

County Commissioners update 10/7/21

Over the past several months the Commissioners have been diligently working their way through the multitude of funding requests associated with the American Rescue Plan. To date, we have received roughly 35 requests and/or suggestions on how the funds should be invested. This does not include the comments and suggestions received at the various public hearings. These requests total 50 million dollars in funding requests when aggregated together.

At a previous meeting the Commissioners authorized the formation of multiple committees charged with reviewing the expansion of Layman Way recovery center and detox services – both of which are sorely needed in this County – as well as the development of a proposed regional public safety training facility and public safety workforce development program in conjunction with the Community College System. From our perspective we have seen firsthand the devastating impacts that the pandemic has had on the public safety workforce and individuals in need of substance abuse treatment and recovery services.

At our meeting last night, we invited several non-profits in to learn more about their requests to the County and how their particular projects will have a regional county-wide impact or a significant sub-regional impact. One organization that presented was “Fair Tide”, from Kittery. This organization is a social service agency serving Kittery and surrounding areas. After a brief presentation the Commissioner’s requested representatives from Fair Tide return with more detailed information to aid in any future decision-making process.

The Commissioners also heard a comprehensive proposal from “My Place Teen Center”. My Place Teen Center is another social service agency providing a wide variety of services to teens age 10-18. They are proposing to open a teen center in Biddeford in conjunction with the Biddeford Housing Authority. The Commissioners were impressed with the presentation and information submitted previously and they voted to allocate up-to 1.5 million dollars for this project. We look forward to working with this organization bringing a dream to reality.

In other matters the Commissioners discussed the upcoming “Spirit of America” awards ceremony that will be held on November 17, 2021. This ceremony, sponsored by the non-profit organization, The Spirit of America Foundation, gives the Commissioner’s the opportunity to recognize citizens who volunteer their time in support of their local community.

Time was also devoted to discussing the County’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The County through our Emergency Management Agency has been coordinating the response at the County level in conjunction with our Public Safety agencies and local governments. We currently operate the vaccination center in Sanford and routinely hold pop-up or mobile clinics in municipalities and local school districts. In response to the recent increase in demand for services, the Commissioner’s voted to declare a County State of Emergency. The State of Emergency allows us to respond to the staffing and purchasing needs in a more expeditious manner to meet the needs of the organization. We are one of the largest vaccine and booster providers in York County, as we encourage everyone to get a vaccine to control the spread of the virus.

We encourage everyone to go to our website: www.yorkcountymaine.gov to review the items listed here in more detail and to review additional information regarding the American Rescue Plan here in York County.