to keep all common areas cleaned.
- Director Honey is requesting consideration that we should consider allowing employees to use their entire sick bank if needed to care for a family member for both sickness and child care. A bill was passed last night "Family First Coronavirus Response Act" which proposes additional 14 days of emergency leave.
- Deputy Director Nuding reported that all the meetings yesterday held with the department heads were very successful. Most were confident they would be able to carry out the majority of their essential functions remotely if they had to. Concerns that would need community involvement were the upcoming TIF project and the PRCC Radio Console Upgrade. A consideration would be that a few departments would need additional laptops if we were to do more remote work.
- ADA Devon DeMarco and Office Manager Kristine Higgins provided a proposed schedule for the DA's office that are looking to minimize staff coverage and have some flexibility within their clerical staff for the next three weeks. The staff will make themselves available even when they are working at home remotely; telephone, text or email. Director Honey feels this is a very thoughtful and responsible approach to keep everyone protected. ADA DeMarco states that the Court system in Maine is on a limited schedule until May. The Court in Bangor will be holding daily arraignments via video conferencing to help reduce the jail population. ADA DeMarco states that the DA's office attorneys are State employees and are staffing the office with three attorneys per day. The Victim Witness Coordinators will be working from home.
- Deputy Director Nuding recommended that this building be closed for public access. This will limit exposure by taking precautionary measures to "flatten the curve". We can still function as a county and limit the exposure that our employees have to the outside

HR/EMA Updates – Continued:

public. The CDC says that we are in the response phase and all municipalities should be preparing for the inevitable for a case to come to Penobscot County. It is imperative to take all precautionary measures NOW to “flatten the curve”.

- Register of Deeds Register Susan Bulay states that she feels confident she can come up with a system that will be a workable solution. Register Bulay has talked with other counties and they are putting a “collection box” outside and checking it daily. Register Bulay will post on her Website that people are to call in ahead of time in order for her to be on the lookout for the document.
- Probate Judge Amy Faircloth reported that Register Renee Stupak and Deputy Register Dorine Rackliff has been working for the past week on how to work with the Court and keep their staff safe. Judge Faircloth believes, like Deeds, they can have paperwork dropped off in a collection box and picked up daily. Judge Faircloth will sign an emergency order and notice for her Court for some hearings to take place over the telephone such as: minor guardianships/conservatorships, estate matters, adult guardianships/conservatorships, adoptions and name changes. Any currently scheduled trials have been postponed.
- The Commissioners commended Director Honey and Deputy Director Nuding along with all the staff for getting arrangements together for Penobscot County during this difficult time. It has been a wonderful team effort. We are very proud to be part of an organization that takes pride in the work that you do. The Commissioners approve these recommendations made.

PRCC Update –

- Director Chris Lavoie and Deputy Director Josh Lilley reported that as of last night PRCC is on lock down. The only people allowed in the dispatch center are PRCC employees and janitorial staff. Director Lavoie reports that his staff is fragile since there is no one available to replace them if necessary.
- Director Lavoie has moved two call takers temporarily into dispatcher positions until this crisis is over.
- Administrator Bill Collins and Director Lavoie spoke that the Radio Communication Bond will not proceed for a June vote. Director Lavoie suggested that we should still move forward on approval for a Project Manager RFP because there is a lot of work behind the scenes that needs to be done before the November vote. The Commissioners wanted to discuss this further.

Sheriff's Update –

- Sheriff Morton stated that today's jail population is 137 in-house (111 males, 26 females), 69 boarded out to other county jails, no federal inmates, no county swaps and 89 inmates in Pre-Trial Services.
- Sheriff reported on the COVID-19 and how it is affecting his departments. Sheriff covered six distinct phases for Law Enforcement, Corrections and Civil departments.
 - Awareness/Notification – this was done weeks ago
 - Supplies/Ordering – we were weeks ahead by conducting a full assessment
 - Cleaning – that is always ongoing but we have additional cleanings in high traffic areas through service master for the lobby and intake
 - Procedural Changes – CDC and MDOC make recommendations through daily conference calls. We are looking at potentially expanding our phone services and video visitation in the jail to allow those incarcerated to have greater access to family and friends. Nursing staff and mental health are still coming in. We have asked law enforcement to use the CDC recommendation of social distancing practices; we are still responding to emergency calls of service.
 - Court proceedings – Sheriff reported that our DA's office are Rock Stars! Marianne Lynch and Devon DeMarco set up shop at Bangor PD helping them when to divert through summoning or arrest. Marianne & Devon have kept in close contact with the Sheriff daily. Sheriff states that they are still taking people that pose threats to the public or themselves. We have secured a place in the Jail for all new arrests to go in order to segregate them.
 - Public awareness - we have provided public awareness through social media and on our website.
- Sheriff conveyed that a State of Emergency does not apply to essential personnel.
- He has shut down his Civil Division effective today. Sheriff made arraignments with the courts that in emergency situations, those will be serviced by the date the court requests. Sheriff has kept on his two full time civil deputies and the part-timers will not be serving papers.
- The LD-973 bill is on hold until the legislatures reconvene. Penobscot County provided the most accurate data for this bill. The only way this will be revisited is if the legislature is brought back in for special session.
- Sheriff is looking from outside services for N 95 masks. This is a huge concern. Shockingly law enforcement falls on a lower priority tier for receiving these.

Finance Update –

- Finance Director, Judy Alexander provided a report on expenditures and revenues through February 2020. On expenditures:
 - County Commissioners are over 16.7%. This is from dues paid to MCCA which is a one-time expense
 - UT Administration is over because of plowing contracts that were paid
 - Wage adjustment line is over considerably but that was due to retroactive pay
- On Revenue:
 - PRCC's revenue percentage is up due to their having three contracts that are paid in the beginning of the year
 - DA's office revenue is up and it stems from deferred dispositions
 - Administrator Collins noted that the Civil Department revenue will see a reduction
- Tax updates:
 - Director Alexander reports that Burlington has paid their tax commitment for 2020
- Commissioner Sanborn made a motion to approve the TAN representation letter for Eaton Peabody as our Bond counsel on \$4.7 M. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approved passed 3 – 0. Signed.

Administration Update –

- Administrator Collins reported the following cancellations due to COVID-19 pandemic –
 - MSA Conference that was going to be at the Cross Center next week
 - MCCA meeting that was going to occur next week
 - Hero's Breakfast honoring one of our own: Deputy Director Nuding from EMA
 - Grievances that were to be held today
- Sheriff Morton did a presentation for Rudman and Winchell lawyers last week regarding the need for a New Jail. Positive Feedback from all.
- Sheriff and Administrator Collins represented Penobscot County at a special meeting regarding LD 973 for MSA, MCCA and MACCAM. As discussed, an presented, this language would be beneficial to Penobscot County if enacted for fiscal year 20-21.
- Administrator Collins feels that Penobscot County is in good shape; Administrator Collins is hopeful that we can one-time adjust our budget. (\$7,375,000)
- Director Honey & Administrator Collins will meet in executive session on the contract negotiations.
- Hand sanitizing dispensers have been placed strategically around this building.

Administration Update – Continued:

- The following positions are being advertised online and on Indeed: Part time Maintenance/Custodian, Part time Jail Cook and Deputy Finance Director.
- Administrator Collins wanted to recognize publicly EMA Deputy Director Nuding, Director LaBree and HR Director Honey for all their efforts over the last few weeks in communicating with the Department Heads and working out arrangements for the Covid 19 pandemic we are facing.
- Bangor Daily News reporter Judy Harrison asked if there would be any action taken on the bid opening last week on the towers. Administrator Collins responded that there are two bids involved: Project Manager and Awarding the bid following the referendum. We are meeting during executive session to discuss this further.
- Payroll Change Notices signed for: Matthew Bragdon – Resignation; McKenzie Madden and Johannah Sirois – Temporary job assignments from Call Takers to Dispatchers; Cap Ayer – Comp time.
- Payroll Warrant to be approved for: \$ 239,754.62
- Accounts Payable to be approved for: \$ 85,699.48
- Unorganized Territory Warrant to be approved for: \$ 31,062.09
- Unorganized Territory TIF Warrant to be approved for: \$ 11,901.48

Executive Session---Commissioner Sanborn made a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:30 a.m., under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (A) Personnel Matter. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Motion approved 3-0. Present were: Commissioners, Administrator Collins, Director Honey and Register Susan Bulay. Session ended at 10:40 a.m. No votes taken.

Executive Session---Commissioner Sanborn made a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:41 a.m., under 1 M.R.S.A. 405 (6) (A) Personnel Matter. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Motion approved 3-0. Present were: Commissioners, Administrator Collins, Director Honey, Sheriff Morton, Chief Birch, Judy Alexander, Captain Clukey, Lt. Hotaling, Lt. Hardwick and Lt. Babb. Session ended at 11:13 a.m. No votes taken.

Commissioner Cushing moved to award Norm Boucher of Communications Design Consulting Group as Project Manager for the Regional Public Safety Communications Upgrade. Commissioner Sanborn seconded the motion. Motion approved 3-0.

Discussion ensued as to why RCM was recommended to be awarded the project even though their cost is a little more. Director Lavoie stated the other bidder was non-compliant in what had been requested in the RFP; including wrong frequencies. They also stated that the

Discussion Continued:

project could have been done in six months, which is unrealistic. Our advisor recommended awarding this project to RCM. He is more confident in what they are proposing.

Conversation continued on the service component piece which includes a 10-year warrantee work of \$1M that can be budgeted for structural engineering. The first year is free and begins in Year Two which will give us time to place into our budget.

Commissioner Cushing moved to award the project to Radio Communication Management (RCM) in the amount of \$4,570,868.00 for the Regional Public Safety Communications Upgrade subject to a successful referendum bond vote. Commissioner Sanborn seconded the motion. Motion approved 3-0.

Director Lavoie is going to reach out to Attorney Ed Bearor to draft acceptance and rejection letters. Director Lavoie will personally reach out to the two vendors.

Deputy Director Lilley also is requesting two hosts for "Team Viewer". Administrator Collins states this will have to come out of the PRCC budget. Approved.

There was discussion on other updates that need to be done. First, we need to have a camera and intercom system located at the front Hammond Street entrance; and we need to upgrade the key scan system.

It is Administrator Collins's recommendation that the Commissioners meeting be cancelled next week (March 24). This will allow more time to be set up for remote meetings.

Commissioner Cushing made a motion to have Registry of Deeds continue with a part-time employee for 30 days. Commissioner Sanborn seconded the motion. Motion approved 3-0.

Commissioner Sanborn made a motion to modify pay and health benefits as recommended by the Sheriff. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Motion approved. 3-0.

Executive Session---Commissioner Sanborn made a motion to go into Executive Session at 11:18 a.m., under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (D) Contract Matter. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Motion approved 3-0. Present were: Commissioners, Administrator Collins and HR Director Erika Honey. Session ended at 11:45 a.m. No votes taken.

Meeting Adjourned-

Commissioner Sanborn moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:46 a.m. with no further business on the agenda. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Moved to approve passed 3-0.

Certified By:

Administrator, William Collins

Peter K. Baldacci, Chairman

Laura J. Sanborn, Commissioner

Andre E. Cushing, III, Commissioner