

**WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT SESSION
MAY 10, 2005**

PRESENT: Commissioners John M. Hyk (Chairman), Charles G. Boetsch and Amy R. Fowler. Also present was Treasurer David Parkman, Deputy Treasurer Karen Ward and County Clerk Barbara L. Arseneau.

TREASURERS REPORT:

Present for this discussion was Treasurer David A. Parkman and Deputy Treasurer Karen J. Ward.

REVENUES:

D. Parkman reported that 28% of the anticipated revenues have been received at this point in the year and expressed that this was a bit low.

APPROPRIATIONS:

D. Parkman noted that the Part Time accounts in both the Jail and Communications Center were running very high and would be over expended well before the end of the year if things kept going at the rate they were.

WARRANTS:

D. Parkman read expenditures from the Active/Restricted Capital Reserve accounts for both the April 29, 2005 and the May 10, 2005 Warrants.

****G. Boetsch moved, A. Fowler seconded authorizing payment of the April 29, 2005 Restricted/Active Reserves in the amount of \$10,552.02. Unanimous.**

****G. Boetsch moved A. Fowler seconded authorizing payment of the April 29, 2005 Regular Warrant in the amount of \$97,695.16. Unanimous.**

****G. Boetsch moved, A. Fowler seconded authorizing payment of the May 10, 2005 Restricted/Active Reserves in the amount of \$5,750.01. Unanimous.**

****G. Boetsch moved, A. Fowler seconded authorizing payment of the May 10, 2005 Regular Warrant in the amount of \$80,262.34. Unanimous.**

****A. Fowler moved, G. Boetsch seconded accepting the Treasurer's report as presented. Unanimous.**

D. Parkman expressed his concern about Robert Howe serving as lobbyist for the County Commissioners Association. There was brief interchange of thoughts on this by the Treasurer and County Commissioners and it was generally felt that he was not "aggressive" or "effective" enough.

(Now present were Sheriff Scott Story and Communications Director Owen Smith.)

S. Story, when asked, said that if B. Howe was “given marching orders, he marches.” He added that even if B. Howe personally disagreed with whatever position he was to lobby for, he works hard to push for the consensus of the MCCA group. S. Story explained that it is extremely hard when there are sixteen counties issuing “different marching orders.” He further added that B. Howe recognized that testimony from the Commissioners themselves, when present at hearings, was often more effective and more impressive than words from him as lobbyist, so at those times, he “hangs back” and lets those individuals have the stronger voice.

ISLESBORO SECESSION HEARING UPDATE:

D. Parkman briefly shared what happened at the last work session. Waldo County Selectman Chair Kathy Littlefield had been invited to attend the workshop and wasn't allowed to speak. Islesboro, who claims much of their residents are below poverty level, were able to afford two paid lobbyists who were allowed to speak.

COMMUNICATIONS CENTER REPORT

Present for this discussion were Communications Director Owen Smith and Sheriff Scott Story.

1. O. Smith presented a request from Thorndike Director of Emergency Management Dale Rowley to place a new radio repeater and new frequency for use by Brooks, Freedom, Monroe, Montville, Troy and Unity. O. Smith felt that this request could be met and did not anticipate any problems, but felt that it should be stipulated that any other towns wanting something like this will need to use the same frequency. J. Hyk requested that language be incorporated into this agreement that if there were any problems caused by this addition to the tower, it would have to be removed. The County's operations must be priority. O. Smith assured the Commissioners that he would see to this.
2. O. Smith requested permission to plant a tree in memory of Dispatcher Dennis “Bear” Bryant, who passed away April 27, 2005. After brief discussion of which trees should not be planted, such as a weeping willow, which causes untold issues with water sources and pipes, the Commissioners authorized planting a tree in Dennis Bryant's memory and for a plaque to be placed at the base of the tree.
3. O. Smith informed the Commissioners that the Communications Center needs to add phone lines and the recorder needs to be upgraded in order to record those additional lines. The cost to run the lines and do the work will be split between the Sheriff's Dept. and Communications Center budgets. O. Smith explained that it only made sense to install a new recorder because just to upgrade the existing one to handle the additional lines would be \$12,000.00. To upgrade to a totally new “generation” recorder would be \$18,000.00. The existing one was installed when the building was constructed in 2000. J. Hyk asked if this request to upgrade was being “driven” by the call sharing that the State wants the County to participate in with them. O. Smith replied that it was, but this upgrade needed to be done soon, anyway. J. Hyk asked if this had been known for the last budget cycle. O. Smith responded that it could have been brought up. O. Smith suggested using Contingency funds or Equipment Service Reserve funds.

O. Smith then suggested that another option was “lease-to-purchase.” Once the lease was concluded, the County could upgrade again.

S. Story agreed that this was not an emergency situation but because the County was planning on doing a 60-day call-sharing trial with the State, it meant this would need to be upgraded sooner than the next budget cycle. S. Story spoke about the call sharing for a moment. He explained that he was not concerned about the fieldwork aspect because this would mean that there would be more law enforcement coverage in the County and he would not have to hire any more deputies this coming year. It also increases officer safety. There were concerns about not having the lines recorded, and there were other concerns that were dispatch related that would have to be assessed after the trial period.

The scope of work would include about \$600.00 to install the lines. 7 large phones would have to be re-configured.

A. Fowler asked what would be the result if this trial proved that call sharing was not going to work out. She was concerned that there would be all these extra, unused lines. S. Story explained that these lines are needed anyway now.

The Commissioners asked how much money was currently in the Equipment Service. B. Arseneau replied that, because she had known this funding question would be presented, she had checked and there was \$12,173.00 at the current time. When asked how much funding would be required from the Equipment Service Reserve, O. Smith felt it would be about \$3,000.00 if the County went with the lease-to-purchase arrangement.

G. Boetsch stated that he was of the understanding that there was a mandate in the discussion process for this call sharing, but it had been tabled. J. Hyk commented that the County “was doing what the State wants us to do, and we have to pay.”

S. Story stated that the police were not the ones “driving” this – it is the legislature. He felt it would be beneficial, however, because even if it costs something to implement it, it is still less expensive than hiring a full time deputy to the tune of about \$70,000.00 when the cruiser is factored in.

J. Hyk wondered if a bad precedent was being set by taking out of Equipment Service. He reviewed the descriptions of the Reserves and what the funds were to be used for in each account. After looking at the Technology Reserve, J. Hyk asked if there was any funding that could be used from the Technology operating budget. B. Arseneau said she had also inquired about this with Jim Arseneau and the answer was definitely not. D. Parkman expressed his concern over dipping into the Technology reserve because it had been difficult to fund this reserve and it would mean the Budget Committee would have to be approached for even more funding during the next budget cycle to replace this.

The Technology budget was briefly discussed. O. Smith stated that radio purchases are currently funded through the Communications Center budget and wondered if a reserve should be set up for the inevitable radio repairs and upgrades the County must deal with. He suggested putting all of the technology purchases in the Technology budget and Technology Reserve. J. Hyk wasn't sure if this was the way to do it, as some technology is department-oriented.

After further discussion, J. Hyk suggested that the Communications Director and Sheriff be authorized to make the arrangements for this lease-to-own upgrade and then come back before the Commissioners with a funding mechanism that pulls from the Sheriff's Department and Communications budgets. The Commissioners then made the following motion:

****G. Boetsch moved, A. Fowler seconded using \$3,000.00 from the Equipment Services Reserve (0220) to fund the remaining portion of the lease-to-purchase for the new recording system with the caveat that this \$3,000.00 would be utilized only in the absence of any other funding available. Unanimous.**

DEPUTIZED ASSISTANTS:

S. Story informed the Commissioners that he had deputized Lincolnville Police Chief William Lombarde and Belfast Police Chief Jeffrey Trafton so that they might serve as deputies on occasion and asked for authority to hire them periodically on an as-needed basis.

****A. Fowler moved, G. Boetsch seconded authorizing the occasional hire of Lincolnville Chief of Police William Lombarde and Belfast Chief of Police Jeffrey Trafton. Unanimous.**

BELFAST-AN OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS (USE OF SUPERIOR COURTHOUSE TREE:

Present for this discussion was Elizabeth Hieronymus, representing the group putting on the "Old Fashioned Christmas" in Belfast during December/January of 2005-6.

E. Hieronymus described the activities lined up and approved by the City of Belfast for the "Old Fashioned Christmas" during the 2005 Christmas season and described the ways she felt this would enhance the "spirit and shopping" during the season and would support local charities.

The purpose in meeting with the County Commissioners was to request permission to string white lights on the large tree on the Superior Courthouse property. The City of Belfast would provide the electricity and the safe installation of the wiring to supply this electricity. Steven Drake of Central Maine Power had agreed, free of charge, to bring a bucket truck and string the lights on the tree. E. Hieronymus requested that the lights be allowed to remain on the tree during the off-season months to avoid the hassle of removing them. She had confirmed with one of the local plant nurseries that this would not damage the tree in any way or look bad during the summer.

****G. Boetsch moved, A. Fowler seconded to accept this proposal.** There was brief discussion of whether or not this included other faiths and it was decided that this was not the concern of the County Commissioners, but that it should be strictly the business or commercial aspect they were dealing with. The Commissioners agreed to send a letter to the Belfast Old Fashioned Christmas group indicating that if leaving the lights on the tree during the year became a problem, it would be beholden upon that group to remove the lights. The Commissioners also wanted it to be very clear that if there are any accidents, it will fall upon the City of Belfast. E. Hieronymus indicated that it would actually fall upon the insurance of the Chamber of Commerce. **Unanimous.**

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION – EMA DIRECTOR RICHARD FARRIS:

Somerset County E.M.A. Director Robert Higgins issued a certificate of appreciation to Waldo County E.M.A. Director Richard Farris "for his continued dedication to Homeland Security for State and Nation and the State Wide Cooperative Mutual Aid efforts between our respective counties. His expertise was instrumental in our massive undertaking of a Tri-County Weapons

of Mass Destruction Exercise, which will only serve to better enhance preparation and protection of our citizens.”

G. Boetsch presented the Certificate of Appreciation to E.M.A. Director Richard Farris and extended congratulations and commendation from the Waldo County Commissioners, as well. R. Farris expressed his appreciation for this honor.

SNOW DAMAGE:

R. Farris informed the Commissioners that it was doubtful that any funding would be forthcoming for the damage caused by this winter’s snowstorms.

R. Farris told the Commissioners that the towns of Waldo County have been reporting rain damage to R. Farris and he, in turn, reports it to the State. In order to qualify for relief funds, there is a minimum amount of damage required. Currently about \$450,000 to \$500,000 has been reported, which exceeds the minimum requirement. R. Farris stated that he has instructed the towns to make their roads passable, but to wait to complete the repairs until the funding arrives to do so.

When asked, R. Farris responded that F.E.M.A (Federal Emergency Management Agency) comes to look directly at each town’s damaged sites individually and assigns the amount of damages.

FUEL OIL BIDS 2005-2006:

B. Arseneau read the sealed bids as follows:

1. Thompson’s Fuel: A fixed rate of \$1.63 per gallon, with the service rate of \$46.00 per hour.
2. Community Fuels: A fixed rate of \$1.74 per gallon, with the service rate of \$46.00 per hour, additional for weekends and evening.
3. Irving Oil: A rate of \$1.665 per gallon, but not fixed. The service rate would be \$67.00 per hour.

****G. Boetsch moved, A. Fowler seconded accepting Thompson’s Fuel Oil’s bid at a fixed rate of \$1.63 per gallon and the service rate of \$46.00 per hour. Unanimous.**

2005 MINUTES APPROVED:

****G. Boetsch moved, J. Hyk seconded to accept Commissioners Court Session minutes from April 12, 2005 and September 14, 2004. Unanimous.**

CORRESPONDENCE

Present for reviewing correspondence was County Clerk Barbara Arseneau to discuss correspondence and Deputy County Clerk Veronica LaBreck, to take minutes.

1. B. Arseneau informed the Commissioners that there would be a State Claims Hearing on June 15, 2005 in Belfast in the Waldo County Superior Courthouse. Commissioner Boetsch agreed to serve as the Commissioner representative at this hearing.

2. B. Arseneau read a letter from Kennebec Valley Council of Government requesting a letter of support from the County Commissioners so that they may qualify for some federal funding. The Commissioners authorized this letter to be written and sent by B. Arseneau.
 3. B. Arseneau informed the Commissioners that Ken Winters of Winters Associates, who has been putting together a compensation study on behalf of the County, had called last week to say that they were about one month behind due to lack of cooperation with the companies/groups they had sent surveys to. Mr. Winters also asked if it would be permissible for him to consult with a benefits attorney he was already familiar with, rather than using Attorney Ed Feibel. The Commissioners agreed, as long as this was still part of the study and would not be costing them extra. B. Arseneau also informed the Commissioners that Mr. Winters had just undergone surgery and passed a get-well card around to be signed.
 4. At the most recent Safety/Department Heads Association meeting the falling matters were discussed and B. Arseneau related them to the Commissioners:
 - Jim Conley had noticed that some people have trouble negotiating the steps in the front of the District Courthouse and felt the situation would be much improved if a railing were installed. He would be providing estimates, most likely at the June Commissioners' Court Session.
 - The Department Heads requested that they be present when Ken Winters revealed the results of the Compensation Study to the County Commissioners. The Commissioner agreed that this would be a good idea.
 5. A response to the request to allow a walking trail to be established on part of the County's property abutting the Water District in Belfast was sent, as requested by the Commissioners.
 6. Register of Probate Joanne Crowley submitted the request that her previous resignation from the MACo Committee, dated March 29, 2005, be reinstated. The Commissioners agreed and a replacement was to be determined at the next Department Head Association meeting at the end of May.
 7. Probate Clerk Anne Roberts submitted her resignation, with her last day of work being May 20, 2005.
- **G. Boetsch moved, A. Fowler seconded accepting, with regret, the resignation of Probate Clerk Anne Roberts. Unanimous.**
8. The former Commissioners' Office photocopier, which currently resides at the Communications Center, is now available to any department in need of a photocopier. B. Arseneau said she had notified all departments.
 9. Interior signage for both the District and Superior Courthouses was briefly discussed. B. Arseneau told the Commissioners that Superior/District Court Clerk Terri Curtis had inquired about the sign on the Law Library also indicating that it was the Archivist Room

and wondered if it should state that. The Commissioners instructed B. Arseneau to explain to T. Curtis that because there was no longer the need for the entire room to be used for a law library, the County Archives would be located in the other half of the room indefinitely, until a permanent, appropriate archival vault or facility is built in the future, so the sign would need to indicate that the Archives were located there.

10. Susan Bulay has let all counties know that, over the next few months, the Maine GeoLibrary Board will be initiating a study of the current and potential use of geographic information systems (GIS) by Maine counties. The MCCA voted to support this study at the January 12, 2005 meeting. The first of the briefings is scheduled for June 10, 2005 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the University of Southern Maine in Portland. An R.S.V.P. is required. None of the Waldo County Commissioners would be attending.
11. Ann Schneider of Maine Municipal Association conducted the annual work site survey on April 1, 2005. The report was received on May 3, 2005. There were a few minor areas that required attention and would be taken care of as soon as possible, but generally, things have improved over the last two years.
12. Duke Energy Gas Transmission sent a letter to the County Commissioners notifying the Commissioners that the towns of Winterport, Frankfort Searsmont and Liberty would be part of the study corridor for the proposed expansion of Maritimes' existing pipeline referred to as "pipeline looping." Maritimes and Northeast Pipeline will be contacting property owners within the study corridor.

(The Commissioners convened a tax abatement hearing between Richard Philbrook and the Town of Knox Assessors at 11:00 a.m. These minutes follow this Court Session minutes.)

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS & COMMISSIONERS REPORTS:

The Commissioners had nothing to report at this time.

The next Waldo County Commissioners Court Session will be June 14, 2005 at 9:00 a.m.

****G. Boetsch moved, A. Fowler seconded adjourning the meeting at 11:45 a.m.**

Unanimous.

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