

FY2014 Waldo County Budget Committee Meeting
November 23, 2013

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

Meeting opened by Commissioner Shorey at 9:00 a.m. followed by the flag salute.

1010 - Emergency Management Agency

Present was EMA Director Dale Rowley.

D. Rowley: We now have a new truck to replace our old Command van, purchased with Homeland Security grant money we received this year. The grant was around \$80,000.00.

****J. Bennett moved, C. Blakney seconded to accept the 1010 proposed request of \$107,395.00. Unanimous.**

1015 - Office of the District Attorney

Present was Deputy District Attorney Eric Walker.

E. Walker: We have some changes in our staff. Katie Sibley, our Assistant D.A., is now with the Attorney General's office handling drug cases for Kennebec and Knox Counties. We are also losing our Prosecutorial Assistant, Lori Perez, who has been here for about a year and a half now. She is taking a job at Unity College teaching Conservation Law. We have hired a replacement for the A.D.A. position. She will start on December 2. We will be hiring someone for the Prosecutorial Assistant position as well. It's a little bit of a step-back for our office as far as losing some experienced people, but I think we will be able to weather the storm and come out the other end. Generally, things have been steady in our office as far as work goes. The drug scene still seems to dominate a lot of our work, unfortunately. Pills like Oxycodone and Hydrocodone seem to be a big problem here in Waldo County as it is statewide and nationwide. Our budget remains about the same. It has not changed much over the years.

B. Sneed: I have a question for the D.A. and Probate, who is sitting right behind you. I noticed you people are going to switch over to an electronic system for many of your publications.

E. Walker: Many of our publications have been paper for years. The companies that provide those have been raising the prices. We are looking to go into something like Lexus Nexus, which is comparable in price, if not lower. Frankly, a lot of my legal research takes place on the computer now, anyway because it is much easier and faster to find case law and such.

B. Sneed: I see that Probate has almost \$2,000.00 for publications in your budget. Can you get any of the things you need online?

S. Peavey: We do, but it is expensive to do this online if you don't have a membership. Most times, it is easier if the judge can carry one of the books home to do research. It is more convenient for her when she is going between the bench, chambers and the Probate office. Our line item has only gone up a couple hundred dollars. We combined the two line items we used to have for Publications into one.

B. Sneed: I was just thinking that if the D.A. office is going as much online as possible, is there any way your office could piggyback with them?

S. Peavey: I don't know. We could check into that. While I am up here, I would like to mention that we are getting into electronic filing. Parties who need to file documents can file them electronically. This is a two-year rollout process. First, the attorneys have the option to go online, fill out their forms and electronically file them. I would get an email and be able to look at them rather than typing them out and putting them in the mail. In 2014, any citizen will be able to go online to fill out forms and file electronically.

****J. Bennett moved, B. Sneed seconded to approve 1015 as presented at \$237,177.00. Unanimous.**

1070 – Registry of Probate

Present was Register of Probate Sharon Peavey.

****R. Desmaris moved, J. Bennett seconded to approve 1070 as presented at \$208,647.00. Unanimous.**

1020 - Commissioners

W. Shorey: We have had a good year. We have trimmed the budget requests a bit. We have surplus left this year because there is still a lot of stuff to come in before the end of the year, which will use up most of that. Next year, we have two contracts to negotiate. We would like to keep the balance where it is. We increased the mileage by \$1,000.00 because we have one Commissioner that has meetings in Damariscotta and another in Augusta several times and we could not make the amount we had work for us. Other than that, we have had a good reduction in the Commissioners budget this year and we look forward to next year, where we plan to try to do the same thing.

R. Desmaris: Did we ever get an appraisal on the 100 acres of land?

W. Shorey: We have. I am in hopes that when we have our last meeting, they will have the paper in hand. The individual has walked the property. He is preparing a report and it is my hope that we can have an Executive Session at the end of the Public Hearing to discuss the price of the land because this is private information. If the Chairman wishes, we will try to do that.

B. Sneed: That makes sense. It is a legitimate reason for an Executive Session.

W. Shorey: Hopefully, it will come out the way we want, but there are no guarantees.

****J. Bennett moved, F. Rollins seconded to approve 1020 as presented at \$503,542.00. Unanimous.**

1025 - Treasurer

Present was Treasurer David Parkman.

D. Parkman: This is almost the same budget as last year. Karen will get a step increase and that is about it.

****B. Sneed moved, J. Bennett seconded to approve 1025 as presented at \$71,290.00.**

Discussion: R. Desmaris asked why the department request was less than the Commissioners request. D. Parkman said it was Karen's step increase.

Unanimous.

1065 - Registry of Deeds

Present was Register of Deeds Deloris Page.

D. Page reported that things are picking up. We are good in comparison to the last three or four years. In January will start e-recording.

B. Sneed: You managed to get a little boost in your fees from Augusta.

D. Page: Yes, we did. We lost a little money on the internet fees, but I think we are still coming out ahead.

****B. Sneed moved, C. Blakney seconded to approve 1065 as presented at \$224,356.00.**

Unanimous.

1080 - Advertising and Promotion

B. Sneed: Does anyone want to comment on this budget?

James Gillway, Town of Searsport Manager and EMDC Board member, and Ralph Harvey, an EMDC Board member, came forward representing Waldo County.

J. Gilway: Back in 2007, the Waldo County Commissioners wrote a letter to the Sears Island Planning Initiative saying they didn't want economic development. We knew wasn't true because Commissioners at that time funded EMDC and economic development. This year, the choice is not to do it. In between the time that we met with the County Commissioners and now, I attended a training session in which MCEDD, one of the other organizations that covers Waldo County, laid out what they do. They modeled their program after EMDC. In the discussion they had with us, they pointed out that EMDC has been doing this for many years as opposed to MCEDD only being in place for a couple of years. It made me realize that the three economic district organizations, EMDC, MCEDD and Kennebec Valley COG are there to promote economic development in our County. It's a bit unusual. Most Counties have one economic development district. In realizing this, people need to know that we are comparing apples and apples. I'm not disparaging what KVCOG and MCEDD are doing. They are both great organizations with a lot of potential. One thing I want to bring out is EMDC has been at this for a number of years. They cover a number of towns. One of their priorities is the Belfast Waterfront development. This past year a general store in Prospect

has been aided with business plans and financing, a company in Frankfort that wanted to buy a garage in Belfast, and working with a Frankfort company that does excavation. They are active and we have to reach out to them. They are a good organization that struggle and we would like to see some support. Sitting on the Board representing Waldo County and not having the County pay this nominal due is a bit embarrassing. I would like to see that remedied.

R. Harvey: Commissioners from six counties formed the original EMDC. We have lost, with redistricting of the State; two counties out of this, Knox and Washington County no longer are in our district. It's embarrassing to spend the time that we do at our meetings and be asked if the County contributes. It's hard for other Counties to contribute when Waldo County isn't a part of it. We are putting in the time talking to people and it's embarrassing not to have our County's support. We have a new program called Seven-A which is helping many small businesses. We are just getting that developed. We have statewide clearance to do this. We are trying to make connections with the bank. We have had some loans and applications come out of Waldo County.

W. Shorey: It is embarrassing for me as an incorporator of EMDC. I was at a meeting with Tom Davis in Brewer and Mr. Davis and I both strongly urged them to straighten out their finances. To date, I haven't heard about that being done and that is part of the reason that I don't support the request this morning. If they would take the steps to straighten out a lease with the University of Maine that is probably costing them ten times more than it should, I would be supportive. I think it's a bureaucracy in turmoil and Mr. Davis and I don't see that they are getting the job done. .

J. Bennett: I need to know what the Belfast Creative Coalition is.

W. Shorey: I would be glad to comment on that. The woman that is involved in that made a map that designated all of the farms in Waldo County.

Sue McCullough of Belfast Creative Coalition came forward at this time.

S. McCullough: I'm Sue McCullough and I'm on the board. Kim [Callas] could not be here today. This is the map that was created (showing map). It was a very successful event. We had people from four states attend. One of the farms had over 300 people show up. They were a little over-run, but it was very successful. We partnered with farmland trust, and between our two organizations, we spent about \$8,000.00 to promote this and we are definitely planning to do it again next year. I don't think I brought enough for everyone to have one, but we can certainly pass these as far as they will go. It was a very big success. In terms of Economic development, we strongly support the creative culture. As you can see, we have over 80 places that are a part of the coalition and we expect to grow.

W. Shorey: When your manager, Kim Callas, was in to talk with us, one thing that impressed us was the exposure these small farmers are going to get because they need it. She has done a very good job of coming up with this map and I thought that \$1,000.00 would help give these farmers that exposure.

S. McCullough: We have the map on our website and you can click on places you want to go. It will make a map for you and you can get directions. The electronic map has been used a lot.

****J. Bennett moved, D. Barrows seconded to approve 1080 as presented at \$11,500.00.**

Discussion: R. Desmaris moved to amend and increase EMDC to \$2,000.00 to equal the funding for MCEDD, bringing the total for 1080 to \$15,500.00. Motion died due to lack of second.

****Original motion passed 7-1 with R. Desmaris opposed.**

B. Sneed: I want to point out that this is just a preliminary vote. December 6 will be the final vote.

1090 – Audit

Present was Treasurer David Parkman.

D. Parkman: We have a new auditor out of Bangor. It is working out very well. I like him and he is very thorough. They did this years' audit and we are very happy with the work they are doing.

****J. Bennett moved, C. Blakney seconded to approve 1090 as presented at \$9,500.00. Unanimous.**

T. Flacke asked that the budget committee receive a copy of the audit report next year.

2000 – Tax Anticipation Note (TAN)

D. Parkman: This was increased by \$2,000.00 over the next two years. We have increased what we borrow by \$500,000. I feel that \$12,000.00 is good.

****B. Sneed moved, J. Bennett seconded to accept 2000 as presented at \$12,000.00. Unanimous.**

2005 – University of Maine Cooperative Extension

Present was University of Maine Cooperative Extension Educator Richard Kersbergen.

R. Kersbergen: We have hired a new 4-H Youth Development person to replace Jane Haskell, who has gone up to Orono. We have increased our educational activities for school gardens. We've gone to Islesboro and certified a whole bunch of students at the Islesboro Central School as Master Gardeners. We have worked with Keith [Nealley] on getting our building a bit more handicapped accessible. Our request for funding is the same as it was last year.

****B. Sneed moved, C. Blakney seconded to approve 2005 as presented at \$40,825.00. Unanimous.**

2025 – Employee Benefits

A. Fowler: I would be proud to speak for this budget. We are very proud of our health insurance program. Four and a half years ago, our original goal was to keep these expenses from increasing every year. We all know that in the private sector, insurance costs sharply increase. Commissioner Johnson has worked very hard on wellness programs for employees and staff and this year, we felt comfortable giving towards what would normally have asked for for \$80,000 to ease the burden. We appreciate that and we appreciate and applaud the budget committee for getting on us four and a half years ago to do something.

****B. Sneed moved, J. Bennett seconded to approve 2025 as presented at \$1,236,550.00. Unanimous.**

2035 – Waldo County Soil & Water

Kym Sanderson came forward to speak for WCSWCD.

K. Sanderson: The district is moving to a new office in the Industrial Park. We are leaving the FCC, about which we have mixed emotions. We liked being out in the country, but the building is old and expensive to heat. The Natural Resources Conservation at the State level is building it and giving us our own space and it will not cost the County a penny.

****J. Bennett moved, C. Blakney seconded to approve 2035 as presented at \$25,000.00. Unanimous.**

2040 - Records Presentation was not discussed as no funding requested.

2045 - Reserves

B. Sneed: Why is the amount here zero?

W. Shorey: Our accountant had recommended increasing Severance and Unemployment to cover potential liability. We have always had a question as to what the Reserves should be, so we moved \$50,000.00 from undesignated funds to cover a two-year period. We also moved some for Future Land and Buildings and County Courthouses. There was no point in putting any money into Reserves this year. We made that move hoping that the 2015 budget will also be low. Reserves will likely not need funding from the operating budget until two or three years from now and then it might be 2% or 3% because we need to start building for the courthouse renovations. We probably will have at the end of this year reserves funded in the amount of \$805,000.00. We had a million dollars when we built the building. We were criticized soundly for squandering reserves to build a new Public Safety building and now we have most of that back. Everything is in a good place and the County of Waldo is a shining example of what can be done with people working together for a common cause.

D. Parkman: I second everything he just said. Traditionally, we got reserves funded at the end of the budget year (with undesignated funds). As the budgets got tighter, we have had to fund from the operating budget for the last 10-15 years. This is a big plus not having to ask the taxpayers for money to fund the reserves. Very few counties have no debt and good cash flow and Waldo County has both.

B. Sneed: So \$800,000.00 on a 5 million dollar budget is about 15% that you have in Reserves, is that right?

D. Parkman: Yes. We can't go over a statutory limit of 20% of undesignated funds that can be kept, whereas towns do not have that restriction.

T. Flacke: Are these undesignated reserves?

D. Parkman: The Reserve accounts are split into three different areas, all interest bearing. The Capital, Active, and Restricted Reserves each have their own money. These were established by Jethro Pease back in 2002-3.

T. Flacke: I'm sure you understand that in the towns, whether they do it or not, the general accounting practices are that unless there is a reserve for specific items, you can't have a checkbook with a million dollars in it and only \$500,000.00 to use for specific items. Towns are not allowed under general accounting practices, they are now saying you have to have a designated fund and a set-aside and the rest must be used to reduce taxes.

D. Parkman: Over the 20% - you are right. The towns are unlimited. Belfast, I believe at one time, had a 4 million dollar surplus.

T. Flacke: We, the towns, are not allowed that at all anymore. Under general accounting practices and through our auditors, they are now saying no. You have a designated fund for a specific purpose and you do a set-aside. Beyond that, all the dollars have to be used to reduce taxes.

W. Shorey: The County follows the law.

T. Flacke: That was a good answer.

W. Shorey: Let me give you an example. We have a courthouse that will need about \$300,000.00 worth of work somewhere down the road. The State had wanted the County to build a \$14 million new courthouse. If we were criticized for building the Public Safety Building and paying for it when we built it, I don't know what would happen if we tried to build a \$14 million dollar building. I think that would be defeated easily. We are focusing on building up the Reserves in the next three years. We have a line called Facilities – All Other that we are building up because it has some flexibility to use in other places, like if we had an emergency and a boiler in Superior Court would need to be replaced. Undesignated Funds, which would be a checkbook balance that I think you are alluding to. If money is above a certain amount, it must go back to the taxpayers.

D. Parkman: The County's goal is to do both – to fund the Reserve accounts and give back to the taxpayers. We have, in the past, given back to the taxpayers. You have to, by law, give anything over 20% back to the towns to lower the taxes.

T. Flacke: It is both difficult and unfortunate that even towns cannot build up funds.

D. Parkman: When I was first elected back in 2002 (my first day was January 3, 2003), the County had to borrow money because it had no cash flow. We had to build some unappropriated balances. For years, we could not get beyond the first couple of weeks in to the year without borrowing.

J. Bennett asked if there should be a vote on the Reserves. All thought no, since no money was requested.

1050 - Corrections

B. Sneed: Scott, is there was anything to say on the Corrections budget? There is nothing we can do about it except grin.

S. Story: Grinning is a good thing. This has been capped for the last five years. Before then, it was the elephant in the closet that we had to deal with every year. I am tickled to death with the way it's going, although not everybody is. If any of you get an opportunity to visit the Reentry, please do. Maybe one of the Commissioners or (County Clerk) Barbara could send you out an email to report what's going on. We are very proud of the work we are doing up there. I can tell you that the recidivism rate came back at somewhere in the 70th percentile. Two out of three people that come out of prison right now will go back. That is what the statistics are showing in Maine. Waldo County has cut that in half. We have people that are paying their fines and restitution. I think we have collected somewhere around \$22,000.00 in rent from the clients. Their fines and restitution are being paid at higher rates than ever before because we are finding them employment. Some people have concerns that we are bring all the bad people to Waldo County, but the fact of the matter is, most of the people (80% or so) were people that would be coming back to this county anyway. We are trying to make better citizens and neighbors for you when they get out of prison rather than give them a \$50.00 gate fee and say "good luck".

The Garden Program produced 26,000 lbs. or 13 tons of vegetables and distributed to food pantries and cupboards. We are very proud of the work being done there. If any of you get an opportunity, drive by and check out the garden next summer. It is quite a showpiece. We have worked hard with many partners putting it together.

BREAK – 9:40 A.M. to 9:50 A.M.

1076 – Communications Center

Present was Communications Director Owen Smith.

O. Smith: The beat goes on. We continue to have personnel challenges. We went into 2013 without a floater. We lost the first floater in late December, trained another that was ready to go in early April but did not pass the training test and left. Our budget, as far as overtime, is based on having two floaters in place. We have advertised for the second floater and got 40 applicants with no experience. After talking with the Commissioners, we have bought a new testing program that is used in Cumberland County, the City of Auburn and Lewiston-Auburn that is able to measure the ability to multi-task, keyboard, and comprehending phone calls. Those agencies using this have not had any new hires fail training.

Last year, Jim Bennett asked about the breakdown for tower sites. I have done that and tower site rentals is \$19,000-plus for rent for three tower sites. Lights, phones and internet is another \$4,500.00. Anything else is repairs and maintenance. Tower sites is the largest cost after personnel. We control the cost the best we can, but we do not own the sites. Ideally, the County could be able to buy a couple of sites and put up their own towers, but I don't foresee

that happening. We do own Aborn Hill and have for 6 years. Through funding that EMA Director Dale Rowley received 2 years ago, we put up a new tower there. We rent everything else, which is not uncommon. Very few counties own their sites.

Personnel issues are the big challenge. Even though a lot of people are unemployed, we find it difficult to find people that can do the job. It's a demanding job. 24/7 means 24/7 – nights, weekends, holidays, call-outs. We do well budgeting vacations and comp time is planned and manageable. The issue is with sick call-out, which almost always results in overtime. Floaters help reduce overtime but are hard to keep. It is a very narrow spectrum of people who are able to learn this job. There is a lot more to the job than there used to be. Mothers, people who work in fast-paced environments like waitresses and fast food workers, etc. are good multi-taskers. We have not had good luck with former police officers. We just found an age group of people that just struggle with technology. We have to be able to answer the call, gather information and enter it into the CAD system, get it paged out while everything else is happening.

Next year we are faced with training all dispatchers in NEXT GEN, coming in February. It is a much more robust CAD system than previously, but has features that will enhance the 9-1-1 service.

F. Rollins: Are the salaries for your employees competitive in a salary survey?

O. Smith: They are competitive. What we found is this; I really thought that I was going to snag a dispatcher from another agency, but it's hard to attract experienced, trained people because they don't tend to leave agencies. We have only been able to do this a couple of times. Down south, they move around more than up here in the north. All shifts are based on seniority. Money-wise, we are competitive.

J. Bennett: It is a pretty big increase over last year.

O. Smith: We are in the last year of a 3-year contract. We will be renegotiating that next fall. It has been an expensive contract, I will admit that. There were pay steps this year for several people. I think we will see less increases with the next contract.

W. Shorey: I'd like to add that the Commissioners had reduced the budget by \$5,000.00 but the Commissioners will be doing a complete review of this department and the increase should be more like 1% [for personnel] and hopefully can reduce other costs.

B. Sneed: For historical purposes, I should mention, too, that this has always been a "union shop". You work with what you have.

W. Shorey: I believe the Commissioners need to sit down and have some long discussions and find alternative ways to work with Owen to see what they can come up with. I believe that this is well worth the time.

J. Bennett: Last year the increase was \$8,361.00 and this year it is \$60,765.00, I believe.

W. Shorey: I believe the last two years there were increases in pay steps. We don't have control over that. It is something that was put in play years ago and it's the one department

that we have to put some time into and think about what we can do to save some money and reduce some costs. We intend to do that. I agree with you 100%, but right now, there is nothing we can do. Hopefully, in a year, we can have something more logical that we can talk to you about.

J. Bennett: I can't believe that there was that much in pay increases. I hear what you are saying about the step increases, but still think it's unreasonable.

A. Fowler: Where are you coming up with that figure, Jim?

J. Bennett: It was \$608,932.00 in 2013.

A. Fowler & W. Shorey: No.

W. Shorey: Something is wrong, Jim.

(Group discussion on figures as presented resulted in finding that J. Bennett had an incorrect sheet. On B. Sneed's request, Deputy Clerk Linda Kinney left the room to provide the correct budget figures for J. Bennett.)

W. Shorey: Mr. Chairman, the mistake has been discovered and the new figure will be about \$20,000.00 more.

D. Parkman: If people will look at the appropriations for this year, we are about \$20,000.00 over budgeted on two accounts now. The first is overtime and the second is tower site operation.

W. Shorey: Yes, we will have those sheets in a few minutes and we apologize for the error.

B. Sneed: What Dave is referring to is this year-to-date expenditure sheet. If you look under 1076, you will see that there are a couple of lines with minuses. That said, you realize that you can move money within 1076 to any one of these lines as the Department Head deems fit.

W. Shorey: I think it's remarkable that the account will finish in the black. We were worried that it would not.

D. Parkman: He has spent 89% overall and that's very good.

A. Fowler: That is right where the budget should be.

1030 – Facilities

Present was Facilities Manager Keith Nealley.

K. Nealley: This year there were a bunch of projects. Last year we appropriated money to re-carpet the upper and lower areas of the Registry of Deeds. In the lower level, we found asbestos tile that had to be abated. Some clients from the Reentry Center assisted in moving all the books and shelving out of the Registry and the clients performed well. It only cost a couple of pizzas for the County and they did a great job. They also assist with mowing lawns at the courthouses and shoveling. It works well and they have a little responsibility.

Upstairs in the Superior Court building, we did some lighting. We had to go to four-foot T-8 lights and gained about twice the candle power that we previously had. That project was paid for entirely by the State. I try to work with the Facilities Manager for the State and he & I often split the cost of projects, but they picked up the whole tab on that one.

We also re-carpeted the District Court Clerk's Office at a cost of \$6,000.00 and the State paid for 50% of that. They try hard to work with us.

The Superior Court Grand Jury Room has been converted to Prosecutorial Assistant office space, including a new lateral filing system that is on a track. This system gained about 50% more storage space in a small area. This has worked out well.

The Grand Jury has been relocated to the Probate Courtroom, which isn't utilized all the time, so now the Grand Jury can meet in a courtroom setting, which everyone feels is a more professional setting.

A new Assistant District Attorney has been hired, so we took the opportunity of painting the office and put down new carpet.

We have done some paving at the University of Maine Cooperative Extension to provide handicapped parking. The paver used reclaimed pavement to help with stretching our dollars. Rick Kersbergen put some money in and I had some additional funding, so we resurfaced the entire area with reclaimed pavement, which may or may not work out. It seems to be packing okay. We will see how the product holds up in the upcoming months.

At the Jail, we replaced an electric range with a gas range, which is much more efficient. We also completed a fire and smoke alarm system. The Jail was only 70% alarmed – now it is 100% fire and smoke alarmed. Lighting upgrades are being done with four-foot fluorescent bulbs instead of a specialty bulb which was a little 13 watt bulb. These four footers are more efficient lighting.

The Old Jail has been cleaned out. That was kind of everybody's catch-all for storage with items that had been there a number of years. We took four 30-yard loads of metal and two 30-yard loads of trash out of there so far. There were old military metal desks needed to be wrestled down the stairs. The Reentry Clients also helped with this and have been working steadily.

One of the things that we have been talking about with the Commissioners, and Scott brought this up, is the fact that records storage is an issue for everybody in the County. District Court stores records here. They also store offsite and rent a facility. The basements of both Superior Court and the Jail are full of records. We have been trying to figure out an approach to use the Old Jail, which is a wide-open structure and figure out a way to use it for records storage. Some records can never be destroyed. Some have to be retained for 80 years. Storage is at a premium.

Boilers, as Bill said, are old. I checked the record and the boiler at Superior Court was installed in 1981. It is as big as a house and burns a lot of oil. We are hoping, in the near future, that we may see some natural gas come through Belfast. If it does, I think that would

be the time to jump on the band wagon and start converting our boilers. We have had great success with the gas boilers at the new building. When we negotiated a contract for propane supply, we locked in at \$1.57. Oil is at \$3.245 a gallon. The past three years we have paid over \$3.00 per gallon. I don't foresee the cost going down.

I hope that there will be no Capital expenditures. I have put nothing in the 2014 budget because there are no big things that need to be done.

F. Rollins: I sent in a model of Knox County and how they co-op. They purchase fuel in large quantities and lock in early in the summer. Have you ever looked at that type of thing?

K. Nealley: The State has a "buy" and I don't know if they were any more favorable. This year the market was doing strange things. Typically, I would get my fuel oil bids out in January. My fuel year ends May 30. I would ask people to project out 16 months and now they are not willing to do that with the way the market is going. This year, Commissioner Shorey and I talked about it and decided to wait. Prices took a little dip, so we jumped in. I think we did well on the propane, I don't know what the homeowners are paying right now, but it's probably comparable to what we are locked in at.

W. Shorey: It is at \$3.57.

K. Nealley: One of the other entities that I deal with is Maine Power Options, which I get my electricity supply from with a bid process. I will look at other entities as well when we get ready for bids. There are rumors that there may be a natural gas line may be running through Belfast. Here's hoping it does. If so, we will start converting boilers in a hurry!

J. Bennett: Who supplies the electricity now?

K. Nealley: All of the buildings are with Constellation. I locked in for a 3-year contract and that is due to expire at the end of 2014. The small entities figure out to 12 – 14 cents per Kwh. The larger ones, like Superior Court and Jail, are around 9 cents per Kwh.

F. Rollins: Are you watching the prices of the other suppliers?

K. Nealley: No, I am in a contract. I did an analysis at the time before we locked into the contract but have not checked recently. It may be a good exercise to look into. I will do that.

J. Bennett: The school and the town just did that and Standard Electricity is cheaper than anybody is. I may be wrong, but I think it was around .068 Kwh for usage.

K. Nealley: I track all my usage on spreadsheets and graphs. I believe it is quite comparable to the number you just gave. Yes, I am paying .069.

****J. Bennett moved, T. Flacke seconded to approve 1030 as presented at \$270,723.00. Unanimous.**

1075 – Sheriff

Present was Sheriff Scott Story.

S. Story: This will be my last budget presentation if all goes well. I am not running for Sheriff again next year. I am going to have a career change and move into the woods, grow a beard and never wear a tie again. I am quite proud of this flat-funded budget, which is one of the few I've presented.

Some things have gone well for us and some things not so well. The first thing I want to show you are the new trucks (Submitted pictures). We have two on the road that are marked and one unmarked. We are getting between 15 and 17 mpg. When we equipped these vehicles and finished up with everything, they were actually cheaper than the cruisers. We were very pleased with that. The fuel mileage is just slightly off from the cruisers, which are getting 1 or 2 mpg better mileage than the trucks. We should get very good money back on trade-in value.

We are in the process of experimenting with new cameras. My Capital Outlay still has a line item for the Watchguard cameras. We are experimenting with some smaller, cheaper military cameras. By the time we get ready to purchase next year we will have a better read on what these are like.

I can't discuss too much about the contract. We seem to be in agreement with the union. Hopefully, the contract will be ratified this coming week. It was a very good contract that falls in line with the budget. The Commissioner negotiated a very nice contract that works well for the County and still keeps the employees whole. It was good for everybody.

The only thing you will notice in my budget that we changed substantially is the switch from part-time money to over-time money. My overtime line has gone up substantially. I tried to balance that out by taking money out of the part-time line. It is difficult to keep a part-time person. They usually want full-time. We put the money into training them and with the demand for police officers in the classifieds right now, they have no reason to stick with a part-time position. They move on. I have one warden that works for us part-time and we have one other police officer that works for another agency working for us part-time. Trying to get those guys, with their other full-time jobs, is tough.

B. Sneed: How many O/T hours are spent sitting in the courtroom?

S. Story: Last year, the ADA saved a lot of money reducing the time officers had to spend in overtime sitting in the courtroom. Unfortunately, she has left for other employment. We are hoping the D.A.'s Office will keep up with that practice. She saved us a lot of money and officer time. She worked ahead on cases. It was very good Prosecutorial work by her. I'm hoping that my numbers don't go up next year. We certainly encourage the DA's office to continue with that practice.

If you look at my budget, I am up on the overtime, down on the part-time. It is a wash in money before it's over. We have 2 or 3 part-timers in the wings right now. At this time, I am 86% expended right now. The target as of yesterday was 89%, so it is looking good. The biggest variables I have are overtime and fuel. Fuel has been a good roll of the dice for us the

past couple of years. Vehicle maintenance looks good. The warranty programs with the new vehicles have saved us a ton of unexpected expenditures. Overall, things are looking good.

I do want to mention just two things: not this year or possibly even next year. There has been no increase for personnel for the past six or seven years. Our numbers in calls for service have been going through the roof and have been for the last two years. The officers are running ragged. The new Sheriff may be asking for another officer or two in the future. The other possible future expenditure is the vehicles. The Chief is driving one with over 131,000 miles on it and the Lt. is driving one with even higher mileage. We have been trying to keep them in good running order for as long as we can. We may also need to add another administration vehicle in. We seem to have to do that once every 5 years or so.

B. Sneed: Are the State Police assisting with coverage?

S. Story: That is going okay. They cover one-third of the county and we cover the other two-thirds. It's working well.

****J. Bennett moved, B. Sneed seconded to fund 1075 for the Department Request amount of \$1,330,236.00.**

Discussion: B. Sneed: Jim is making his motion on the column (in black) that was the original Department Request before going to the Commissioners.

W. Shorey: At the time, the Commissioners requested more for fuel than what the Sheriff requested due to the circumstances in the middle east at the time. Gas prices have come down somewhat; so possibly the Sheriff's original request might be sufficient. I think J. Bennett's comment is a good one under current circumstances

B. Sneed: Sheriff Story, can you live with \$5,000.00 less?

S. Story: I don't have a crystal ball; none of us do. I will certainly do my best to try to stay within that.

Unanimous.

1076 – Communications (with a new front page)

****B. Sneed moved, J. Bennett seconded to approve 1076 as presented at \$867,697.00. Unanimous.**

B. Sneed: December 6, 2013 at 6:00 PM is the next meeting

A. Fowler: I would like to confirm, if I may, that the only reduction was in the Sheriff's budget in the amount of \$6,400.00. Is that correct?

B. Sneed: During our break, I was speaking with the new employee of Time & Tide. She did not raise her hand to speak during the open forum. I told her to come back on December 6 with a presentation for the Public Hearing.

W. Shorey: Vance Wells of Time & Tide came in looking for assistance with a public garden. I told him he would need to have \$4,000.00 to \$5,000.00 for seed money to start the project. Mr. Wells said they had about \$80,000.00 to \$100,000.00 to work with. I explained that the budget committee would want to see a functional project moving forward before funding. I told him that I would help on my own time in getting the program started if he would go out and find a town willing to sponsor him, but the Commissioners had not felt Time & Tide should be funded since they had not had a productive program going for the last three years. He has not gotten back to me as of yet.

A. Fowler: We try not to duplicate services. When you have a Reentry Center that is producing 26,000 pounds, and a Cooperative Extension office that is going into the schools to teach gardening, you begin to duplicate services.

J. Bennett: A gentleman came to our town and asked if they could use the Thorndike Town Office kitchen to teach people how to cook healthy food. Hannaford is assisting with that program. After you take the class, they will give you a free bag of healthy food.

****B. Sneed moved, J. Bennett seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 a.m. Unanimous.**

Respectfully Submitted by: 
Deputy County Clerk