**Minutes**

**PRESENT:** Commissioner Brann, Commissioner Harvell, Commissioner Barker

Meeting held by Zoom

**Franklin County Commissioners Meeting**

**September 7, 2021 Minutes**

Meeting was called to order by Commissioner Brann at 3:15 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance

**Audience:**  Vickie Braley, Jim Desjardins, Fen Fowler, Susan Black, Pam Prodan, David Rackliffe, John Donald, Judith Kaut, Donna Perry, Marisa Hutchinson, Mike Pond, Tom Martin, Tiffany Baker

**APPOINTMENTS:**

**3:15 P.M. Executive Session: 1 MRSA 405 (6) (E) Consultation with legal counsel: Consultation with attorney to discuss pending complaint.**

Entered Executive Session: 3:17pm, Exited: 3:30pm

**No action taken. Motion: (Clyde/Lance) (3/0)**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Clerk’s Report: Motion to approve the clerk’s report for minutes of August 17, 2021: (Clyde/Lance) (3/0)**
2. **Treasurers Report**: 10 warrants: 6 county, 2 UT, and 2 payroll. Also, EFT payment for MainePERS, Payroll EFT for retirement. Pam reported that bank reconciliations for July are available. Since there are no transactions yet, there is no reconciliation on the COVID funds bank account, but it has a .15% interest rate. For July, the COVID account accrued $373.53 in interest for the month of August. County account, also at Bangor Savings, is currently at a .12% rate of interest with collateral with repurchase agreement. The TIF account at Bangor Savings is collateral, different from the County. acct., $250k max. Insured by FDIC. UT account at Skowhegan Savings had been similar to the county, mortgage backed security, full liquidity, no term, but this spring, due to the volatility in the mortgage rate environment, Pam decided to change the collateral to an Irrevocable Stand-by Letter of Credit from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston. The county still has one CD for monument and has $2,000. Discussion around putting some of the ARPA funds into a higher interest baring account to collect interest until used. No amount was specified.

**A motion and second to approve the Treasurer’s report. (Clyde/Lance) (3/0)**

1. **Maine State Retirement Rule Changes on Joining MPERS:** Optional provisions to pass on 9/9/2021. These provisions allow employees another chance to elect MainePERS, and an option to enroll in the first 5 years of employment through an open enrollment.Currently, employees have one chance to enroll within 7 days of the start of employment. The commissioners would like to see a list of employees who would be eligible to enroll should the county adopt these provisions. Vickie mentioned that we did not add this expense into the budget that we would need to figure out which account the employer contributions would come from. Employees who join this provision would be paid with after-tax dollars. Action: Will revisit this item at the next meeting.
2. **Property Tax abatement request, Peter Axelson vs Town of Rangeley Plantation:** Vickie contacted the assessor. Received a letter from the Rangeley Plt. Assessor Mr. Keep. Per statute a person who applied for abatement w/I 60 days and has not received response can then apply to the county commissioners within 60 days after notice of decision or after the applications is deemed to be denied. If the commissioners believe the applicant is over assessed, “the applicant is granted reasonable abatement as the commissioners think proper.”

Action: Schedule Mr. Cary Keep to attend the next meeting.

1. **457 Plan Amendment- Effective date of change and administrative fee:** There is a $300 administrative fee for the plan change. Going forward the hardship withdrawal approvals will go through the administrator, Tiffany Baker.

**Motion to approve the change to the plan effective October 1, 2021 and pay the administrative fee of $300: (Lance/Clyde) (3/0)**

1. **Signing of MOA with NCEU: Motion to approve the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement: (Lance/Clyde) (3/0)**
2. **Stephen Charles, on behalf of FOP: Request approval for MPERS study:** New plan allows for 25 years of service, age 60 retirement. County moved the sheriff’s department to the new special law enforcement plan back in 2013. Stephen is requesting to make the remaining 5 employees still employed whole on their “lost time” due to the plan change. These employees, 2 union and 3 admin. Lost about 3-4 years, therefore they will have to work until 28-29 years of service due to this change, while others will be able to retire at 25 years of service. Stephen will have to work until he reaches 29.5 years of service. Stephen would like to ask the commissioners to approve the study which has an administrative fee estimated to be around $750.

Action: The Commissioner’s would like to understand the breakdown of the administrative fee and will revisit the item at the next meeting.

1. **Mike Pond-Road updates/Jail septic system:** Mike provided an update on roads in the UT. Those mentioned include Calvin Gray Road, Beach Hill Road and Alder Brook in Perkins Plt. Looking to next June for the project start at this point with winter coming. Main-Land Development will put a package together to include quotes and design on the three separate projects and then the County will put the projects out to bid. Main-Land Development is a consulting company. Project quotes include the “white house” at roughly $750, jail plans at roughly $7k, and water schematics at roughly $5k. **Motion to proceed with the three project quotes: (Lance/Clyde) (3/0)**
2. **COVID policy and public meetings discussion:** Discussion around the COVID policy which expired the end of June, looking at whether or not to reinstate, and public meeting requirements such as possible masking and remote meetings over Zoom. Will continue to revisit as we are updated/advised by the Maine CDC and the state.
3. **Reeds Mill Road, Madrid-ATV use:** Clyde feels the Commissioner’s made a mistake in granting access to the Reeds Mill Road in Madrid. Concerns of speed, garbage, and unsafe travel have been expressed. Clyde witnessed first-hand some negligent operations of ATV and UTV riders on the road. There isn’t a shoulder for them to move off the road onto and traffic on that road includes logging trucks and other large vehicles.Lance has spoken to some locals who expressed that they feel someone is going to get seriously hurt or killed. Users are also traveling from the Reeds Mill Road onto other roads not permitted for ATV travel. Motion to revoke access for ATV, UTV, Dirt Bikes, etc. on the Reeds Mill Road beginning on September 15, 2021: (Lance/Clyde) (3/0) Will send a letter to the ATV club to have signs removed, and the county will post a notice to the public.
4. **John Donald-Approval of part-time Corrections officer and approval of new Sergeant: Would like to hire Anthony Champoli as a new part-time corrections officer for the jail. The fee to buy him from Androscoggin for his training is $8,000. Motion to approve the hiring of Anthony Champoli and pay the $8,000 fee: (Lance/Clyde) (3/0)**

**Promotion of Brooklyn Brown to full-time Sergeant: (Lance/Clyde) (3/0)**

1. **Time Keeping System for the county:** Clyde stated that he was not in favor of a timekeeping system, and that he trusted his employees to accurately document their time on and off shift. Tiffany respectfully acknowledged Clyde’s response and stated that she is aware there has been some misuse of the current system. Lt. David Rackliffe expressed concerns around a timekeeping system. He stated that he knows his deputies do not abuse the current system. His concerns were that some of his deputies report to work early and leave late and they are currently not compensated for this, that 3 of his deputies do not have service or internet at home when they leave to start their shift and that they would have to drive 15 minutes to get service to be able to clock in, also sometimes a deputy may get called out in the middle of the night and not remember to clock in, and that he felt there would be more of an administrative burden on the administrators to correct time and enter time if this system was in place. Beyond that, there would need to be accountability in accordance with the new policy which would be developed to support this new process. Tiffany informed Rackliffe that there would be a grace period and training involved should we adopt this system. Supervisors will also be able to go in and correct time when necessary, and that the employee can make notes on the error when clocking in. Tiffany also informed Lt. Rackliffe that if the deputies are starting shift early, they should be compensated for working. Vickie addressed the issue of no internet or service at the 3 deputy’s homes stating that we switched to First Net with AT&T to boost signal. Rackliffe then stated that it wouldn’t be in effect for 2 years. The commissioners asked that Tiffany research other counties and municipalities to address some of these concerns and find out how such systems are working for patrol in other areas.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. **Reeds Mill Road, ATV traffic: Addressed above**
2. **ARPA Program Administrator job description: Motion to amend with the corrections: removal of “regional development office” and add an example of relevant experience such as “grant writing experience” and approve the posting of the position to the Daily Bulldog, Franklin Journal, and Irregular: (Lance/Terry) (3/0)**
3. **Telecommuting Policy, Agreement, and Application approval: Move to accept and adopt the telecommuting policy into the handbook, and approve the agreement and application documents: (Lance/Terry) (3/0)**

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

1. **Trailer at the old municipal landfill belonging to Franklin County:** Tiffany to investigate further by reaching out to FPD and the Farmington Town Office.

**Warrants:**

6 county, 2 UT, 2 Payroll. All warrants have been signed and approved.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**A motion and second to adjourn. (Lance/Clyde) (3/0)**

**Meeting adjourned at 5:48 p.m.**

**Next regular meeting will be September 21, 2021 at 3:15 p.m.**

**A recording is available for this meeting.**

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FRANKLIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, CLERK