

**WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COURT SESSION  
(SPECIAL SESSION)  
OCTOBER 23, 2008**

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Donald P. Berry, Sr., Amy Fowler, and John M. Hyk (Chairman). Present to take minutes was County Clerk Barbara Arseneau.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Review of FY 2009 Budget Requests

**UNIVERSITY OF MAINE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION BUDGET (2005):**

Present for this review was Rick Kersbergen and Barbara Gould. R. Kersbergen explained that the budget is reduced from the 2007 request because the County's Facilities Budget has absorbed several maintenance lines. The salary portion did increase, so the overall budget only went up \$1,000.00 from 2007. R. Kersbergen noted that the Extension has already pre-purchased a large volume of fuel, so that will reduce expenses in 2008 for fuel.

J. Hyk asked if anyone had any questions. The Commissioners did not. They commended the Extension staff for being very efficient and continuing to hold their budgets down.

**\*\*D. Berry moved, A. Fowler seconded to accept the University of Maine Cooperative Extension (2005) as presented in the amount of \$41,529.00. Unanimous.**

**REGISTRY OF DEEDS BUDGET (1065):**

Present for this review was Register of Deeds Deloris Page. D. Berry explained that he did not feel he could approve the Deeds Clerk (New) position. D. Page explained that this actually was not a new position, but one that was vacant. She explained that she would be willing to not fill it this year, as long as it would be understood that in future years, if the work pace increased, she would be requesting for that to be filled again.

The Commissioners asked why Capital Outlay was lower than the previous year. D. Page explained that last year a copier needed to be purchased, which was a more costly item than what was being requested this year.

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, D. Berry seconded to accept the Deeds (1065) budget as amended at \$214,878.00. Unanimous.**

J. Hyk asked D. Page's opinion on what she would do if the economy continued to worsen and there was a drastic reduction in her budget by the Budget Committee - would she recommend reducing by a position or to go to a four-day workweek? D. Page responded that she would need to reduce the workweek because she felt she could not run the Deeds Registry with fewer people, since the Registry is on the second floor.

The Commissioners thanked D. Page for meeting with them.

**ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION BUDGET (1080) – Waldo Community Action Partners:**

Ed Murphy of WCAP was present to meet with the Commissioners. He reported that during the year, 2,097,000 miles had been logged, 79,000-plus trips had been made and 2726 people had been served by the transportation system. He explained that this is funded in every community, plus the County. When the County funds a dollar, the State matches a dollar, and the federal government funds a dollar.

The Commissioners praised the service offered by WCAP Transportation. A. Fowler stated that she was amazed that in spite of rocketing fuel costs in 2008, the budget request has not increased for 2009.

**\*\*D. Berry moved, A. Fowler seconded to approve this budget as requested at \$3,500.00. Unanimous.**

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, D. Berry seconded to fund the Advertising & Promotion line minus the \$5,000.00 requested by Eastern Maine Development Corporation, at a total of \$7,353.50. Unanimous.**

### **CORRESPONDENCE:**

Reporting Correspondence to the Waldo County Commissioners was County Clerk Barbara Arseneau, as follows:

1. Deputy Register of Deed Stacy Grant will reach the twelve-year step on November 4, 2008 with an increase to \$15.73 per hour. The Commissioners noted this.

2. Communications Director Owen Smith has recommended rehiring Katie Dakin, who resigned her full-time position as Dispatcher effective March 20, 2008. The rehire will be effective October 12, 2008 at the two-year level of \$15.44 per hour.

**\*\*D. Berry moved, A. Fowler seconded to rehire Katie Dakin as full-time Dispatcher effective October 12, 2008 at \$15.44 per hour.**

3. District Courthouse Lease:

B. Arseneau informed the Commissioners that the Courthouse lease still has not been signed by the State. Furthermore, the rent is not being paid at the correct rate. The Commissioners had a conference call with Regional Court Administrator Ted Glessner. When they spoke with him, they informed him that rate is being paid incorrectly. Regarding the lease, T. Glessner explained that the hold-up has been due to the State requiring a specific format for the contract. The State only wanted amendments to the current lease, not a new contract altogether. J. Hyk explained that the Commissioners had responded favorably to the counter proposal by the State. T. Glessner agreed this should be resolved by now and thought it had been and told the Commissioners that he would look into this today.

4. The Eastern Maine Development Corporation Board of Directors and Executive Vice President has invited the Commissioners to the 2008 Corporators' Meeting on November 13, 2008 at EMDC on 40 Harlow Street in Bangor from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. The Commissioners were not able to attend.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**\*\*D. Berry moved, A. Fowler seconded to approve the minutes from the County Commissioners September 9, 2008 Court Session with amendments. Unanimous.**

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, D. Berry seconded to approve the minutes from the Tri-Town Snow Riders vs. the Town of Morrill tax abatement hearing. Unanimous.**

**\*\*D. Berry moved, A. Fowler seconded to approve the minutes from the December 13, 2007 County Commissioners Court Session. Unanimous.**

### **REGISTRY OF PROBATE BUDGET:**

Present for this review was Register of Probate Pro Tempore Sharon Peavey. A. Fowler inquired about the passport photo camera being requested in the budget. S. Peavey explained that, instead of sending people

away to get a photo for their passport, having a camera would not only be practical, it would eventually make money for the County. After 85 photos, it will have paid for itself. It is a Fuji camera that comes with its own printer.

J. Hyk noted that the budget is reduced and asked why. S. Peavey explained that the Judge had reduced the Court Appointments line, and salaries are a little lower due to staffing changes. The Republican Journal has indicated that their rates will be increased. S. Peavey noted that the Registry charges fees to run the public notices to try and offset some of the expenses.

\$5,500.00 has been spent, and in Restitution, \$6,811.00 has been brought in at this point in the year.

S. Peavey indicated that an overage is anticipated in the Printing and Engraving this year because forms have changed and needed to be purchased. Some necessary forms could not be purchased this year because of the cost. This is why that line has been increased for next year.

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, D. Berry seconded approving the Registry of Probate (1070) budget as presented at \$178,653.77. Unanimous.**

J. Hyk asked S. Peavey's opinion on how she would handle things if the economy worsened – would she reduce a position, or go to a four-day workweek? He explained that the work week would be shortened – it would not be four ten-hour days. After some thought, S. Peavey felt that, if those were the only two options, she would recommend the four-day workweek. She felt it would be extremely difficult to try and run the Probate Registry with only three people.

#### **PROJECTED REVENUE:**

After a quick review of the projected revenue, the Commissioners asked K. Trussell to check on the Deeds revenue, as they did not believe it would be the same as the previous year, which is what is projected.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS CENTER BUDGET (1076):**

Present for this review was Communications Director Owen Smith. O. Smith assured the Commissioners that there is no “fluff” in his budget. There is nothing “inflated,” as has been stated in recent letters in the newspaper by a Belfast Councilor.

O. Smith reviewed the various lines in the budget request. A. Fowler wondered if a lease had gone up in the tower site line. O. Smith explained that it appears the County may be able to use the Point Lookout property to install a tower to complete the southern part of the coverage. He based the figure on the cost to use the Tower in the Town of Liberty. J. Hyk asked if anyone else would be speaking for the Communications Budget. O. Smith felt that he would be the major speaker. A. Fowler felt that it helped last year when the Belfast Police Chief spoke up for the budget request. J. Hyk felt that someone from the Board of Directors should be prepared to speak on behalf of the Board. O. Smith said he hoped this would be the case, and that those who agencies are using and working with Dispatch would also speak up. He also commented that if crime increases and the Sheriff's Office gets busier, it all starts first with Dispatch, as those calls come to the Dispatch Center first. J. Hyk felt that the Commissioners should take the position that the budget is recommended by the Board of Directors, who are comprised of fire, emergency and law enforcement agencies, and if the Board recommends this budget, the Commissioners are not going to “second-guess” that budget.

D. Berry stated that he had been working with the Communications aspect of things pretty much since its inception. He explained that another dispatch center operates by billing the town individually as service is rendered. "This (the Waldo County Dispatch budget) is our bill for using this service." He commented that running things the way Waldo does is the most efficient way to offer this service, in terms of cost and service to the citizens.

**\*\*D. Berry moved, A. Fowler seconded to accept the Communications Center Budget (1076) as presented. Unanimous.**

J. Hyk asked if the ergonomic furniture was important. O. Smith confirmed that it certainly was. He explained that the Workers Compensation ergonomic expert "couldn't speak highly enough" about this furniture and its benefits.

O. Smith noted that Somerset and Lincoln Counties pay their dispatchers more than Waldo County, now. He commented that Waldo is no longer the leader in salary, but added that the wages and benefits are still "excellent."

J. Hyk asked when every town voted to do what is now being done, wasn't it a question that went out to referendum? O. Smith confirmed that it was and that the referendum passed. There was brief discussion about funding and how things would work if the Communications Center was funded by what each individual town uses. O. Smith said he knew some towns would be pleased with that and the towns that used it the most would realize a much greater expense. He did not advocate funding it this way.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS CENTER NEGOTIATING TEAM FOR COMMISSIONERS:**

D. Berry wanted to record the Communications Center Negotiating Team as Follows:

- Communications Center Director Owen Smith
- Commissioner Donald Berry
- County Clerk Barbara Arseneau
- Human Resources/Payroll Director Michelle Wadsworth, as a back-office resource

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, J. Hyk seconded accepting this group as the Negotiating Team for the Communications Center. Unanimous.**

#### **TREASURER'S BUDGET (1025):**

Present for this discussion was Deputy Treasurer Karen Trussell.

When asked about the salary, K. Trussell explained that the Treasurer's salary is at a 4% increase. The Deputy Treasurer position is 6.9% increased above 2007, at the recommendation of the Treasurer. He would have preferred to increase it more to be more equitable, but felt it would not be palatable to the Budget Committee.

**\*\*D. Berry moved, A. Fowler seconded to accept the Treasurer's Budget as presented. Unanimous.**

#### **EMPLOYEE BENEFITS:**

Present for this review was Deputy Treasurer Karen Trussell, Human Resources/Payroll Director Michelle Wadsworth and County Clerk Barbara Arseneau.

The Commissioners felt that the Benefits that had been taken out for the Jail need to be spelled out more clearly on the Jail Budget summary.

After lengthy discussion, the County Commissioners reduced the Health Insurance total from \$939,900.00 to \$925,000.00 and Workers' Compensation to \$32,500.00.

The Commissioners also felt that there should be a sheet that shows the County's portion and what the employees will be paying with the total of all at the bottom.

M. Wadsworth quickly reviewed the Deferred Compensation matches and recommended reducing that to \$7000.00 because it was realized that the County no longer matches funds for employees enrolled in both Maine State Retirement and the Deferred Compensation simultaneously, which had been the case previously.

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, D. Berry seconded accepting the Employee Benefits Budget (2025) as amended at \$861,930.00. Unanimous.**

**RECORDS PRESERVATION BUDGET (2040):**

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, D. Berry seconded accepting the Records Preservation Budget (2040) as presented at \$2,490.00. Unanimous.**

**GRANT WRITING BUDGET (2050):**

Present for this review were Barbara Arseneau and Karen Trussell. The Commissioners asked B. Arseneau if any funds had been applied for and/or brought in this year. B. Arseneau responded that the grant funding research had not turned up any grant opportunities because the grants available this year have not been applicable to the County, so none have been applied for at this point.

The County Commissioners felt the Grant Writing budget should be reduced to \$4,000.00 for research only. If a grant is applied for, J. Hyk said it would be taken out of Contingency funds.

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, D. Berry seconded accepting the Grant Writing Budget (2050) as amended at \$4,000.00. Unanimous.**

**SHERIFF'S BUDGET:**

S. Story and R. Keating were present for the review. S. Story started by explaining that the Sheriff's and Chief Deputy's salaries are now paid in full from this budget as result of Jail consolidation.

S. Story reported that the State of Maine is reducing the State Police presence; therefore the County will now be responsible for 17% more coverage. A. Fowler wanted to know if this was in writing. S. Story stated that Maine State Police Lieutenant Madden has offered to come to speak to the Budget Committee and explain why they State will no longer be covering Waldo County the way they were. He explained that this is why two additional patrolmen have been added to the budget. The decision will need to be made as to whether the coverage will remain at the level it has been, which would involve hiring the two additional patrol officers, or if it is decided that two new patrol officers will not be hired, then coverage will not be the same level. It may involve prioritizing and delays in responses.

The Commissioners felt that this change in coverage really needed to be in writing so that the State has to account for why it is pulling out of Waldo County. They wondered why only Waldo County is being singled out for this, acknowledging that it would increase the budget.

R. Keating reminded all present that Waldo County is doing 80% of the calls in Waldo County. The State insisted on this call-sharing and told the Sheriff's Office that their men needed more work, and if the County didn't do this call-sharing, they would pull their troops out of Waldo County. The State has made changes since then. The State came back and complained that it is too busy and they can't follow-up on the calls for service. S. Story said there was the request by the State, and there has been a push toward regionalization and joining forces. He explained that even before the State came in, the County was having difficulty following up on calls – it was only “putting out fires.” R. Keating reminded all that crime is on the rise, and is being influenced by the poor economy. S. Story emphasized that the patrol division can handle the added load, but it will not be at the response rate it is now. R. Keating also stated that taxpayers pay for County services, but also pay for State services and this reduction in service to the County is not fair to the taxpayers.

J. Hyk asked S. Story to request an explanation in writing, because he worried that if he wasn't able to attend a budget meeting, there would be no record. R. Keating assured the Commissioners Lt. Madden would be present to speak at the budget meeting. R. Keating also suggested that, especially if the budget does not allow for two additional officers, a letter be sent from the County Commissioners and the Chairman of the Budget Committee to the State indicating the impact this will have for the County of Waldo and that the County would not be able to absorb the workload being left by the State Police if they pull out of Waldo County.

#### Contractual Services:

S. Story explained that the gas costs were based on \$4.50 per gallon because of what prices were at the time he put the budget together in August. There was some discussion of what that number could be, realistically. Gas prices were currently between \$2.70 and \$2.90 at the moment, but all conceded that after the election in November, those prices would go right back up. \$50,000 was included in that, for maintenance and repairs. There was some discussion of the gas going to \$4.00 per gallon. The Commissioners acknowledged that it was “chancy,” and S. Story stated that it always is every year.

#### Capital Outlay:

S. Story reported that the County will not be purchasing Dodge Chargers anymore.

There was brief discussion about Tazers that included an explanation that there are three in the department at the time and the Sheriff is gradually trying to obtain enough for all Patrol Officers.

#### Personnel:

D. Berry asked that the Commissioners enter into Executive session for a personnel matter.

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, D. Berry seconded to enter Executive Session at 11:17 a.m. for a Personnel Matter according to Title 1, § 405 D and F. Unanimous.**

**\*\*D. Berry moved, A. Fowler seconded to come out of Executive Session at 11:34 a.m. Unanimous.**  
No action was taken.

**\*\*D. Berry moved, A. Fowler seconded to approve the Sheriff's Budget (1075) as presented. Unanimous.**

#### **JAIL BUDGET (1050):**

Present for this brief discussion was Sheriff Scott Story and Chief Deputy Robert Keating. The budget is capped at the 2008 level, which includes other components from budgets such as Facilities Management, Commissioners Budget and Employee Benefits.

**RESERVES BUDGET (2045):**

**\*\*J. Hyk moved, D. Berry seconded to change the name of the 0156 Reserve from Jail/Sheriff Facility to Sheriff Facility, effective today. Unanimous.**

The Commissioners discussed what to request for reserves. A. Fowler thought it would be good to ask for additional money for the courthouse for the furnace. J. Hyk reminded them that there was already money in the reserve for that. There was discussion of adding to the Grant Matching line. Currently there is \$60,000.00 in that line. A. Fowler thought that more money should be added to the Employment Security line, and should be added to the Severance Line. The Commissioners were aware that one employee is due to retire in 2009 and that will expend most of what is in that line. \$27,699.00 has been expended out of that line this year. In September, \$30,000.00 was voted to be added to that, so of that \$45,000, \$27,699 has been expended. This will leave \$17,000.00. A. Fowler recommended adding \$30,000.00 to that account in the budget request for 2009.

The Technology Reserve will be discussed next week during the October 28, 2008 meeting. Therefore, there will be no vote on this budget until that time.

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, D. Berry seconded to break for lunch at 12:09 p.m. Unanimous.**

**\*\*D. Berry moved, A. Fowler seconded to reconvene the court session at 1:13 p.m. Unanimous.**

**COMMISSIONERS BUDGET (1020)**

A. Fowler asked why the County paid \$150.00 to MACo. B. Arseneau replied that her understanding is that this amount is requested of all the counties. A. Fowler expressed her displeasure with MACo and stated that she would need to speak with Communications Director Owen Smith, who still attends those meetings, to find out if it is worth paying the dues.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY BUDGET (1010):**

Present for this budget review was EMA Director Dale Rowley. D. Rowley submitted two sheets comparisons between 2008 and 2009 and Grants applied for and received from 2006 through 2008. General grants received totaled \$526,144.41, the May Day Storm Public Assistance funds were received in the amount of \$266,894.99 and Hazard Mitigation Grants totaled \$371,367.00.

D. Rowley reviewed the individual increases from Contractual lines and explained the reasons for the increases. The Travel line has increased to include Hazmat duties. The telephone bill has gone down because of a switch in cellular service. He mentioned that the facilities maintenance portion of this budget is located in the Facilities Management budget. It is broken out and sent to the State for reimbursement.

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, D. Berry seconded to accept the EMA Budget as presented. Unanimous.**

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S BUDGET (1015):**

Present for this review was District Attorney Geoffrey Rushlau and Deputy District Attorney Eric Walker. G. Rushlau asked if there were any questions. A. Fowler inquired about the ergonomic equipment and was

told that this is a match for a total of about \$21,000.00 in furniture upgrades upon the strong recommendation of the Workers' Compensation ergonomic expert. The match is only \$700.00.

Personnel:

E. Walker explained that the present Part Time Child Advocate is staying at \$13,000.00 because part of it is covered by a grant. The individual currently in this position has taken a lower rate of pay due to personal circumstances limiting her income level.

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, D. Berry seconded to accept the District Attorney's Budget as presented at \$161,657.00. Unanimous.**

**WALDO COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT BUDGET (2035):**

Present for this review was Kym Sanderson of Waldo County Soil & Water Conservation District. The budget has remained the same for the past three years. A few things have changed. They are not spending as much on the annual report. J. Hyk asked if WCSWD assists with pond design. K. Sanderson replied that it does not.

K. Sanderson submitted invitations to the County Commissioners to a 2008 Annual Banquet and Meeting on November 15, 2008 at 11:00 a.m. Tour of Beaver Ridge.

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, D. Berry seconded to accept the Waldo County Soil & Water District Budget (2035) as presented at \$19,675.00. Unanimous.**

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, D. Berry seconded to enter Executive Session at 1:48 p.m. according to Title 1 § 405 (D) for a Personnel Matter. Unanimous.**

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, D. Berry seconded to come out of Executive Session at 2:51 p.m. Unanimous.**

**\*\*D. Berry moved, A. Fowler seconded to amend the Commissioners budget to increase the 2009 COLA of the County Clerk, Deputy County Clerk and Human Resources/Payroll Director wages to 8%. Unanimous.**

There was some discussion of what "undesignated funds" may be used for. It was noted that there was only \$21,000.00 in undesignated funds for 2007.

**\*\*D. Berry moved, J. Hyk seconded to adjourn the Court Session at 3:17 p.m. Unanimous.**

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