

KNOX COUNTY COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

Thursday – March 17, 2022 – 5:00 P.M.

The Joint Supplemental Budget Meeting of the Knox County Commission was held on Thursday, March 17, 2022, at 5:00 P.M., via ZOOM.

Commission members present were: Dorothy G. Meriwether, Commissioner District #1, Richard L. Parent, Jr. Commissioner District #2 and Sharyn L. Pohlman, Commissioner District #3.

County staff present included: County Administrator Andrew Hart, Administrative Assistant Wendy Galvin, Sheriff Tim Carroll, Finance Director Kathy Robinson and IT Director Mike Dean.

Budget Committee members present: Chair Shawn Levasseur, Roger Peabody, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Charles Grover, Bob Duke and Nick Lapham and Randy Stearns (*arrived at 5:16*).

Absent: Register of Probate Elaine Hallett, Register of Deeds Madelene Cole, Jail Administrator Bob Wood, Airport Manager Jeremy Shaw, Prosecutorial Assistant/Investigator Shane Riley, District Attorney Natasha Irving, Communications Director Robert Coombs and EMA Director Ray Sisk.

Joint Supplemental Budget Meeting – Agenda via ZOOM

Thursday – March 17, 2022 – 5:00 P.M.

- I. 5:00 Meeting Called To Order** (Chair Shawn Levasseur for the Knox County Budget Committee, Commission Chair Dorothy Meriwether for the Knox County Commission)
- II. 5:01 Public Comment**
- III. 5:03 Approve Minutes** (Chair Shawn Levasseur for the Knox County Budget Committee, Commission Chair Dorothy Meriwether for the Knox County Commission)
 - 1. Minutes of Supplemental/Amended Budget Review Meeting of February 17, 2022.
 - 2. Minutes of Supplemental/Amended Budget Review Meeting of March 3, 2022.
- IV. 5:05 Supplemental/Amended Budget Review**
 - 1. Further Review of ARPA Projects – Municipalities & Non-Profits and Knox County Departmental List.
- V. Adjourn**

I. Meeting Called to Order

The March 17, 2022 Joint Supplemental Budget Meeting was called to Order by Budget Committee Chair Shawn Levasseur and Commissioner Chair Dorothy Meriwether at 5:05 P.M.

II. Public Comment:

Chair Levasseur asked if there was any Public Comment.
None

III. Approve Minutes (Chair Shawn Levasseur for the Knox County Budget Committee, Commission Chair Dorothy Meriwether for the Knox County Commission)

- 1. Minutes of the Supplemental/Amended Budget Review Meeting of February 17, 2022.
- 2. Minutes of the Supplemental/Amended Budget Review Meeting of March 3, 2022.

- *Barry Norris made a motion to approve the amended Minutes of the Supplemental/Amended Budget Review Meeting on February 17, 2022. Bob Duke seconded the motion. A vote was taken with all in favor.*
- *Commissioner Pohlman made a motion to approve amended the Minutes of the Supplemental/Amended Budget Review Meeting on February 17, 2022. Commissioner seconded the motion. A vote was taken with all in favor.*
- *Bob Duke made a motion to approve the Minutes of the Supplemental/Amended Budget Review Meeting on March 3, 2022. Charles Grover seconded the motion. A vote was taken with all in favor.*
- *Commissioner Pohlman made a motion to approve the Minutes of the Supplemental/Amended Budget Review Meeting on March 3, 2022. Commissioner seconded the motion. A vote was taken with all in favor.*
- Administrator Hart wanted to draw attention to the five (5) highlighted items at the bottom of page one (1). Those were items that were a split vote with the Commission and Budget Committee. Those items need to be decided on whether to keep or remove from the list. The Sheriff would like to speak on a few of those items.

General Discussion from the Sheriff:

- The Sheriff stated the Correctional Facility doors will cost \$840,000. We are at a point where these are no longer serviceable. It has become a safety concern. He is willing to give up something else on the list. At this point, he says he is begging to have those two items placed back on the list. This is strictly for safety reason. This is a huge expense and doesn't know how else we would be able to fund this.
- A Budget Committee member asked for the figures again.
- The Sheriff stated the doors will cost \$840,000 as it is roughly \$10,000 per door and there are eighty-four (84) doors. Also the brick, mortar and caulking has a cost of \$190,000.
- A Budget Committee member asked about the line for the HVAC for \$196,400; is that something that was part of the long term Capital program for funding the HVAC? Can that be put in the budget process?
- Administrator Hart stated in 2021 budget phases 1-3 were approved for the HVAC. Then in 2022 budget we had put in phase 4 along with some other capital projects including paving of the road & sidewalks and the masonry work (repointing of the brick). Then found out the medical contract going to increase substantially. We had to remove all of the Capital to be able to pay for the medical contract and stay within the cap number. Phase 4 was part of that capital that was in the original budget and we had to remove that. Then we discussed with the Commissioners and Budget Committee to fund that out of ARPA, and were approved at a previous meeting to keep that on the list and have that funded. We did sign a letter of intent for Phase 4 with Siemens when we had the first three (3) Phases approved, knowing that we still had to do Phase 4. It was agreed that we would budget Phase 4 and complete the project.
- A Budget Committee member asked if you had to choose between the masonry and caulking work or the HVAC, which one would you choose.

- The Sheriff stated that we have gone so far into the HVAC he would love to be able to finish this project. The masonry, can we get by another year? There are loose bricks, so it's a safety hazard right now. That is a hard question to answer.
- A Budget Committee member asked if the Correctional Facility gets the new doors, then what about the control system that is in place now.
- The Sheriff stated that we put a new control system in a couple years ago, if we get new doors they will be compatible, so there would be no additional cost.
- A Budget Committee member is in favor to place the doors back on the list.
- A Budget Committee member stated they would like to see the boat stay on list.
- A Budget Committee member stated he would vote to keep these two items on the list. We need to think of safety and security first before anything else.
- The Sheriff stated he will remove three (3) positions: Discharge Planner, Diversion Deputy and Community Liaison Officer in order to get the doors and brick and mortar for the Correctional Facility.

- *Barry Norris made a motion to reinstate the doors to the ARPA list for the Correctional Facility in the amount of \$840,000 for new doors, \$190,000 for brick and mortar at the Correctional Facility, and to keep the watercraft on the list. The motion was seconded by Roger Peabody. A vote was taken with all in favor.*

- *Commissioner Parent made a motion to reinstate the doors to the ARPA list for the Correctional Facility in the amount of \$840,000 for new doors, \$190,000 for brick and mortar at the Correctional Facility. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pohlman. A vote was taken with all in favor.*

VI. Supplemental/Amended Budget Review: Further Review of ARPA Projects- Municipalities, Non-Profits and Knox County Departmental List.

- Administrator Hart stated there are five (5) items that were discussed at the last meeting, but a decision to remove or keep them on the list was not made. These need to be discussed tonight and a decision needs to be made.

Highlighted in Yellow: (No definitive decision was made at 3/3 Meeting)

Discussion: Discharge Planner - Corrections

- The Sheriff requested to have this item removed.
- A Budget Committee member stated the reason why the Budget Committee did not support these three (3) positions had a lot to do not so much with the dollars but committing ourselves to employment and not having the time to be able to evaluate whether those three (3) positions would be productive for the County in its purpose.
- A Commissioner stated the Budget Committee unanimously voted not to include these positions because it would have a presumed impact on the 2023 budget. She wanted to remind the Committee members that they are tasked with reviewing the 2022 budget not the 2023 budget. To her it sounded like they were making a decision based on a future budget for which they had no authority.

- A Commissioner stated because of the nature of the other pressing safety needs she will vote to have this removed, but would like to see this revisited and a serious discussion about funding these positions.
- ***The Budget Committee chose to vote on all three (3) positions in one motion, not individually.***

A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee to remove the Discharge Planner for \$68,625.00 per year, Diversion Deputy for \$73,511.00 per year and the Community Liaison Officer for \$90,000.00 per year from the ARPA list.

In favor of removing: 8 (Roger Peabody, Gayle Gallant, Bob Duke, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns, Charles Grover, Nick Lapham and Shawn Levasseur)

Against: 0

Maybe: 0

Abstained: 0

This item will be removed from the list.

- ***The Commissioners chose to vote on all three (3) positions individually, not all in one motion.***

A consensus vote was taken by the Commission to remove the Discharge Planner from the list or \$68,625.00 to the ARPA list.

In favor of removing 3 (Commissioner Pohlman, Commissioner Parent and Commissioner Meriwether)

Against: 0

Maybe: 0

Abstained: 0

This item will be removed from the list.

Discussion: Diversion Deputy - Corrections

- The Sheriff requested to have this item removed.
- A Commissioner would like to discuss this position at a further date.

A consensus vote was taken by the Commission to remove the Diversion Deputy position from the list for \$73,511.00.

In favor of removing: 3 (Commissioner Pohlman, Commissioner Parent and Commissioner Meriwether)

Against: 0

Maybe: 0

Abstained: 0

This item will be removed from the list.

Discussion: Watercraft - Sheriff

- A Budget Committee member stated having a descent watercraft is a safety issue. If something happens the fastest to get someone there is about two (2) hours, whereas if you had the boat you could get there in forty (40) minutes.
- Another Budget Committee member stated she agrees and would like this item to stay on the list. She feels this would be a good thing for safety and retention.
- A Budget Committee member stated where Knox County has those inhabited islands it accentuates the rational for keeping the boat on the list. We need to be thinking of safety and security first before we vote for anything else.

A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to add the Sheriff's Department's request for a Watercraft for \$300,000.00 to the ARPA list.

In favor: 8 (Roger Peabody, Gayle Gallant, Bob Duke Randy Stearns, Barry Norris, Charles Grover, Nick Lapham and Shawn Levasseur)

Against: 0

Maybe: 0

Abstained: 0

This item was kept on the list

A consensus vote was taken by the Commission on whether to add the Sheriff's Department's request for a Watercraft for \$300,000.00 to the ARPA list.

In favor: 3 (Commissioner Pohlman, Commissioner Parent and Commissioner Meriwether)

Against: 0

Abstained: 0

This item was kept on the list

Discussion: Community Liaison Officer - Sheriff

- The Sheriff requested to have this item removed.

A consensus vote was taken by the Commission to remove the Community Liaison Officer from the list for \$90,000.00 to the ARPA list.

In favor of removing 3 (Commissioner Pohlman, Commissioner Parent and Commissioner Meriwether)

In favor: 0

Against: 0

Maybe: 0

Abstained: 0

This item will be removed from the list.

Discussion – Department/Agency

- Chair Levasseur suggested for this next portion to go line by line: to first **approve or not approve** the line as presented. If the line passes it passes, if it fails then we can reconsider if anyone makes a motion, or if no one makes a motion then it fails altogether. If a motion is made then we would vote again to approve the updated number.
- Administrator Hart stated that the procedure that was laid out makes sense. It makes sense to go through each one and if you want to approve the amount that is there then it's an approval to send that number to final vote whenever we determine what the final vote will be. We do have to come up with a final total of numbers to then present to the Town and a Public Hearing Notice to have a final budget to vote on.
- A Budget Committee member asked if we were starting with the County operations first, and then moving to Non-Profits/Municipalities?
- Chair Levasseur stated that was correct unless someone makes a motion otherwise.
- Chair Levasseur placed on the screen a PowerPoint showing running tally of how much is approved or yet to be approved.
- Administrator Hart wants to discuss the stipends. Up until now there has been a lot of concern with other employees within the County, and a feeling of not everyone being considered and the feeling of being left out. A lot of Counties did give a stipend, bonus or premium pay for everyone in the other Counties and funded it out of ARPA. There are about twenty-five (25) employees that are not getting anything. If we agreed upon doing something it could range anywhere from \$1,000-\$2,000. Several Counties responded and the average is about \$3,000 for all employees. He wanted to bring this up for discussion and get thoughts on this.
- A Commissioner stated she would like the spreadsheet taken down due to this was not the spreadsheet we have been working with all along and finds it distracting to look at.
- A Budget Committee stated that this whole process has been a boondoggle. We now have twenty-five (25) employees, and rightfully saying what about us? If he understands this correctly, the stipends are really set up as a competitive bonus to retain staff. If we are calling it what it is, then it's not related to COVID pandemic.
- A Commissioner stated the confusion over what this represents is the original intent last year was for essential workers who are at an increased work risk for getting COVID at a time that there were no vaccines or other protections and were putting themselves at risk for serious disease. That is not the case any longer. We have vaccinations and we have treatments. The original reasoning does not exist any longer. The other reason for the essential worker pay is retention and recruitment, and we have two (2) departments where that has been a historical problem which was made worse during the pandemic. Those two (2) departments are Dispatch and Corrections. We have twelve (12) New Hires in Corrections right now. If we can give these guys a little extra money in order to keep them in the Jail she is 100% behind it. She would like to believe that Knox County is paying what they deserve for the day to day risk they (Patrol Deputies) have in their jobs. If they are not then that is something that needs to be discussed. She feels IT should be compensated for the value of the job, Airport Security is not on the road they are in the Airport; she knows there is risk and she wants to believe they are compensated for it. She feels the only people who should be getting stipends are Corrections and Dispatch.

- Chair Levasseur said he thinks two different things are being talked about and wanted to clarify. Administrator Hart was talking about employees not already covered under the other five (5) highlighted items.
- Administrator Hart stated yes.
- Chair Levasseur said ok so those people you wanted to add to the list right.
- A Budget Committee member asked are these stipends supposed to be targeted to those at risk during the pandemic, and is this for past performance or future performance.
- A Commissioner stated her understanding is that it is two (2) separate classifications as written under the American Rescue Plan. In the final rule the second which is retention and recruitment that is one (1) basic category. Getting someone into the job and keeping them there was separate from the essential worker risks. The whole issue of nobody should be getting in excess of 150% of the average annual in Maine. The average annual income in Maine is \$57,918.00 and a 150% of that is \$86,000.00. (*She froze due to her connection*)
- Administrator Hart stated the reason why he is bringing this up is because it has caused a problem with morale with the non-union employees and the employees that were not included. A lot of Counties and Municipalities gave out \$1,000, \$2,000 or \$3,000. He feels when we first did this that we should have given this across the board to everyone. That would have been fair. Its \$50,000 to add on the list. To represent the employees and he is bringing the issue forward and supports it.
- A Budget Committee member stated this program started March 3rd. He is motivated by the argument for retention and recruitment. He thinks it will make the other issue that Administrator Hart is talking about go away because if you define the money for retention and recruitment then that is not the same argument of fairness that those employees are making with you on the other stipends.
- A Commissioner stated she agrees that it is a hard situation.
- A Budget Committee member stated there are 16,000 people in Knox County and almost everyone went to work every day, we are now trying to segregate out County employees that came in and want stipends for what they've done; what are we going to do for everyone else in the County who has also stepped up, gone to work and done their job. We are just brushing them by because they don't have a voice in the matter? We need to look across the whole County and see how we can reward a majority of the voters and citizens of Knox County.
- A Budget Committee member stated have we not already committed close to \$500,000 and we have actually spent \$490,000.
- Administrator Hart stated that was spent last year.
- A Budget Committee member stated that that is not include in the million six.
- Administrator Hart stated that was correct.
- A Budget Committee member asked is if the \$490,000 is not part of the \$7.7 million?
- Administrator Hart said yes. It would be \$7.7 million less the \$490,000.
- A Budget Committee member confirmed that we are basically looking at \$7.2 million. Right now we are looking at spending \$1 million in addition, so it would be \$1 million out of the \$7.2 million. So \$1 would be allocated to these stipends.
- Administrator Hart said yes. He stated that what a Budget Committee member did was to add the \$490,000 to the \$1 million and you get the \$1.5 rounded. You would have to take this off the \$7.7 which would then give you the \$6.2 million.

- A Budget Committee member agreed that this was the \$490,000 from last year plus the \$1 million that was not approved yet. So that Committee member was talking about last year's not what you are proposing to add this year.
- A Commissioner stated the three (3) divisions that are receiving this benefit are presented by individual Unions. He suggests the time and place to give a retention raise is during negotiation process with the Unions, not here and now.
- A Budget Committee member stated we would make this a two (2) year process to get our normal budget prepared so that we continue this down the road. Are we still considering that second year go-round?
- Administrator Hart stated that he thought it was agreed that we would not do that.
- A Budget Committee member reiterated and said earlier when we were talking about the stipends a suggestion was made to split and do this over a two (2) year period. This way it would give our budget time to catch up and be able to continue some sort of (*inaudible*).
- A Budget Committee member stated it was tied to the retention piece and he suggested that we spend much more than the \$1 million. He suggested putting more money into retention because of the problem we are having in the three (3) departments. He was suggesting spreading it out over two (2) years.
- A Commissioner stated that we have heard comments about decorum during these meetings. She just wanted to remind people to not do anything on ZOOM that you wouldn't do live at in person meetings.
- Chair Levasseur asked if anyone had a motion to add anything based on Administrator Hart's recommendation.
- A Commissioner asked Finance Director Robinson whether or not there are any employees in either Communications or Corrections that make in excess of \$76,377.
- Finance Director Robinson stated she would have to look. She said definitely in Corrections but she'd have to look in Communications.
- A Commissioner stated \$76,377 is 150% of the annual average income in the State of Maine minus the \$10,500 that is suggested. According to American Rescue Plan you have to have a very special rational to be giving a stipend to anyone that makes up to \$86,000 including the stipend. She would ask that anyone that is making up to \$76,000 to not receive payment in excess of the 150% of the average annual income.
- Finance Director Robinson stated that she can make that vote but she will also say that we have conferred with the consultant who is a lawyer and on webinars that relate to premium pay, and paying people that fall into that category can be very easily justified. They are looking for two (2) sentences. You can make that motion but we can also justify paying the people that fall into that category also. The people in the management structure should not be excluded from that.
- A Budget Committee member asked wouldn't that be more policy in how the money is spent, that we are just covering the approval.
- A Commissioner stated that Administration went and got a consultant to help deal with the ARPA funds. We have never met the consultant and know nothing about the consultant. One thing the consultant recommended did not coincide with her personal feelings. We have never gotten any justification. She stated she would be more than happy to give each Knox County employee \$1,000 but the problem is every cent we give to a well paid employee takes money away from the homeless,

people with no medical insurance, people going to food pantries for food, and she is just trying to prioritize based on need.

- *Bob Duke made a motion to approve the stipend as stated for Communications in the amount of \$167,382, Corrections in the amount of \$494,333 and Sheriff's Department in the amount of \$299,096 for a total of \$960,811. Charles Grover seconded the motion. No vote was taken. Therefore, this motion fails.*
- A Commissioner wanted to know if the \$299,096 for the Sheriff's Department is simply for Patrol Officers or does it also include Process Servers?
- Finance Director Robinson stated it would include everybody but the Sheriff and MDEA as they have a different funding source.
- A Budget Committee member spoke and said this is not an issue of putting oneself at risk it is due to retention and recruitment. Those three (3) departments are where we have heard is a big problem.
- Administrator Hart stated when we started this process we had fourteen (14) openings in Corrections, eight (8) openings in Dispatch and zero (0) openings in the Sheriff's Office. We gave money to Corrections first then the next Union requested money which was the Sheriff's Office, that was approved and then Dispatch then asked for more money from their Union and that was approved. This has been called a number of things from premium pay to a retention bonus and no matter how we do this it will cause a problem. If we don't include Airport Security, those are two (2) Union positions; the Union will file a grievance against the County if those aren't funded. IT was going into the Jail dealing with staff and inmates so he feels they should be included. No matter how we do this its going to cause a problem.
- A Budget Committee member said if we 're doing this as a retention bonus you would still get his feedback, or are you saying that if we narrowed it down to Communications and Corrections because those are the areas where we need retention so then the feedback to you would not be so bad?
- Administrator Hart stated the problem is at this point we don't have any vacancies in the Sheriff's Office. The biggest problem is with Corrections and Communications. The biggest problem that happened was when we included one (1) department we included Non-Union positions and that is what caused a problem with the rest of the employees in the County. Once we started bringing in other positions that we not unionized that caused a problem with all employees. They are asking why are these Non-Union employees getting a bonus and the rest of us Non-Union employees are not?
- A Budget Committee member asked if all the positions in Communications and Corrections Union positions.
- Administrator Hart stated no. All management positions are Non-Union in Communications and Corrections and the Sheriff's Office management and Civil Process are Non-Union.
- A Budget Committee member stated if someone is getting paid \$60,000 a year, and one getting paid \$40,000 a year, are they getting the same \$200 a wk. Why wouldn't we do this at the same percentage rate? We are just asking for trouble.

- Finance Director Robinson stated at this point the employees know it is going forward at \$200/wk. We would not be in favor of shaking it up at this point.
- A Budget Committee member stated we should put in the other \$50,000 for everyone to get something. They are employees are not Union employees, but everyone should get something. This has been hard on everybody.
- Chair Levasseur stated we are on the motion just to approve those three (3) lines. Let's clear that out and then we can move onto the first two (2) lines or rejecting it, and then see if we want to add more. Let's get something approved today.
- A Budget Committee member asked what is the difference between the Sheriff line here, and what we did a year ago with \$400,000 something thousand.
- Administrator Hart stated the amount approved in 2021 was \$490,000 that was actually for Communications, Corrections, Sheriff's Office, IT and EMA. This started out with Corrections initially which was a retention/premium pay, then went to the Sheriff's Office and Dispatch. Then we discussed IT and two (2) EMA positions. What is being proposed is for twelve (12) months. This would go back to January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022.
- A Budget Committee member asked is this a redundant reason for doing this?
- Administrator Hart stated it was approved in 2021; the discussion with everyone was that this is going to be approved until December 31, 2021. There could be a possibility it could get extended, but that would be a discussion with the Budget Committee and Commissioners. We picked a time frame and then stated we would request to continue the bonus. We are still dealing with retention. Different terms were being used for this pay.
- A Budget Committee member asked is it fair to look at it one way that we already did this last year why are we going to do it again this year. It seems redundant to do it again this year. The other people we are talking about we did nothing for them last year.
- Administrator Hart stated some of the other reasoning we had a retention problem and we had some current employees that said we are considering leaving too. At that point we were going to lose more people. If we don't approve any money for some employees that are here right now they could come in and say, "I'm leaving because I thought I might get this money".
- A Budget Committee member stated you said there are about twenty-five (25) other people. You're only asking for \$50,000 so you're not suggesting giving them the same amount. \$200/wk. you are suggesting a different solution for the other people.
- Administrator Hart stated that is correct, \$2,000 per person.
- A Budget Committee member asked why are some getting \$200 /wk. and the others \$2,000 all at once,. Why would you think people would consider this fair?
- Administrator Hart stated the ones listed were receiving the additional \$200/wk. for about six (6) months in 2021. The discussion with those departments was we would try to entertain to keep it going into 2022 if approved. The reason for the other twenty-five (25) was just to request something. We didn't do the figure of \$200/wk. for the other twenty-five (25) employees.
- A Budget Committee member stated when this was proposed to us regarding retention this was a stop-gap measure to get us to potentially properly budgeting the right wages for these folks that are being pulled away from other agencies. I remember that was part of the conversation at that time. There is no parody in this thing. In one way part of me just wants to say let's not give anybody anything, and then part of me says let's give everybody the same amount.

- A Budget Committee member thinks it should be on a percentage basis and everyone should get the same percent if you're going to treat everyone equally.
- Chair Levasseur asked to take a vote on whether or not to fund the stipends for Communications, Corrections and Sheriff's Department. *(Please go to the individual departments below)*
- A Commissioner wanted to propose a motion and have it worded differently the Budget Committee worded theirs.
- ***Commissioner Meriwether made a motion to pay \$167,383 Communications, \$494,000 for Corrections, and that no employee receives more than 150% of the average annual income in the state of Maine including any stipend they may get. Commissioner Pohlman seconded the motion for discussion purposes. A vote was taken with 2 against and 1 in favor. Therefore, the motion fails.***
- ***Commissioner Parent made a motion to eliminate all retention bonuses. Commissioner Pohlman seconded the motion. A vote was taken with all in favor.***
- Commissioner Pohlman stated that this whole issue of proper pay to keep people needs to be discussed at a different date. We cannot keep throwing money at a problem that needs a much larger solution for retention. She would like to give it to everybody but we cannot. At this point she is taking it off because she does not see a fair way of doing it for everybody. No one will be happy anyway. The Budget Committee and Commissioners need to sit down and figure out how to pay these people to keep them, rather than us having it to bandage it together with stipends and all this temporary stuff.
- A Commissioner agreed. She suggested we should set aside some funds to address any emergencies that might come up.
- A Budget Committee member agreed that they should meet and discuss the problem. He suggested set money aside and to make to be deducted from the \$7.7 million. We should make it comparable to last year, \$490,000.
- Chair Levasseur stated the Budget Committee did not weigh in on the IT or Airport Security lines and this needed to be done.
- A Budget Committee member suggested that Administrator Hart and Finance Director Robinson go back and get us some new numbers. We are just spinning our wheels on this tonight.
- ***Barry Norris made a motion to table this discussion of stipends until next meeting. Roger Peabody seconded the motion. A vote was taken with 7 in favor and 1 abstention.***
- Administrator Hart asked what type of calculation were you looking for? \$200/wk. for each employee or \$2,000 per employee?
- A Budget Committee member suggested at the next meeting we do not start with this stipend item. We should save this item for last.
- A Commissioner stated this particular item has been the hard egg for everyone working on this. This has been extremely productive work. How do you make your employees satisfied? What lines are we willing to draw? Every bit of discussion is critical. We shouldn't feel rushed. We need to address this carefully and thoughtfully.

- Administrator Hart stated that we are \$9.2 million right now and we only have \$7.2 million. We will not make everyone happy no matter what we do.
 - Administrator Hart stated the next meeting will be on March 31st. If we will continue after March 31st that would be April 14th for another meeting. We will need one meeting to do a final vote and send it out to everyone and then have a final meeting. We are essentially following the Budget process in the Charter. We come up with a final Budget, then we have to send that out to the Towns, we have to do a Public Hearing Notice and then we vote on a final Budget. Similar what we do with the annual Budget.
 - A Budget Committee member stated we should keep the cap in mind as well.
 - A Budget Committee member would like the numbers to reflect some sort of percentage.
 - A Budget Committee member stated if we are looking for parody, the percentage is the best way.
 - A Budget Committee member stated we need to be clear on the final rules
 - A Budget Committee member stated part of this whole thing to retain employees so we have to take that into consideration. We do not want that to go by the wayside.
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- *Roger Peabody made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Charles Grover. A vote was taken with all in favor.*
 - *A motion was made by Commissioner Pohlman to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Parent. A vote was taken with both in favor.*

The regular meeting adjourned at 7:17 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Galvin
Administrative Assistant

The Knox County Commission approved these minutes at their regular meeting held on March 31, 2022.