

**WALDO COUNTY BUDGET COMMITTEE
FINAL MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING FOR FY 2006 BUDGET
DECEMBER 14, 2005
7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Budget Committee Members Bill Sneed (Chairman), Bradford Payne, Rachel McDonald, James Bennett, Tim Biggs, Richard Desmarais and Samuel Butler. In attendance as observers were Waldo County Commissioners Hyk, Boetsch and Fowler, Treasurer David Parkman, numerous County Department Heads and County employees, members of the press and several citizens. Also present was County Clerk Barbara L. Arseneau to take the minutes.

PUBLIC MEETING – FY 2006 BUDGET:

Chairman Bill Sneed called the Public Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

L.D. 1 TAX CAP DISCUSSION:

K. Ward handed out the tax cap sheet and mentioned that all but four towns had sent their property growth figures in. B. Sneed asked her to give a rough explanation of how the tax cap was figured and why the towns' input is required. K. Ward explained that the town's need to submit anything newly taxed from April 1, 2004 through April 1, 2005. There is a spreadsheet that automatically calculates it. The numerator is the newly taxed amount and the denominator is the total municipal valuation and then the percentage is achieved from dividing those. It is the budget tax assessment of 2005, the average real personal income growth percentage, which is set by the State, then the property growth factor is added to it, and it multiplies by the tax assessment for 2005. This brings you to the new assessment for 2006. The cap is only on the assessment to the towns and not the total budget. To get the assessment, it won't be available until after the first of the year, the books are closed and the audit goes through. The Commissioners set the assessments in March, and then the letters go out to the towns, generally in April. She commented that it was "a confusing mess when you are trying to figure it all out."

B. Sneed asked how the Budget Committee could exceed the cap. K. Ward reminded them that she had given them copies of the law that explains that the cap can be exceeded or increased by a majority vote between the Budget Committee and the Commissioners. There were different definitions for "exceed" and "increase." B. Sneed explained that "exceed" is only a one-time event and "increase" adopts it to the budget and that is what the cap would be the following year. B. Sneed asked if there was any way to figure this out tonight. K. Ward responded that it could not. They could take what ever the budget is going to be and deduct out the projected revenue, but as far as surplus and how the Commissioners apply that, it will not be known until the audit is done. There is no way to figure it out until then.

B. Sneed commented that they had some "large ballpark" to work with. K. Ward stated again that the projected revenue could be deducted and that would leave about \$181,000.00 or so difference.

B. Sneed clarified that if what the Budget Committee voted on in the last few weeks, if it didn't change by one penny tonight, would still be short about \$180,000.00. K. Ward said that it would

depend on whether there was Surplus or not. B. Payne asked what the penalty was if the County did go over the limit. K. Ward responded, "As long as you vote, there's no penalty." G. Boetsch clarified that it was with the wording "exceed," not "increase," and it there was no penalty with the word "increase." B. Sneed said that this was the same wording as it was for the towns; "exceed" is a one-time extraordinary measure only, whereas "increase" means "it is increased to \$10,000,000.00 if you pick a round number – that's the base you start with for next year."

J. Bennett said he believed that if the County exceeded the cap, then that gives the general public the right to ask to put this out and get 10% of the vote, the last Election Day, it has to go out to referendum. He said he had already checked on this and that was what they told them, in fact, if anybody was at the meeting they had in Waldo, that was what they were told. B. Sneed asked for clarification and asked if that required a petition of 10% of the vote. J. Bennett said that if the County went over the spending cap, the people can get 10% of the names, which was not very many names, the people have the right to make the County go out to referendum vote. K. Ward clarified that this was only the case if the word "exceed" was used. If the vote was to "increase," that doesn't apply to that.

B. Sneed told J. Bennett that it was just the same as the towns' wording. J. Bennett said that "in the towns if they vote not to increase it and it increases, it automatically goes to the Selectmen to make a decision. Here in the County, it goes to referendum." B. Sneed added that this was so if somebody chose to do this. B. Sneed commented that the situation seemed to be that there were no firm numbers to work with, so, at best, they could come back in the middle of March and say "Thumbs up" or "Thumbs down" on this budget and if we say "Thumbs down", we start all over again. B. Arseneau asked how the County was to operate in the meantime. B. Sneed commented that this was "a hell of a mess."

J. Hyk indicated that the Treasurer had a question. Treasurer D. Parkman asked from the audience, "How is the County going to borrow money with no commitment? We have to borrow money by the first of this year." B. Sneed replied that he had no idea, no clue because this is such new territory for everyone.

R. McDonald asked what it would take to get those four towns who had not submitted their numbers to get them to the Budget Committee right away. A. Fowler said that the Commissioners Office had tried.

B. Sneed asked K. Ward how much of a difference it made with any given town – 1%, ½ %? K. Ward replied that it was 2/10's of a percent, which only moves it 2/10's of a percent. B. Sneed said if one town was up and one was down, it would pretty much stay the same.

K. Littlefield, Town of Waldo Selectman, asked how the County's bonded indebtedness plays into the picture. She thought the bonded indebtedness was subtracted from the account and wasn't sure that it applied that way and this was why she was asking. D. Parkman replied that he did not know. He added that the only indebtedness was the Communications Center debt. She thought that if this was part of the assessment and did not need to be, every little bit would help.

B. Sneed commented that this was “a drop in the bucket. It won’t move it a lot.” K. Ward said she would check that out.

S. Butler asked if anyone had heard if any of the towns are getting into any mess over this. B. Sneed said that this was the interesting thing they had heard the other night – there were “no cops out there for this. There’s no stick out there.” S. Butler said he guessed they wouldn’t have to worry about it too much, then. B. Sneed laughed and said he was inclined to agree.

G. Boetsch commented that he thought the Lincolnville Selectmen had voted to override the cap. B. Payne clarified that the town had voted to override the cap. The budget was under the cap, but the town added an additional article that if the town wished to exceed the budget, they had a separate article and did vote to do that. The question is consequences. He had understood that at some point, the State was going to look at how many towns exceeded the budget and devise some way to penalize them in the future, but apparently, nothing of that sort had come to surface yet. He didn’t understand what use it was if there was not some penalty for doing it.

S. Story said he wasn’t going to pretend to know the ins and outs of the laws, but he did sit in on most of the sessions in the legislature when this was discussed and it was watered down substantially, with the final provisions that it could be overrun by a majority vote in municipality. In a county, it could be with a majority vote of the Commissioners and Budget Committee. As far as sanctions go, he didn’t hear a lot of discussion regarding sanctions if the cap was overrun, but he felt the big concern was that nobody wanted to be the “bad people” when it wasn’t done right, so to speak. He had been hearing that there are many places that are living under this and a lot that can’t do it. It is his understanding that the relief valve for the municipalities and the counties was simply the majority vote; he had not heard any discussions about sanctions.

J. Bennett said he had spoken with Geoff Herman of Maine Municipal and he had said that this was working for 70% of the towns. 70% of the towns were living within their caps. B. Sneed added that MMA has been collecting statistics and the other night, he had heard that they had data from 146 towns and 70% of them were within their budget. Interestingly enough, the 30% that were over were the tiny towns of less than 1000. He didn’t know what that meant. This was the information as of about one week ago.

B. Sneed said that this was the bind they were in, the rules that they had to play under and they might as well start reviewing the budget by department.

S. Story asked if there were any sanctions for the towns if they didn’t provide the information. B. Sneed replied no; in fact, the towns aren’t even required to provide it at all. It is up to the County to obtain it however it can.

B. Sneed said that 22 of the 26 towns had reported. S. Story asked what the figure looked like now and was told that it was 4.81%. B. Sneed said it was 2.62% that the State gives the county, plus 2.19% according to Karen’s calculation, equals about 4.81%. This means that, given last year’s budget, this one can increase by about 4.81% on the assessed value to the towns, which

was an important distinction. It was not on the total budget. This is why it is so difficult to figure, because there is no way to know the assessed value is until after the end of the current year, after surplus is known, etc. S. Story asked if this assessment was based on last year's figures, if this gave them some idea of what it would be. B. Sneed responded that based on last year, the County is at about \$181,000.00, as things stand right now, "in the hole." If the budget was not changed by one cent to the budget, it is still \$181,000.00 in the hole if the projected revenue is anywhere near correct.

S. Story asked if surplus would offset that. S. Butler replied, "Doubtful. We don't have that much surplus anyway. Never do." J. Hyk agreed that there was very little last year. S. Butler stated that at most, there was usually only about \$150,000.00 a year.

B. Sneed suggested they "get on with it."

PROBATE BUDGET – 1070:

B. Sneed asked for Mrs. Crowley, Register of Probate, and was told by Judge Longley that she had a family emergency tonight. Judge Longley hoped to answer any questions. B. Sneed asked about the reduction of \$11,000.00 from the guardian ad litem account. J. Longley said they were ready to try to work with that. She said, "We pride ourselves on being fair, respectful and efficient with everyone, including everyone, including the Board and the Budget Committee and we're squeezing every penny out of these people. Her constitutional requirements state that she must make sure that they have a lawyer and she had a list of those times, totaling about 7 to 8 times. Those times, especially if it's a parent and it is their child, it requires unique counsel and they can't afford it, I try to get them that counsel and we are training ourselves to, when we appoint counsel, to accompany it with a virtual inquisition about their inability to pay." She explained that they are trying to push for people to payments via a payment plan and diligently pursue payment. She has an obligation to make they are "able to pay." She wanted to meet the challenge set before them.

B. Sneed expressed concern that there was such an overdraft this current year and asked where the difference would be paid from. Judge Longley explained that there was overflow from other years and this was the year that the payments came due. This is why it was overdrawn. She explained that they were trying to reach back and are sending letters, calling them in, and trying to get whatever payment out of them they can. She mentioned that when children are involved, emergency guardianship can occur, which means "right away." She was reluctant, from past experience, to come in right away for the emergency because not everybody in the family gets notice, and then there is anger and the children are now caught in a "war zone." When there are fewer emergencies and a 14-day notice, families are all getting notified and are all coming in and all are working together from the first step. This helps it not to drag and reduces guardian ad litem fees and legal fees. She felt that this was the most important way to meet the \$8,000.00 cap they were given. She felt they were able to do so.

J. Hyk stated that this was all important, but when the surplus number was being thought of, whatever the difference was between what was budgeted and what was spent, has to come out of surplus. That starts to "nibble away" at that surplus number.

D. Parkman said he had a figure from December 12, 2005 that showed that \$8,000.00 had been appropriated and \$20,971.78 had been spent this year, which was \$12,971.00 “in the hole.” This would come out of that department’s bottom line. B. Sneed said he realized that this was one of those things that had to be paid, regardless. J. Longley mentioned that if they collect \$6,000.00 of that \$12,000.00 of back payments with their new procedures, and try to find \$6,000.00 from the other accounts within their budget, it should be covered. She explained that J. Crowley had been able to negotiate a reduction in the cost of advertising in one of the papers. This saved \$1,500.00 right there. R. McDonald applauded this effort.

S. Butler suggested going department by department, or they would be “all night this way.”

1010 – E.M.A.:

J. Hyk informed the Budget Committee that there had been six or seven applications for the vacant Emergency Management Agency Director position and a screening process that involved Robert Keating, Barbara Arseneau and two senior people from Maine Emergency Management had been utilized. There were only two qualified candidates interviewed for the EMA Director position today and both had indicated they did could not possibly work for \$32,000.00. Each of them indicated that the amount they needed was \$40,000.00. One of the candidates is extremely well known in the County, extremely well qualified, would make “a tremendous director” and the Commissioners would like to find a way to hire him, because as everyone knew, this is a much more important position than perhaps it was a few years ago. The only thing he could offer in mitigation or extenuation was that the Budget Committee could increase this amount from \$32,000.00 to about \$36,000.00 or \$37,000.00, the individual the Commissioners had in mind would not be needed the medical benefits and perhaps the Commissioners could prorate some of that money in the benefit line and move it over to create that position. If the Budget Committee did not wish to do this, he would understand, but he did not know what the Commissioners would do because it would appear that the County really cannot find the qualified person at \$32,000.00 per year to do the job correctly, bring in grant money, train the people in the towns, and do all the things that need to be done. This is not a small job. He asked the Budget Committee to consider this increase in salary and to remember that half that number is reimbursable by the Federal government. If this salary is increased by \$6,000.00, it is really only \$3,000.00 increase for the County. He expressed his concern that if the County didn’t get “a really crackerjack person in here to whip this County into shape, we will all regret it sooner or later, if we haven’t already.”

S. Butler mentioned grant writing and asked if there would now be two grant writers in the County. J. Hyk replied that the County does not need two, but he certainly believed that the County needs an EMA Director that is focused on that as well. S. Butler argued that a new department had been created for Grant Writing this year and the Budget Committee had already voted to \$15,000.00 for this. J. Hyk responded that he didn’t believe that the EMA Director would be writing the grants for the rest of the County, but rather would be focusing on EMA/Communications/Homeland Security grants.

Archivist Cheryl Coats raised her hand and explained that the EMA Director would need to know how to disburse the grant monies that he/she received and that would be his/her responsibility.

S. Story explained that at the Sheriff's Office, he applies for many grants; most of which are easy, but there are grants out there that he did not have the time or the technical knowledge to apply for. In fact, C. Coats had helped him last year with one that she wrote with the City of Belfast amounting to \$10,000.00. He felt another important thing was that the County just received a \$160,000.00 Homeland Security Grant that the County was fairly concerned it would not receive because of a late submission, and the reason this was successful was because Cheryl Coats "picked up that ball and ran with it." He stressed that there are many grants that require technical knowledge to write and disburse. He definitely felt that there was room for both a grant writer and an EMA Director with grant writing capabilities.

J. Hyk said he could answer this question in a different way: "If you don't have the right EMA Director, you better have the right grant writer."

S. Butler commented, "Hopefully you're going to have both." Someone commented that "one of the shining points" of the previous EMA Director was his ability to write grants.

K. Littlefield asked J. Hyk if, when he said that they couldn't find a qualified person, how advertised was this? J. Hyk replied that it was advertised extensively, and the job description was provided. The person the Commissioners have in mind would be one of only three certified EMA Directors in the State of Maine. "This is a top-notch person."

S. Butler commented that if the EMA Director does not need benefits, basing his estimates on his town, this would probably be about between \$6,000.00 and \$6,500.00 alone, which would save the County right there. J. Hyk stated that somehow the salary had to get to \$40,000.00. B. Sneed said that he thought the figure was \$36,000.00 before. J. Hyk said that was so, and he hoped to negotiate the rest with the benefits side, but that would not save the County the most of amount of money. He recommended letting the benefit amount go to surplus, raise the difference or \$8,000.00. "If you are taking it from the benefits side, you don't get that back as reimbursement from the Federal government."

J. Bennett asked if the Budget Committee could be assured that, if they went along with the salary, it is not "just to get the foot in the door, and then come back next year and say they could not stay without getting the benefit package." J. Hyk said he had told the candidate that if this person could not stay, they could go. D. Desmarais commented that the Budget Committee is not supposed to negotiate salaries, that is the Commissioners decision; the Budget Committee could only affect the bottom line. J. Hyk explained that the budget that had been presented was now requested to be changed. D. Desmarais raised the question that if the Budget Committee said to work with what is already in the budget, could the Commissioners do that? J. Hyk said they could have, but Jethro Pease had already eliminated a fair amount of money from the EMA budget. D. Desmarais asked again if the Commissioners could stay within this bottom line. J. Hyk responded that he did not think so, but would be glad to overdraw it. "I'll be glad to

overdraw it if we can't stay within it, but I'm not going to lie to you because I don't get enough money, and number two, I'm not going to go behind your back and just do it without saying something. That's not the way we operate. Since I've been Commissioner, I've been 100% honest with the Budget Committee and I intend to stay that way."

K. Littlefield felt the Commissioners were creating a very dangerous situation that Mr. Bennett had just outlined. Maybe it was true that the Commissioners could tell this person to "take a hike" but once a \$40,000.00 position had been created, they wouldn't be able to expect to hire anyone for anything less than that with benefits. J. Hyk stated that this was a little bit different from a regular employee. A. Fowler explained that this position requires experience and not just someone off the street. J. Hyk emphasized that this was highly experienced person. A. Fowler confirmed the qualifications of that person. K. Littlefield said she understood that, but it still comes down to the question, does this County want to adjust this salary and its benefits to fit an individual rather than adjusting the job description and a salary range and getting the best person they can. J. Hyk said that the Commissioner said that this could be done, but the only qualified applicants would not work for that salary and those who would work for that salary were simply not qualified at all. He reiterated that this is a sensitive position requiring a number of skills.

The question arose as to whether this would be deliberated on after the public hearing was closed. B. Sneed said no. S. Butler said that the vote could not be taken until after the Public Hearing had closed.

1015 – DISTRICT ATTORNEY BUDGET:

The total for this budget was \$148,036.00. There was no discussion.

1020 – COMMISSIONERS

The Budget Committee had approved \$515,072.00. When B. Sneed asked if there was any discussion, Belfast City Manager Terry St. Peter spoke. He said he just wanted to say, with watching the procedure, he wanted to commend the Budget Committee for the job that they have done and while he didn't agree with everything, they had made some difficult, tough decisions and had trimmed the budget. People don't usually commend but criticize and he wanted to make a point to offer his congratulations and commendation. "That's it!" he concluded.

B. Sneed asked Jim Arseneau if he would like to "throw an oar in the water," and J. Arseneau replied that he might as well.

J. Arseneau asked the Budget Committee to reconsider the reinstatement of some of the funds for Technology that had been cut. There was an arbitrary figure of about 41% that had been cut. It would be greatly appreciated if some additional funds could be put back into that budget to allow the County to accomplish some of the things that need to be set forth. He noted that in the budget there was \$36,000.00 that was added to the Technology budget because it was felt that these items should not remain in the other departmental budgets. If there "was any way in the hearts" of the Budget Committee that would benefit the community down the road, he hoped that between \$30,000.00 to \$40,000.00 could be put into that budget, as it would be greatly appreciated and well worth the investment today.

B. Sneed said that Budget Committee Member Ms. Conover had done an exposition on where she thought \$36,000.00 of this could go. He felt it should be mentioned that VillageSoup had done an interview with CHS and that the owner had said their business wasn't going anywhere soon. B. Sneed felt that they were slowly going out of business and winding down, but the article reported that they would be more than happy to upgrade the County's current system.

J. Arseneau suggested that the Budget Committee Could speak with Belfast City Police Trafton, Sheriff Story and Communications Director Smith, and ask about what type of support is received when they call CSH for assistance. Recently, the County called because they needed some stuff added and it was done quickly, but from May into October if you called them, it actually got to the point where he had to call them on their cell phone to get service. The wait is usually 24 to 48 hours before even getting a telephone call back. When the system is down and people can't log on in Belfast and Sheriff's departments, it is more than just an issue of where the company is going long term. It is affecting the service the service being received right now. Regarding the interface being used, he invited the Budget Committee to come and spend half a day at the Communications Center or with the patrol division and listen to how much they "enjoy" using the program and how "easy" it is to use, they would find it needs to be changed and is affecting the productivity of the County employees. This is one of the reasons a change is being investigated. In addition, the County has been promised an upgrade for three years that has not been seen yet. A maintenance fee is paid, an upgrade is supposed to be part of that, and typically most software companies do that on a yearly basis. He knew of no other clients who pay an annual maintenance fee and receive no upgrades every single year. There has been no upgrade for Waldo County's system in three years. "Those are some of the things we're up against and why we are looking for change," he concluded.

R. Desmarais said he agreed with this. He noted that IMC and Spillman are better than what the County has now. He said he had been trying for three days to get a hold of Chief Fournier of the Freeport Fire Department. The October "Townsmen" had an article on emergency services and, he had mentioned this in an earlier meeting, they consider dispatch centers to be in abundance with 46 and that the Public Utilities Commissioners has mandated that they be reduced down to 24. Chief Fournier has stated that he would go further and he is interested in a plan now being talked about which would be four centers statewide, which R. Desmarais thought was "very reasonable" as some centers can handle over 1 million in population. He didn't know who the people were that were interested in it, and that is why he tried to contact Chief Fournier. He commented that Waldo County was looking at a 7-year program and said he didn't even know if Waldo County would be here in 7 years. He stated that "we can't forget the future." J. Arseneau said this was true, but the software being purchased is not just for the Communications Center. It is providing for the investigating part, the evidence tracking and in corrections. As Sheriff Story has said, there may be a change a few years down the road, but if the County sits and waits, when the time comes and the County has to make a move, it will be too late – the County needs to keep moving forward. He explained that any company that business will be done with, if, for example, they decided to turn off a portion of the module because, say, if they change the dispatching portion, the maintenance fee that is paid would be reduced because that would no longer be used. There would be a decrease in the overall cost for the leasing side, if the County chose to do that.

J. Arseneau was asked if he read the article on CSH in the news. He said he had, and had contacted CHS after he read that. J. Arseneau was asked if CSH had a better contract than what the County had now, which was approximately \$6,000.00 per year. J. Arseneau clarified that it was \$9,000.00 for the County and \$9,000.00 for Belfast. He explained that this provided maintenance so that if anything happens to the system, the company will come and take care of it. If the County wanted to do adds, moves or changes, or add people, the County pays per diem per hour to do that. They were looking for somewhere in the neighborhood of \$15,000.00 to \$16,000.000 for the County and some larger amount than Belfast is paying right now for full support so that if there was a change to be done, there was no billing. He stated that it is cheaper for a County, based upon adds, moves or changes not to pre-buy a \$15,000.00 to \$16,000.00 package because the County does not use that much billing time. If there was a real emergency, it might be worthwhile, but nothing like that had happened yet, so it made no sense to put money into something that there was no benefit in return.

When asked if contracting with Spillman, if it included about a \$30,000.00 software upgrade and everything, J. Arseneau replied in the affirmative. R. Desmarais acknowledged that he was not familiar with the Technology, but it sounded like \$15,000.00 plus \$15,000.00 added up to \$30,000.00 to him. He asked if this was comparing “apples to apples.” J. Arseneau said no, because the Spillman software would affect more than just Belfast and Waldo County. The plan was also to bring on Searsport and Lincolnville with Spillman via whatever CAD patch there would be, so it would actually be serving a greater amount for less of a maintenance fee and there was a guaranteed upgrade every single year. If someone was to inquire of Cumberland County’s technical department and ask how Spillman does their upgrades, it would be found to be “quite seamless” for what the County has to deal with. Spillman takes care of the whole process. R. Desmarais asked again about contacting CHS after the article. J. Arseneau said he had contacted them because the information did not seem to be quite the same as what he was familiar with. R. Desmarais asked J. Arseneau if he still felt that CSH could “pull freight” at any time and they seem to say they will be a two-to-three year warning before they go out of business. J. Arseneau said he would not say that any company was going out of business because he couldn’t predict that, and it is difficult to know if there will be any warning at all. He commented that Waldo County is one of six CSH clients in the State of Maine and originally there were 32. Five or six years ago, there was immediate response to calls for service. Waldo County has not been experiencing that type of service. If one looked at CSH’s web sit, see what the web site says about the company. “Has Waldo County been given satisfactory service?” he asked and replied, “Probably not, if you compare to what I’ve seen from other companies for what you pay for maintenance.”

T. St. Peter said that although he had planned on leave the meeting, he was a little familiar with this subject. He hadn’t planned to get involved with the choices in companies, but the Belfast Chief of Police met with Mike Cormier and Bill Single of CSH. T. St. Peter was part of that meeting because he wanted to see what Belfast was paying, and was satisfied, as it was \$7,000.00, and they receive licensure for different performance and databases. “Belfast is comfortable,” he commented. What he really wanted to share, and he wasn’t sure if the County Sheriff or Communications Director had been made aware of this yet, was one, CSH was pretty strong in saying they were not going out of business any time soon. Two, Chief Trafton said he

wasn't aware of all know the capabilities of the program and now that CSH had shown him some of those capabilities, and now that he knows what he can do with the program it is too soon to decide. O. Smith asked if they got a commitment from CSH regarding the upgrade. T. St. Peter they were looking to buy a product for it to be available. He said he has been told there is a lot more capacity and was told that an upgrade should be available in just a few weeks.

R. Desmarais felt that \$36,000.00 was a lot of money and felt that the CAD system should not be brought up this year.

1025 – TREASURER

There was no discussion.

1030 – FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

R. Fenney explained that the Commissioners had requested that he attempt to go over the Facilities budget with the Committee due to the recent resignation of the previous Facilities Manager. R. Fenney was somewhat familiar with the projects going on and the work that had been done prior to now.

R. Fenney told the Budget Committee that they could live with \$380,000.00 amount the Budget Committee had allocated for the Facilities budget. K. Littlefield asked if the inmates could clean the buildings. L. Zainea mentioned that the inmates could not clean the courthouses due to the confidential court-related material kept in these buildings. J. Arseneau offered his viewpoint from having done a lot of work in the county facilities and expressed that “the inmates do a good job but they are inconsistent – adequate but not up to par.” He mentioned that he travels to other county facilities “and Waldo should be ashamed in some areas.” L. Zainea wanted it understood that the Waldo County Courthouses are the cleanest by far.

1050 – Jail

There was no discussion.

1065 – Register of Deeds

There was no discussion.

1070 – Probate Court

S. Butler commented that he had voted against cutting this budget. He said the increase was in the wages alone at \$4,000.00. He also said that they would have to cut many other things in the budget. He thought there was something behind the cut. B. Sneed said they should not have to dip into the “black box, if they need the money, they need the money.”

Judge Longley informed those present that there are security issues and there is a great need to explore options for security for the District Courthouse building, in which the Probate Court and Registry are located. J. Bennett asked why the Commissioners cut the security officer out of the budget. J. Hyk replied, “Why should we take it out of Scott’s [the Sheriff’s] budget? If there is a problem in the parking lot then the Belfast Police Department should be called.” He stated that he was reluctant to be the first County to start regularly provided Probate Court security.

Judge Longley said that she would sit down with Barbara Arseneau and Joanne Crowley and figure out about security of the building. She suggested perhaps getting small bulletproof vests for a reduced cost sometime this year to avoid an accident.

A man from the public described how domestic situations can flair. He criticized the Commissioners for stating that they did not wish to be the first County to have security for Probate, but were willing to be the first to supply an archivist. Just because nobody had yet been assaulted in court was not a good reason. J. Hyk agreed that someone needs to take a good hard look at the security issue and how to provide for it.

D. Parkman mentioned that there was a 200% - 300% increase for court appointments during 2005. He suggested that the Probate Court take care of the court appointments first before security and to increase the line request for court appointments "so they could function within reality."

S. Story said he did not disagree with Judge Longley about court security. He felt that it all started with when Probate needed a deputy for "a hot case today." Then it led from that to an officer being needed for every court session. The pay needed to come from somewhere and he was apprehensive of it being from the Sheriff's budget.

B. Sneed asked if there was an officer in the District Court at all times. L. Zainea explained that the County used to supply security to the District and Superior Court, but now with the new State contracts, they are considered State courts. A bailiff is always with the judge and the other is in the courtroom and escorts the people to the clerk's office. An officer has to be there at all times.

B. Payne asked the Commissioners if they would be working on this issue. J. Hyk said that they will have to deal with it but was not sure how. Judge Longley thanked them for their concern. K. Overlock mention that when a telephone call is placed to the Communications Center, the response time is one to four minutes.

1075 – Sheriff:

There was no discussion.

1076 - Communications Center:

There was no discussion.

1080 - Advertising and Promotion:

B. Arseneau mentioned that Time & Tide had sent a letter, but the Budget Committee did not wish to put the funding back in for this request.

1090 – Audit:

There was no discussion.

1095 - Debt Services:

There was no discussion.

2000 – Interest:

There was no discussion.

2005 - Waldo County Extension Association:

There was no discussion.

2025 - Employee Benefits:

There was no discussion.

2035 - Waldo County Soil and Water Conservation:

There was no discussion.

2040 - Records Preservation:

An unidentified man from the audience asked why Waldo County felt the need to be the first County to hire an Archivist and why this service had never been put out to bid. The Commissioners explained that they had stumbled onto Ms. Coats during a job interview for a totally separate Waldo County position. They did not intend to create a new position for this, but recognized that this was an opportunity to finally address the chronic records problem that had been plaguing the County since its inception. The man continued to express his displeasure that this had not been advertised. J. Hyk responded that this was a specialized field and not something readily found in this area. He credited former Commissioner Jethro Pease for this “great find” and stated that the County records are now being handled properly and a system of managing them was nearly fully developed for the first time in Waldo County’s history.

B. Arseneau asked if she could speak on the subject. B. Sneed allowed this. She started by noting that the initial request for the Records Preservation budget was \$73,844.00. It had been brought to her attention that the way the budget was set up may have caused some confusion. In 2003, the County Commissioners decided it was “high time to start dealing with the records mess,” as John Hyk has put it. Commissioner Pease discovered Cheryl Coats, now serving under the business name of DRG Specialty Services during a job interview for a different position. He recognized, and immediately brought to the attention of the other Commissioners, that the County had found someone who was highly qualified to handle the County’s records problems. This was an affordable solution. C. Coats had taken care of past records that had accumulated since 1827 and the second phase was to establish a fully-functioning records management system for those departments who have never had one including the Commissioners and Treasurer’s offices, the Jail, Sheriff’s Office and EMA to some degree. Initially, this project started with funding from Deeds Surcharge, as many of the records that needed to be sorted through were old ones belonging to Deeds. This funding could not be used for the other departments’ records, so in 2004, the Commissioners established the Records Preservation budget to deal with those other department records. Even though this was a contractual service, the Commissioners recognized the need to continue properly handling the County’s records after the contract with DRG had ended. The idea was not to slip back into the previous poor records management. So the statement that this was a new department budget was not entirely accurate, as this project has been underway since the middle of 2003 when Ms. Coats was contracted.

B. Arseneau continued that the only two departments that have records management systems are Probate and Deeds. Those systems were not without cost. In 2003, the Registry of Probate upgraded its filing system at over \$15,000.00 and has ongoing yearly expenditures to maintain its records. The Registry of Deeds spends a fair amount annually to handle its records. In 2005, the Registry of Deeds expended over \$83,000.00 for maintaining its records.

The original \$73,844.00 would allow all the past jail records to be handled and would allow for a system of management to be developed that could work for the remaining departments as well, creating a properly managed records system with the proper records accessible to the public. She mentioned that the statement had been made more than once that County records are “just old pieces of paper.” “Try telling that to someone who needs to know if their property abuts an abandoned road or a discontinued road, which are two very different things. Try telling a citizen that you simply have no records that would assist them in knowing if they have access to the woodlot that serves as their livelihood and has now been blocked off by their less-than-cooperative neighbors. I have seen people leave the County Commissioners Office in tears because they could not afford an attorney to research their problem in more detail for them. One citizen who couldn’t afford an attorney informed me that it cost him \$12,000.00 to learn nothing because the records were not available. Imagine how I have felt to learn that there are, in fact, at least 66 road maps that I did not know existed! I wonder how many wrong decisions have been made because of the inaccessibility of these records.” B. Arseneau then went on to demonstrate the archaic, less-than-accurate method in which the public had to locate a road map by using the single book that the County had available, with only a partial, difficult to read index that didn’t even include the current names of the roads. She described how frustrating this is and inefficient for the citizens, attorneys and surveyors.

She further explained that Waldo County is not remotely compliant with the State laws governing records maintenance and storage. If this continues, the county will not be permitted to apply for any more records preservation grants. The only reason the County has received every records preservation grant applied for is because C. Coats was qualified and skilled. She asked that the Budget Committee please finish what it had started by allowing the proper funding to complete the records management system and archiving system so that the other departments who have never had one, will have a system equal to those of Deeds and Probate that allows access to those other departmental records. She thanked the Committee for allowing her to speak.

Cheryl Coats spoke and explained that the State sets rules for which records must be saved and for how long in order to protect records from inappropriate disposal. That does not necessarily mean that a County has to throw out records. That would be the choice of the County. She explained that different types of records have different values, for example, some have historical value for governmental reasons, and some had historical value for genealogical reasons. Some have value as artifacts, some have value as collections. The unidentified man in the audience questioned the retention of some of the Deeds records, in particular, some of the original Deeds documents and argued that this was unnecessary. C. Coats explained that, just because these particular documents had been duplicated, they still had value as a very unusual collection. She

explained that if the County notified the public that these were available and also notified various groups who would be interested, money could be made. People are interested in looking at original deeds, seeing original signatures of family members, purchasing copies, etc. C. Coats also mentioned that there are duplicate books in the Registry of Deeds, but that does not mean that one set has to be destroyed. She explained that in such cases as the unique collection of Deeds being discussed, because they are so uncommon and so complete, even if the County petitioned the States records advisory board to dispose of these, the board could say no. She emphasized that these records belong to the County and the County has the right to retain any records it sees fit to retain. What it does not have the right to do is to dispose of certain records that are designated by the State for retention.

J. Bennett mentioned that the committee was told that some books were put in storage. C. Coats confirmed that a number of duplicated Deeds books were being stored at a records storage facility in Bangor.

2050 – Grant Writing

The same unidentified man from the audience asked if the grant writing position was advertised and when told no, asked why Archivist, Cheryl Coats had been used for this. Treasurer D. Parkman responded that the Commissioners had hired Cheryl as an outside contractor to take care of the long-standing County records situation. In the process, they had discovered her grant writing abilities, as she had successfully secured several grants for records preservation. Due to this ability, they continued to contract with her but for other grant writing as well. “She has done a very good job and has saved the County a lot of money,” he stated. Hiring an outside contractor rather than paying a county employee benefits was additional savings for the County.

J. Hyk explained that the working relationship with Archivist had worked out very well for the County and the grant writing had developed from that relationship. So far, it had worked out very well. Every grant she had applied for was successfully and fully obtained. This totaled nearly \$200,000.00 and it had only cost the County about \$7,000.00. “I don’t see what the problem is,” he retorted.

The man from the audience said he did not believe there was a problem; he certainly applauded her if she had brought in about \$200,000.00 worth of grant for the amount of money that the County had paid. His only issue was that this position had never been advertised. D. Parkman replied, “We already had Cheryl! Why would you go out if you had already contracted her to one job and now she could do another and had done a fine job? I don’t see the argument!”

The man conceded that it is not really an argument, and quoted J. Hyk as saying “some working relationships develop.” He commented that this might be true that working relationships develop, but they “just aren’t as right as they should be.”

B. Sneed commented that half an hour ago this gentleman had already had issues with the Records Management not being put out to bid and thought this had “now come full circle.”

Communications Director O. Smith detailed how C. Coats obtained a grant for \$160,000.00 and that it was “literally pulled out of the fire” and in less than two days, had turned it around and got it ready to be shipped to Augusta. If she had not been readily available and had not had the ability to do that, this would not have happened. She did an “extraordinary job pulling this out of the fire.” The time that would have been wasted trying to find another qualified person to do this could easily have resulted in the complete loss of this money. “\$200,000.00 - I’ll be real blunt. She’s earned her keep and she will continue to earn her keep in the future. She does a good job and she knows what she’s doing,” O. Smith stated.

S. Butler said he had one comment. “I’ve been on this Budget Committee fourteen years, which is probably too long, but I’ve worked with a lot of Commissioners and this last four years has been the best four years that I have worked on this Budget Committee. These Commissioners, and one that just got done, have really worked hard and tried to get something for this County and I think it’s about time we appreciated it.”

John Hyk stood up and cheered. Everyone laughed.

B. Sneed said before the Public Hearing was closed, the Reserves should be discussed.

RESERVES:

B. Sneed listed off the Reserves. Technology was \$90,000.00 but \$30,000.00 of that belongs to Probate. B. Sneed asked what the \$30,000.00 of that was for and J. Arseneau explained that it was for software that was strictly for Probate.

G. Boetsch asked O. Smith if now that the \$160,000.00 Homeland Security Grant was definitely approved, did the \$40,000.00 that had been cut from the reserve for the Microwave build-out as a match. O. Smith said that they did not, but at some point, perhaps not this year, the County would need to set aside reserves to upgrade and/or replace Communications equipment. The \$40,000.00 is not needed this year.

B. Sneed continued reading the remaining Reserve requests and asked if there were any further questions or discussion.

K. Littlefield asked who had authority over County Planning and wondered if that could be accessed for any county planning. J. Hyk responded that it could be used for County Planning at the discretion of the Commissioners. K. Littlefield asked if this could be tapped for a worthy item, if the Commissioners were convinced of a worthy item. J. Hyk responded that he was “always an easy touch for worthy projects.” K. Littlefield continued and said she wanted to talk with the Commissioners about the money that was cut from Future County Planning. She said she had served on the Jail Study Committee and this group met extensively for more than a year and devoted a great deal of time and effort. B. Sneed added, “And money.” K. Littlefield told him there was no money expended. “As a matter of fact, it didn’t cost the County a dime for what we did.” She had typed out a few words she wanted to say at this time. She wanted to speak on the Jail and Sheriff’s Office and the Reserve money that was cut out of the budget. She had already alluded to the dedicated group of people on the Jail Committee. There were very

few of them that were in favor of the original Jail bond issue, “so it wasn’t a stacked deck.” They explored the total Jail referendum package “from A to Z; very painfully, I might add, at times.” This committee came up with several possible options that needed to be explored and that was hopefully given to the County Commissioners. B. Arseneau confirmed that it was. She was not sure if the report was presented with any kind of presentation or just handed to the Commissioners without any attempt to explain how they arrived at these options and the process, conclusions and request that was made, “and at this point, I really don’t care.” She stated that she would make her pitch now. Waldo County is in a critical situation with the Jail and Sheriff’s office. She assumed that, one; everyone had toured the Jail and Sheriff’s Office. Number two, all have done their homework, which means they had looked at Jail population figures, boarding figures – both numbers of inmates and costs. Number three, that they have looked at the future capital cost of maintaining and upgrading the Jail and Sheriff’s Office. Fourth, that you have actually read the Jail Research report and that this group was NOT asking that yet another Jail study be funded. “What we are asking you to do is to come up with an adequate amount of funding to allow this group to partner with a professional in order to research and evaluate the unique options we came up with, not to further study the old Jail study, but to help us look at these new and different options and see if all or any combinations will work for Waldo County. This problem, ladies and gentlemen, is not going away – it’s only going to get worse. And to do nothing is the same as sticking your head in the sand. If you choose not to address it in small steps, in the not to distant future, you will be forced to address it in giant, more costly steps. Your question now, to me, is probably, where do we find the money? One of my first questions, Commissioner Hyk, is already answered: the County Planning Reserve fund. I noticed from some papers I got from the County Clerk that there were some expenditures made from that account. I asked her if she would find out what those expenditures were and she provided me with a report, and I appreciated that, but I still don’t know what they were for, but the only thing listed on them were for “Cheryl Coats.”

C. Coats explained that this was for grant writing. K. Littlefield asked if this was for future County Planning. C. Coats explained, “You have to plan – you need to have either a two, three or five-year plan out there to know what the County can watch for grants. That’s why they used this. That’s what we’re doing. We’re looking for grants to try to help the County so that the County’s future will get better, so that we can find funds if they decide to do a Jail and all these different projects. We want to get some of those federal funds.”

K. Littlefield asked mentioned that one expenditure was in excess of \$5,000.00 and asked what was done to secure grants for future County Planning. C. Coats responded, “160,000.00.” K. Littlefield asked what that money was for. C. Coats told her it went to the Regional Communications Center. K. Littlefield said she was not trying to put one department against another, but she had sat on this committee [budget] when these reserves were first established and that was for something totally different than for County Planning for Regional Dispatch or planning on anything. This was for County services and future development of the Sheriff’s Department and Jail. Her concern was that this committee [Jail] spent a great deal of time on this and that if the Budget Committee thinks this is just another study is an error. The Jail Research Committee was not asking for just another study. “This problem is not going anywhere. We’re going to pay for it in little steps or in giant steps and if we can prepare

ourselves in the future by raising money for this reserve fund and allowing for a better plan to be out there, we will be more ready to when this problem eventually comes to a head.

B. Sneed called on Barbara Arseneau. B. Arseneau assured K. Littlefield that when the aforementioned Jail Research reports were sent out, she also sent all the minutes from the meeting in which the Jail Research Committee met with the Commissioners, so that people would have every piece of information regarding that report because she realized that just sending out the report by itself might not be as well understood.

B. Sneed called on Scott Story. S. Story said he couldn't agree more with K. Littlefield with the exception of the statement about the "stacked deck." "It was a little bit of a stacked deck. I helped put this committee together when the bond failed and the people that I went out and looked for as a majority to sit on this committee were the people that were dead-set against the original bond issue. I have to tell you, I was very pleased with this committee at the end of the day, because what they didn't do is say, 'This is your problem, you deal with it.' They agreed that this problem belonged to anybody. It was a painful process. This is not the first, or second I've been through this – it was the third or fourth time. One last thing he wanted to suggest as far as putting money aside for future planning surrounding the Jail and Sheriff's Office. When Jethro Pease worked temporarily at the EMA and started cleaning up some space down there, he came across an item from 1992. It was a very conclusive Jail and Sheriff's Office study. The recommendations that came out of that couldn't have been any more mirrored to the recommendations of the study that we did back in 1999. This is not the same thing. What this committee has done is taken a look at this and thrown some other options out there. One thing I take pride in with this group of Commissioners and myself is that we did not turn around with this bond issue and try to force-feed it down the taxpayers' throats a second or even third time around. I don't like doing business that way. The people spoke and it's incumbent upon us to take a look and see how we might make this a little more palatable to the public and try to look at the best options that we can. The point I'm trying to make is in 1992 we knew we had this problem and we didn't put money aside. When that day came that we had to tap into \$18.5 million the taxpayers decided that they didn't want to pay for this. I don't blame them and to this day I'm not bitter over this because I'm a taxpayer in this County too and it hurts. But, it's our job to try to plan for the future for these options is important. Had we started setting money aside in 1992, that \$18.5 million would probably not have hurt so bad." He mentioned that if he asked people what they paid in sales tax year, they would probably have no idea, but if you ask them what they paid in income tax, a few might know. He bet every person who paid property tax knew exactly what that was. He expressed the need to plan ahead because, in just the time period that has passed since the failed referendum, he had received an estimate recently that the \$18.5 million would now be about \$23 million. "It's never going to get any better. We've got to put some money aside and work on this."

B. Sneed stated that there was an ad hoc group of well-meaning citizens here that were asking for \$50,000.00. They were not employees of the County and not constituted by the Commissioners of the County, as far as he understood. The Commissioners had forcefully argued against giving them this money a few weeks ago, so he proposed this: "The recently founded Waldo County Golfers Association thinks they have a better idea for the County's 100 acres. We think we

should build a County municipal golf course and we would like \$85,000.00 to study the economic impact analysis. Are you going to give me the \$85,000.00 to fund this?" S. Story said that he did not think a golf course was the obligation of the County but a Jail is. B. Sneed asked, "Suppose this generates a lot of money? So that we can demonstrate this, maybe we will have to go to Sarasota or Palm Springs to check out some of these municipal golf courses, but we can demonstrate that we're going to generate money for the County. Are you going to fund our group?" S. Story reiterated that the County was not obligated by statute to fund a golf course. B. Sneed countered that the County was not obligated by statute to fund an ad hoc group of private citizens, no matter how well meaning they may be, out of county funds.

S. Story said again that the County is "obligated to provide a Jail and this is how we need to go about it to continue forward."

G. Boetsch said he was trying to work with the tax cap. S. Butler said he hated to sit here and have people say, "We've cut this and we've cut that, and didn't fund anything." "You have \$43,000.00. Are you going to piss this away next year, or do you want \$93,000.00? If you can't get by on \$43,000.00, if this committee [Jail] didn't spend any money this year, why do you need \$50,000.00 more?" J. Hyk said he would like to answer. K. Littlefield said she could speak for herself, but he could if he wished. J. Hyk said that a few selectmen and the Sheriff came to the Commissioners and asked them for \$50,000.00 to further study this program and also suggested that the Commissioners put \$100,000.00 into a Reserve account. The Commissioners agreed to put it in the budget to bring it to the Budget Committee.

K. Littlefield expressed that "to term the group that had spent over a year working on this 'not Waldo County employees,'" she had worked for the Town of Waldo for thirty-two years and there were others who had worked about as long. "Maybe that doesn't make us a true County employee, but I think our reputations are all well known. We took this on ourselves for the betterment of the County and nobody told us what was in that reserve account, Sam. We didn't ask specifically for \$50,000.00, we asked for help on this. We contacted legislators, we contacted a lot of others for funding and ways that we could help the County out because this problem is going to hit the County sooner or later. If you don't want some free help for it, that's fine. If we're authorized to approach the Commissioners for some use of those funds, or for them to authorize the use of those funds, that's fine."

S. Butler said that the only problem he had was, when it came to Technology and other things in the budget this year, he knew they need a Jail and has known it for years. The flat roof is "terrible." His point was that "if hundreds of thousands of dollars keep being added on to this budget, you will never get a jail out of the people in this County. The people in this County are not going to vote for an \$18 million jail if we keep on adding \$700-800,000.00 each year."

K. Littlefield argued that this was why the group developed several options with room for investigation but try to see if any of those options would work. Her recommendation was to bring an expert in to see if any of those options would work, or if any of the services could be shared with other counties. She felt it would save the County money to have done homework ahead of time and put money away for when the Jail and Sheriff's Office "collapse."

S. Butler thought that maybe this should be in a different category. He suggested that it should, perhaps, be designated as "Jail Planning," not just "County Planning." He described past practices with previous Commissioners who would take money out of the reserves to pay for things because those reserves could not be touched because they were restricted. "The Commissioners could use those for anything they needed to do certain things," he said. He commented that they had done that this year with the County Planning money, but he did not have any problem with what they had spent the money on. He did not understand why any more than \$43,000.00 would be needed for this purpose, however.

S. Story said that this was why the group did not know what was in the reserve account and did not know what the Commissioners had planned for it, nor did the Committee have any idea if there was any money in that account anyway. What they did recognize was that whenever the County did go back out to referendum with whatever proposal might be at that time, the group recognized that there were costs associated with going out to referendum. K. Ward told him that it was about \$50,000.00. S. Story said that did not even include the study work that had happened before. That was why the group had suggested that money be set aside for the referendum and for any additional professional work that would be needed to examine the options, but he did not know what the \$43,000.00 was earmarked for. S. Butler told him he would have to ask the Commissioners.

R. McDonald said that, not only was \$43,000.00 in the account, but they were adding \$100,000.00 to Future Land and Buildings. "It's not being completely neglected."

K. Littlefield said they had not been aware that there was that Future Land and Buildings account available, but she did not think that allowed for much planning in the County Planning reserve

J. Bennett asked K. Littlefield if her group knew how much money they thought they needed to accomplish what they wanted to do. K. Littlefield replied that they did not.

B. Sneed said the Public part of the meeting has ended.

(RECESS)

FINAL BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING:

1010 – E.M.A. Budget at \$85,943:

S. Butler moved, R. McDonald seconded accepting the E.M.A. Budget at \$85,943.00. Vote passed 6 in favor and 1 opposed (R. Desmarais).

1015 – District Attorney Budget at \$148,036.00:

****R. McDonald moved, J. Bennett seconded accepting the District Attorney Budget at \$148,036.00. Unanimous.**

1020 – County Commissioners Budget at \$515,072.00:

****J. Bennett moved, R. McDonald seconded to accept the County Commissioners Budget at \$515,072.00. Unanimous.**

1025 – Treasurer’s Budget at \$51,232.00:

****R. McDonald moved, J. Bennett seconded accepting the Treasurer’s Budget at \$51,232.00. Unanimous.**

1030 – FACILITIES MANAGEMENT Budget at \$380,000.00:

****B. Payne moved, R. McDonald seconded accepting the Facilities Management Budget at \$380,000.00. Unanimous.**

1050 – JAIL BUDGET at \$1,707,147.00:

****S. Butler moved, R. McDonald seconded accepting the Jail Budget at \$1,701,147.00. Unanimous.**

1065 – REGISTRY OF DEEDS BUDGET at \$227,543.00:

****J. Bennett moved, R. McDonald seconded accepting the Registry of Deeds Budget at \$227,543.00. Unanimous.**

1070 – REGISTRY OF PROBATE BUDGET at \$170,000.00:

****R. McDonald moved, J. Bennett seconded accepting the Registry of Probate Budget at \$170,000.00. Vote passed 6 in favor and 1 opposed (S. Butler).**

1075 – SHERIFF’S BUDGET at \$982,059.00:

****B. Payne moved, R. McDonald seconded accepting the Sheriff’s Budget at \$982,059.00. Unanimous.**

1076 – COMMUNICATIONS CENTER BUDGET at \$644,781.00:

****J. Bennet moved, R. McDonald seconded accepting the Communications Center Budget at \$644,781.00. Unanimous.**

1080 – ADVERTISING & PROMOTION BUDGET at \$3,500.00:

****S. Butler moved, R. McDonald seconded accepting the Advertising & Promotion Budget at \$3,500.00. Vote passed 6 in favor and 1 opposed (B. Payne).**

1090 – AUDIT BUDGET at \$5,500.00:

****J. Bennett moved, R. McDonald seconded accepting the Audit Budget at \$5,500.00. Unanimous.**

1095 – DEBT SERVICE BUDGET at \$76,900.00:

****S. Butler moved, J. Bennett seconded accepting the Debt Service Budget at \$76,900.00. Unanimous.**

2000 – INTEREST BUDGET at \$35,000.00:

****B. Payne moved, J. Bennett seconded accepting the Interest Budget at \$35,000.00. Unanimous.**

2005 – UNIVERSITY OF ME COOPERATIVE EXTENSION BUDGET at \$54,787.00:

****R. McDonald moved, T. Biggs seconded accepting the U. of M. Cooperative Extension Budget at \$54,787.00. Unanimous.**

2025 – EMPLOYEE BENEFITS BUDGET at \$1,249,272.00:

****J. Bennett moved, B. Sneed seconded accepting the Employee Benefits Budget at \$1,249,272.00. Vote passed 6 to 1 opposed (T. Biggs).**

2035 – WALDO COUNTY SOIL & WATER BUDGET at \$19,675.00:

****S. Butler moved, R. McDonald seconded accepting the Waldo County Soil & Water Budget at \$19,675.00. Unanimous.**

2040 – RECORDS PRESERVATION BUDGET at \$24,291.50:

****R. McDonald moved, B. Payne seconded accepting the Records Preservation Budget at \$24,291.50. Unanimous.**

2050 – GRATANT WRITING BUDGET at \$15,000.00:

****J. Bennett moved, R. McDonald seconded accepting the Records Preservation Budget at \$15,000.00. Unanimous.**

RESERVE ACCOUNTS:

****S. Butler moved, R. McDonald seconded accepting the Reserve Accounts as budgeted at \$223,000.00. Unanimous.**

****S. Butler moved, J. Bennett seconded adjourn the meeting. Unanimous.**

****S. Butler moved, R. McDonald seconded to reconsider the last vote. Unanimous.**

DISCUSSION OF TAX CAP LD-#1:

There was some discussion about the lack of figures available and the illogical way the law had been developed.

J. Hyk said he was not convinced that anyone here was the authority on the subject of LD. 1. He asked if it made sense for everyone to meet again in two weeks. B. Sneed thought this whole thing was ridiculous and “crazy” because the Commissioners had no bottom line, no idea what their numbers were going to be. R. McDonald asked if this was the way the vote would have to be handled every year because there was no way to know what the cap was going to be. She thought it seemed shameful and pointless to have a cap if it had to be increased every year, because there was no way to have a firm tax cap.

****S. Butler moved, R. McDonald seconded to increase if necessary the Tax Cap if needed. Vote passed 9 in favor and 1 opposed.**

Then there was some discussion of when the Commissioners were supposed to vote. B. Arseneau read that the Commissioners and Budget Committee had to vote together. J. Hyk said he did not think the Commissioners could vote in this forum because it was not a Commissioners meeting. B. Sneed suggested that they call a Commissioners meeting right now. K. Ward also read: "A majority vote of the County Budget Committee and the Board of Commissioners will authorize the County to go over the cap."

J. Hyk said, "We're going to vote now, and then we're going to vote again at our own meeting. B. Arseneau said, "The law doesn't indicate when and in what form you vote, but it does say that you have to vote together."

There was continued debate about the voting process. G. Boetsch said he wanted to vote at the next Commissioners meeting. B. Sneed reminded him that it had to be a "combined vote of the Commissioners and the Budget Committee." G. Boetsch decided he wanted to abstain.

The motion was repeated, B. Arseneau checked, and a majority passed it.

****B. Sneed moved, J. Bennett seconded adjourning the meeting. Unanimous.**

Respectfully Submitted by _____
Barbara L. Arseneau, Waldo County Clerk