

WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT
May 14, 2013

PRESENT: Commissioners William D. Shorey – Chairman, Amy R. Fowler and Betty I. Johnson. Also present was County Clerk Barbara L. Arseneau to take minutes.

Call to Order: Commissioner Shorey called the court session to order at 9:00 a.m.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Present with the County Commissioners was Treasurer David A. Parkman, Deputy Treasurer Karen Trussell and Sheriff Scott Story. D. Parkman reported the following:

REVENUE:

D. Parkman reported 37.38% in revenue received, but described this amount as “really not a good sign. Usually much more has been received by now.” He acknowledged that the Registry of Deeds’ revenue is more in the 40-47% range, which is good.

COUNTY APPROPRIATIONS:

D. Parkman reported that the County Appropriations could be 37% expended by this time of year. There is one payroll included on this appropriations report for May. D. Parkman commented that most departments are right in the ballpark at 33% expended. Concern was expressed over the fact that the overtime budget for the Communications Center was over budget. The Commissioners thought they should consult with the Director on this matter. W. Shorey thought that likely it was because a few employees had left this year and because the second floater hadn’t finished training yet.

D. Parkman mentioned that the part-time line and over-time lines had to be looked at together, noting that the part-time line has not been expended much. All agreed that once the second floater gets started, this should really help to keep costs down. Having a floater position the previous year saved the County a great deal of money.

CORRECTIONS:

D. Parkman reported briefly on the Jail situation, noting that there will be more discussions in the future. For Waldo, the CAP will remain the same. Right now there is an average of 50 inmates per night that have to be sent to another county. Somerset is doing its own thing, taking Federal inmates, but will take other counties’ inmates if the sending county is willing to pay \$84.15 per night per inmate directly to Somerset County Correctional Facility. D. Parkman commented that the basic problem is the State was going to fund anything above the CAP for each county correctional facility and the State has not had the money to do it. He added that it has been that way right from the beginning.

Sheriff Story, who was present, stated that he believed D. Parkman was accurately reflecting the situation other than that all the Sheriffs would like to see the Jails go back to the counties. The drawback is that this cost would now go back to county taxpayers. The need for transition funding was discussed. S. Story also explained that the Governor had not realized that the counties don’t keep money received from writing tickets through patrol, but the Governor was

aware that that Deeds does not get to keep 90% of the money it brings in and that might be a way to assist counties. S. Story said that even if employees didn't get pay raises, the fact that contractual items continue to go up in cost makes it so that the jails cannot function on the money they have right now.

There was brief discussion of a possible joint venture between four of the counties. D. Parkman said that it would be awfully tight, but between the four counties, Waldo, Knox, Sagadahoc and Lincoln, they could run things.

S. Story said that the prison in Warren has 80 beds, if there was a way for a county to handle a few female inmates for the State in return. A. Fowler asked about the difference between a prison and a jail and the differing philosophies and how it impacts the inmates. S. Story said that this philosophy "all went out the window" with consolidation of the jail system. There was discussion about programs to rehabilitate and teach people how to live on the outside. S. Story said that the money is really only covering basic operations. If the Maine Coastal Regional Reentry Center & Kennebec's KARA program were closed, it would only amount to being a "band-aide" that would only help for about a year. In answering Commissioner Fowler's question, S. Story explained that the philosophy is the same it always was – only there isn't the money being allotted to do it. He commented that both the best and worst thing Waldo County did was not building a new Jail back in 2003. While there was no big debt saddling the County, "best practice" was not followed by building a new jail.

A. Fowler described Somerset's Jail as a "Mercedes" but this and other flagship jails are holding onto a lot of debt.

S. Story reminded all that Waldo County is paying the debt through the system and that if the system goes back to the way it was, it would still take the current staff to run the 72-hour-hold. There was discussion of Waldo County taking Federal reentry clients in order to increase its revenue. S. Story stated that he has received plenty of criticism for not having enough room for County inmates. There was further discussion on this and how it might become more of a "warehouse" mentality. S. Story said the good news is that Waldo County is in a good position at this point.

RESERVES:

There was no discussion of the reserves.

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to file the Treasurer's report. Unanimous.**

WARRANTS:

W. Shorey read the amounts from the warrants and they were approved for payment as follows:

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the April 26, 2013 General Fund Accounts Payable and April 11 and 25, 2013 Payroll warrants in the amount of \$247,939.44. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the April 26, 2013 Capital and Restricted Reserve warrant in the amount of \$21,478.16. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the April 26, 2013 Reentry Accounts Payable and April 11 and 25, 2013 Payroll warrants in the amount of \$83,536.54. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the April 26, 2013 MCRRC Restricted Reserve warrant in the amount of \$920.00. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the May 14, 2013 General Fund Accounts Payable warrant in the amount of \$185,130.08. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the May 14, 2013 Active and Restricted Reserve warrant in the amount of \$10,336.85. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the May 14, 2013 Reentry Accounts Payable warrant in the amount of \$245,953.48. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the May 14, 2013 MCRRC Restricted Reserve in the amount of \$4,728.02. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the Revised March 29, 2013 Capital and Restricted Reserve in the amount of \$31,822.57. Unanimous.**

B. Johnson asked Sheriff Story why there were so many repairs on the washer and dryer because she had noticed that there seem to be replacements within a short period of time. S. Story said he would look into this.

S. Story asked if pay scales had been decided on yet, particularly for corrections employees since the fiscal year starts in July. The Commissioners said they would be completing these soon.

TECHNOLOGY UPDATE:

Present for this discussion was Technology Consultant James Arseneau, who reported the following to the Commissioners:

1. Server Update: The Spillman server was ordered, and arrived at Spillman where it is being configured and should be here next week. J. Arseneau reminded the Commissioners that he had sent a message to department heads asking for their input for a date to remove old server and install new one. He hadn't received much response, so he has selected June 17, 2013, in the evening. Spillman is scheduled to come out the first week of August and will be on site August 5th. Wednesday, August 6th, the data will be transferred from the SUN server to IBM. Thursday, Spillman will stay around to be sure things are working properly. The upgrade won't be until late fall, early winter and possibly even 2014.

2. PC Update: J. Arseneau requested bids from PC Connection and HP. With HP, without a contract, the PCs cost \$2,900 to 3900.00 apiece. Going through the WSCA contract, the cost would be \$2,200 to \$2,700 apiece. J. Arseneau submitted some handouts to Commissioners so they could follow along with the configurations information. J. Arseneau stated that handouts have also gone out to the departments. Most printers are running OK. Some of the 4100's that come off line will be recycled. The PCs that affect the Corrections facility were reviewed with the Detention Manager and Correctional Administrator. The Sheriff had set aside funds in the Corrections budget to fully cover this. There are four configurations of PCs, one type of laptop and four types of printers. The Commissioners' large printer will be changed out, as it is having ongoing blurring issues. The standard workforce printers in some of the departments will be replaced. There will be 66 units altogether, and data will need to be transferred. J. Arseneau said he has asked people to go through and delete any data they don't need to keep. He has reminded people not to keep documents and data on their desktops because these can easily be lost. Documents should be saved on the network, which is backed up.

B. Johnson asked if the County did email archiving. J. Arseneau replied no, that Waldo did not have anything like that. B. Johnson said that she had recently attended a workshop and learned that it has been an issue with businesses not having quick retrieval of documents because they are not all in the same place. J. Arseneau said he believed that might be able to be addressed in the future.

A. Fowler asked if there was a breakdown of the costs. J. Arseneau showed and explained the breakdown on the document that he had submitted. A. Fowler asked if the Judge needed a laptop, as she recalled that the Judge had preferred to use her Mac. A. Fowler explained that she was in no way "picking on" the Judge but was simply inquiring because if this computer was not going to be used, perhaps it wouldn't make sense to buy one. J. Arseneau explained that the Judge does not use her Mac during her court sessions. Now that there is wireless, the Judge can use the Mac. The other laptop will be available if something goes wrong with her Mac, plus it will be available if the person serving as Judge ever changed. When asked if there would need to be a lot of work done on the Mac to tie them together, J. Arseneau responded no, there should not be.

W. Shorey asked about the schedule of switching out all the computers and printers. J. Arseneau said he would be working on a schedule, but it would likely start this fall and go into 2014, noting that as long as this was done by February 2014, it would be within the timetable to receive the contract rates.

MOU E-RECORDING AND OTHER DEEDS DISCUSSIONS:

Present with the Commissioners was Register of Deeds Deloris Page.

1. D. Page informed the Commissioners that the Waldo County Registry of Deeds was going to start e-recording, likely by July 1st. She asked if the Commissioners preferred to sign the MOU with Simplifile or have her sign it. The Commissioners opted to sign. A. Fowler asked if this had gone through an RFP process and was told no; that these people would serve as middle person for ACS. When asked why the Registry was going to start e-recording, D. Page explained that this is being requested more and more by people from out of state. There will be no additional cost to the County. When asked if more staff or other costs would be related to this, D. Page responded no, that it would be a little more work for the current staff, but that's all.

2. D. Page requested that part time Deeds Clerk Amy Keller work full-time this summer, as she had last summer. When asked, D. Page said she had not budgeted for these additional hours of work, but thought she would have enough in her 2013 budget to cover it. This would be June through August, but would not put A. Keller in a permanent full-time status. The Commissioners agreed, but wished to research the timeframe to be sure that this would not become a permanent full-time position or change benefits, etc.

3. The ACS contract runs out in 2013. A. Fowler asked if this had gone through the RFP process and D. Page responded, no, they have been with this company "forever". She listed other counties that use ACS and those who use Xerox.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to go into Executive Session for consideration of a personnel matter related to evaluation/discipline as permitted by M.R.S.A. Title 1 §405(6)(A) at 10:15 a.m. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to come out of Executive Session at 10:25 a.m. Unanimous.** No action was taken.

ADDITIONAL EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK POLICES:

Human Resources/Payroll Director Michelle Wadsworth and County Clerk Barbara Arseneau discussed three polices to add to the Waldo County Employee Handbook. Two policies had been recommended by the Safety/Department Head Committee as follows: Absenteeism and Awards and Prizes.

The Absenteeism policy was presented as follows:

Absenteeism:

Employees are expected to report for work unless they are on approved leave. Unauthorized absences or excessive or inappropriate use of authorized absences (sick leave) or tardiness will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. An absence is considered to be unauthorized if the employee has not followed proper notification procedures or the absence has not been properly approved.

Employees who are absent from work for three consecutive days without giving proper notice to the County will be considered as having terminated their position. At that time the County will formally note the termination and advise the employee of the action by certified mail to the employee's last known address.

Department heads shall notify the Human Resources/Payroll Director of any absence more than three (3) days for evaluation under the FMLA Policy.

(Put the following under the Sick Leave Policy):

Unauthorized Use of Abuse of Sick Leave:

When unauthorized use or abuse of sick leave is substantiated, the Department Head or his/her designee may administer corrective and disciplinary action.

Habitual Absence/Furnishment of Proof of Illness by Physician:

Employees who are habitually absent from work due to illness or physical impairment shall, at the request of the Department Head or his/her designee, furnish proof of such illness or impairment and statement of physical fitness signed by an accredited physician prior to returning to a work assignment. Habitual absence without proper written medical proof may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Pattern Abuse of Sick Leave:

Employees may be disciplined, including up to termination of employment, when patterns of abuse of sick leave are substantiated by the Department Head or his/her designee. Patterns of sick leave abuse may include but are not limited to the following:

1. *Before and/or after holidays*
2. *Before and/or after or in conjunction with days off*
3. *Any one specific day*
4. *Excessive absenteeism – use of more sick leave than earned.*
5. *On holidays and/or special events*

Occurrence:

An occurrence consists of a day and/or two (2) or more consecutive days of sick leave absence.

The Awards and Prizes Policy was presented as follows:

Awards and Prizes:

The County Commissioners and/or Department Heads may present awards and/or prizes to employees (i.e. retirement plaques, safety committee prize money) with County funds, as approved. Non-cash awards and prizes are considered nominal and nontaxable up to \$75.00. Awards or prizes that are cash or cash equivalent will be subject to appropriate taxation in compliance with IRS regulations.

M. Wadsworth and B. Arseneau also requested authorization to add language to the Employee Handbook, both in the Code of Ethics section and at least one other place, regarding the expectation for employees to demonstrate honesty, truthfulness, not falsify records, etc. It had been noted that no such wording could be found in the handbook and should be added.

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to accept the Absenteeism policy, the Awards and Prizes policy and to add language in the Employee Handbook regarding honesty, truthfulness, not falsifying records, etc. Unanimous.**

HUMAN RESOURCES/PAYROLL DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

1. Update on spring/summer wellness baskets: M. Wadsworth listed items to go into the spring/summer wellness baskets, including pedometers, lip balm, fresh fruit, trail mix, hand sanitizer, walking maps, etc. M. Wadsworth believed that the cost should be less per employee than the previous fall/winter baskets, which were under \$7.00 per employee. Her goal was to try and keep the total cost under \$700.00. Commissioners approved.

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to allow up to \$700.00 from the Health Insurance fund for wellness baskets for each department. Unanimous.**

2. Replacement Chair for Part-time Victim/Witness Advocate: M. Wadsworth informed the Commissioners that because grant funds had been received by Waldo County for ergonomic furniture the previous year from MMA, the County was not eligible to apply this year. It had come to her attention that the Part-time Victim/Witness Advocate in the District Attorney's Office needs to have a chair replaced. The Commissioners authorized using funds from the Courthouse Reserve.

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to allocate up to \$400.00 for a replacement chair for the District Attorney's Part-time Child Advocate. Unanimous.**

CORRESPONDENCE:

County Clerk Barbara Arseneau reviewed correspondence with the County Commissioners as follows:

1. Draft Commissioners' Annual Report Letter. The Commissioners reviewed the draft. It was agreed that the Spirit of America Ceremony needed to be added, that additional language for Commissioner Fowler needed to be added, and some photos of the Waldo County Garden and Spirit of America Ceremony should be included.

2. MOU between the Administrative Office of the Courts and the County of Waldo for 2013-2017 with the monthly rate of \$7,552.91 or \$90,634.86 per year through June 30, 2017:

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to approve and sign the MOU between the Administrative Office of the Courts and the County of Waldo for 2013-2017. Unanimous.**

3. During last Commissioners' workshop, Commissioner Johnson had recommended changing the June court session from Tuesday, June 11, 2013 to Thursday, June 13, 2013 at 9:00 a.m. The Commissioners agreed to move the court session to June 13, 2013 and instructed the Clerk to send a notice out to all regarding this change.

4. The Commissioners received notice dated April 24, 2013 informing them that Deputy Nicholas Oettinger has assumed the position of School Resource Officer for RSU #3. The Commissioners noted this.

5. B. Arseneau reminded the Commissioners that Robert Nelson, who does a lot of research in the Commissioners Office, had donated a list of road names in Waldo County that he has put together over the years. He donated it as an "unofficial record" that could be used to locate roads. B. Arseneau had drafted a sentiment of appreciation from the Board of County

Commissioners. The Commissioners stated how grateful they were for the generous sharing of this information that had been gathered through years of work on the part of Mr. Nelson.

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to give a sentiment of appreciation to Mr. Robert Nelson for his thoughtful donation of Waldo County road names as an unofficial record to assist in researching of these roads.**

6. B. Arseneau reported that the required 2013 Annual Report for Congress Street Hill Property, LLC has been filed with the Maine Secretary of State's office. The fee involved for the attorney that assisted in filing it was \$215.00.

7. B. Arseneau and M. Wadsworth recently attended a free Labor and Employment Seminar presented by Bernstein Shur regarding developments in labor and employment law, affordable care act, data security for employers, violence in the workplace, etc. There were some interesting and helpful things learned and B. Arseneau thanked the Commissioners for allowing them to attend.

8. A tax abatement appeal has been requested by Greenwoods, LLC in the Town of Northport via an attorney with the firm of Jensen, Baird, Garner & Henry Attorneys at Law. The Commissioners briefly reviewed the application and instructed the County Clerk to schedule a hearing during the June regular court session at 9:30 a.m.

MINUTES APPROVED:

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to approve the minutes from the April 9, 2013 Waldo County Commissioners Court Session. Unanimous.**

DISCUSSION OF RESPONSE PLANS FOR COMMUNICATIONS CENTER:

Present for this discussion was Waldo County Communications Director Owen Smith, Waldo County Fire Chiefs Association President Bill Gillespie, Waldo County EMA Director Dale Rowley, Technology Consultant James Arseneau, Thorndike Selectman James Bennett, Searsmont Selectman Bruce Brierley and Waldo County Selectman's Association President Katharine Littlefield.

Commissioner Shorey opened the floor for discussion.

J. Bennett stated that the fire departments are being paged out even though it is not necessary. He said he had been hearing this, and it has happened three or four times lately. When the fire department was paged, the dispatcher told them that this was their orders to page them out and that they had to follow those orders.

B. Brierley said Searsmont stated that he has no problem with the arrangement. He understood that there was a sheet sent out and the fire chiefs had signed out what they wanted to.

B. Gillespie explained that each town has the right to say how they want their fire trucks paged out. In his experience with most car accidents, the police are the last ones there. In Liberty, the fire truck is paged out to manage traffic until the police arrive. Even once on scene, the officer is busy with paperwork. B. Gillespie commented that a wrecker is a dangerous situation, for

example, and fire trucks block off the road to prevent more accidents. He further explained that he had sent a response out to respond to confusion related to the Waldo County Commissioners' March minutes. He claimed that there was a miscommunication with Owen about Montville regarding a medical emergency and when to tone out. A number of towns respond to other towns. He explained that he met with Owen after the issue had been brought out in the Commissioners' court session. He commented on bomb threats, noting that the fire department doesn't want to be there under those circumstances, for example.

J. Bennett stated that he does have a say over the Town of Knox because Thorndike has an arrangement with them. Regarding his view that it is not always necessary to call out a fire truck, he used a recent example of a car/deer accident in which the deputy didn't want a fire truck to come out and the dispatcher continued to dispatch the fire truck. J. Bennett explained that he didn't want to hold back services when they were needed, but didn't think it makes sense that a Deputy says that he doesn't need something and in that case, it shouldn't be sent.

B. Gillespie explained that there are times when the Deputy can't stay on scene and there are times this additional service was needed.

K. Littlefield observed that J. Bennett was referring to specific cases. She asked if there was a "blanket" sheet sent out where "all" was selected. B. Gillespie told her, no, it was sent to each individual town. She said she had a good conversation with Communications Director Owen Smith and he had provided her with good information. She added that probably the biggest issue was that the town selectmen were not aware of the response plans. She said that all selectmen should go back to their individual fire chief to find out who has been designated to respond to various emergency scenarios.

O. Smith explained that fire responding to PD accidents is not unusual and has gone on for years. First it was a system in a book, then a reference guide. Then EMA Dale Rowley got a grant for response plans. He noted that B. Gillespie had an original sheet, but some of the fire departments did not find them helpful. Some filled out the sheet but, unfortunately not all the fire departments submitted them and B. Gillespie helped "get a push on" to get them submitted. Dispatch was entering these plans in as they received them, then put a push on it themselves, to get the data entered. The dispatchers entered things as they received them, without questioning it. Then it became an issue with fire departments responding to ambulance and hostage situations. B. Gillespie then sent out another plan. O. Smith explained that there are no automatic responses to ambulance calls, school hostage situations, etc. because they have been taken out of the plan. Dispatch is bound by what they have in their system to page out what they have in their system. The Town of Freedom, for example, had checked that they wanted a response to every thing on the list.

D. Rowley added that after being paged out, the fire department does not have to respond, if the fire chief decides they don't need to.

O. Smith emphasized that it was not the place of the Communications Center employees to question these response plans. He cited a recent situation in which a car accident resulted in

leaking fluid, so the fire dept was paged. He stated again that these plans really aren't anything new; they are just being put into a new system.

K. Littlefield responded that the whole thing was new to them. She herself was going to have a conversation with her fire chief. If Dispatch has confirmation of the paperwork and they have a conversation with the fire chief and they decide not to page out things, this could be signed off on and then the procedure can be changed.

O. Smith informed those present that the Communications Center has developed a "change form" for chiefs to fill out and sign off on. It is entirely up to the chiefs.

B. Gillespie commented that the form may look ominous, but in the past there was nothing in writing for Dispatch with specific discussions of who to tone out. Now it is spelled out as to what they want coming. It is not different; it is just now in writing.

K. Littlefield said she believed that it was mostly a matter of the selectmen not being aware of the response plans and needing to converse with their fire chiefs.

J. Bennett said that he had a problem with the forms having gone to the fire departments rather than the selectmen. He didn't want to cut anyone short for necessary emergency equipment, but he believed that the selectmen held the purse strings and things beyond fires needed to be discussed. He added that the count has gone from 20 a year to 80 a year.

B. Gillespie agreed that the selectmen should have discussions with their fire chiefs. Each chief is different. It is all based on what the fire chief thinks he needs to do the things that he needs to do. Eventually these will be broken out by daytime, evening, etc.

J. Arseneau explained that when the form originally came out, Thorndike filled it out. The Communications Director and the EMA Director did not question anything. This was submitted right away. A number of towns did not do this and had to be chased. Meanwhile, the forms had become more detailed, so those towns that had responded early had a little different response than those who submitted their information later. Nobody had intended to step on anyone's toes. It has always been the fire chiefs who make those decisions.

K. Littlefield restated that she had a good conversation with O. Smith, she would sit down with her fire chief and have a discussion and hopefully all would understand what was decided and why.

B. Gillespie explained that a fire chief might want to be there to assist with some rescues, such as a water rescue, even if he doesn't have all the equipment. If a call comes in for a structure fire at an address, a screen pops up and tells the dispatcher exactly who has to respond to that. He added that most of those incidents require a fire department response.

K. Littlefield said she had no issues with the arrangement. She wondered, though, if some might be in the way unnecessarily. She understood that they want to be there when needed and for mutual aid.

A. Fowler said she visits the Communications Center quite a lot, listens to the scanner and a call may come in to Dispatch and the reason for this computer program is to not leave things up to chance. These may be very detailed, and the idea was not to downplay the job of the selectmen. She said in her town, they yield to the expertise of the fire chief.

K. Littlefield said the real problem was no communication between the fire chief and selectmen. It was nobody's fault – and now that it has been brought to their attention, they can communicate and it will be fine.

J. Bennett asked about finding out how many times a fire department was paged out and then wasn't needed. B. Gillespie responded that a report can be run showing the responses in detail, but added that this was not the reason Thorndike's responses had gone up because it has only been implemented for a little over a month.

J. Bennett said what he didn't want was a deputy on a site saying they don't need anybody and the dispatcher arguing and saying that they have to send somebody.

B. Gillespie stated that it is very rare for an officer to get there first. Usually it is another agency that gets there first. It could be put in the response plan that if the PD gets there first and says they don't need anybody or can send people home, that arrangement can be made.

O. Smith did not recommend getting that detailed in the notes. This would take the dispatcher too long to read them before they started paging out.

O. Smith submitted a list for those present to see, but told people not to panic when they look at it. He explained that there are 38 different natures but many don't happen often; if ever. The idea is so that the dispatcher won't wonder what they are supposed to do or who is supposed to be paged. These forms provide for good planning. He advised not to get "hung up" on the length of the list, but at least everybody knows what needs to happen.

O. Smith further explained that the original misunderstanding was that dispatch wanted fire departments to go on ambulance calls. Dispatch DOES NOT create this kind of policy. Dispatch just sends who they have been instructed to send out. Fires in the daytime in some of the towns are getting critical because there aren't enough volunteers to take care of it during the day. There is a lot of anxiety when a call is paged out and nobody responds. There are places on the form for whom to call out for the second page, and the third page. He acknowledged it is a lot of work entering the information on the form but reiterated that dispatchers don't make judgment calls.

B. Gillespie stated that the form is to help the dispatchers to know what to do in particular circumstances. In his case, the select board asked him to make the decisions of when the fire department goes out or not.

J. Bennett said he questions whether or not insurance covers people who show up that aren't needed to be there. If it isn't in the minutes, it isn't covered. He told about an incident when two

people fell off his roof and were injured and he stated that one person did not get covered by Workers' Comp.

D. Rowley, who happened to be the second person who fell off, verified that Workers' Comp did, in fact, pay his claim. He stated that if someone does not go out if paged, they can be held liable for not responding. Someone at least should be sent out to see if response is needed. There had been issues with a few dispatchers years ago making judgment calls on whether or not something was serious enough to send a fire truck out. He acknowledged there would be growing pains with this new system, but now that it is automated, it helps dispatch. After having conversations between selectmen and fire chiefs, anything that needs to be changed can be.

K. Littlefield commented that she was just happy to know that the plans exist and after talking with the chief in her town, nothing may change at all. This will be a good thing for the selectmen to understand.

W. Shorey said that, basically, things were operating as they had in the past; it was just now the information is coming up on a screen.

B. Gillespie asked if Thorndike's plan had been filled out by the current chief and J. Bennett responded that it was filled out by the former chief. B. Gillespie recommended that J. Bennett sit down and go through it with the new chief to see if any changes needed to be made.

K. Littlefield said she had a conversation with a dispatcher this past winter and learned that if a Deputy says a snowplow needs to come out, the dispatcher cannot argue with that and has to do it.

J. Bennett repeated that he just didn't want to hear a deputy tell a dispatcher not to send someone out and hear the dispatcher argue that they were going to. O. Smith explained that dispatch cannot and will not deviate from what the fire chiefs have put in the plan. These forms take the judgment calls out of the hands of the dispatcher. K. Littlefield explained to J. Bennett that this would have to be reflected on the form that has been filled out. She understood that it might not be the deputy's decision to make and perhaps he would need to contact the fire chief directly himself. She also acknowledged that this is a "sue-happy world and everyone needs to cover themselves."

B. Gillespie noted that it would be very difficult to break up different types of responses and make too many exceptions. He stated that people need to trust the fire chief to make the decisions of when to go or not.

W. Shorey recommended that J. Bennett talk with his chief to get this ironed out.

B. Gillespie invited the selectmen to the Fire Chief's association meetings. He emphasized that fire fighters are mostly volunteers, and don't want to roll out of bed at night any more than they need to. He noted that the volume of calls going up is largely related to chimney fires.

J. Arseneau noted that when you are listening to a scanner, you are only getting part of the information. There is a process. He encouraged the selectmen to work with their town to get the forms organized.

O. Smith added that if a Deputy tells a dispatcher that the fire department isn't needed, it is not his authority to go against the form the fire chief has sent out. Dispatch is not going to second guess the protocol that is in the system. The protocol will be followed. The deputy may not always know the whole situation.

K. Littlefield said that it needs to be made right between the fire chief in their own towns.

O. Smith invited anyone who has questions about the Communications Center to call him and he will gladly explain things.

O. Smith took the opportunity to ask the selectmen present about animal control issues in towns. If there is no ACO, or they won't answer, dispatch has called the selectmen. He had been told by one town that it was not the selectmen's issue and not to call them. B. Brierley and K. Littlefield explained that it IS the selectmen's issue if there is no ACO responding.

The Commissioners thanked all for coming in to discuss the response plans.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMISSIONERS BUSINESS:

1. No business.

NEXT COURT SESSION:

The next Commissioners Court Session is a special court session on May 21, 2013 at 9:00 a.m. to open fuel oil bids and attend to some other Commissioners' business.

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to adjourn the Commissioners Court Session at 11:50 a.m. Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted by Barbara L. Arseneau
Waldo County Clerk