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County commission questions contract deputy proposal

By TAMMY WELLS
Senior Staff Writer

ALFRED — A conversation between county officials and the Hollis Select Board about contract deputies is set to continue, but the York County Board of Commissioners has concerns about the sheriff's office taking on a what some are calling a 'new' community.

Commissioners have historically advocated for the contract deputy program, whereby municipalities pick up the costs associated with hiring one or more deputies for 40 hours of dedicated coverage per week — typically costing around \$100,000 annually for one deputy's salary, benefits and a vehicle. The dedicated coverage is over and above the sheriff's rural patrol.

But Hollis, while once patrolled by sheriff's deputies, has been one of five communities patrolled by Maine State Police since 2013, when the two enti-

ties modified a call-sharing agreement that originated in 2005. The revision assigned agencies to specific towns, rather than the zone system under which responsibilities changed month-to-month.

The modified agreement calls for troopers to have primary responsibility for five of York County's 14 rural communities that don't have their own municipal police departments. The five communities are Alfred, Dayton, Hollis, Lebanon and Lyman. The sheriff's office has primary responsibility for Acton, Arundel, Cornish, Limerick, Limington, Newfield, Parsonsfield, Shapleigh and Waterboro.

Zinser on Wednesday told commissioners he was concerned about manpower, and whether the county would be getting into a volatile situation because

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Aircraft carrier is rushed to the hurricane-battered Keys

By JENNIFER KAY
and DOUG FERGUSO
Associated Press

MIAMI — Authorities sent an aircraft carrier and other Navy ships to help with search-and-rescue operations in Florida on Monday as a flyover of the hurricane-battered Keys yielded what the governor said were scenes of devastation.

"I just hope everyone survived," Gov. Rick Scott said.

He said boats were cast ashore, water, sewers and electricity were knocked out, and "I don't think I saw one trailer park where almost everything wasn't overturned." Authorities also struggled to clear the single highway connecting the string of islands to the mainland.

The Keys felt Irma's full fury when the storm blew ashore as a Category 4 hurricane Sunday morning with 130 mph (209 kph) winds.

How many people in the dangerously exposed, low-lying islands defied evacuation orders and stayed behind was unclear.

As Irma weakened into a tropical storm and finally left Florida on Monday after a run up the entire 400-mile length of the state, the full scale of its destruction was still unknown, in part because of cut-off communications and blocked roads.

Five deaths in Florida have been blamed on Irma, along with three in Georgia and one in South Carolina. At least 35 people were killed in the Caribbean.

Statewide, an estimated 13 million people, or two-thirds of Florida's population, remained without power. That's more than the population of New York and Los Angeles combined. Officials warned it could take weeks for electricity to

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James D. Herbert speaks to the crowd gathered at the University of New England's Biddeford campus for his inauguration as the sixth president of UNE on Saturday morning.

UNE inaugurates Herbert as school's sixth president

By ED PIERCE
Executive Editor

BIDDEFORD — Saturday, Sept. 9, 2017, is a day that James D. Herbert, Ph.D., is going to remember for a long time.

With his wife, mother and three of his four children looking on, Herbert was officially inaugurated as the sixth president of the University of New England during a ceremony filled with pageantry, humor and a glimpse into where its new leader would like to take the school in the future.

An accomplished psychologist, author, guitarist, gardener and practitioner of karate, Herbert was welcomed to his new role as UNE president by delegates from 21 other colleges and universities, U.S. Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, members of the UNE faculty and board of trustees, UNE students and past UNE presidents Charles Ford and Danielle Ripich, who he succeeded as UNE's leader.

Before the ceremony, Herbert said he was filled with pride and humbled to

serve as UNE's president.

"I am incredibly honored and privileged to have this position at UNE," Herbert said. "I've never met students so happy and I just couldn't be happier."

He said he and his wife, Lynn Brandsma, love being in Biddeford and were thrilled to have attended the La Kermesse Franco-Americaine Festival in June.

"I speak French, so I was absolutely fascinated in conversing with some of the people there," Herbert said. "I feel a sense of connection

with this community and it's going to be fun to explore more of it."

Collins said she believes that Herbert is going to thrive at UNE.

"President Herbert comes to UNE with a distinguished record as a scientist and an academic leader," she said. "His accomplishments are remarkable."

She said she wishes Herbert "all the best" in the great challenge that he has accepted.

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Discussions continue about MaineHealth unification

By ED PIERCE
Executive Editor

BIDDEFORD — Additional public forums are continuing to give Maine and New Hampshire residents the chance to voice their opinion about a plan that would have MaineHealth hospitals and medical organizations governed by one statewide board of trustees, including Southern Maine Health Care in Biddeford and Sanford.

If adopted, the unification initiative would create a single system-wide MaineHealth Board of Trustees for 12 different health care organizations while leaving in place a system of local boards that would oversee local hospital services and other care delivered to local communities.

Proponents say increasing financial pressures as a result of uncertainty in health care delivery is at the heart of the measure, but critics of the proposal say it will lead to loss of local control for community health care.



Discussion is continuing about a plan that would have MaineHealth hospitals and medical organizations governed by one statewide board of trustees, including Southern Maine Health Care in Biddeford and Sanford.

On its website, MaineHealth says although financial pressures are system-wide, local health

care systems are also being severely impacted by other forces. MaineHealth says fewer

procedures are taking place at its community hospitals.

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MaineHealth

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It says that in 2015, some 20 Maine hospitals — including four MaineHealth members — performed fewer than two inpatient surgeries per day.

The company attributes that issue to many relatively simple procedures now being done in outpatient clinics and more complex procedures that are being done at larger specialized medical centers able to afford expensive new technologies employed by highly specialized providers.

It says that surgeries and other complex procedures have provided much of the revenue that community hospitals need to stay open, but now that money is going away.

But, it says that large tertiary care hospitals like Maine Medical Center in Portland are seeing growth and cites statistics from 2015, when more than 70 percent of all inpatient surgeries in Maine were taking place at just five hospitals.

This has left local community hospitals unable to pass more costs on to private insurers and others either now losing money, or expected to suffer financial losses in the near future.

Smaller MaineHealth hospitals with 25 or fewer

beds designated as “Critical Access” by the federal government and eligible to get more generous government payments, are seeing their finances erode.

The company says that in the last year, four of its seven local healthcare networks lost money and a fifth of those fell well short of budget.

The unification proposal would establish one governing entity with a single budget aimed at making sure each community gets the services it needs and attempts to do it in a way that preserves a measure of local control and input into the care provided locally, MaineHealth says.

The next community forum will be conducted in Rockland on Sept. 18, with the final forum of the year to be held in North Conway, New Hampshire, in October.

Community forums in Biddeford and Sanford were held in July with a panel consisting of SMHC President and CEO Edward McGeachey; SMHC Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer Michael Albaum; SMHC Board Chairman Ted Hisson and MaineHealth President William Caron.

In a press release issued by SMHC, the hospital outlined the core reasons for unification.

“The proposal under discussion would create a single, system-wide board of trustees for MaineHealth,” SMHC officials said in the press release. “It would also leave in place local boards that would retain significant responsibility for the hospital services and other care delivered locally.”

MaineHealth currently administers numerous health care organizations and hospitals in the state including Southern Maine Health Care in Biddeford and Sanford; Maine Medical Center in Portland; Franklin Memorial Hospital in Farmington; Miles Campus and Hospital in Damariscotta; Stephens Memorial Hospital in Norway, and St. Andrews Hospital in Boothbay Harbor, among others.

The proposal creates a statewide board of 25 members who would serve for five-years and then the system would be re-evaluated.

Southern Maine Health Care has been a part of MaineHealth since 2009.

A decision about unification is expected to be made by member health care organizations and hospitals early in 2018.

— *Executive Editor Ed Pierce can be reached at 282-1535 ext. 326 or by email at editor@journaltribune.com.*



ED PIERCE/Journal Tribune

New University of New England President James D. Herbert, left, talks with U.S. Sen. Susan Collins during the inauguration ceremony for Herbert in Biddeford on Saturday.

UNE President

FROM PAGE A1

“As home to Maine’s only medical and dental schools, UNE plays a vital role in our State’s future, helping to keep our best and brightest students here and to attract high-achieving students from elsewhere to come to Maine to study and to stay,” Collins said.

Herbert joins UNE from Drexel University in Philadelphia, where he served as executive vice provost and dean of the school’s Graduate College. Prior to those positions, he served at Drexel as interim provost and senior vice president for Academic Affairs, head of the Department of Psychology, interim head of the Department of Biology, associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, director of the Anxiety Treatment and Research Program, director of the Ph.D. Program in Clinical Psychology, and president of the University Faculty.

Drexel University President John A. Fry praised UNE for choosing Herbert.

“At Drexel, James is known as a remarkable teacher, prolific scholar, and skilled administrator with a collegial approach to meeting any and all challenges,” Fry said. “It was with full confidence in his leadership that James was named dean in 2015. In that post, he has

heightened our emphasis on graduate education — at the master’s, doctoral and postdoctoral levels — as an essential strategy to secure Drexel’s place among the nation’s leading research universities.”

Fry said that as executive vice provost, Herbert, who was the first member of his family to graduate from college, was indispensable in working to strengthen and improve academic policies and strategic planning, develop external partnerships, provide insight into major infrastructure projects and enhance fundraising efforts for Drexel.

“Published widely, his work on the application of new technologies to the treatment of anxiety-based disorders has gained national and international media attention,” Fry said.

Herbert’s book “Acceptance and Mindfulness in Cognitive Behavior Therapy,” was published in 2011 with colleague Dr. Evan Forman, and Fry said that he received an endorsement from the Dalai Lama, who called it “a most beneficial and powerful method for ensuring a healthy mind and heart.”

According to Fry, Herbert has two great loves in his life.

“First is his amazing family and then there is his second great love — food,” he said. “There are two things you need to know about James. He will always finish

his meal first and you will soon find his eyes on your plate.”

In his inauguration address, Herbert says he envisions an exciting new chapter unfolding for UNE.

“I am deeply honored to play this role in the next chapter of UNE’s unique and remarkable story,” he said.

“It’s a story steeped in the history of courageous people who were dauntless in their efforts to build and grow an institution of higher learning. Throughout the years, the university and its predecessor institutions continuously upheld the values of dogged determination and inclusivity while delivering on the promise of education and the personal fulfillment that comes with it. I know that that spirit of UNE is ever-present and will push us forward, together, to a bright, bright future.”

He said the responsibility of serving as UNE’s sixth president is not something he takes lightly. “This is a day for us to wonder just how much further we can take UNE, to wonder just how much more UNE, and each of us, can become during the next era of our university’s evolution,” Herbert said. “As we sit here, shoulder to shoulder, I believe we can accomplish anything we put our collective minds to.”

— *Executive Editor Ed Pierce can be reached at 282-1535 ext. 326 or by email at editor@journaltribune.com.*

Hurricane Irma

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be restored to everyone.

More than 180,000 people huddled in shelters in the Sunshine State.

“How are we going to survive from here?” asked Gwen Bush, who waded through thigh-deep floodwaters outside her central Florida rescuers and get a ride to a shelter. “What’s going to happen now? I just don’t know.”

The governor said it was way too early to put a dollar estimate on the damage.

During its march up Florida’s west coast, Irma swamped homes, uprooted trees, flooded streets, snapped miles of power lines and toppled construction cranes.

In a parting shot, it triggered severe flooding around Jacksonville in the state’s northeastern corner. It also spread misery into Georgia and South Carolina as it moved inland with winds at 50 mph, causing flooding and power outages.

Around the Tampa-St. Petersburg area, where Irma rolled through early Monday,

damage appeared modest. And the governor said damage on the southwest coast, including in Naples and Fort Myers, was not as bad as feared. In the Keys, though, he said “there is devastation.”

“It’s horrible, what we saw,” Scott said. “I know for our entire state, especially the Keys, it’s going to be a long road.”

He said the Navy dispatched the USS Iwo Jima, USS New York and the aircraft carrier Abraham Lincoln to help with search and rescue and other relief efforts.

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