

**WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT SESSION  
MARCH 17, 2021**

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Amy R. Fowler (Chairman), William D. Shorey, and Betty I. Johnson. County Clerk Barbara Arseneau took the minutes. The court session was conducted via teleconference due to COVID-19 restrictions.

**Call to Order:** Commissioner Fowler called the court session to order at 9:02 a.m.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Finance Director Karen Trussell reported the following:

The County Checkbook balance is \$150,081.88, after payroll balance is \$31,172.74.

The Jail Checkbook balance is \$81,218.66, after payroll balance is \$48,488.55.

County Appropriations:

18% of the County 2021 budget has been expended and it could be 21% at this time.

County Revenue:

27.21% of the County revenue has been received at this time.

Corrections Appropriations:

17% of 2021 budget has been expended and could be 21% expended.

Corrections Revenue:

1.7% of the Corrections revenue has been received at this time.

**TAX ANTICIPATION NOTE:**

\$400,000.00 has been borrowed by the County. \$650,000.00 has been borrowed by the Jail. The total borrowed is \$1,050,000.00. K. Trussell reported that last year at this time, \$1,500,000.00 more had been borrowed.

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to file the Financial Report. Unanimous.**

The question was raised regarding how to fund the Part-time Legal Secretary position and the increase in pay for Prosecutorial Assistant Eric Harvey. K. Trussell stated that this will be funded from the true budget lines.

**WARRANTS**

**\*\*W. Shorey moved, B. Johnson seconded to authorize payment of the March 11, 2021 General Fund Accounts Payable warrant and March 4, 2021 payroll in the amount of \$167,056.66. Unanimous.**

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to authorize payment of the March 11, 2021 Capital, Active & Restricted Reserve warrant in the amount of \$9,776.95. Unanimous.**

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to authorize payment of the March 11, 2021 MCRRC (Corrections) Accounts Payable warrant and March 4, 2021 payroll in the amount of \$110,019.76. Unanimous.**

**\*\* W. Shorey moved, B. Johnson seconded to authorize payment of the March 11, 2021 MCRRC (Corrections) Restricted Reserve in the amount of \$20,043.98. Unanimous.**

### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY REPORT**

Present was Information Technology Manager J-sun Bailey, who reported the following:

1. The setup for TV and Zoom in CC's Courtroom is about 90% completed. He will set up a test Zoom with Commissioner Johnson to make sure it's all working.

2. The setup in the Probate Courtroom has been changed and completed. He sat in for the first run and made sure it worked properly.

3. The laptop for the new part-time District Attorney's employee has been delivered. There was discussion about two older laptops needing to be replaced for the two State employees who work at the District Attorney's Office. Prosecutorial Assistant Eric Harvey was present and said that he has researched this extensively. The County is responsible for all office equipment including computers for these employees. J. Bailey explained that while the County does pay for the computers and sets them up, the State is responsible for loading their own software on them. E. Harvey said that, after conferring with Legal Secretary Felicia Gray, that the Contract Equipment line is used for software, licensing, and support. There is some funding available in other lines if necessary. The Commissioners decided to leave the purchasing process to J. Bailey, and he said he would work with E. Harvey to come up with the best and most logical approach.

**\*\*W. Shorey moved, B. Johnson seconded to authorize J. Bailey to decide where and how the computers would be purchased and set up. Unanimous,**

4. J. Bailey said he is still playing catchup on other things that had to wait while he was performing the Spillman upgrade.

### **TOWER SITE BUILD-OUTS AND NEW HIRE**

Present was Communications Center Director Owen Smith, and Dispatch Supervisor Michael Larrivee.

1. Tower Site Buildout: O. Smith summarized the information he sent the Commissioners over the past few days as being a request to hire a consultant to work through the process of the tower refresh/buildout, which is anticipated to be a \$750,000.00 project. He believes it is very important to have a consultant involved in the process. The most recent quote from the consultant is \$9,600.00. When asked, O. Smith reported that this consultant performed work for Penobscot and Sagadahoc counties. The Commissioners agreed it was wise for the County to engage a consultant for this project.

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to authorize the expenditure of \$9,600.00 to hire a consultant to collaborate with planning the tower refresh/buildout. Unanimous.**

When asked about other counties' funding for this kind of project, O. Smith said he knew that Penobscot went out to bond, but has not spoken with Sagadahoc about their finances. He had spoken with EMA Director Dale Rowley about possible grant funds and has been told there is nothing for this kind of project. It all goes to law enforcement and preparedness. The Communications Center Secretary, Amanda Wagner, keeps her eyes open for grant funding but there has not been anything at this point.

W. Shorey said it was a powerful statement that the County of Waldo had funds saved for this project. All agreed. Mike Larrivee was asked if he had any comments. He did not speak, and O. Smith said that Mike has been working on this from the beginning, and has been assisting with things down at Point Lookout in Northport. The owner, Mr. Hirschfeld, is moving his family to a new residence in July and the County should get the bulk of this work done before that. O. Smith noted that Mr. Hirschfeld is very much a community-minded individual and has been extremely helpful and supportive.

2. O. Smith has a new hire to recommend, which will be officially presented by Human Resources Director KelLee Gray.

3. O. Smith stated that J. Bailey is doing a great job for the Communications Center, he is a great asset to the County, he did well with the Spillman upgrade, and spent a lot of late hours on that.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

B. Arseneau said that there was no new correspondence at this time.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

B. Arseneau requested that the Commissioners approve the minutes from the March 3, 2021 Waldo County Commissioners Court Session.

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to approve the minutes from the March 3, 2021 Waldo Count Commissioners Court Session as presented. Unanimous.**

#### **COMMISSIONERS MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**

B. Johnson brought up the matter of Rescue Act funds, or "stimulus funds" that are being made available to counties. Waldo County's allocation is reported to be \$7,702,480.00 and the State will not have any part in the distribution of these funds. There will be restrictions on how these funds can be used, and she will send a list to the other Commissioners once that is made available. She listed as examples some things such as investments in increasing broadband, unpayable property taxes due to COVID-19, and assisting local businesses. It cannot be used to replace the County budget. During the last round of funding, the State handled the distribution, and did distribute some to EMDC and MCEDD to help businesses. This time some larger cities will receive additional funds, including a few cities in Maine. She will forward all information to the Commissioners as she is made aware of it.

W. Shorey wondered if the tower buildout, a solar farm, and broadband expansion might fit the criteria for these funds. B. Johnson said she would look at the regulations and try to figure it out. There will be one portion of funds this year, and another in 2022.

EMA Director D. Rowley, now present, said he reached out to Senator Collins to find out more because the law has been released, but the regulations have not. It is difficult to know what the funds can be used for. The allocation of \$7,702,480.00 is NACo's estimate. The other piece is that the amount received cannot be more than 75% of the budget. This equals \$7.1 million, which is lower than NACo's estimate. He's been told there won't be an application. Senator Collin's Office said it believes that it will still be funneled through the State. Some will also go directly to the towns. Some of the smallest towns are looking at \$100,000.00 or so. So, technically, the County will receive more than anticipated.

B. Johnson agreed that regulations are being figured out and aren't finalized. At least in 2021, some funds will be received. D. Rowley said he believed Capital Improvements would fit well. B. Johnson said she had a brief summary and was glad that D. Rowley had more detail. The Commissioners thanked him for sharing information, and asked that any additional information be sent to them all. B. Arseneau requested to be copied on all the information to set up a record for the County.

B. Johnson recommended all be thinking about possible uses for the funds in the meantime. D. Rowley noted that there is a 3-year timeframe to spend the funds. He also recommended a committee be formed to plan for uses. B. Johnson asked if D. Rowley could guide the Commissioners on this. He said he definitely would do so.

## **EMERGENCY SHELTERS**

Present was EMA Director Dale Rowley, who was asked to speak earlier than scheduled because the court session was ahead of schedule. He reported as follows:

1. Emergency Shelter Food Program: D. Rowley said he is looking to contract out the ~~start an~~ emergency shelter food program instead of using volunteers. We have our own emergency shelter at the Searsmont Community Center. The closest shelter the Red Cross would open in 2017 was in Bangor. He asked Belfast Soup Kitchen to cater for the shelter, and they are willing. They would purchase, cook, deliver the food, and clean up after. He mentioned possible pricing per person for breakfast, lunch, and supper, as well as snacks. The Commissioners asked to see the agreement, so he forwarded a copy. W. Shorey asked if there was an account for that. D. Rowley explained that the Emergency Shelter Reserve can serve that purpose. Using a reserve makes sense rather than making it a regular budget line because emergency shelters are seldom needed. Finance Director Karen Trussell reported that \$21,392.00 is in that reserve. D. Rowley thought up to about 12 people could be in the shelter. When asked if this would be like a warming shelter, he explained that those are usually each Town's responsibility and is not open at night for sleeping. This would be different.

2. Continuity of Operations and Continuity of Government Plan: The Commissioners said they had read through the plan and commented that it was thorough, clear, and well written.

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to approve and sign the 2021 Continuity of Operations (COOP) and Continuity of Government (COG) Combined Plan. Unanimous.**

## **OPENING VEHICLE BIDS**

Present was Lieutenant Matthew Curtis to open bid proposals for new vehicles. The Sheriff's Office solicited bids and requested that they come directly to the office due to COVID and keeping exposure down. A hybrid cruiser was spec'd out and the price-point fell in line with last year's costs.

Vehicles Bid Proposals Received:

1. Quirk proposed \$41,648.14 per vehicle. They did not spec out some of the options requested.
2. Darling's proposed \$41,812.00 per vehicle. They did spec out all that was requested. The difference between Darling's and Quirk was only \$146.00. M. Curtis asked for authorization to award the bid to Darling's since they met the specifications.

**\*\*W. Shorey moved, B. Johnson seconded to approve the vehicle bid to Darling's. Unanimous.**

Ram Truck Bid Proposals:

1. Darling's proposed \$27,514.00 per unit with trade allowance of \$15,000.00.
2. Newcastle proposed \$27,503.00 per unit. This is \$11.00 less per unit than Darling's, but Newcastle offered \$2,000.00 more (\$17,000.00) for trade-in value. M. Curtis discussed this already with the Sheriff, and they would like to award the bid to Newcastle for three (3) units.

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to award the truck bid proposal to Newcastle for all three units. Unanimous.**

The Commissioners asked M. Curtis for his viewpoint on hybrids vs. trucks. He noted that the trucks are cheaper on the front end, and hold their value. He also noted that the Sheriff's Office wanted to honor the request of the Budget Committee to try out hybrids, and they have worked fine.

M. Curtis told the Commissioners that the Sheriff sent his regrets that he couldn't be in attendance as he had another meeting.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT**

Present was Human Resources Director KelLee Gray, who reported the following:

1. Dispatcher Stefanie Lunt has resigned effective March 20, 2021.

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to accept the resignation of Dispatcher Stefanie Lunt effective March 20, 2021. Unanimous.**

2. Communications Director Owen Smith has recommended hiring Amy Donaghy to fill a vacant full-time dispatcher position effective May 24, 2021 at the hourly wage of \$17.85, which will be adjusted to the current level when the union contract is signed.

**\*\*W. Shorey moved, B. Johnson seconded to approve hiring Amy Donaghy effective May 24, 2021 at \$17.85 per hour, to be adjusted to the current level when the union contract is signed. Unanimous.**

3. Commissioner Fowler asked K. Gray to report on the recent online classes she's taken. K. Gray mentioned that she has been able to take some of the courses for free. The course she took yesterday stated the following:

- First and foremost, the employee handbook law must be current, and job descriptions also must be current.
- Second, performance evaluations must be accurate.
- Third, performance plans must be good.
- Fourth, termination processes must be consistent and applied to all employees.

She'll be working on getting these areas more in line with these recommendations. A. Fowler had sent her another course to take and she had already signed up for it. Another course on virtual work has progressed ahead of what Human Resources has planned. Usually this is planned and Human Resources is ahead of that. Due to COVID, H.R. is kind of behind, needs to catch up, and get ahead. She learned about what work at home would look like, how time is spent, how to monitor work time from home, especially if there is discipline. This is all to avoid litigation.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**\*\*W. Shorey moved, B. Johnson seconded to go into executive session at 10:17 a.m. for discussion of employment law as permitted by M.R.S.A. Title 1§405(6)(a). Unanimous.**

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to come out of executive session at 10:47 a.m. Unanimous.**

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to implement the language in the Personnel Policy and union contracts to comply with the new Earned Paid Leave law. Unanimous.**

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to adjourn the court session at 10:51 a.m. Unanimous.**

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