

**WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT SESSION
MARCH 3, 2022**

PRESENT: Commissioners Amy R. Fowler (Chairman), William D. Shorey, and Betty I. Johnson, who was present via Zoom videoconferencing. County Clerk Barbara Arseneau was on vacation leave.

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

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Finance Karen Trussell reported the following:

The County Checkbook balance is \$117,879.92 and the Jail Checkbook balance is \$12,084.32.

TAX ANTICIPATION NOTE:

The total Tax Anticipation Note is \$5,500,000.00. \$570,000.00 has been borrowed; \$200,000.00 by the County and \$370,000.00 by Corrections. From here on out, money will be borrowed from the TAN until property taxes start to come in.

County Appropriations/Revenue:

14% of the County 2022 budget has been expended and it could be 16.7%. 20.90% of the County revenue has been received at this time.

Corrections Appropriations/Revenue:

13% of Corrections 2022 budget has been expended and could be 16.7%. 0.87% of the Corrections revenue has been received at this time.

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

WARRANTS

****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to authorize payment of the February 25, 2022 General Fund Accounts Payable and Reserve warrant, and February 17, 2022 payroll in the amount of \$257,500.59. Unanimous.**

****W. Shorey moved, B. Johnson seconded to authorize payment of the February 25, 2022 MCRRC (Corrections) Accounts Payable and Reserve warrant, and February 17, 2022 payroll in the amount of \$152,907.06. Unanimous.**

HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE, & APPROVAL OF MINUTES

H. R. Director KelLee Gray reported the following:

1. Nothing to report for H.R.

2. A card of gratitude to the Commissioners was received from Jim and Joyce Richards for the Spirit of America Foundation Tribute Certificate of Recognition awarded to the Richards Family.

3. B. Johnson was asked if she knew anything about the Informational Peace Proclamation and Grand Peace Treaty of the States that the County of Waldo received. She said she didn't know any more than anyone else, and "it just came out of the blue." A. Fowler noted that only nine (9) counties were attached on this information. She spoke with two other counties that were listed on it, and they said that they were not aware of it either. The Commissioners wondered if it had to do with unorganized territories, but realized that there were other counties with unorganized territories that were not included. B. Johnson said she didn't know if it would be discussed during the next Maine County Commissioners Association meeting or not. No action that would be taken on it.

3. Minutes Approved:

****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to approve as written the minutes from the February 17, 2022 Commissioners Court Session. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to approve the minutes from the February 17, 2022 Commissioners Court Session. Unanimous.**

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY REPORT

Present was IT Manager J-sun Bailey who reported the following:

1. He is moving forward with the Office 356 conversion. He had planned on testing this just on himself first, but because they asked and were willing to be part of the testing, there are a total of four (4) employees trying it out currently.

2. New Telephone System Quotes: Three quotes have been received, which J. Bailey will review and get back to the Commissioners. This will be one system for all the County departments, which will allow employees to call each other directly by extension. It will not effect the 9-1-1 telephones, as that is a separate system. All the companies have a presence in Maine. Two are hosted systems, and one is a Cloud system. Nobody hosts the current phone system; all the lines are supported by Consolidated, so the County can either stay with Consolidated or go with another provider. He has sent the County's phone bills to these companies so they can find something comparable or could save money. Later in the court session, he noted that with a new phone system, when employees have to work remotely due to COVID, illness, or a storm, they can take their phone with them, and continue to answer it.

3. He's requested and received credit from Seacoast Security for the annual maintenance plan for the system that is no longer supported by them.

4. He has sent out RFP's for web design.

5. He has set up the time clock at the Communications Center that allows employees to use an iPad to log in. He'll bring it to the H.R. Director to make sure it will work with the payroll. A. Fowler asked that K. Gray have access to Schedule Express, and J. Bailey said he will check to see if she has, and will add her if she doesn't.

6. The contract has been signed with the IT recycling company in Waterville, so he is working on building a pallet for them and collecting IT equipment. He'll call them to pick it up.

7. The new Windows licenses are in, so he is in the process of updating.
8. The body cameras and vehicle cameras have come in. The plan is to install cameras in eight vehicles, and install the rest in the new vehicles when they arrive.

BROADBAND UPDATE AND ARPA FUNDS DISCUSSION: (not on Agenda)

While waiting for the next person on the agenda, Freedom Selectman Elaine Higgins was asked to give a brief update on Southwestern Waldo County Broadband Coalition planning. E. Higgins reported that the feasibility study is almost finished, and they have obtained legal counsel to assist as they move forward. J. Bailey and E. Higgins briefly discussed that the Broadband Utility District would rather work with a utility than individual towns, which is why SWCBC is interested in having a utility.

E. Higgins said she heard that some of the County's ARPA funds would be used to refurbish the former Superior Courthouse. The Commissioners said that is not the case there are security issues with that building, including how to keep it secure health-wise. They plan to move the District Attorney's staff to the vacated EMA space, and are trying to figure out where to move the Registry of Deeds. ARPA funds are also earmarked for a new EMA building on the County Garden property, and a warehouse for garden produce storage. The Commissioners noted that the list has changed several times due to costs, etc.

E. Higgins offered to get information on a distributor for local farmers that the County might be able to utilize. The Commissioners thanked her but explained the County is not-for-profit and has to be very careful how it distributes the vegetables.

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Present was Director Michael Larrivee who reported the following:

1. A hiring process was just completed, there were four applicants, and they have chosen two to hire. He wished to hire retiring Deputy James Porter as Dispatcher, as he will bring a lot of experience and knowledge along with him. The pay rate and start date are unknown at this point.
****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to hire retiring Patrol Officer James Porter as Dispatcher at a date to be determined. Unanimous.**
2. The new hire, Cassie, has resigned from the Communications Center. He will get the paperwork to the Human Resources Director.
****W. Shorey moved, B. Johnson seconded the resignation of Cassie Armstrong-Hopkins effective March 18, 2022. Unanimous.**
3. He noted that it is hard to hire dispatchers because of the high stress level of the job and people can work elsewhere for the same amount of money. He believed this would continue to be an issue, but noted that the current staff has appreciated the recent raise in pay.
4. Work on the new tower at Point Lookout in Northport will start the week of March 14th.

5. There were a few issues with the new radio system. Two towers failed to pass structurally. One was Unitel tower in Unity. M. Larrivee notified them of the failure, and told them if they ever fix it or put up a new one, the County would be interested in utilizing it. The other tower was Windy Hill in Frankfort. The report was that it is old, is supposed to be a freestanding tower but was guyed and should not be. M. Larrivee has reached out to Black Diamond to see how much it would be to put up new steel, which is the least expensive part of the fix. There is a cell tower behind it, so consultant Norman Boucher is reaching out to them to see if the County could rent space on that.

6. Construction at the conference room at the Comm. Center is nearly complete.

7. With the recent small outbreak of COVID, the Comm. Center, he's hired a company to deep clean the radio consoles, which will be between \$1,500.00 and \$2,000.00. He worked with Facilities Manager Keith Nealley on this, and it will be paid from the Facilities budget.

EMA Director Dale Rowley, now present, said he had contacted the cellular tower about pricing before they put the tower up and they wanted an exorbitant amount of insurance coverage. They also wanted about \$10,000.00 a year from the County. M. Larrivee said they were also considering going back to Mount Waldo. It would cover the same area, and they could take all the equipment except the tower and put it up there. D. Rowley said steel isn't terribly expensive and if the foundation there is good, it might work well. They also wouldn't have to change the licensing.

SWANVILLE PROJECT UPDATE:

Present was EMA Director Dale Rowley, with the following update:

The DEP Stormwater Permit Application has been submitted. DEP requires notice to the property abutters as part of the application process. Abutters may send DEP comments and may review the application at the Swanville municipal office or at EMA. The abutters may request a public hearing through the DEP and DEP will decide whether to hold one or not. The Belfast Water District is one of the abutters; they have a well about 2,000 feet away from the project site. The County property is located over an aquifer that the Water District utilizes. A meeting was held with the Belfast Water District that included the Project Architect, the project Civil Engineer, the EMA GIS Planner Robert Hoey, Keith Pooler from Belfast Water District, Ricky Pershkin from Dirigo Engineering, and Dale Rowley. The Water District representatives were concerned that hazardous materials might make it into the ground and impact the aquifer. There is no wellhead protection ordinance in Swanville. The county property is located in the Aquifer's Zone 2, and "best management practices" are recommended by DEP. Belfast Water District will request DEP make these recommendations requirements. One of the best management practice recommendations was to have a wet pond, which is already in the design. Some of the smaller drainage swales are being redesigned, which will allow runoff water to be spread out over the surface. The Water District was concerned about the roof dripline infiltration design which collects water off on side of the warehouse roof. They are looking at redesigning it so that the water could be directed into a storm drain instead.

D. Rowley recommended that instead of putting a bathroom in the warehouse, which would require a separate septic system, a separate bathroom could be installed in the EMA building with access from the outside but not inside EMA. Originally there was going to be a fire sprinkler system in the EMA building design, but the space could now be used for that bathroom. The original architect's cost

estimate of the project was \$6.7 million, and the County had budgeted \$2.5 million. With the recommended changes so far, it has been reduced to \$3.5 million. He is also considering making the warehouse and foundation its own bid item. Plans should be done in 4 to 5 weeks, and there was some discussion on potential options for hiring out the work. D. Rowley reviewed the permitting requirements from the Town of Swanville, and reported that the construction documents are halfway finished.

E. Higgins asked if the water had been tested for PFAS, and A. Fowler said sludge was never used on those fields, as she had checked into that.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

1. The Commissioners briefly revisited their concern over Waldo County being mentioned in connection with the International Peace Proclamation and Grand Peace Treaty of the States since they knew nothing about it. This was not Waldo County's idea, and there would be no action taken on it.

2. A. Fowler said she would be attending a meeting later this afternoon for ongoing discussion with the Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry regarding clarifying the water boundary lines between Waldo County and Knox Counties.

****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to adjourn at 10:17 a.m. Unanimous.**

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