

OXFORD SS.

At the Court of Oxford County Commissioners begun and held at Paris, Maine within and for the County of Oxford at 6:00 PM on October 16, 2012 being a public hearing held to receive comment on the county's 2013 budget proposal, there were present:

Steven M. Merrill, Chairman
Dave Duguay, Commissioner
Caldwell Jackson, Commissioner
Scott G. Cole, Administrator
Judith Haas, Assistant Administrator
Becky Secrest, Commissioners Clerk
Budget Committee members

County employees and members of the general public were present at different times throughout the session.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Chairman Merrill requested the Commissioners, Budget Committee members, department heads and other county employees introduce themselves. Everyone did so. The Budget Committee members for the 2013 budget are Bradford Adley-Rumford, Les Flanders-Lincoln Plantation, Robert Heard-Porter, Dennis Henderson-West Paris, Lee Holman-Hartford, Richard Hunt-Waterford, Rick Micklon-Otisfield, Russell Newcomb-Norway, and Floyd Thayer-Oxford.

Chairman Merrill turned the meeting over to Administrator Cole. The Administrator presented some "fast facts" on the department request 2013 budget covering the following:

- Total expenditure of \$5,960,000 is an increase of 3.95%;
- Non tax revenues are \$1,630,000, a decrease of 6.8%;
- Handling of casino revenues will be addressed in the Commissioners budget proposal;
- Property tax is at \$5,600,000, an increase of 5.4% including jail tax set by statute;
- Five departments have expenditure increases: Sheriff, RCC, airport, benefits and unclassified;
- Eight departments have expenditure decreases;
- Three departments have expenditures remaining the same;
- Largest decrease is payments to Capital Reserves down 57%;
- The budget funds 66 full-time positions (28 union-3 units, 38 non-union).

Chairman Merrill directed everyone's attention to the Contributions page of the budget for review.

Barbara Murphy and Susan Jennings spoke on behalf of the Oxford County Extension Association in support of continued funding in 2013 for a budget line item of \$109,364.

Bethel Town Manager Jim Doar expressed thanks for the county's consideration for continued funding of the Bethel Regional Airport at a \$3000 level representing no increase over last year's request.

Eastern Slope Regional Airport Manager Dave Cullinan stated they were requesting the same level of funding as last year-\$3000.

Jim Delamater, thanked the director and staff of the Western Maine Economic Development Council (WMEDC) for doing a great job this past year; noted that the unemployment rate in Oxford County is 8.6% further emphasizing the need of funding support to the WMEDC. Rumford Town Manager Carl Puiia spoke in support of the WMEDC and highlighted how they have assisted the Town of Rumford in the past year to promote Rumford as a Maine downtown center. Fred Henderson also spoke in support of funding the WMEDC in 2013. Funding request of \$112,000 is equal to the request last year.

Oxford County Soil and Water Conservation and Threshold to Maine RC&D Area, Inc. are requesting a 0% increase in funding for 2013. There were no representatives from either organization at the hearing.

Chairman Merrill directed attention to the 2013 Summary of Expenditures. The Budget Committee requested further explanation from the following departments:

- Regional Communications Center: 2.42% increase was in operating expenses;
- Registry of Deeds West and East: The question of consolidating the two registries of deeds offices was posed to the Commissioners. The Chairman stated this was not being considered at the present time. Pat Shearman explained the surcharge line item which is set up by statute and is a pass through for a dedicated purpose;
- Registry of Probate: there were inquiries regarding books and periodicals with no clear explanation given for the increase or how that is figured. The Register of Probate was not present;
- Sheriff: The Sheriff explained increases in fuel expenditures, overtime costs, investigative and general office supplies and salary for a School Resource Officer.
- Airport Operations and Maintenance: There was a lengthy discussion on the increased cost for airport maintenance and operations such as mowing, plowing, fence repair, striping, legal services, tree cutting. The Administrator, without going into detail, stated that things are moving forward in the best interest of the county.
- Unclassified Accounts: The zero in the TAN Interest "actual spent column" is because the expense is only booked when it actually occurs. A suggestion was made to put casino money toward this account. The Commissioners said they have discussed this option. There was a brief discussion and explanation of Risk Pool Insurance and County Firemen & Rescue Insurance.
- Employee Benefits: This line item is a function of county policy and collective bargaining agreements.

- Capital Reserve Requests: The Spillman computer line item request covers a two year plan to upgrade a server to remain current. Communications request covers a three year plan to upgrade equipment. Probate Docket request is a five year plan. The IMAT line item reduced to a zero request reflects the recent purchase of a new trailer purchased through state surplus using funds appropriated in recent years. The Charter Commission line item is an on-going appropriation with a goal of \$25,000 in reserve prior to initiating creating a charter.

Chairman Merrill directed attention to the 2013 Summary of Revenues. Revenues are not quite as rosy as hoped for coming in at a decrease of 6.61%. The Commissioners will be looking at these numbers at their workshop on October 17th.

The Chairman thanked everyone for coming to the budget hearing and encouraged the committee members to feel free to contact department heads with questions or requests for further explanation of their respective budgets.

Commissioner Duguay commented on how well the departments have done holding the line on this years budget and working hard to hold the line on the 2013 budget.

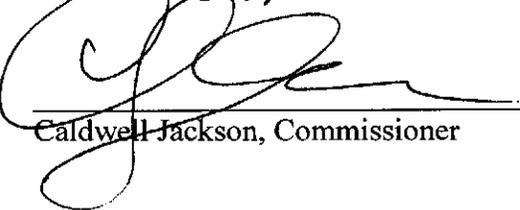
No other bills or accounts were given consideration on the 16th day of October, 2012. The Commissioners adjourned at 7:12 PM.



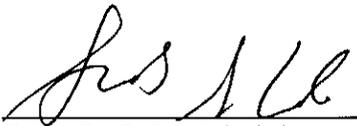
Steven M. Merrill, Chairman



David A. Duguay, Commissioner



Caldwell Jackson, Commissioner



Scott G. Cole, Administrator