

**WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT SESSION  
PUBLIC HEARING/FINAL BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING  
DECEMBER 17, 2010**

**PRESENT:** Budget Committee Members Bill Sneed (Chairman), Nakomis Nelson, Roger Lee, Peter Curley, Richard Desmarais, James Kenney, James Bennett and Robert Henry Plausse; Commissioners Donald P. Berry, Amy R. Fowler and William D. Shorey; Commissioner-Elect Betty Johnson and County Clerk Barbara L. Arseneau to take the minutes.

**Call to Order:** Chairman Bill Sneed called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

**Introductions:** All at the main tables introduced themselves.

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

Bill Sneed opened the Public Hearing by asking if there were any questions of the public. Bruce Brierley, 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman- of Searsmont of 24 years said that he has seen many things and he does not want to proposed budget to go up and feels that this budget should be held at last years level.

B. Sneed called on Leslie Umans from Belfast and Brooks, who asked questions regarding the proposed storage of records at the Old Jail and Sheriff's Office once and where the funding would come from. She also asked where funding would come to preserve and maintain the Jail Keeper's house and the Jail. Commissioner A. Fowler explained that the funds were in the Facilities budget.

L. Umans asked about grant writing and wanting to understand why the Commissioners funded it at zero. Commissioner D. Berry explained that the Commissioners felt they didn't need to pay an outside person to do this as the County has a "master grant writer" in one of the departments and further explained that the County funds Eastern Maine Development, who does some grant writing and which is now also part of KWRED.

L. Umans asked what would occur if there were "over-drafts" with the new building project. A. Fowler explained that funding would depend on which portion of the building it was related to, and W. Shorey explained that the Commissioners did not anticipate overdrawing because they had looked at a lot of changes.

B. Sneed informed L. Umans that the next question would be her last one.

L. Umans asked why nothing was being funded for Reserves and questioned what would happen if there was a problem.

B. Sneed informed L. Umans that the Commissioners have \$100,000.00 in reserves as well as a contingency account for emergency situations.

Treasurer David Parkman introduced himself as the County Treasurer and explained that this year had been one of the best years as far as cash flow was concerned. He noted that the County

had not had to borrow from the Tax Anticipation Note until April. He further noted that the County is debt-free, that there was a surplus of over \$1,200,000.00 and that the County had returned tax money to the Towns. He noted that there were three Reserves of concern: the Severance Reserve, the Workers' Comp and Technology. He explained that the previous year, the County had \$87,500.00 from taxes to fund the Reserve accounts. He appealed to the Budget Committee to fund \$30,000.00 for Severance, \$30,000.00 for Workers' Comp and \$40,000.00 for Technology. He explained that the Commissioners had not asked for it, but he was asking right now. He commended former Commissioners Jethro Pease, John Hyk, Greg Boetsch and current Commissioners Amy Fowler, Donald Berry and William Shorey for very good money management.

B. Sneed commented that "as bleak a picture as the Treasurer wants to paint it," the County was no worse off than it had been for the last decade, adding that if the Commissioners had not requested this money, the Budget Committee should not second-guess it.

B. Sneed called on Brenda Bonneville of Belfast, who asked four questions pertaining to the new EMA/Sheriff building and the Reserves. First, she inquired of D. Parkman where the \$1,000,000.00 would come from and N. Nelson replied instead, "Your pocket." Second, B. Bonneville asked if the \$1,000,000.00 was dedicated to the proposed building. Third, she inquired about the funds for the Sheriff's portion of the building, given that the County had spent "a fair amount of money on legal and professional services. Deputy Treasurer Karen Trussell responded that this had come from the \$1,000,000.00.

B. Sneed called on Jim Miller from Congress Street in Belfast. Mr. Miller asked when the budget was available to the public, as the informational meeting was in October 23, 2010. B. Sneed replied that the budget was 99% done at that time.

A. Fowler explained that some of the money was coming from a grant that the EMA Director had been fortunate enough to obtain.

D. Parkman added that \$500,000.00 was earmarked for the Sheriff's building and \$500,000.00 came from undesignated funds and when asked by J. Miller how much he believed would be left, D. Parkman estimated about \$400,000.00.

J. Miller asked if these reserves would be rebuilt, and D. Berry explained that the Commissioners have voted to sell the 100 acres of land and to build up the reserve accounts with that money.

Budget Committee member Peter Curley said that this was his first time on the Budget Committee and it had been explained to him where the money was coming for the new building. There was brief discussion of how the reserve accounts are set up with specific purposes and that some are restricted. The reserves uses cannot be changed except by request to the state.

EMA Director Dale Rowley identified the reserve accounts being used to construct the new EMA/Sheriff building, including the grant funds. All totaled, this came to a little over \$1.5 million.

J. Miller said he was having a hard time understanding how the Commissioners have put aside half a million dollars.

Commissioner Berry explained that the money had been accumulated over years. Further discussion continued regarding funding of reserve accounts.

B. Sneed called on Susan Berwall from Belfast, who asked what the budget increases were over the last 10 years. Treasurer D. Parkman provided an overview of the past 10 years and commented on everyone doing a good job running their departments.

B. Sneed read the annual percentages of increase in the budgets from 2004 to current.

Discussion continued between several Budget Committee members and citizens, including Leslie Umans and Susan Berwall regarding use of the Reserve Accounts.

The Jail budget was briefly discussed and Sheriff Scott Story explained that the unified system, even though it has its flaws, had been fiscally good for Waldo County.

B. Sneed called on Seth Benz of Miller Street in Belfast. S. Benz provided a brief review of the EMA and Sheriff's Building and stated that the public had been under the impression that it was going to be just an EMA building. He appealed to the County Clerk to get the County Commissioners Court Session minutes done sooner and requested that information be available in a timely fashion. He stated that he believed minutes should be published within days of a court session.

D. Parkman commented about the lack of reporting by the press, noting that in years past, there had been excellent press coverage of County Commissioners court sessions, but this was no longer the case.

### **FINAL BUDGET MEETING:**

#### **1010 – E.M.A.**

**\*\*N. Nelson moved, J. Kenney seconded to fund the EMA personnel line at \$77,004.00.**

Discussion:

B. Sneed asked how many employees are involved in the unions. D. Berry said they were approaching twenty (20).

After brief discussion of unions, B. Sneed reminded the Committee that this matter was not the Budget Committee's discretion to be involved with. R. Desmarais confirmed this

J. Bennett said that he thought the budget should stay at the 2010 figures and that no raises should be given.

There was discussion of how to proceed and how to handle the personnel lines. B. Sneed stated that by the statute, the Budget Committee is required to provide an explanation for the changes that were made in each budget.

The Committee discussed union negotiations and salaries of all employees and getting a better understanding of what the Budget Committee can and cannot do.

**\*\*Motion passed with 7 in favor and 1 opposed.**

Contractual Services:

**\*\*B. Sneed moved, R. Desmarais seconded to fund contractual services at \$16,115.00.**

Discussion:

R. Lee said that he was not in sympathy with this approach. He wanted to skip to the Employment Benefits Budget (2025) and discuss the contractual services portion.

**\*\*R. Desmarais withdrew his second and B. Sneed withdrew his motion.**

**\*\*B. Sneed moved, N. Nelson seconded to suspend discussion on the EMA 1010 Budget and to move on to Employment Benefits Budget 2025.**

Discussion:

There was confusion regarding the health insurance so Commissioner Fowler and Commissioner Berry explained the history of how and why the County adopted a self-funded health insurance plan along with a brief history about what the employees pay toward the premiums. N. Nelson exclaimed that he felt that if the Budget Committee wanted to look at a zero budget, his opinion was that in order to do that, he would be comfortable cutting at least \$50,000.00 to \$65,000.00 from line 4724 - Health Insurance Premiums.

**\*\*Motion passed, with R. Desmarais opposed.**

### **2025 – EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

**\*\*N. Nelson moved, R. Lee seconded to fund line 4000 Contractual Services in Budget 2025 at \$1,100,000.00.**

Discussion:

P. Curley asked how much this cut will affect the employees. N. Nelson assured him that it affects no employees and that this was a reserve in the event that some employees have a health emergency.

**\*\*Motion passed, with R. Desmarais opposed.**

B. Sneed was ready to move onto EMA but N. Nelson requested that the Committee go back to Employee Benefits the Employee Benefits Budget.

**\*\*N. Nelson moved, R. Lee seconded to return to 2025 Budget line 4000 to take out \$9,700.00.**

Discussion:

N. Nelson state that he wanted to “get out of that line” and then look at each departmental budget as they saw them so then they would be at a zero budget and then the Committee could make rational decisions.

**\*\*Motion passed with 5 in favor and 3 opposed.**

**\*\*N. Nelson moved, J. Kenney seconded to fund line 4000 in the Employee Benefits (2025) Budget at \$1,090,811.00. Unanimous.**

### **BACK TO 1010 – E.M.A.**

**\*\*B. Sneed moved, N. Nelson seconded to fund the contractual services line in the EMA (1010) Budget at \$18,420.00. Unanimous.**

**\*\*N. Nelson moved, J. Kenney seconded to fund the commodities line in the EMA (1010) Budget at \$2,800.00. Unanimous.**

### **1015 – DISTRICT ATTORNEY**

B. Sneed briefly explained that the Registry of Deeds was losing a position, but the District Attorney’s office would be gaining that person.

**\*\*N. Nelson moved, R. Lee seconded to fund line 3000 in the amount of \$152,237.00. Unanimous.**

**\*\*N. Nelson moved, B. Sneed seconded to fund line 4000 in the amount of \$47,234.00.**

Discussion:

R. Desmarais asked why line 4600 Contracted Equipment had increased. G. Rushlau responded that it was the increase in number of software licenses for the prosecution software that they are required to use.

**\*\*Motion passed unanimously.**

**\*\*R. Plausse moved, J. Bennett seconded to fund line 5000 in the amount of \$7,700.00. Unanimous.**

**\*\*R. Plausse moved, N. Nelson seconded to fund line 7011 in the amount of \$3,750.00.**

Discussion:

B. Sneed asked if this was a one-time Capital Outlay item and why it couldn’t be taken out of the Technology budget. G. Rushlau explained that this is a unique situation in that the prosecution software is changing from an old version to a new version. There was additional explanation from Technology Consultant James Arseneau and G. Rushlau.

**\*\*Unanimous.**

## **1020 – COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**\*\*N. Nelson moved, J. Kenney seconded to fund the Commissioners (1020) Budget at \$460,855.00.**

Discussion:

B. Sneed asked about wireless data cards being a monthly cost. Technology Consultant J. Arseneau explained that it was a typographical error and is actually a yearly cost.

R. Desmarais questioned the Commissioner Chairman being given extra funds for the additional work that position does; expressing that he felt it should be decreased by \$1,800.00.

**\*\*N. Nelson amended his motion to reduce the amount by \$1,800.00 for a total of \$459,055.00. R. Lee seconded that amended motion.**

**\*\*Motion passed unanimously as amended.**

## **1025 – TREASURER**

**\*\*J. Kenney moved, B. Sneed seconded to fund the Treasurers (1025) Budget at \$61,501.00. Unanimous.**

## **1030 – FACILITIES**

**\*\*N. Nelson moved, J. Kenney seconded to fund the Facilities (1030) Budget at \$240,472.00.**

Discussion:

B. Sneed asked about the generators. D. Rowley said that all generators are in the Facilities Budget.

**\*\*Motion passed unanimously.**

## **1065 – REGISTRY OF DEEDS**

**\*\*R. Plausse moved, J. Bennett seconded to fund the Registry of Deeds (1065) Budget at \$195,387.00.**

Discussion:

B. Sneed asked about MacImage and how that lawsuit was going. Register of Deeds Deloris Page explained that Waldo County was dismissed from the case but the case could come back at another time.

**\*\*Motion passed unanimously.**

## **1070 – PROBATE**

**\*\*J. Kenney moved, R. Lee seconded to fund Registry of Probate (1070) Budget at \$189,998.00. Unanimous.**

## **1075 – SHERIFF**

**\*\*N. Nelson moved, J. Kenney seconded to fund Sheriff’s Patrol (1075) Budget at \$1,201,878.00.**

Discussion:

B. Sneed asked about the gas item line.

W. Shorey explained that he was the one who had reduced that line item due to the economy at the time, but he believed that now the \$5,000.00 should be put back into the budget.

R. Desmarais questioned the Sheriff regarding the “big jump” on line 5375 – Training/School/Supplies.

S. Story responded that he had to replace three full time people this year and the price at the Academy had gone up.

B. Sneed discussed amending the motion and adding \$900.00 to the fuel line.

**\*\*R. Plausse moved, J. Bennett seconded to amend the motion to fund the Sheriff’s Patrol (1075) Budget at \$1,202,778.00. Unanimous.**

## **1076 – COMMUNICATIONS CENTER**

**\*\*B. Sneed moved, R. Plausse seconded to fund the Communications Center (1076) Budget at \$773,752.00.**

Discussion:

P. Curley questioned why the travel line had increased.

Communications Director Owen Smith explained that there are no online classes the employees can take so they need to travel to the classes as the State mandates them.

R. Desmarais asked why there was a 40% increase in line 5375 - Training/School/Supplies. O. Smith replied that the Center should actually be sending three or four people for training, but usually can only send two. He explained that the dispatchers have to keep educated and continue learning.

**\*\*Motion passed unanimously.**

## **1080 – ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION**

**\*\*R. Plausse moved, B. Sneed seconded to fund the Advertising and Promotion (1080) Budget at \$10,000.00.**

Discussion:

J. Bennett stated that Time & Tide should be fully funded as he felt they have done a great job.

Ron Desrosiers, who was present on behalf of Time & Tide, gave a brief description of what Time & Tide has done for the County of Waldo.

**\*\*J. Bennett moved to amend the motion to fund Advertising and Promotion (1080) Budget at \$12,125.00.**

**\*\*Motion passed with P. Curley opposed.**

### **1090 – AUDIT**

**\*\*J. Bennett moved, R. Desmarais seconded to fund the Auditing (1090) Budget at \$8,000.00.**

Discussion:

Treasurer D. Parkman explained why the \$15,000.00 was taken out of the budget, as this was paid from the Reserve account for the audit for EMA. B. Sneed asked if this was a reoccurring expense. D. Parkman explained that the additional audit was for grant money received during 2009 totaling more than \$500,000.00, which requires a special audit. He stated that grant money received in 2010 had not reached \$500,000.00, so no special audit would need to be performed. He noted that this could change from year to year depending on how much grant money was brought into the County.

**\*\*Motion passed unanimously.**

### **2000 – INTEREST**

**\*\*R. Desmarais moved, B. Sneed seconded to fund the Interest (2000) Budget at \$17,875.00.**

Discussion:

There was discussion between Treasurer Parkman and B. Sneed as to whether it was appropriate to take the \$2,125.00 out of the account to make up for the addition of funds to Time & Tide.

**\*\*Motion passed unanimously.**

### **2005 – UNIVERSITY OF MAINE EXTENSION**

**\*\*J. Bennett moved, B. Sneed seconded to fund the Waldo County Extension (2005) Budget at \$42,702.00. Unanimous.**

### **2035 – WALDO COUNTY SOIL & WATER DISTRICT**

**\*\*R. Plausse moved, N. Nelson seconded to fund the Waldo County Soil & Water District (2035) Budget at \$20,475.00. Unanimous.**

### **2045 – RESERVES**

**\*\*J. Bennett moved, B. Sneed seconded to fund the Reserves (2045) Budget at zero. Unanimous.**

**2050 – GRANT WRITING**

**\*\*J. Bennett moved, B. Sneed seconded to fund Grant Writing (2050) Budget at zero. Unanimous.**

**BACK TO 2025 – EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

**\*\*N. Nelson moved, B. Sneed seconded to fund Employee Benefits (2025) Budget at \$1,091,608.00. Unanimous.**

**BOTTOM FIGURE: \$7,457,316.00 at a zero increase.**

**\*\*B. Sneed moved, N. Nelson seconded to moot the third part of the meeting for L.D. 1. Unanimous.**

**\*\*B. Sneed moved, N. Nelson seconded to adjourn the Budget Committee meeting. Unanimous.**

**Respectfully submitted by \_\_\_\_\_  
Veronica Spear, Deputy County Clerk**