

**WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT SESSION
SEPTEMBER 11, 2014**

PRESENT: Commissioners William D. Shorey, Amy R. Fowler and Betty I. Johnson. Also present was County Clerk Barbara Arseneau and news reporter Ben Holbrook.

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

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Present with the Commissioners were Treasurer David A. Parkman and Deputy Treasurer Karen Trussell.

County Revenue:

D. Parkman mentioned that revenue is now 81% received and it looks like it will be a normal year. Deeds fees are at 84% and starting to come in stronger, as well as the transfer tax. It could be as low as 71% so this is a good sign.

County Appropriations:

D. Parkman reported that most department budget lines are 71% expended or below, so the total budget is 68% expended. The Sheriff's P/T and Travel lines are a little high, but otherwise the Sheriff's budget is on track. The Communications Center Over-time line is high, but the bottom line of the budget is 72% expended so that is not too concerning. Other personnel lines balance it out.

Corrections Revenue:

Not discussed.

Corrections Appropriations:

Not discussed.

Reserve Accounts:

Not discussed.

Tax Anticipation Note:

D. Parkman informed the Commissioners that the T.A.N. has \$400,000.00 left in it at this point. This should carry the County without any problem until property taxes start to be paid. D. Parkman reported that none has been received yet. Normally by the end of September 10-12 towns have paid.

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

WARRANTS:

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the August 29, 2014 General Fund Accounts Payable and August 28, 2014 Payroll warrant in the amount of \$210,551.08. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the August 29, 2014 Capital, Active & Restricted Reserve warrant in the amount of \$16,328.93. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the August 29, 2014 Reentry Accounts Payable and August 28, 2014 Payroll warrant in the amount of \$75,316.87. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the August 29, 2014 MCRRC Restricted Reserve warrant in the amount of \$1,045.28. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the September 11, 2014 General Fund Accounts Payable and September 11, 2014 Payroll warrant in the amount of \$158,126.30. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the September 11, 2014 Capital, Active & Restricted Reserve warrant in the amount of \$10,396.76. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the September 11, 2014 Reentry Accounts Payable and September 11, 2014 Payroll warrant in the amount of \$88,947.49. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the September 11, 2014 MCRRC Restricted Reserve warrant in the amount of \$1,247.21. Unanimous.**

K. Trussell stated that the Chairman had asked for a reduction in the minimum criteria for expenditures from the Courthouses Reserve from \$10,000.00 to \$2,500.00. This was something that had needed to be addressed for some time and it came back to his attention because there was desk at the D.A.'s Office that was purchased in the amount of \$2,036.63. The Commissioners had originally voted to pay \$1,000.00 from Facilities, All Other in the March session; but the desk had proven to be more expensive than originally thought. K. Trussell had inquired from which account the remaining cost would be paid.

****W. Shorey moved, A. Fowler seconded to reduce the criteria for expenditures from the Courthouses Reserve from \$10,000.00 to \$2,500.00 from this day forward. Unanimous.**

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to rescind the motion from the March 2014 session to pay for the desk at the D.A.'s Office from the Facilities, All Other Reserve. Unanimous.**

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to pay the entire cost of the desk for the District Attorney's Office from the Courthouses Reserve. Unanimous.**

FACILITES REPORT:

Present with the County Commissioners for this report was Facilities Manager Keith Nealley.

1. K. Nealley reported an ongoing problem with the break room. The water cooler malfunctioned and dumped 5 gallons of water into the break room carpet. K. Nealley has been drying it out with a

dehumidifier but is requesting to replace the carpet in that room with tile. This is more conducive with its use as a break room in addition to office storage. The rough estimate to do that would be \$500.00. He reported that the cooler has been replaced with a gravity feed, which requires no electricity. The Commissioners agreed, authorizing payment for this from the Courthouses Reserve.

B. Johnson asked if the tile was being considered with possible future changes to the break room in mind. K. Nealley said that the chairman had suggested that the break room/record room expansion be halted since the Brownfields grant had come through and there might be possible record storage space elsewhere in the future.

2. Energy Efficiencies in Superior Courthouse: K. Nealley reported his efforts for energy efficiency in the Superior Courtroom. Court only meets there certain times a year. It has been converted back to a manual system so the courtroom can be shut down and heat reduced when court is not in session. Joe Pierson with Thayer Corporation had been in but could not attend today's court session, but there was some discussion on preliminary savings. \$12,000.00 was spent last year and there could be potential savings close to 40% by converting the heads on the burners to propane. The cost to do this will be about \$25,000.00 but when considering the savings, it should be about \$4,500.00 per year so it will take about six years to pay off that conversion.

W. Shorey thought it would be better to wait and convert to natural gas, referencing a local school that recently converted to propane and their cost of fuel increased nearly 81% instead of saving money. Propane costs a great deal and this part of the country has a shortage.

K. Nealley recommended allowing Mr. Pierson finish providing the numbers so that the Commissioners would have all the facts before making a decision. W. Shorey suggested that Mr. Pierson would not be able to know the cost of propane in 2015. K. Nealley thought the completed study would at least provide information about the conversion costs so that if a pipeline is ever run in Belfast, they information has already been gathered. W. Shorey noted that many people have converted to propane, as it was the thing to do, but nobody foresaw the shortage and the increase in prices.

The Commissioners agreed that a comparative study would be useful, noting that no quick decisions could be made. K. Nealley agreed, stating that he would continue to work on energy-saving measures in the meantime. He noted that the Budget Committee is concerned each year with money being saved on energy and he makes strong efforts to find ways to realize energy conservation.

3. Security Signage for Courthouses: K. Nealley explained that there had been recent concern that the security signage for both District and Superior Courthouses was not up to date with the current statutes, etc. K. Nealley has been researching and discussing this with the County Clerk and District Court staff. Now, in addition to firearms, there are chemical weapons, tazers and the like and he had recommended updated wording for the signs at the exterior entrances. A. Fowler read the sign wording as follows: *Notice: Firearms, electronic control devices, disabling chemicals or other dangerous weapons are prohibited in this courthouse. Persons possessing a firearm in violation of Title 17-A, M.R.S.A. 1058 will be subject to arrest and prosecution.*

K. Nealley also submitted a copy of a sign used in Penobscot County, which listed a long list of other smaller items. The Commissioners agreed that was too much verbiage. The Commissioners authorized K. Nealley's first submission for signs at the courthouses.

4. Communications Center Generator: K. Nealley noted that the Communications Center Generator was installed when the building was constructed in 2001. There are a lot of power fluctuations when the building has to use the generator. All the computer UPS's are beeping, the lights flicker and he spoke with Director Owen Smith and Jim Arseneau and they are concerned that there will be damage to the unprotected equipment. On September 15, 2014, a full load test will be conducted and things will be "tweaked" if possible. He cautioned the Commissioners that all the computers and telephone equipment have a UPS that controls the power surges; hence the clicking on and off and beeping, so he felt that the generator will likely need to be replaced at about \$20,000.00. It was noted that the 2001 generator is older technology and likely there is a generator now that is rated for technology equipment. These are more of a converter than a generator. The EMA Director currently uses one when he is operating out of his trailer on other sites.

W. Shorey noted that his personal computer doesn't function the same when he is using his generator at home. He asked if there was a larger generator that could be hooked up. K. Nealley said the Communications Center might be able to tap into that. W. Shorey said it still might not work, and maybe there will be fluctuation even with a larger generator. He wondered if the Sheriff's equipment would show if it is running on CMP power or generator. W. Shorey asked if the Sheriff had ever complained about his equipment during generator use. K. Nealley responded that he had not.

K. Nealley said he would look into this further. Since the Ice Storm in December of 2013, there have been issues with lights flickering, etc. There was discussing of voltage having been "tweaked" about two years ago. It was noted that UPS's are sensitive to voltage changes. It was further noted that this generator is tested under load once a week, so it is used frequently. K. Nealley said he would do further research and get back to the Commissioners. W. Shorey requested that research be done to see if the Communications Center could tie in with the Public Safety Building. K. Nealley expressed concern that if that generator went down, then all those buildings would be affected, but noted that there are some portable generators available in an emergency.

5. K. Nealley's computer is dead and Technology Consultant J. Arseneau is working on it.

SHERIFF'S REPORT:

Present with for this report were Sheriff Scott Story and Chief Deputy Jeffrey Trafton.

1. Maine Pre-trial Agreement. J. Trafton explained that this agreement would be in place and ready to take over October 1, 2014. Karen Clark may be hired. They are also talking about adding a half-position to assist her with her work. This would be a net savings for Waldo County in the amount of \$10,600.00. It was calculated by taking the four counties collectively, and looking at the individuals costs. Waldo's present costs were about 17% of total cost, savings were calculated at 17% of the total cost and that is how the savings were achieved. The Board of Corrections (BOC) wants to see more than just these four counties doing this type of thing. They are going to try it for a year and see how it goes. The four counties are Lincoln, Sagadahoc, Knox and Waldo.

2. Personnel Changes:

Detective Merl Reed's dog Neva, needs to retire. The Sheriff's Office has purchased another drug canine and the goal is also to have this dog go on patrol. Merl decided to go back on patrol with the canine. This is not an aggressive dog and it possesses an excellent drug/tracking skill. Dale Brown will now fill the Detective position, with the Commissioners approval. Sergeant's pay and detective's pay are lateral, so there is no change in his pay. A new sergeant will be selected at a later date.

W. Shorey noted that there was an email from J. Arseneau regarding changing positions and the possible need to have Toughbooks in the vehicles. S. Story had not seen this email and asked for more time to digest this. He had not anticipated any changes with the equipment and asked for time to discuss this. He thought it would be more of shifting equipment.

B. Johnson said that two of the laptops were indicated that they might not hold up. The Sheriff said he would review, discuss and get back to the Commissioners.

S. Story said that there should be only a negligible change in the personnel costs with all these changes. S. Story asked if the Commissioners would approve the changes and asked if there could be pre-approval for a new hire.

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to approve the changes in personnel at the Sheriff's Office, acknowledging the promotion of Dale Brown to Detective and Merl Reed moving back to Patrol.** Discussion: D. Brown's move to Detective will be lateral pay wise; M. Reed's will be actually a reduction in pay, but he is aware of that. **Unanimous.**

CORRESPONDENCE:

Present with the County Commissioners was County Clerk Barbara Arseneau who reported the following:

1. Budget Committee Ballots: Ballots were received for the 2015 Budget Committee members as

District 1:

Five out of seven were received. Fred Rollins of Islesboro received four (4) votes and Eric Sanders of Belfast received one (1) vote. It was noted that Arthur Durrity of Lincolnville would be filing the final year of the term for that municipality.

District 2:

Three of eight votes were received. Bill Sneed of Prospect received all three (3) votes.

District 3:

Ten of eleven votes were received. Harry Dean Potter received all ten (10) votes.

2. The Commissioners signed a resolve acknowledging September as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month.

3. B. Arseneau informed the Commissioners that at their request, President of the Waldo County Selectmen's Association Kathy Littlefield had drafted an invitation to all Selectmen to attend an

Economic Development Meeting October 2, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. at the Waldo Town Hall. B. Arseneau has scanned and sent this invitation by email and copied and sent it by post, as well.

4. Efficiency Maine has sent the County a check in the amount of \$725.00 for completing the energy efficiency project in the Superior Courthouse. The funds will go into the Facilities, All Other Reserve.

MINUTES APPROVED:

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to accept the minutes from the August 19, 2014 County Commissioners Court Session as presented. Unanimous.**

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to recess for a short workshop at 10:05 a.m.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to reconvene the court session at 10:19 a.m.**

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded for the 2015 Budget to reflect changes to the Facilities and Communications Center budgets as follows: In the Facilities Budget, lines 7001 and 7003 will both be reduced to zero. In the Communications Center Budget Line 4600 will be increased to \$8,600.00 and all Capital Outlay items will be reduced to zero; recognizing that these changes will reflect a decrease in the presented budget of \$4,986,634.00, which may be less than the budget presented to the County Taxpayers in 2011. Unanimous.**

The Commissioners noted that this is remarkable and that the health insurance cost has gone down an additional \$80,000.00.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMISSIONERS BUSINESS:

1. W. Shorey reported that it is anticipated that the Waldo County Garden will generate about 25,000 lbs. of produce this year. Unfortunately, there was a lot of rain and washouts so some of the vegetables were affected by that.

2. Officer Darrin Moody was recently awarded the American Legion of Maine Award for Law Enforcement Officer of the Year and the Clerk had drafted a Sentiment of Appreciation at the chairman's request. The Commissioners reviewed the sentiment and signed it.

3. The first Brownfields Meetings have gone well. An email message from the person in charge in Boston was received, explaining that the mandates are fewer than expected so there will not need to be as much formality.

NEXT COMMISSIONERS COURT SESSION:

The next Commissioners Court session will be a regular session on October 9, 2014.

****W. Shorey moved, A. Fowler seconded to adjourn the court session at 10:40 a.m. Unanimous.**

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