

**WALDO COUNTY FY2014 BUDGET COMMITTEE
ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
OCTOBER 24, 2013**

PRESENT: Budget Committee Members, David Barrows, Peter Curley, Richard Desmarais, Bill Sneed, James Bennett, Harry Dean Potter, Tom Flacke and Clement Blakney. Also present were Islesboro Selectman Fred Rollins, County Commissioners William D. Shorey, Amy R. Fowler and Betty I. Johnson, County Clerk Barbara Arseneau and Deputy County Clerk Linda Kinney to take minutes.

Call to order: Commissioner Shorey called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. and asked everyone to make introductions.

BROWNFIELD GRANT PROCESS:

W. Shorey: The first order of business tonight is to nominate a Budget Committee Chairman for this year.

****J. Bennett moved, R. Desmarais seconded to nominate Bill Sneed as FY2014 Waldo County Budget Committee Chairman.**

****J. Bennett moved, R. Desmarais seconded that nominations cease. Passed by 8 with Bill Sneed opposed.**

W. Shorey: I'll give the meeting over to you, Bill. Do you have a member that you need to vote on this evening?

B. Sneed: Yes, and it's a little weird. It's the first time in 12 years we've had to do this. When someone, for one reason or another, is no longer part of the Budget Committee and their term is not up, we have to get someone from the same town. It's State law. Someone from Betty's district couldn't do it any more, so you (referring to Islesboro Selectman Fred Rollins) volunteered to jump into the fray, am I correct?

F. Rollins: Yes.

B. Johnson: There's another member for District 1, because Morrill is now District 1 so you also have a new member.

B. Sneed: They're both District 1. He (referring to new member Tom Flacke of Morrill) got in on his own right as opposed to a replacement. We can't vote on him, is that correct, Barbara?

B. Arseneau: Right.

B Johnson, Yes, he was voted in by the Selectmen from the different towns.

J. Bennett: We have to vote on just him (referring to Fred Rollins).

B. Sneed: Because the ballots have already gone out, it's up to the Budget Committee to fill the vacancy from the same town.

****B. Sneed moved, J. Bennett seconded to nominate Fred Rollins from Islesboro to fill Craig Olson's one-year vacancy on the committee. Unanimous.**

BUDGET DISCUSSIONS:

W. Shorey: Bill, would you like to ask us to present our budget now?

B. Sneed: What do you think is best? Should we take a couple of minutes to let the newest members look at the paperwork they have in front of them?

W. Shorey: Good idea.

(B. Sneed gave a synopsis of the budget binders and explained that the Department Head of any department can move money around in his or her department as they see fit.)

B. Sneed: Nobody can move money from department to department, including the Commissioners without calling us back to do it, which has never happened. The money that is in a department has to stay in the department. The second thing is we can't touch individual employee lines. If you don't like what an employee is getting paid, tough.

J. Bennett: No, that's not right.

B. Sneed: You cannot touch it, Jim. We've gone through this.

J. Bennett: I've already checked and you can cut the bottom line.

B. Sneed: You can cut the bottom line, but you can't cut the individual pay.

J. Bennett: If you cut the bottom line, then the individual is cut. It's confusing the way you say it, Bill.

B. Sneed: We cannot cut an individual employee's line. Period. If you don't like the bottom line for the Personnel, take it out of somewhere else in that department. You've never brought it to us in writing and these people (Commissioners) have it in writing.

J. Bennett: Okay, I can bring it in writing. If somebody's getting "x" number of dollars and we think it's too high, we can cut the bottom line in that person's department.

B. Sneed: That's what I said. The other problem is that most of the employees are unionized. They are under contracts.

F. Rollins: Is that why there are green numbers?

L. Kinney: Yes, those are the Personnel amounts.

J. Bennett: We've discussed that before and I thought they took it out last year.

A. Fowler: That is just Personnel, Jim, and the reason why is because that is a done deal. That's why it carries over automatically.

B. Sneed: Those are the things for the individual departments. This mess here [Appropriations Report] is a year-to-date expenditure. As of tonight, we have gone through 81% of the year. If you look at the very first page where it says Emergency Management, you will see at the bottom of the column for Y-T-D Var. percentage, which means that the Emergency Management Agency Department has spent 80% of their budget as of today. That means that they are right on the money. If you flip over to the District Attorney's Office, you will see that the Y-T-D is only 75%, so you think that they have money left over. We know from years past that they buy legal books at the end of the year, so even though it says they have only spent 75%, we know that by the end of December, that will be gone. The columns to the left, or right, are what was done in previous years.

B. Arseneau: You are looking at the allocation for the current year. Those are the first set of figures that you see. Last year is 2012, and the year before is 2011.

B. Sneed: That's pretty much that. We will go through each one of these line by line.

A. Fowler: It gives a good overview if there is a particular area in a department that tends to spike or is way down.

B. Sneed: As a rule, if you will just look at some of these tabs, we know that a lot of this just does not change much. The most complicated one is the Facilities budget because the man that takes care of it takes care of all of the buildings. He does heating, electricity, plowing, and plumbing, all of it. This is usually the most complicated budget. The second most complicated one would be the Sheriff. The reason it's normally not too bad is that the Sheriff is addicted to using computers, so he prints all this stuff out for us. Some of this stuff never changes. We have to pay an auditor, interest, and we share the cost of Cooperative Extension with the University.

A. Fowler: They are very frugal.

B. Sneed: They hardly spend any money. The Soil & Water service spends very little money. I think they are also funded in part elsewhere.

A. Fowler: Correct, through Federal money.

B. Sneed: The one thing we don't touch is the jail. We just send \$2.8 million to Augusta and that's it.

W. Shorey: You know there is discussion going on that next year, the jail portion will be left off the County Budget and we will just talk about the things that we control and pay for. The jail costs are fixed and we have absolutely no say about them.

R. Desmaris: But it comes out of the bottom line so it should be open to the public even though it's fixed.

A. Fowler: You're absolutely right. The State now wants that left off the LD Tax Cap forms that are filled out by the Treasurer's Office. It just shows your County budget. My argument is this; the taxpayers are assessed for what the full County budget is. The towns receive two invoices, but the fact of the matter is your County budget is built with \$2.8 million in it.

B. Sneed: You pay for it; it should be on that budget. As for the Revenues sheet, I assume that the Registry of Deeds is still a profit center?

R. Desmaris: They just got an increase in what they can charge per page. (Several folks answered this with a "yes".)

B. Sneed: The question is, on the Revenue Control Report, is this all of the revenues that come in?

A. Fowler: The only revenue that wouldn't be reflected on here, I believe, is the jail. Anything that has to do with your jail is completely separate and benign from this budget that you see. The jail creates revenue from room and board from the residents that is charged once they can get a job. That revenue goes into the jail budget, which is then submitted into the State.

B. Sneed: Is there a separate line from the Tax Revenue received from the 26 towns?

A. Fowler: No. That has to be completely separate from everything.

P. Curley: Where would that be? Do we show it at all?

B. Shorey: We have a worksheet that shows every town, what the commitment is from that town and the total.

A. Fowler: Would that be shown as revenue where that actually goes out as a bill?

P. Curley: You send those bills out based on what your budget is. Its revenue, just like when we send tax bills out for property.

W. Shorey: We can easily produce that sheet at the next meeting to show you all of the towns and what each town pays.

A. Fowler: I actually have it if you would all like a copy. (B. Arseneau left the room to make copies.)

P. Curley: Does the County receive funds from the State like towns do for Revenue Sharing?

A. Fowler: Our Unorganized Territories include Lasell and Little Bermuda Islands. We receive \$3,408.00 a year from the State of Maine for taxes.

B. Sneed: The only other things are these large sheets. These are the statement of the Reserve Funds. Like most of our towns, these people have Restricted and Unrestricted accounts. The Restricted accounts are the ones you can only spend the money on for what the title is for. We'll see the next time we get together that they are not asking for any money for the Technology account, which is in the first set of categories. What they are going to do is take money from the Category 2 accounts, which are the Unrestricted Reserves, which includes Unemployment and Severance, to fund Technology. It's their call. What are the Undesignated Funds? If you read across the Reserve Account, you will have balanced budget funds and then it says Undesignated Funds. Are those just the ones that have not been spent yet?

W. Shorey: Yes. They have not been allocated to anything.

B. Sneed: This is the first half of the year. If you'll flip the sheet, you'll see the second half. They don't have to spend the money from the Reserve accounts.

D. Potter: That term – Undesignated Fund Balance, I believe is used by auditors to describe what we used to call surplus.

A. Fowler: Nobody is supposed to use that word any more! (laughter)

C. Blakney: What happened to it in the second half of the year? I see the first page shows it and then, in the second half, it's gone.

P. Curley: It carries over in the balance.

D. Potter: Do the Commissioners have the discretion to spend from the Undesignated Funds balance?

W. Shorey: We can move the money to Reserves.

B. Sneed: At this point, are all of the employees under some sort of union contract, except for maybe Barbara and a few of the others.

W. Shorey: Yes. In two weeks, we are starting negotiations with the Sheriff's Department Fraternal Order of Police Union. Then there are two other unions with the Communications Center, District Attorney's office and Registry of Probate office. There are three different unions that we have to negotiate with on different years. The Sheriff's Department is this year and the other two will be next year.

B. Sneed: Those three unions are the bulk of the employees?

W. Shorey: Right. We had several meetings going back six years and the salary increases for the non-union people was always an item for much discussion. Last year we said that it would be the last year we would do this. All non-union people are on the same scale now of 1% a year for longevity. The 1% rule applies to everybody and it will show up quickly when you look at the pay scales.

B. Sneed: It's taken these people a while to get the job descriptions, the pay scales and the step increases standardized.

W. Shorey: We think that we are in real good shape now and everyone is treated fairly. It's COLA every year if you have one. Someone would get 2.5% in a step increase and the COLA happened to be 2%, giving them 4.5%. Last year the Commissioners said, "We're not going to do this any more. It's not going to happen. Everybody is going to be on the same page. There won't be any more 2%, 3%, 4%." It got as high as 5.5%. When you go through the budgets this year, it will be readily apparent.

B. Sneed: The two great unknowns used to be the jail and the employees salaries because they were just literally all over the map. It was almost impossible to budget for them. It has taken these people quite a while to get it squared away.

A. Fowler: And the Health Insurance.

B. Sneed: Ah, the Health Insurance. They had a great black hole. With the boarding of the prisoners, that whole problem has gone away.

R. Desmaris: We're still on solid ground, right? I've been reading stuff in the paper about the jail. Where are we?

A. Fowler: The garden is very successful! (laughter) Our hands are tied at this point. There is still a very good chance that the State could come in and take over our facility. Frankly, at this point, we just send the money in. If they take it over, we're going to continue to send the money in. It's unfortunate. It is what it is. I'm just grateful that the Jail bond failed in Waldo County years ago. When they first did the consolidation of the jails, we all went kicking and screaming into it. I'm not playing any political side here. There were plusses to it. It saved us on room and board. In years past, for any of the new members, we would shop for jail beds and they would negotiate them anywhere between \$95.00 and \$160.00 a day. We couldn't pay our jail board, so we rolled it into the following year. The consolidation stopped the shopping around. A small jail is good for us, but you read about the large receiving facilities like Cumberland County and Two Bridges with a set boarding rate of \$24.86 a day to house an inmate. My daughter boards a dog and its \$25.00 a day. These facilities are overflowing with incredible debt with our inmates and we are grateful because it's saving us money. Of the county jail cost of \$83 million dollars, 69% is personnel.

B. Sneed: Before the jail consolidation, we were looking at increases of $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ million dollars every year. There was no way to stop it. We could do nothing.

W. Shorey: From an accounting standpoint, we have the best of both worlds now. We should be extremely happy. We send \$900,000.00 down the road for operations and its someone else's bill, not ours.

A. Fowler: Two Bridges foots the bill. There are several lawsuits currently from Waldo inmates, and it's their problem. We just listen to their complaints and thank them.

R. Desmaris: It makes you wonder how long the train is going to stay on the track.

A. Fowler: We are very fortunate that we have a very good agreement with Two Bridges Regional Jail in Wiscasset because they we could easily be in the same situation as Somerset County where they stop taking inmates because they were not being adequately paid.

B. Sneed: Do you think that we can go through this whole budget on a Saturday?

A. Fowler: Yes.

W. Shorey: Easily, Bill.

B. Sneed: Can everyone make it to a Saturday meeting? We used to do this at 6:00 PM for five Friday nights in a row and then sometimes the week between Christmas and New Years. If we can get through this whole budget book in one Saturday, it would be great. If they are asking for an eleven percent increase, that probably wasn't going to happen in one Saturday meeting, but now they are asking for a 3% decrease; it's hard to fight with them. I will find something to fight with them about, but it will be hard!

W. Shorey: I have a couple of things here for discussion. If you would turn to the Budget Summary tab in your binder, I just want to mention a few things that really stand out and go along with what you are saying, Bill. Quickly scan down through those lines. The 1010 line's increase is longevity and COLA's. 1015 is the same. Skip the County Commissioners (1020) for now. 1025, the Treasurer, is something that we will have to discuss a little bit. A year ago, we had \$50,000.00 to \$60,000.00 backed up in Restitution accounts. Checks' not going out is like a Chinese Air raid, if you will. The Commissioners got aggressive on that and had to change some faces in some departments. You can be proud of your District Attorney's office now and the staff that works there. In turn, we took all of those proceeds, funneled them through our office, and Karen is now in charge. The checks now go out on the day they should go out and we have a great accounting system. Karen also has charge of producing another budget for the State for the jails and she is an extremely talented person.

B. Sneed: Karen is the Deputy Treasurer, correct?

W. Shorey: Yes. The Commissioners think that Karen should be the Finance Director of Waldo County. We have put \$2,500.00 in this budget to increase her pay. We also think that the duties have changed in the Treasurer's office and when election time comes, we are going to propose to reduce the salary to offset Karen's increase. It's only fair because we have an individual that is doing 95% of the work and she should be compensated for it. Any question that I ask her, I can have an answer to in a minute or two at the longest. She is a very valuable individual. We expect

push back on the latter part of the program that I just mentioned, but I want it out on the table early in the discussions while everyone is in a good mood! (laughter)

B. Sneed: I'm laughing because I was looking through this last night and my wife said, "What's up?" I said, "The Treasurer is up 6%; we'll take that out of his salary!" You guys have already decided to do it! (laughter all around)

W. Shorey: We thought it would only be to do it at election time so that someone running for office will know what he or she is getting. We made that change this year and we feel it is a valuable change. I can't say enough about how our funds are handled in the County and the overseeing that we have. Every invoice that is paid has a stamp on it that Commissioner Johnson has looked at the invoice and [Treasurer] Parkman looks at the invoices as well. The \$2,500.00 is money very well spent.

A. Fowler: At the end of the day, for a \$7.9 million budget, Karen is the CFO. Look at her salary. You would never find a CFO making what she makes overseeing a budget that large. She is worth her weight in gold.

W. Shorey: Facilities Management is down 3%. Keith did a good job with his budget this year. Deeds, again, is the longevity increase and the COLA. Probate Court is the same thing. The Sheriff was down .5%. When we did his budget there were two war ships just off Libya and gunfire was supposed to start at sunrise. That never materialized but the price of gas was going out of sight. We told the Sheriff that we did not believe he had enough money in his budget for fuel, so we added \$5,000.00 to the budget. Since then, things have settled down and the price of gas may go down to \$2.13 or \$2.14 in 6 – 7 weeks, so that's \$5,000.00 that can come out of this budget. Otherwise, it was a good budget the Sheriff presented; almost the same as last year.

B. Sneed: The two great crapshoots have always been the Sheriff's cost of gas and Facilities cost of heating oil. These guys have made the best guesses possible in October for the coming year. Some years they get it wrong and some years they get it right. It's always a crapshoot.

B. Johnson: It's always unpredictable.

W. Shorey: I think oil today is \$98.00 and recently was \$108.00. If the trend comes down for 3 or 4 months, he is going to be okay on fuel and that's \$5,000.00 he won't need. The Dispatch Center's increases are due to years of service increases. There was nothing we could do about those. We are recommending a small change from what the budget request from Owen was, but the budget is still going to be up around \$30,000.00 from last year and it's the only budget that's way up primarily due to labor. We have two floater positions. We have had trouble retaining the second position. If we could keep someone in this position, we feel we have a good candidate now, we can bring that budget in line within the \$10,000.00 you wanted to do last year. We feel good about that. This is a good time to say some things that we can have time to think about. Advertising and Promotion; Waldo Community Action Partners have done a tremendous job for us and they ask for the same amount of money each year. We always support their request because they don't ask for more. Eastern Maine Development Corporation is asking for \$5,000.00 again, and frankly, the Commissioners have not been able to support that because we

don't see the dance taking place. It's just not there. If you feel differently, that's okay, but we can't see it.

B. Sneed: We've asked them for years to show us something and they come in with a half-hour of snappy patter and no numbers, ever.

W. Shorey: The man from Time & Tide asked if he could come in and see me about 2 weeks ago. He came in and was quite persistent about getting money. He has a program he wants to do involving starting a garden and get people on welfare to work in it. I asked him if he had money to do this. He told me he has \$100,000.00. I told him that it is a difficult deal and he should take an acre of land, 3 or 4 thousand dollars and I would help him out with my tractor people. I won't do it free, but I will see that the garden gets plowed and harrowed and ready to plant. Then he can come back to the Budget Committee a year from now and tell us about this pilot project and what it does. We produced 26,000 pounds of produce a year ourselves with the guys at the Reentry Center helping. The Commissioners couldn't buy into the thing because they still don't have a program and I assured him I would take the time to help him to get started and point him in the right direction, but it's not a viable thing and we passed on it. You are all familiar with the Eastern Maine Firefighters. We give them funds and they provide firefighter training that save the towns a lot of money. Midcoast Economic Development District is Commissioner Johnson's area. We gave them \$1,136.00 last year and she twisted Commissioner Fowler's and my arm until we gave them \$2,000.00 this year. Someone will be talking about that more down the road. A woman from Belfast Creative Coalition came in to talk to us. She has done a study and designed some maps involving arts and agriculture. She has done a good job of identifying the small farms in Waldo County, provided a map to those farms to help those farmers get their produce out into the market, and we thought it was worthwhile for \$1,000.00. This is a good time to have a general conversation about that.

B. Sneed: This is a good one to use as an example too, Bill. Many times after the actual budget pages, we will have all kinds of paperwork that is justification for the requests for increases.

A. Fowler: Every department head from each of these departments, or anyone requesting money, will come before you to present their budget to you so you can directly ask them questions.

W. Shorey: Moving on, the Audit is a \$9,500.00 deal. We have a new auditor and they have done a really good job. The T.A.N. Interest Note really should be \$12,000.00. We borrow that money and we really should be carrying \$12,000.00. \$10,000.00 is really cutting it too close. UMaine Extension and all of those people are exactly the same. The Employee Benefits is a big deal, gentlemen. I heard the conversation just before I was elected Commissioner that you guys said we had to come up with a program to not let this go over a million dollars. We started a self-funded insurance program and it was a little slow getting underway, but it is running well now. The Wellness Program goes along with it. Initially it was \$796,000.00 a year. That was in 2012. In 2008, it was \$840,000.00. In 2014, \$725,000.00. We are cutting it \$80,000.00. This is a great program. You have interest rates and insurance rates going up 7 to 12 percent all over the country. The Affordable Care Act is going to add \$2,000.00 to each household. We have had experts working with us on this ACA and our policy matches up with it well. We've done a good job. The government makes you jump through hoops with several means tests. You have a great insurance program for your employees. They have a Wellness Program that is working well.

With a little luck, we expect to see this decrease a little more next year. That is a great thing when you can take \$80,000.00 out of a budget and it doesn't appear anymore. I wanted to mention that.

B. Sneed: One other thing, too, if you look at the very bottom line, it is just about what it was in 2005.

W. Shorey: Yes, that's great!

B. Sneed: It was climbing almost as fast as the Jail's was and then it hit a plateau for a while. It's been holding as steady as anything can these days.

A. Fowler: Especially insurance in this market. Either everyone's health insurance is increasing or his or her benefits are less. We've managed to stay even.

W. Shorey: Continuing on, Soil & Water is all the same. They haven't changed any. Records Preservation is zero. We had a chance for a \$2,000.00 deal just before the end of the year, so we didn't have to put that in the budget. Reserves are funded from Undesignated Funds. If you will recall, we had a conversation that our accountants said that Severance and Employment Security was a liability of \$150,000.00 - \$200,000.00. If it were to all come due at once, we should be putting in \$25,000.00 a year. We put \$50,000.00 into each one of those accounts. We are going to sit back and look at that for a couple of years. The whole budget for 2014 and 2015 is predicated on if we can take people at their word. The Governor says this revenue sharing is going to be conservative for a couple of years. We are going to be as conservative as we can be for a couple of years and keep the tax increases as low as we can. That's generally how it runs. I've mentioned some spots where you might want to take a second look, Mr. Chairman, but I think that Saturday we can easily run through this budget without any trouble.

B. Sneed: The other question I had, Bill, was in Severance and Employment Security. They wanted you to throw money into it and you turn around this year, take it out, and move it into Technology.

W. Shorey: No, we put money in this year. We have a motion to have that money go in.

B. Sneed: But your letter said that you were...

W. Shorey: We are misreading that or maybe don't understand. Maybe I didn't make it clear that we are funding Technology and the Severance. The money is in the Severance account and the Employment Security account to carry us for a couple of years.

B. Sneed: So you are taking money out of Severance and Employment Security?

W. Shorey: No, we are putting it in. Overall, I would tell you that we are proud of the financial condition of Waldo County. We work every day trying to keep it that way and try to keep things down to a minimum. We have no debt and quite likely, you won't find another county in the State of Maine that is has a budget that is down this year instead of up.

A. Fowler: An example: Oxford County's was an 11.2% increase that they just submitted to their Budget Committee. Commissioner Shorey is right. Remember, you just built a Public Safety building for \$2.4 million on which you owe nothing. Nothing is owed on your Communications Building. I almost think we are the only county in the State of Maine that has no debt. It is unheard of. Everyone else is trying to learn how we managed to self-fund our health insurance.

B. Sneed: (jokingly) Have you sold Parkman's land yet?

W. Shorey: I was going to talk about that next, Mr. Chairman. Here's the deal. We have some interest in the land. We have had an extremely difficult job getting a commercial appraiser that knows what they are doing to appraise that land. We now have someone that said he would have it done for us in November. In November, when we get the official appraisal, I would like to get you all in a room and sit down to a discussion on the price we want to get for this land. The Commissioners realize we could make that deal if they want to, but everyone should buy in because it is probably going to sell for less than what we paid for it.

B. Sneed: We bought 100 acres of land for \$300,000.00 out by the airport. It seemed like a good idea at the time. Even Islesboro voted for it (laughter).

W. Shorey: I'm speculating and don't know this for a fact, but I have a feeling that land could sell for \$250,000.00 to \$275,000.00. I think it's a stretch to try to go over that.

B. Sneed: If you sell it, someone will start getting tax revenue.

A. Fowler: It's a tax base for Belfast. It's not doing us any good just sitting there. That money could beef up our reserves.

W. Shorey: I don't want to say too much about someone else's business, but Belfast has done a tremendous job of re-creating itself. I don't know how you could pass on 100 acres that borders on you. I think if they want to spend a million dollars on a bike path, that land ought to be high on the list, but we will see. The last thing about money is we have a jailer's house and the jail. We hauled four containers of steel out of the jail to the dump that accumulated over the years. It's become apparent in the last few months that the County is going to experience a shortage of storage space in the next five years. We are making a provision of more record space in the Commissioners area. We are going to do a little conversion that will get us by two or three years that will probably cost us \$10,000.00. That old jail should go to storing records. The Sheriff's office has a tremendous amount of records to store. Maybe Belfast or some of the other towns would like to store records there. We are cleaning out the old jailers house, which is the old Sheriff's office and we're going to seek some proposals from people that would like to develop that property. We may develop it ourselves. That is moving forward, we have a process in mind to get rid of it, and we are concluding that it should be a couple of small apartments because in-city housing, in particular, rates high on the Brownfield's Grant. It will be a couple of years before we work our way through these two things.

B. Sneed: So we're no longer hoping for a lightning strike on the old office.

W. Shorey: It would take an awful charge of lightning to bring it down, Bill. (Laughter)

B. Sneed.: It is just loaded down with lead paint and two-foot thick walls so that will not be a pretty process.

W. Shorey: Storage would be a great thing for the building. That's what it will likely be. We did a conversion in Superior Court recently. We had a terrible situation over there the last six or more years. Secretaries and clerical people were jammed into little corners, trying to work. There was just no room and it was tremendously inefficient. We made a deal with the State to have the Grand Jury come meet in the Probate Court when they deliberate every three months.

A. Fowler: The jury room is this tiny 8' x 10' room, so they moved over here.

W. Shorey: Then we made a place for the Prosecutorial Assistant in there with a conference table and put in a sophisticated filing system that increased their efficiency tremendously. The Sheriff will say that the time his deputies are tied up in court now is a great savings over what it was.

B. Sneed: What would be a good Saturday? Can everybody do a Saturday? (Discussion ensued on which Saturday would be good for all to hold the next budget meeting.)

A. Fowler: In years past, these incredible ladies' have put together a light snack and a lunch. They put on an amazing spread.

B. Sneed: For those of us who have done this before, is there any particular department heads you would like to see here?

R. Desmaris: I know EMDC is coming down.

A. Fowler: I would have no problem telling many of these people that the Budget Committee is very satisfied with their budgets and they do not need to attend.

B. Sneed: The Sheriff has done some interesting things with vehicles this year and it might be interesting to hear from him. I always like to hear Mr. Nealley from Facilities. We will ask Owen to come, even though I never can seem to get a straight answer out of him.

A. Fowler: There are plusses. It is the third largest budget and there's tower information and communication information.

J. Bennett: I think you should notify them all and if they show up or not, its fine.

B. Sneed: That would be one way to do it. There are three department heads that we would like to see.

W. Shorey: I can tell you that Deeds and Probate is almost a rubber stamp. There is nothing there. All the amounts are the same other than the COLA.

B. Sneed: The only significant increase for Probate is the increase in guardianships and that's another one of those crap shoots where you just have to have the money set aside whether it gets spent or not. Judge Longley does a good job guessing at that. She knows her job. So, those three for sure and as Jim said, if everyone else wants to come out and eat free on the County, they can. These people have to publish the time and date. We will set it up for **November 23rd at 9:00 A.M. at District Court**. The only other meeting that we have to have is a public meeting thereafter. It is a two-part public meeting. The first half is truly public. Anyone that wants to come in can ask any of us questions. That sometimes only runs 20 minutes and sometimes runs an hour and twenty minutes. It depends on how exercised people are. That has to be done in the evening and before December 31st by law.

B. Johnson: Let's do it December 6th.

B. Sneed: There is a public portion, then we go through the budget one more time for a final reading and then we have to figure out L.D. 1, which in this case is going to be moot because the budget is down. We don't even have to go to that part of it. You guys need a certain period to advertise, Barb? Is it 10 days?

B. Arseneau: Yes, it is 10 days and I always end up rounding it to two weeks because by the time you get it to the paper and they get it out, you need at least that much time.

(Lively group discussion about date and time.)

A. Fowler: **December 6 at 6:00 P.M.** This is the Public Hearing and the final budget.

****B. Sneed moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:03 p.m., J. Bennett seconded. Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted by



Waldo County Deputy Clerk