

**WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT SESSION
JANUARY 6, 2022**

PRESENT: Commissioners Amy R. Fowler (Chairman), William D. Shorey. (Commissioner Betty I. Johnson was present briefly during an executive session.) Also present was Freedom Selectman Elaine Higgins, and County Clerk Barbara Arseneau, who took minutes.

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

2022 CHAIRMAN

****W. Shorey nominated Amy Fowler to serve as Chairman for 2022, and B. Johnson moved for nominations to cease. Passed unanimously.**

After short discussion, it was decided that Commissioner Shorey will continue to be the one who decides when non-essential offices will close for inclement weather and employees will work remotely from home.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Finance Karen Trussell reported the following:

1. TAX ANTICIPATION NOTE:

K. Trussell went through all the financial paperwork for the Tax Anticipation Note, which was awarded to Camden National at the interest rate of 1.25%. The Commissioners and Clerk signed all documents.

2. K. Trussell requested that there be a change in the Dispatch budget lines for payroll purposes. She requested that line 3200 Shift Differentials and 3202 Shift Differentials – Pro both be paid from a 3005 budget line. She also requested that the Shift Differentials – Overtime be paid from the 3001 Overtime line instead of line 3201.

****W. Shorey moved, A. Fowler seconded that the Shift Differentials and Shift Differentials – Pro be paid from line 3005, and that the Shift Differentials – O/T be paid from the 3005 Overtime line as requested. Unanimous.**

SHERIFF'S REPORT

Present was Sheriff Jeffrey Trafton, who reported the following:

1. Another Deputy resignation is pending because there has been a conditional offer from another agency.

2. Hiring bonus for Corrections and Deputies: The Sheriff's Office would like to advertise nation-wide for both Corrections and Patrol on a Police One web site to attract new employees. He expressed appreciation for the Commissioners authorizing a hiring bonus for both divisions. He believed Waldo is the first county in the state to offer a bonus to Corrections employees. He has been trying for the past 7 years to show Corrections employees that that they are as important as the patrol officers, and this goes a long way to do this. He described how the bonus payments work through the first year of the new hire's employment. After finishing BLETP, the new hire would receive half of

the payment, and after completion of the first year of employment, they would receive the second half. Another time they could receive a bonus would be if a former employee wished to be hired back after a minimum of 5 years after leaving employment with the County.

3. The Camera systems are delayed in arriving and will be installed the last week of March. The Sheriff's Office and installers will work along with IT Manager J-sun Bailey and Communications Director Michael Larrivee.

4. Four (4) Sheriff's employees have contracted COVID and three (3) have returned to work.

5. Chad Foley will be promoted to the detective position effective January 6, 2022 with an increase in pay to \$32.40 per hour.

6. Casey Ashley has been Acting Detective since October 24, 2021. He has been selected to stay in that position permanently, and the Sheriff asked that this be retroactive to October 24, 2021 for seniority purposes. He is already being paid at the Detective's wage, so that would remain the same at this point.

****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to promote Officer Chad Foley as Detective effective January 6, 2022 with a pay increase to \$32.40 per hour and to promote Acting Detective Casey Ashley as Detective retroactive to October 24, 2021 for seniority purposes, with the wages remaining as they currently are. Unanimous.**

7. J. Trafton said he met with the State Police recently to update and modify the MOU for patrol support. The State Police is covering 4.5 counties with only 16 officers. He predicts that within the year, the State Police may pull away from calls for service and do specialty fields such as highway drug interdiction, etc. instead. Waldo County will need to plan for that because the State currently covers 25% of Waldo County, and the Sheriff's Office covers 75%, so if this happens, the Sheriff's Office will have to plan for more positions to cover day and night shifts. He hopes he'll know more by the time the next budget cycle starts. He recalled that in 1984, when he started with the State Police, the County only had two deputies who worked days to 2:00 a.m. and the State Police covered the rest.

E. Higgins asked how the Sheriff's Office protects people who are "not quite capable." J. Trafton explained that the S.O. still does "wellness checks". He gave an example of a widow who calls the Sheriff's Office frequently. The Sheriff has assigned the Community Liaison to assist her as a good fit, so the officers can focus on law enforcement work.

E. Higgins wondered how it would effect taxes paid by towns such as Freedom if the County takes on more of the law enforcement calls. A. Fowler said it would likely increase certain parts of the Sheriff's Office budget, but the overall bottom line of the budget may not go up that much initially. J. Trafton said it has to be recognized that the State Police have to deal with more bureaucracy when trying to hire new positions. The bureaucracy makes it very difficult and they have to get approval for additional headcount from the Legislature making it very difficult to increase the size of their department. There will still be a State Police presence, and they will back up Waldo County when needed, but they may not be taking calls for service. Call sharing used to be 50/50 but it's gradually

been changing with the County taking on more. He anticipates being down five (5) law enforcement positions and it's imperative to attract good people. E. Higgins said she will make a note to share this information at her town meeting.

W. Shorey asked if the fleet is holding up since the new vehicles haven't arrived. J. Trafton said he heard it will be sometime in 2022 before they receive the vehicles that were ordered for 2021. The Lieutenant will be putting together RFP's for the 2022 vehicle order with the hope that those will arrive late in 2022. The budget didn't have to be increased for 2022, but he projects that repairs and maintenance will increase in 2023 because the fleet will be older. New vehicles will also cost more because there are no incentives that reduce cost for fleet vehicles anymore.

HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

H. R. Director KelLee Gray reported the following:

1. The first payroll with the new system is going pretty well with a few glitches that she needed to work out.
2. Amanda Wagner has resigned as P/T Secretary at the Communications Center effective December 31, 2021.
****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to accept the resignation of P/T Communications Center Secretary Amanda Wagner effective December 31, 2021. Unanimous.**
3. Corrections Officer Carlene Thornton resigned effective December 17, 2021.
****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to accept the resignation of Corrections Officer Carlene Thornton effective December 17, 2021. Unanimous.**
4. Detective James Greeley resigned effective December 2, 2021.
****A. Fowler moved, W. Shorey seconded to accept the resignation of Detective James Greeley effective December 2, 2022. Passed by two. (B. Johnson was out of the room.)**
5. Corrections Officer Jesse Damron resigned effective December 15, 2021.
****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to accept the resignation of Corrections Officer Jesse Damron effective December 15, 2021. Unanimous.**
6. EMA Director Dale Rowley will reach the 16-year step on January 9, 2022 with an increase in salary to \$67,044.32. Noted by the Commissioners.
7. EMA Deputy Director Olga Hussey reached the 16-year step on January 3, 2022 with a pay increase to \$22.86. Noted by the Commissioners.
8. Patrol Deputy Lucas Potts reached the 2-year step on December 22, 2021 with a pay increase to \$23.14 per hour. Noted by the Commissioners.
9. Deeds Clerk Amy Keller reached the 8-year step on January 2, 2022 with a pay increase to \$21.57 per hour. Noted by the Commissioners.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY REPORT

Present was J-sun Bailey who reported the following:

1. He has finished the iPads for the Communications Center Supervisors.
2. He is working on the quote to set up wireless network at Jail. With visits not being able to be held in person, Zoom is being set up as they are looking to lock down access as much as possible.
3. He is also setting up a punch system for the Jail employees.
4. He is working on setting up the EMA laptops, which were purchased with grant funds.
5. The Mail server will go to online version with Office. He has called vendors for quotes and minimum users to start with. He usually starts with himself so he can work through the bugs, if the vendor will allow that. After a few months, then he starts to integrate other employees.
6. He has set up an iPad for time clock punch-ins for Communications Center employees.
7. New firewalls are in, so he is replacing them. He's purchased some hours for assistance with the firewalls at the Communications Center and Public Safety Building.
8. The security report has gone up 20 points since the audit, which is good. Android phones are on public Wifi. He can't force phones not to have certain IPs. If he can separate the public and private internet, he will work on that, and that will resolve that problem.
9. Body cameras were shipped and should arrive in a few weeks. Once the other cameras arrive, they will all be put together with the software. There was some discussion on Command Center and there will be a meeting soon to see what it really can do.
10. He is working on reassigning the former detective's laptops to the new detectives.
11. Regarding the Commissioners iPhones, he is trying a phone to see how it works for a month and is working with US Cellular to get the Commissioners' phones set up this week. B. Johnson said US Cellular doesn't work well in her area, so J. Bailey said he can make sure hers is on the Verizon network. A. Fowler said US cellular works fine where she is.
12. He has gone through each department to make sure all the laptops are ready for work-at-home days.

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Present was Director Michael Larrivee who reported the following:

1. Dispatcher Blaine Parsons reached 6 months of employment, and has gone from Class 1 to Class II at \$20.88 per hour. Noted by the Commissioners.

2. The new tower at Northport is at 90% design review, and they are awaiting FAA approval. EMA Director Dale Rowley sent it out, and as soon as the FAA approval is received, they can start breaking ground. The owner of the property has just been phenomenal. He has been very happy with how things are going, and has been wonderful to work with.

3. RCM has ordered most of the parts to be locked in. The only thing that hasn't been ordered is cabling and antennas. The structural analysis will be done today at Unity and Aborn towers, and then will do the rest.

4. RCM has submitted license applications and Consultant Norm Boucher has been doing Zoom meetings every two weeks to keep things moving.

5. There were some hiccups with the time-clock portion of the payroll, but those will work out OK. He is having a tough time with scheduling. They stopped with Scheduling Express, so now they're back to paper. He thinks it may work in the future, but isn't sure. One dispatcher didn't show up because the schedule changed and he didn't know it. M. Larrivee asked if he could use part of the Communications Equipment Reserve to purchase Schedule Express for a year and if the other payroll program works eventually, that will be fine. It will interface with the payroll system and that can be set up. He hopes to use the payroll system but this will cover the scheduling for now.

****W. Shorey moved, B. Johnson seconded to authorize the purchase of Schedule Express from the Communications Equipment Reserve. Unanimous.**

M. Larrivee noted that Schedule Express keeps all the data for one year so they can turn it back on today.

CORRESPONDENCE

County Clerk Barbara Arseneau reported correspondence as follows:

1. The IRS standard mileage rate for 2022 is 58.5 cents per mile driven for business use, which is up 2.5 cents from the 2021 rate.

****W. Shorey moved, B. Johnson seconded to set the mileage reimbursement rate for the County at 58.5 cents per mile driven for County work purposes for 2022. Unanimous.**

2. B. Arseneau will send an updated Commissioners Committee Involvement List for them to review before the next court session on January 20, 2022.

3. Mr. Kelly Bellis, who has been conversing with B. Arseneau regarding Waldo County's meridian line and markers, sent her an article published in the April 8, 1882 Bangor Daily Whig & Courier describing the establishment of the standard meridian line for Waldo County and its exact location near the old jail. The Commissioners enjoyed the article and instructed B. Arseneau to thank Mr. Bellis for sharing this with them. They also asked that it be added to the County Web Site under a section called "Did You Know?" B. Arseneau said she would work on this with the IT Manager when he had time available.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. The December 2, 2021 minutes needed a correction under Commissioners Miscellaneous Business 2. Change from “needs a new planter” to “needs two new discharge devices for the planter.”

****W. Shorey moved, seconded to amend the December 2, 2021 minutes for this correction. Unanimous.**

2. The December 16, 2021 minutes were sent to the County Commissioners.

****W. Shorey moved, seconded to approve the minutes from the December 16, 2021 Court session. Unanimous.**

COMMISSIONERS MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

1. A. Fowler reported that the Maine County Commissioners Association Risk Pool offered a class on COVID. The attorneys who provided this also included the links for the information. She and several department heads took this class and found it very informative.

2. W. Shorey said two years ago there had been discussion about digging a pond at the County Garden. The person who was going to meet with him was busy so it never happened. He met with R. Walker yesterday and they will work with the gentleman, who is willing to do this even though he is retired. This will be a water-wagon system that is hauled by a tractor. That equipment will need to be ordered soon because it will take a long time before it is sent. He would like to order this as soon as possible, but doesn't know when the invoice will come in. This would come from the ARPA funds. The Commissioners all agreed the water wagons should be ordered as soon as possible. The State gave permission to run a line to the pond that leads to the stream, and Project Clerk of the Works/EMA Director Dale Rowley will have a pond dug. Hopefully with this other pond, there won't be a need to run a line to the stream, while having a better way to irrigate the crops.

****W. Shorey moved, B. Johnson seconded to go into executive session for discussion of non-public at 10:03 a.m. as permitted by M.R.S.A. Title 1§405(6)(F). Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to come out of executive session at 10:36 a.m. Unanimous.** No action was taken.

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to adjourn at 10:37 a.m. Unanimous.**

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