

**2015 WALDO COUNTY BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 15, 2014**

PRESENT: Budget Committee Members Bill Sneed (Chairman), James Bennett, Tom Flacke, Clem Blakney, Peter Curley, Fred Rollins, Richard Desmarais, Arthur Durity and Harry Dean Potter; Commissioners William D. Shorey, Amy R. Fowler and Betty I. Johnson, Treasurer David A. Parkman, Deputy Treasurer Karen Trussell to record changes in the budget. Also present were Deputy County Clerk Marilyn Saucier and County Clerk Barbara Arseneau to record the minutes.

Call to Order: Chairman Bill Sneed called the court session to order at 9:00 a.m. and said he would need to leave at 11:00 a.m. so he asked who would fill in for him if the meeting wasn't done by then.

****P. Curley nominated Richard Desmarais as Vice-Chairman of the Budget Committee and J. Bennett seconded. Passed with abstention by Mr. Desmarais.**

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT BUDGET (1030):

Present for this report was Facilities Manager Keith Nealley, who introduced himself; stating that he has been here six years. K. Nealley reviewed projects that had been completed and ongoing projects for the buildings, including a revamped office for the new ADA with new carpet, fresh paint and some new furniture. The state kicked in 50% for this project and has for some other projects as well, including re-carpeting the District courtroom and clerk's office. The break room downstairs in the District Courthouse is used by the Commissioners Office for a break room and also records storage. This room had an old refrigerator that leaked so the carpet removed and new tile floor put in, as well as new, efficient refrigerator. Some projects looking ahead in 2015 include:

1. The Old Jail and former Sheriff's buildings. The County has received Brownfields Grant funds to abate lead paint and asbestos, so this will likely be a multi-year project and the County hopes that some parts of these buildings may be utilized by the County for some of its needs.
2. A tower project in Stockton to enhance communications capability. This is being worked on by K. Nealley, Commissioner Shorey, EMA Director Dale Rowley, Communications Director Owen Smith and it is hoped that this will be up and running by the first of 2015.
3. Some sections of the District Courthouse are 20 years old and after storms and wind, chunks of asphalt shingles are seen lying on the ground. This will probably be an expenditure at about \$20,000.00 and he may see if the State would be willing to assist with this, as well. Generally the state assists if a project is directly related to their work.
4. Handicap ramps at Superior Courthouse are deteriorating from salt used to melt ice. Pricing for this is being looked at for a spring project.
5. The old wooden door at the lower entrance of the Superior Courthouse needs to be replaced, for energy efficiency and for ADA compliance, with an automatic opening door. There have been a number of ADA projects done over the years and this would bring the County buildings up to nearly 100% in meeting ADA accessibility requirements.

6. Possible conversion of boilers in the Superior Courthouse to natural gas or propane. This is on hold until it is better known whether or not natural gas will be more readily available in the future.

Regarding the upcoming heating season, K. Nealley provided some history related to the fuel bid process. Bids were solicited in February of 2014 and the results were not great. After waiting to see what was going on in the Middle East, the County solicited bids again and locked in on heating oil at \$3.35 per gallon and locked in on propane at \$2.00 per gallon. Currently the statewide price is \$3.00 per gallon. Propane is averaging \$2.50 per gallon, so the County did well to lock in on that at \$2.00 per gallon. In speaking with Commissioner Shorey, K. Nealley said that the Facilities projections for heating oil in the 2015 budget might be able to be reduced. Typically, the County locks in until the end of June for each year. Hopefully after the first of the year, the County can solicit bid proposals and lock in on good pricing for the 2015-16 heating season. He felt the fuel costs could be reduced by \$4,000.00 total.

B. Sneed asked for clarification of where the reduction would come from. K. Nealley said Superior Courthouse burns the most fuel, but he also informed the committee that a recent project he completed was to reconvert the pneumatic thermostat system to manual control in the Superior Courtroom, which has 27 foot ceilings and is 60' x 60' cube in dimension, which is used every other month. This should save substantially in heating that large area, particularly since it isn't used as much as other rooms.

B. Sneed asked about reducing Commodities, lines 5405 through 5211, from \$56,475.00 to \$52,475.00 and K. Nealley said he thought he would be comfortable with that. When asked if he could reduce it to \$50,475.00, K. Nealley said he would not be comfortable with that as he can't predict the fuel trends and wasn't sure the prices would remain as low as they have been. He will keep a close eye on fuel prices with Commissioner Shorey. Once suppliers have committed, he will put proposals together.

B. Sneed inquired about the discussion of needing roof work on the District Courthouse but no actual money request for that. K. Nealley said the Commissioners were considering performing that work at some point through a reserve account. He makes sure that routine maintenance is planned, but tries to keep things as tight as possible during tougher times.

When asked by F. Rollins if he is able to forecast repair work in advance, K. Nealley said that his predecessors did not document work that was done so, in his spare time he takes information he gathers from the Commissioners' Court Session minutes and creates a spreadsheet of repairs so that he will be able to project when maintenance will need to be performed.

When asked about new technologies in lighting and LEDs, K. Nealley said Efficiency Maine had a program that the County took incandescent lighting over the Judge's chambers and also at the Communications Center, which is a 24/7 facility and changed to LED's. He spent \$750.00 on light bulbs and received a \$750.00 rebate from Efficiency Maine for LED bulbs. Incandescent lights create a lot of heat, so this will help keep costs down in the summer.

J. Bennett asked about vehicle maintenance, gas and tires in the amount of \$2,000.00 and asked if K. Nealley uses a county vehicle. K. Nealley said he and his Facilities Technician use a County van to

run errands such as recycling, and other errands. He does not take this home with him. Occasionally he needs to use his vehicle so he is reimbursed mileage for that.

****B. Sneed moved, R. Desmarais seconded to fund the Facilities Management budget at \$286,590.00. Passed with T. Flacke opposed.**

T. Flacke asked if unused budget funds were put in reserves and W. Shorey said yes. He asked if unused money from the fuel lines is put in a specific reserve for fuel. D. Parkman also explained that nothing is really carried over from the operating budget – it “lapses”. When T. Flacke asked if there should be a reserve account specific to fuel, W. Shorey said he didn’t believe it was necessary and felt that if the County could get a good quote at the beginning of the year, it would be O.K. He explained that they generally just move unused funds altogether to undesignated funds and then use some to reduce taxes, and some in reserves.

J. Bennett asked to discuss the \$115,000.00 for the extra payroll for 2015. B. Sneed said that neither he nor J. Bennett could understand this.

W. Shorey explained that nobody is getting extra pay – it is an extra two weeks in 2015 and that in 2016 that amount will be less because there won’t be an additional pay period. J. Bennett contended that the money was raised in 2014, so it should be paid then regardless of the holiday and pay day falling on January 2nd. W. Shorey explained that nobody was getting extra pay, the accountant likes the way it is being handled, and it would require changing the entire payroll system to change that. He explained that the following budget year, it would be less because that additional 27th pay period would not be in the budget.

B. Arseneau explained that, technically, the money was not funded in 2014. 26 pay periods were funded for 2014, not 27 pay periods. It is in 2015 that there is 27 pay periods. She had confirmed with Deputy Treasurer Karen Trussell that an additional pay period occurs every 11 years. It is just the way the calendars work. J. Bennett stated that this money was raised in 2014, was worked in 2014 and should be paid in 2014. J. Bennett said he had obtained a paper from Deputy Treasurer Karen Trussell that employees were paid in January for work done the previous year. He passed out copies of this paper to the Budget Committee. K. Trussell explained that this is how it is done every year. It is not based on a scheduled from Jan 1 to Dec 31. It is based on pay periods and how they fall. B. Sneed said he understood, that it is the way the pay periods roll and that it evens out over the other 10 years.

W. Shorey added that this budget is 3.9% less than last year and that undesignated funds were used to fund part of this budget in order to keep it low. Also, the budget will be \$114,000.00 less automatically because the 27th pay period won’t be in it.

D. Parkman said that every year there are 26 pay periods except that on the eleventh year, there are 27 pay periods.

B. Sneed gave an example using a Deputy named “Dick” and illustrated that if he is hired in 2014, so in 2013 we pay him because it isn’t much. He starts January 1, 2014. Will he be paid \$1200.00 in January? Will he get \$1150.00 or \$1250.00 and it will change every year. He asked if that was right

over a 365 day period. He finished by saying that it evens out over the preceding or following ten years.

(EMA Director Dale Rowley and others started speaking at the same time.) D. Rowley explained that the pay period is actually 364 days. Each year, you lose a day and one fourth and after 11 years, you've lost two weeks. It's like a leap year. C. Blakney explained that you might have one week that is in this year and the second week in January. The accounting has to accommodate for that. Nobody is being paid extra. There aren't two checks – there's one.

J. Bennett argued that one week should be paid from 2014 and the other from 2015. The rest of the Committee decided to move on from this topic.

SHERIFF'S BUDGET (1075)

Present was Sheriff-elect Jeffrey Trafton. J. Trafton introduced himself as the Chief Deputy for the past three years and said he was excited to be serving as Sheriff for next four years. Sheriff Story worked with him on the 2015 budget, but he put the majority of this budget together. He explained that they are people who provide a service, so most of the budget is related to personnel services. There are some pay raises as negotiated in the union contract, which was a good, positive process.

His priority is to try to run the Sheriff's Office as well as Scott Story has. He's named the new Chief Deputy as Jason Trundy, after Scott Story retires in 2015. The current Sheriff will serve as Chief Deputy until that time. J. Trundy has served in a number of capacities since the 1990's and does an excellent job.

Other priorities: patrol, public safety, the Reentry Center along with the 72-hour hold. There have been a lot of things going on at the state level with corrections. They met with the DOC this week and are not sure what will be happening in the future but are pretty confident that regardless of the consolidated system, the Reentry Center will survive.

He provided his background. Over the past 31 years, his function has been primarily in patrol. He was a State Trooper for 21 years, and has spent the last three years learning the Corrections side of things. The reentry center tries to change the way these gentlemen think so that when they go back to society, they have skills and are working members of society and aren't just dropped back into society and will have a better chance of not being re-arrested. Not all are successful, but many are doing well. For many, they are back in prison in a month or so. This is common in the state system. If we can get someone through the program and stays out a year or two, that is still a measure of success because the person has stayed out longer and isn't costing the government thousands of dollars to take care of them in jail. Some stay out longer after going through the reentry program. But many are out and are now taxpayers and productive members of society. When asked, J. Trafton said there is a woman's reentry that is run by the state at the York County Jail. Otherwise, the MCRRC is the only men's reentry center in the state other than a men's reentry is run by the former Chief of Police in Bangor is running a reentry for men for Federal prisoners. MCRRC is the only men's reentry at the County and State level.

Sheriff Story, as Chief Deputy, will focus mainly on five-year recidivism study on the reentry center. Have had about 170 residents go through the program and graduate. The Sheriff's Office wants

numbers and data on where they are now. The recidivism rate for someone who gets out of prison at the state level is 70%, which he described as “just awful”.

When he first came three years ago, the reentry center had not been open quite two years. He did a short study and they were running 25 to 26% recidivism rate, which is a lot better than 70%, so something is already being done right. He believes that the five-year study will show the recidivism rate to be more like 35%, but that is still much better than 70%. Warehousing prisoners is not the answer. Putting people in prison because we’re mad at them is not the answer. He believed the reentry center is doing an excellent job

A. Durity asked if the budget was the only revenue source for the Sheriff’s Office. J. Trafton said all the services the Sheriff’s Office provides is through county property tax. The only other income is when some events such as a fair or parade occur and an organization hires a law enforcement officer, sometimes they are charged but the Sheriff’s Office often tries to work something out so they don’t have to charge. The income from this goes into a special reserve account entitled “Detail”. When asked if any of the officers are hired to help Towns enforce local ordinances, J. Trafton said there is nothing like that in place right now.

B. Sneed asked if there could be a reduction in vehicle fuel based on the year-to-date expenditures. J. Trafton said he thought \$6,000.00 could easily be subtracted from that line. It could be \$90,000.00.

R. Desmarais asked about the increase in the request for dues. J. Trafton said that some dues have been added. He has joined the National Sheriff’s Association, and also added, through the National Sheriff’s Association the cost of their large data-base which allows access to policies and procedures across the county. J. Trafton said that by joining that organization, for \$500.00 per year, they have access to a large data base of policies and procedures, which is working well for other agencies. He felt that it made sense for Waldo County to have the same access. Waldo County Sheriff’s Office is also joining the Police Chief’s Association, etc.

K. Trussell read off the descriptions of the dues line that had been submitted to the Commissioners. In addition to the Maine Sheriff’s Association, the National Sheriff’s Association, there were several other organizations.

B. Sneed asked about the vehicle line request, noting that the Sheriff had requested \$100,000.00 and the Commissioners had reduced it to \$28,000.00. J. Trafton said that in the past, the Sheriff’s Office generally tries to get three new vehicles a year. There are also admin vehicles – not set up for patrol and are unmarked, such as for the Chief Deputy. Sheriff Story had a lease for his personal vehicle rather than having a cruiser. This will change this year because the insurance carrier was not happy with that arrangement because it the lines are blurred as to when the County insurance covers things and personal insurance covers it. J. Trafton said he will be using a county vehicle instead. He discussed details related to the fleet and its uses.

There are three cars that need to be updated as they have reached the end of their life cycle. The Commissioners are working with him to use reserve funds to purchase replacing these cars.

R. Desmarais asked why the cruisers were put elsewhere. W. Shorey said the Commissioners were trying to keep the budget under \$5,000,000.00 so they put technology under reserves, patrol vehicles under the Vehicle Replacement Reserves to keep the budget down. R. Desmarais asked if this included tazers, bulletproof vests and cruiser cages, etc. W. Shorey said it was only the cruisers being paid from the reserve. It was noted that in 2016 the vehicle request, which would be about \$72,000.00 for vehicles, will be coming out of the operating budget as it normally would.

When asked if there was a lot of turnover with patrol deputies, J. Trafton said generally there isn't a lot of turnover and they average about one per year. He believed it was because it is an excellent place to work and longevity is usually good.

When asked about the canine officer, J. Trafton explained that the current canine is getting older and has failed some of the drug certifications, so they have found another dog to train and replace the first dog. This dog will be part of the patrol division instead of the detective division. Detective Reed wanted to stay a canine officer, so he opted to move to patrol as a patrol officer. The Academy is starting a new program for drug canines to also track people. This dog will not be taught to attack. The dog often visits schools and needs to be a safe dog. The new dog is friendly, shows no aggression and is in the process of being trained.

J. Bennett noted that the vehicle lease was still in the Sheriff's budget. All agreed that was an oversight and should be removed.

The bottom line for this budget with the reductions, which is \$8811.00, results in \$1,096,754.00
B. Sneed went over and reviewed discussed the reserve accounts for those who were new.

****B. Sneed moved, P. Curley seconded to approve the Sheriff's Budget at \$1,096,754.00.**

A. Durity asked if next year, the Sheriff's budget will increase for vehicle expenditures and was told yes.

Motion passed unanimously.

(The Deputy Treasurer noted that the motion had been made from the wrong column.)

****B. Sneed moved, R. Desmarais seconded to fund the Sheriff's budget at \$1,328,116.00.
Unanimous.**

DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S BUDGET (1015):

Present was District Attorney Geoffrey Rushlau, who introduced himself as being newly re-elected.

G. Rushlau stated that the District Attorney's budget is largely personnel services. He noted that the contractual slightly from the previous year. The Laboratory Test line is a little lower along with the Witness Fees and District Court Witness Fees lines (4925 and 4926) budget. He credited the excellent skills of the Victim/Witness Advocate and the prosecutorial staff in Belfast for practices that allowed for a reduction, including scheduling witnesses only as necessary. He noted that from year to year, it may increase depending on substantial cases.

He briefly discussed the Statutes line and because the paper version is so expensive to update and maintain, he decided to go to the online version to keep costs down.

Commodities are the same as the previous year.

G. Rushlau spoke to the changes in the personnel lines. The figures for the Administrative Legal Secretary, Legal Secretary and Victim/Witness Advocate wage lines were estimated at what the pay may be, depending on upcoming union negotiations with the union. Two of the employees are also eligible for pay step increases. The Prosecutorial Assistant/Supervisor position, which is a relatively new position, has now been filled by former State Police Detective Dean Jackson. It is modeled after the Knox County position and is partly paralegal, partly law enforcement and to have this individual is a great benefit to the office. This position is not part of the bargaining unit but longevity increases that is consistent with the union's schedule.

Another substantial change in staff was the P/T Victim/Child Advocate. The previous employee was collecting social security and had a capped income. This kept the wage at an artificially low level. This individual resigned last year and the replacement, who is former Probation Officer Eric Harvey, has joined the staff. He is now working about 20 hours per week, has been a great addition to the staff and is being paid at the typical rate for this position. Because of the wage increase, G. Rushlau has reallocated a larger portion of the grant paid through Knox County shared between the two counties to Waldo County. It will pay \$7,000.00 toward that position instead of the \$3,000.00 it was paying in the past. This grant revenue is not reflected in the budget.

Long-time Deputy District Attorney Eric Walker became District Court Judge in April. He was a great prosecutor in the District Attorney's Office for 20 years. Now they have an experienced prosecutor, Neil Mclean. G. Rushlau described all the staff as "top notch" and doing very well working together.

A. Durity asked who pays prosecutors. G. Rushlau said the prosecutors are State employees who are paid from the State budget, not the County's.

****B. Sneed moved, C. Blakney seconded to fund the District Attorney's budget at \$256,405.00. Unanimous.**

COMMUNICATIONS CENTER BUDGET (1076):

Present was Owen Smith, Director of Waldo County Regional. O. Smith introduced himself as Director of the Waldo County Regional Communications Center which is also the 9-1-1 PSAP. As such, the center answers calls for service and dispatches for all EMS, Fire and Police and EMA emergencies for all Waldo County municipalities with the exception of the Town of Lincolnville. Only other 24/7 operation in the County is the Reentry. The center runs 24/7. He described his as primarily a "people" budget – it's all personnel. There are a few other areas for larger expenditures including tower sites – all but one tower is leased. They will be bringing on another tower in Stockton Springs and it should be operating by late January. Some things will be moved to that tower and will provide better, much stronger service to those areas that have been weak. The County will own space on this tower.

Personnel changes: One retirement; some who were training left, so this involved bringing another person on. There have been had two floaters for 7 of the 12 months and this is starting to work pretty well. He hoped that there won't be any more personnel changes. He would like to see it stay stable to see how well the floater arrangement works.

B. Sneed explained that P/T and O/T have been somewhat of a nightmare for this department and between the Director and the Commissioners, this has been "wrestled to the ground."

When asked where the tower if Stockton is going, O. Smith said the Tower is going on Church Street on the Water Company property. There is a cleared site for a road. It's a good spot and has been tested – balloons have been flown to determine line of site for the microwaves. They believe it will work well and is a lot better access than they have now.

A. Durity asked for training/mileage line. O. Smith said that two budgets ago, he had one travel line that included everything. He spoke to the Commissioners and asked to break out mileage that was related to training. This helps to understand the cost of training, a lot of which is mandatory. Between NENA (national) and MECCA (county), which are two communications associations, they are providing in excess of 55 hours of training each year per dispatcher. O. Smith explained that it is a lot cheaper than having a national person come in at \$140.00 a piece.

A. Durity asked where the dispatchers travel for training and was told they travel to such places as Portland, Auburn, Augusta and Vassalboro.

J. Bennett asked if mileage was being taken out of Training Mileage line, what the \$4,100.00 in travel for. O. Smith explained that it was for travel not related to training but for attending meetings of associations that O. Smith belongs to, overnight if needed. The 4100 was reduced by almost the amount of the travel line a few years ago.

B. Sneed asked why the recorders were not in the Commissioners Technology capital outlay line. O. Smith said that the recorder has always come out of Communications Center Budget because it is generic to just the Center. He had put a request to purchase one in the Capital Outlay part of the budget request this year but after talking with the Commissioners and manufacturers, it was decided to lease it because it would just become outdated like the one is now. The current one cannot handle the technology related to 9-1-1 that now comes in. So, the recorder maintenance line is up this year because that lease is in there.

B. Sneed asked if any of these under the Commissioners technology budget. W. Shorey said no, that there was someone in the audience that would like to speak to the other requests on the communications Center capital outlay budget request. The Commissioners had not approved it for the budget.

W. Shorey said he'd like to mention that when the tower in Stockton Springs is completed, which will cost about \$125,000.00, the County won't owe a penny on it.

O. Smith explained that with that tower, there will be enhancements for some of the problems. The Town of Stockton Springs will be allowed on that tower and they are also talking with the Town of Searsport about going on that tower.

B. Sneed asked if space would be rented out to local ham operators. O. Smith said that they do not at this time because they need to have more secure site and a more accessible site.

C. Blakney asked about the Commissioners increasing line 4600 by \$4,000.00. O. Smith said that when the Commissioners reviewed the budget, the new recorder lease was put in the wrong budget line. But it was understood that the bottom line of the budget is unchanged because it was moved from one line to another.

****B. Sneed moved, R. Desmarais seconded to fund the Communications Center Budget at \$921,239.00. Unanimous.**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION:

B. Sneed informed the Committee that he had received a call from Waldo Selectman Kathy Littlefield asking to be allowed to speak for a few minutes and asked for a motion to permit this.

****J. Bennett moved, T. Flacke seconded to allow Waldo Selectman Kathy Littlefield to speak. Unanimous.**

K. Littlefield asked Bill Shorey if he would like to explain first.

W. Shorey said that Belfast Manager Joe Slocum called to let County know that a new company is considering moving to Belfast. The company was considering a few other locations, too, and the City of Belfast was trying to come up with some ways to attract them to this area. It is anticipated that there will be about 200 employees hired with this company, likely over a 2.5 year period. J. Slocum proposed offering \$350.00 per employee that the County would “kick in” to the company once employees from the Waldo County area are trained and hired by this company. The Commissioners were considering putting \$70,000.00 to put toward that fund, if the Budget Committee agreed going that way. It would be a sizable venture that could bring benefits to the citizens. The County will not make a single payment unless the employee had finished the training and lived in Waldo County. The County is trying to come up with a way to guarantee employment for up to 200 people in the County. If the company hired people that were not from the Waldo County area, they would receive any money for those individuals from the County. He then turned the floor over to Kathy Littlefield.

K. Littlefield said you don't very often see her wanting to add things to a budget. Usually she is on the “subtract” side. They had a meeting at the Town of Waldo recently that was focused on Economic Development. The Selectmen know the position that the townspeople are in regarding paying their taxes. You can cut all you want to cut, but until people can go to work, they still can't pay taxes. Everything concerning town services is going down at the same time.

She said that they came away from that meeting with the direction from the County Commissioners to consider looking into a part-time Economic Development position for the County to help open up opportunities to help people get back to work. Meanwhile, this new development with the company

“exploded” onto the scene. She believed this was a “win-win” situation. She confirmed with Commissioner Shorey that no money would be paid from the County until a County citizen was trained and hired. If nobody was trained hired, no money would be coming out of the budget and would be left in there. Any unspent money budgeted will go back into undesignated funds. She felt this was a great opportunity for the people in all the Waldo County towns - it didn’t matter whether this company was located in Belfast or any other Waldo County town. It isn’t a Belfast project; it is a county project and is a good chance to put a lot of Waldo County people to work. If it falls through, the money hasn’t been spent. She thought that this company was more of a sure thing than waiting to see what a part-time Economic person might produce in trying to find other work for people. An Economic Development person being hired would mean the money would be spent, whether or not jobs were found for people.

B. Sneed asked if the Commissioners were asking for the budget to be increased by any amount.

W. Shorey said that the Commissioners had already voted to move \$35,000.00 of undesignated funds in the amount of \$35,000.00 into a designated account new Economic Development Reserve Account. The opportunity was for \$70,000.00 and since the current 2015 budget is so low, what is being requested is to add an additional \$35,000.00 to the 2015 budget to bring the amount up to \$70,000.00 in order to fund 200 potential employees with this company.

K. Littlefield clarified that they are asking for an additional \$35,000.00 to be added to the budget. The Commissioners confirmed that.

P. Curley asked for clarification of the funding. W. Shorey restated that there is already \$35,000.00 in a reserve account and the Commissioners are asking for an additional \$35,000.00 to be added to the budget. He explained that there had already been about \$12,800.00 in reductions on the current budget to date, so it really wouldn’t be the full \$35,000.00.

B. Sneed asked which budget this extra money would be funded from. He asked if it would be the Advertising and Promotion Budget (1080).

W. Shorey said that might be an idea.

F. Rollins asked when the payout would be for potential employees. W. Shorey said that people might be interviewed as early as December, but the time to train and hire might be several months.

T. Flacke stated that this was all being done on conjecture and wondered when the information would become public. He didn’t think anything should be done until it was “on the front page.” The name and principals of the company are unknown.

K. Littlefield said that this company is looking at other locations and it may not be possible to wait until they choose this location. The more the County could “sweeten the pot”. She was aware that the company has a huge interest in reopening the former telephone company buildings, to the tune of \$3,000,000.00 to upgrade the phone system. She felt that employers should be enticed to the area. There was some debate between K. Littlefield and T. Flacke about the appropriateness of funding a

company when so little was known about it and, conversely, possibly losing this opportunity if they waited.

T. Flacke felt that \$35,000.00 was in place already, and any additional funding should come back to the Budget Committee to discuss at a later date.

R. Desmarais said he had spoken with Commissioner Shorey the previous week about this company and while he is in favor of the jobs, he felt that there were “red flags all over this.” He commented that he was “set back” that Joe Slocum would approach the County about funding when he has other opportunities to get that he could be approaching. He had also spoken about this two nights ago with John Holden, who is extremely knowledgeable about “TIFFs”, and he stated that this request from J. Slocum is a “TIFF” and he shouldn’t be coming to the County Commissioners asking for the Commissioners to fund 200 jobs. He wondered what would stop another company from coming in and asking for funds from the County in the same manner.

W. Shorey illustrated that the County had applied in 2012 for a Brownfields EPA Cleanup grant and was denied. They reapplied in 2013 and it was awarded. The same could be true with the County; just because something is done one year, it is not an automatic rubber-stamping for other companies. If the County wasn’t interested, didn’t feel it was appropriate or didn’t have the funds, it wouldn’t have to give any money. Also, W. Shorey said it was important to be aware that the City of Belfast stepped up to provide a Brownfields Assessment Grant in the amount of \$25,000.00 to the County and never asked for one penny in return. They also allowed their grant writer, Economic Development Director Thomas Kittredge, to help write the Brownfields Grant for Waldo County that was eventually awarded to the County and never asked for payment for assisting. W. Shorey said that the EPA has described him as likely one of the best grant writers on the East Coast, and that this was a huge help to the County in obtaining this grant. He did not feel it was inappropriate that the City of Belfast approached the County on this other matter after helping the County to the tune of \$225,000.00.

R. Desmarais felt that it would be taking tax payers’ money that is designated for the County and handing out to other companies. Once the County crossed that line regarding funding incoming companies, they would not be able to go back. He felt that if there was extra \$70,000.00, it should be returned to County tax payers. W. Shorey disagreed.

A. Durity said that this would be the same situation as when the southern states promised Toyota huge rebates in order to get a car factory. Pretty soon they’d given away all their tax dollars and then had nothing left so they had to raise taxes, which got everybody up in arms.

R. Desmarais commented that if people read the bio on this incoming company, they would see it was not a stable company.

A. Durity stated that what attracts companies is good electricity and good phone services, not this kind of thing.

W. Shorey stated that if they wanted to “walk by this opportunity”, they could and that is why it is being discussed at this table. He reminded them that none of the money would be spent until the jobs were guaranteed.

B. Sneed said that the Commissioners felt they needed another \$35,000.00 after this budget was passed and request it. All the Budget Committee would need is 10 days to call the committee back and if they would agree, they would agree.

K. Littlefield asked where the funding would come from. R. Desmarais said that they should talk to John Holden and put together a TIFF. (There was continued debate between R. Desmarais and W. Shorey about this.)

W. Shorey asked about just approaching this with the existing \$35,000.00, wait to see how it would go to fund 100 people working for this company and then come back to the Budget Committee.

The question continued as to where any future would come from. W. Shorey said the Commissioners could let them know where the funding could come from if they called the Budget Committee back together.

(There was lively discussion about the philosophy of giving money to this company or hiring a Part-time Economic Development person and it was generally understood that it would be one or the other.)

(There was also brief discussion of whether or not funding hired employees for this company would be better than hiring an economic development person part time.)

D. Parkman thanked the towns who have paid their taxes and reminded those who have not paid, that Thanksgiving is November 27th and after December 1, any unpaid taxes would be charged interest. He just wanted to remind folks of this.

***A. Durity moved, R. Desmarais seconded to take a break at approximately 10:35 a.m. Unanimous.**

(BREAK)

B. Sneed re-convened the meeting.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (1010):

Present was EMA Director Dale Rowley. D. Rowley explained that other than the personnel lines, the EMA budget has gone up about \$600.00. He mentioned a few budget lines that had changed to reflect actual expenditures, such as web services and copier costs. He mentioned that he usually has about 18 of the 20 Town (Local) EMA Directors show up and that they need a new person for Unity and also for Troy. He acknowledged that they could have a regional one shared between two towns, if needed.

The Personnel line is increased to accommodate the extra pay period.

Half of the EMA budget is reimbursed each quarter by the State government, including EMA costs in the Facilities budget. It is through the Emergency Management Performance grant, which has been around since the Cuban Missile Crisis. About \$55,000.00 to \$56,000.00 will be reimbursed.

Another helpful thing is that this grant is that even though the State of Maine is the most poorly funded of the 50 states, the State has trouble spending the match, so money was going back to FEMA. In recent years, they can now use “soft-match” money which includes time spent training, and also food, which can be converted to dollars. The EMA just built a new pole barn and was able to feed people and count people’s time.

Also, there are Homeland Security Grant funds received, although this is shrinking quite a bit. Waldo County made out much better over the years. Now that the competitive piece has been removed, it is allotted. The County used to get more, but now receives less as a result. Now they receive about \$80,000.00 each year. \$20,000.00 is dedicated to law enforcement. EMA is now in the process of getting cameras and radar guns for Searsport, bulletproof vests and radios for Belfast and equipment for accident reconstruction for the County Sheriff’s office, which reduces the time spent on-scene much less.

D. Rowley has also been putting money into radio programming equipment. EMA can do licenses and radio programming for all the towns police, ambulance and fire services. He believes this is saving the towns about \$10,000.00 each year in programming costs alone because they don’t have to pay another company to do this. A base station has been put up in Frankfort. The EMA is also re-licensing and re-teaching people regarding frequencies. A few years ago, they got a grant for narrow-band and got new licenses for those whose licenses had expired.

B. Sneed said he needed to leave, as he had mentioned earlier.

B. Sneed said he had spoken with retiring Register of Deeds Deloris Page and Deeds has lost a lot of money in fees because of the Internet but the State has allowed increases in other areas, so that has made it “budget neutral”.

R. Desmarais took over chairing the meeting.

J. Bennett asked D. Rowley about travel and gas. He asked if D. Rowley had a County vehicle and this pays for gas and oil. J. Bennett asked about line 4100 and 4200. D. Rowley explained in detail the vehicles and accounts. He explained that having a government vehicle instead of paying mileage, it pays for itself, because of the 50/50 reimbursement. He hopes to pay off the vehicle and put the reimbursement back in the reserve account. The travel line is used for gasoline. It was acknowledged that the word “Gas” should not be in line 4200. The \$2,000.00 is for maintenance. He explained that the EMA now has 3 vehicles; a jeep, mobile command post and an ambulance that the radio operators use.

A. Durity said that it was confusing because 4100 lists “Travel” but it really means gas, and 4200 lists “gas” but really isn’t. The budget should be changed to reflect actual use.

A. Durity asked about projecting storm costs. D. Rowley explained that he is salaried, and the he uses comp time with the Assistant Director rather paying over-time. There is a reserve account for Disaster Response, so that can be used, as well, that might be related to a storm. He illustrated that he had to

use money from the reserve account because they paid Waldo CAP to transport elderly from homes to shelters during the November 1st snow storm and power outage.

D. Parkman asked D. Rowley for clarification on the reserve accounts. D. Rowley explained how the reserves were used and how unused money was handled. D. Rowley explained.

***J. Bennett moved, T. Flacke seconded to fund the Emergency Management Agency budget at \$113,244.00. Unanimous.**

COMMISSIONERS BUDGET (1020):

R. Desmarais said that this budget was down quite a bit. W. Shorey explained that Technology was being paid from a reserve in order to keep the budget down. Other than that, everything is pretty much the same.

J. Bennett said he thought the mileage at \$7,500.00 was high. W. Shorey said that he doesn't do much traveling himself but Commissioner Fowler was in Augusta a substantial amount of times during the month and that Commissioner Johnson also had far to travel for meetings such as in Damariscotta. J. Bennett asked if the Commissioners get mileage to attend monthly court sessions. A. Fowler said that they do, by statute. He didn't understand how the Commissioners are paid to be Commissioners and then get mileage. B. Johnson explained that the statutes state that if the County Commissioners do not reside in the County Seat, they are reimbursed for travel to their court sessions but that did not constitute a large part of that mileage reimbursement. J. Bennett stated that he had found close to \$30,000.00 in food and mileage in the budget. He thought that was a lot of money.

A. Durity estimated that this was about 40 trips to Augusta per year.

P. Curley asked what the mileage reimbursement rate was and was told it is .56 cents per mile, which is the current State allowance.

****P. Curley moved, C. Blakney seconded to approve the Commissioners Budget at \$181,241.00.**

O. Smith asked if he could speak briefly and mentioned that Bill Gillespie of the Liberty Fire Department was there to speak about a capital outlay item. R. Desmarais said it was his understanding that this matter would not be discussed until the Public Hearing.

J. Bennett noticed that the motion was made on the wrong column amount, so a second motion was made to correct that.

****A. Durity moved, J. Bennett seconded to amend the motion to approve the Commissioners Budget at \$318,029.00. Unanimous.**

TREASURER'S BUDGET (1025):

It was noted that Treasurer Parkman had left for a previous commitment.

****J. Bennett moved, T. Flacke seconded to approve the Treasurer's Budget at \$75,909.00. Unanimous.**

REGISTRY OF DEEDS BUDGET (1065):

****J. Bennett moved, A. Durity seconded to approve the Registry of Deeds Budget at \$220,761.00.**

There was brief discussion of the personnel pay reflecting a reduction due to a new Register of Deeds being elected. **Unanimous.**

REGISTRY OF PROBATE (1070):

J. Bennett asked why the Commissioners had recommended a higher salary for the Register of Probate. W. Shorey explained that the Register of Probate's wages were increased \$3,000.00 to be in equity with other department heads, as this was overdue for several years.

****J. Bennett moved, P. Curley seconded to approve the Register of Probate budget at \$223,920.00. Unanimous.**

ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION BUDGET (1080):

****J. Bennett moved, T. Flacke seconded to approve the Advertising and Promotion Budget at \$13,500.00.** Discussion: C. Blakney asked for a short summary of what each agency does. W. Shorey provided a brief explanation for each. A. Durity asked why the Firefighter's Association was in this budget and the Commissioners said they likely put it in there because there was no other place and this is an outside agency. **Unanimous.**

AUDIT BUDGET (1090):

****J. Bennett moved, P. Curley seconded to approve the Audit Budget at \$9,000.00. Unanimous.**

DEBT SERVICE BUDGET (1095):

None requested, so no action taken.

INTEREST BUDGET (2000):

W. Shorey explained that this has been increased because the County wanted to increase its capital borrowing in case they need, plus Treasurer Parkman thought that the interest rate might be increasing.

J. Bennett asked why this amount wasn't reduced since there wouldn't need to be money borrowed to pay for three new vehicles for the Sheriff's Office. W. Shorey explained that this was money borrowed for the Tax Anticipation Note.

T. Flacke wondered if the County should investigate billing the Towns monthly to avoid the County having to borrow so much. W. Shorey responded that this would be hard to change that system and, that as it is, some of the Towns able to pay until the last day it is due in the late fall. If the County doesn't have to borrow all the money, it doesn't get spent but this budget was increasing because the County wanted to be sure it has enough to borrow money to borrow and enough interest in case the entire amount has to be borrowed.

R. Desmarais explained that the Town of Searsport also goes for a Tax Anticipation Note in much the same manner.

T. Flacke said he didn't agree with this and that if the Town's were billed monthly, it might keep the County from borrowing and keep the cash flow going. He said that the Town of Morrill sends a payment to the school district and so do the rest of the Towns.

J. Bennett and C. Blakney disagreed, saying that the towns are often behind in paying the schools monthly, never mind paying the County monthly, as well. There was brief discussion of Towns having a difficult time paying the school district monthly and that some pay with borrowed money.

A. Durity asked if the County has to borrow money because others aren't contributing, perhaps those institutions pick up the interest.

W. Shorey explained that the Treasurer was elected a number of years ago, he was told the first day he came to work in January that he needed to go out and borrow money to pay the first payroll and accounts payable. He explained that Commissioners like to have about \$700,000.00 in designated funds to carry the County over until they have to borrow from the taxes.

W. Shorey said that he believed this would have to be changed at the State level and had even approached one of the representatives about it, who thought that was unlikely.

A. Durity asked for clarification that it is the state controls when the towns pay and was told that is the case. The towns are not obligated to pay in the fall.

T. Flack said that they had offered to pay monthly because the Town doesn't have to borrow money and the County wouldn't have to borrow money either. He still thought it should be investigated on a spreadsheet to see if it would lower how much money the County had to borrow. It was noted that this would have to be changed at the legislative level.

H. Potter asked if the County had discussed changing to a fiscal year versus a calendar. A. Fowler explained that the Jail budget is on a fiscal year but the County is on a calendar year. H. Potter wondered if this would help the situation. There was brief discussion on this and the Commissioners said they didn't know how many towns were on a fiscal year and did not know whether this would reduce borrowing or not.

R. Desmarais asked for a motion.

****T. Flacke moved, C. Blakney seconded to accept the Interest Budget at \$15,000.00. Unanimous.**

U. of M. COOPERATIVE EXTENSION BUDGET (2005):

W. Shorey acknowledged that Rick Kersbergen had been here earlier but W. Shorey had not known this budget would be reviewed so he told him he could go home.

****J. Bennett moved, F. Rollins seconded to approve the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Budget at \$41,110.00. Unanimous.**

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS BUDGET (2025):

****J. Bennett moved, H. Potter seconded to approve the Employee Benefits Budget at \$1,126,000.00.** A. Durity asked if this was largely contractual obligations involving unions and was told that it also included health insurance benefits, etc. **Unanimous.**

WALDO COUNTY SOIL & WATER:

****J. Bennett moved, F. Rollins seconded to fund Waldo County Soil & Water Budget at \$25,000.00.** A. Durity asked for a brief explanation of what this organization does. W. Shorey explained that they provide a lot of guidance for people with small or large operations, particularly in agriculture, and serve as a resource officer for people wanting soil tested, want to know about rotating crops, assist with writing grants, etc. **Unanimous.**

It was noted that there are no requests for Grant Writing or Records Preservation.

BOTTOM LINE SUMMARY:

It was noted that \$12,811.00 had been deducted from the total 2015 budget. The new County budget, not including the Jail budget, is a total of \$4,973,823.00.

****P. Curley moved, F. Rollins seconded to approve the total County 2015 budget at \$4,973,823.00. Unanimous.**

NEXT BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING:

The next Budget Committee Meeting will be the Public Hearing and Final Budget Committee Meeting at 6:00 p.m. on December 12, 2014.

****J. Bennett moved, P. Curley seconded that the Public Hearing and Final Budget Committee meeting be held on December 12, 2014 starting at 6:00 p.m. Unanimous.**

****J. Bennett moved, P. Curley seconded to adjourn the meeting at approximately 11:30 a.m. Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted by *Barbara L. Arseneau*
Waldo County Clerk