

**WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT SESSION
(SPECIAL SESSION)
SEPTEMBER 28, 2012**

PRESENT: Commissioners William D. Shorey – Chairman and Amy R. Fowler. (Commissioner Betty I. Johnson was absent to attend another meeting.) Also present was County Clerk Barbara L. Arseneau to take minutes and Deputy County Clerk Linda Kinney to make notes on 2013 Budget changes.

Call to Order: Commissioner Shorey called the court session to order at 1:00 p.m.

FIRE CHIEF’S ASSOCIATION CONVENTION SUPPORT LETTER AND 2013 BUDGET REQUEST:

Present with the Commissioners was Morrill Fire Chief David Wight and Waldo County Firefighter Chief’s Association President (and Liberty Fire Chief) Bill Gillespie.

1. 2013 Budget Request: B. Gillespie gave the Commissioners a brief report on various training that has been provided to local firefighters and provided a sheet listing this. He also stated that the Association has done a lot of work on the building used for training to make it more appropriate for that. Parking has increased and they have purchased a “Rescue Andy” for training purposes, which cost \$1,300.00. The idea is to have this in a centralized location so that all can use it. B. Gillespie also reported that the hazardous technicians unit out of Rockland has been shut down. He further listed the costs related to training and feeding trainees.

Commissioner Fowler acknowledged that grant funds are limited for fire departments. B. Gillespie noted that even if funding is not made available, the fire department is willing to do fundraising to keep services going as they always were.

W. Shorey explained that that Time & Tide RC&D lost its director about two years ago and that even though this group has not appeared to be able to redirect itself, the money continues to be funded by the Budget Committee. Commissioners Shorey and Fowler recommended not funding this organization for another year, noting that the letter of request that was mentioned the previous day had not been received at the time Mr. Wells came in to meet with them and it only had arrived by mail today.

W. Shorey recommended allocating \$5,000.00 for the purpose of funding training for the Waldo County Firefighter Association as requested.

A. Fowler recommended that B. Gillespie and D. Wight attend the Budget Committee Meeting and make their request in person.

B. Gillespie offered to send information for the 2013 budget so that the Budget Committee would be able to understand the reasons for the request.

A. Fowler moved, W. Shorey seconded to add to the 1080 Advertising and Promotion budget a line called “4719 Waldo County Firefighter Association” with a request for \$5,000.00 to be funded in that budget. Unanimous.

2. Letter of Support – Upcoming Convention: B. Gillespie informed the Commissioners that the Waldo County Firefighter’s Association would like to request signatures from the Waldo County Commissioners Office on a letter of support to hold the Maine State Federation of Firefighters Convention in 2015. The Commissioners signed this request.

1020 COMMISSIONERS BUDGET REVIEW, CONTINUED:

Present: It was determined that there was an error in calculations in the 2012 personnel line. The pay step for County Clerk and the H.R. Director were omitted. The correct figure for the County Clerk should have been \$49,503.00 and it should have been \$41,598.00 for the Human Resources/Payroll Director. This is not going to be a problem because there are funds remaining in the budget due to a new Deputy County Clerk being hired in July at a lower rate than the previous Deputy County Clerk.

The Commissioners discussed the need to cease using the current pay scale for their staff, which has yearly pay step increases, and consider going to a pay scale similar to the current union pay scales. W. Shorey explained that the current pay scale had been developed under a previous chairman with the understanding that COLA’s would not be added to it. The current board recognizes that this will not continue to work because not applying cost of living increases would mean that the pay for these positions would fall behind over time. They also acknowledged that adding cost of living increases to a pay scale that has yearly pay steps would move these positions too far, too fast. For 2013, the County Clerk, Deputy County Clerk, and H.R./Payroll Director would not receive a pay step increase. The pay would be based on the 2012 salaries with a 3% COLA only.

1065 REGISTRY OF DEEDS BUDGET:

W. Shorey said he was not in favor of increasing the part-time Deeds Clerk position to a full-time position because times are hard and the budget needs to be kept down as much as possible. A. Fowler agreed, recalling that the usual busy time in the registry is during the summer months and that the Commissioners had agreed to bring on extra help during the summer months this past year. They did not feel there was compelling reason to increase the current part-time hours. In looking at the previous year’s budget, the Commissioners believed it might be necessary to add funding for the current part-time clerk position in the amount of \$17,173.00, which includes the 3% COLA.

1076 COMMUNICATIONS CENTER BUDGET:

The Commissioners, as discussed during the previous day’s court session, reduced the Communications Center Director’s salary to 3% above the 2012 salary, without the pay step on the pay scale, without adding the error to \$58,178.00. In 2010, the salary was \$53,941.00. After going back and forth several times trying to figure out where the errors were and adding a 3% COLA, the total for 2013 will be \$59,337.00. The Commissioners also recommended adding one more floater position. This will need to be discussed further. A certain amount will need to reduce the Over-time line.

2025 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS BUDGET:

The Commissioners agreed to stay with the recommended amount of \$835,800.00 for Health Insurance. Group Life will remain as originally budgeted, as H.R./Payroll Director M. Wadsworth had learned from

MainePers that the statutes dictate payments to retirees and any changes would have to go through the Maine Legislature.

****A. Fowler moved, W. Shorey seconded to adjourn the meeting at 2:45 p.m. Unanimous.**

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