

**WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT SESSION  
(SPECIAL SESSION)  
MARCH 21, 2011**

**PRESENT:** Commissioners William D. Shorey – Chairman, Amy R. Fowler and Betty I. Johnson. Present to take minutes was County Clerk Barbara L. Arseneau.

**Call to Order:** Commissioner Shorey called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

**ADDRESSING RESERVE ACCOUNTS:**

K. Trussell submitted copies of Reserve Account Information as follows:

1. A copy of a check for \$200,000.00 coded from 1050-4030 for moving to Corrections Reimbursement on January 2, 2009 and a copy of a check in the amount of \$315,420.98 for Opening the Jail Account on December 31, 2008.
2. A spreadsheet of all money used for the mission change. On April 30, 2011 the County was refunded for Facilities Management work on the mission change in the amount of \$106,888.72.
3. A copy of page 8 of the September 2009 Audit, showing that the total undesignated fund balance as of June 30, 2009 was \$642,688.75.00.
4. K. Trussell expressed concern that while in the July 14, 2009 minutes D. Parkman recommended moving \$50,000.00 in the Jail Checking Account for any discrepancies with the audit, she could not find it and believed that it may have come from undesignated Jail funds. She referenced the law not going into affect until 2009 stating that whatever was leftover from the jail had to be kept with jail accounts. She supplied copies of those minutes and a sheet showing that \$50,000.00 from Jail Checking was not checked off.
5. A copy of a check from County Planning in the amount of \$7,202.00 and Future County Land/Buildings in the amount of \$14,445.60 for a total of \$21,647.60, a copy of a check from Future Sheriff's Building account in the amount of \$113,519.00, and a check from jail Technology in the amount of \$12,000.00.
6. A spreadsheet of all expenditures related to the mission change from both County funds in the amount of \$106,888.72 and Jail funds in the amount of \$73,047.94 with a supporting spreadsheet of expenditures from the County Planning, Future County Land/Bldgs, Community Corrections and Facilities All Other Reserve accounts.
7. \$338,633.43 is what is available that is County money. That would leave \$255,654.91 in the Jail undesignated funds.

W. Shorey said that he and A. Fowler were having a discussion a while back and he agreed with her that money needed to be moved from undesignated Jail funds into reserve accounts, but had also heard D. Parkman say that the County would have to draw on the TAN and incur interest costs if this were done. W. Shorey stated that he believed that even if that were the case, it would be less expensive than not moving that money from the undesignated fund, noting that the undesignated fund would be better

than they thought if some money was moved out of it and some left in it. W. Shorey said he appreciated all the help the Treasurer's Office gives them in the finances.

There was brief discussion of concern over the BOC's "inflated" report of how much money has really been saved with the new system.

W. Shorey stated that paving near the Communications Center has never been finished and lighting on the current Jail needs to be changed to match the lighting design for the new EOC/Sheriff's building, which will reduce the amount of light in the neighborhood.

B. Johnson reminded the Board that during the final 2011 Budget Meeting and Public Hearing, some of the citizens had expressed concern over draining the reserve accounts.

D. Parkman said that there were two ways to look at it; either hold a referendum process for the new EOC/Sheriff's Building and spend more money that way, or do what the Commissioners did, which was to use funds from appropriate reserve accounts. He said that he "applauded" the decision the Commissioners had made.

W. Shorey felt that it was best not to earmark the rest of the undesignated fund for reserve accounts yet until the Commissioners could see how the year was going and could determine which reserve accounts need to be built up.

D. Parkman said that in this case, he anticipates borrowing from the Jail TAN in July of 2011. K. Trussell reminded the Commissioners that they needed to develop a capital improvement plan for the Reentry Center.

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to move the County portion in undesignated surplus of the Jail account in the amount of \$338,633.43 and transfer it to the Future County Land and Buildings Reserve Account.** Discussion: W. Shorey asked, rhetorically, how many times in the last eighteen months or so that the Commissioners have spoken about Jail funds, noting that this has been discussed many, many times and now the Commissioners could feel they were vindicated. A. Fowler quipped, "Vindicated or violated?"

D. Parkman said that S. Story deserved credit for coming up with the plan for the mission change to a Reentry Center. W. Shorey commented that the result has been that only Waldo County's facility is in good financial shape. D. Parkman noted that the County of Waldo is paying their share for their inmates monthly to the BOC *if* the BOC pays Waldo County's invoices from the previous month to the Two Bridges facility, where Waldo's inmates are being held. D. Parkman said he believed that if the County paid what the BOC expects to be paid, if there is any funding left over, it will belong to the County of Waldo. **Unanimous.**

W. Shorey said he had been around a lot of entities, and he wanted to say that both the Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer have done an excellent job in assisting with the fiscal management and handling of money for the County.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

B. Arseneau asked that the Commissioners approve the following minutes:

- February 8, 2011 Commissioners Court Session

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- February 8, 2011 Pet. #352 L. Philbrook vs. Town of Montville Tax Abatement Appeal Hearing
- February 11, 2011 Commissioners Court Session (Special)
- February 17, 2011 Commissioners Court Session (Special)
- March 1, 2011 Commissioners Court Session (Special, morning session)
- March 1, 2011 Commissioners Court Session (Special, afternoon session)
- March 8, 2011 Commissioners Court Session
- March 17, 2011 Commissioners Court Session (Special)

**\*\*W. Shorey moved, A. Fowler seconded to approve the minutes from March 8, 2011. Passed by two.** (Commissioner Johnson abstained because she could not recall if she was present.)

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to approve the minutes from February 8, 2011 Commissioners Court Session. Unanimous.**

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to approve the minutes from the February 8, 2011 Pet. #352 Philbrook vs. Town of Montville Tax Abatement Appeal Hearing. Unanimous.**

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to approve the minutes from the February 11, 2011 Special Commissioners Court Session. Unanimous.**

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to approve the minutes from the February 17, 2011 Special Commissioners Court Session. Unanimous.**

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to approve the minutes from the March 1, 2011 Commissioners Special Afternoon Court Session. Unanimous.**

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to approve the minutes from the March 1, 2011 Commissioners Special Morning Session. Unanimous.**

**\*\*A. Fowler, W. Shorey seconded to approve the Commissioners Court Session Minutes from March 17, 2011. Passed by two.**

#### **MISCELLANEOUS COMMISSIONERS BUSINESS:**

1. Possible Alarm Systems for Courthouses: W. Shorey explained that Facilities Manager Keith Nealley had spoken earlier to the Commissioners prior to the start of today's session, as he could not stay to meet with them. He spoke with them regarding the State's recent proposal to try and obtain a grant to pay about half of the cost to put a building-wide fire alarm system in both Superior and District Courthouses. The estimated cost to do this project is approximately \$56 to \$60,000.00. K. Nealley has stated that he will obtain something in writing from the State regarding this project.

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to match the State's portion of a grant for fire alarm systems for both Superior and District Courthouses, pending receipt of confirmation from the State in writing.** Discussion: W. Shorey noted that this gives the Facilities Manager the ability to draft up a contract and start moving forward with this project once the State has confirmed its share.

2. W. Shorey said that there will need to be a 1099-type position developed to oversee the EOC/Sheriff's building project as a sort of "Clerk of the Works," which will be paid from the proper reserve accounts.

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to develop a plan to fund a part-time 1099 position to oversee the EOC/Sheriff's building project. Unanimous.**

3. Proclamation for National County Government Month in April: After reading the National County Government Month proclamation based on NACO's recommendation, the Commissioners voted as follows:

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to embrace the National County Government and to issue a proclamation to that affect. Unanimous.**

4. Proclamation for Public Safety Telecommunicators Week – Second Week in April: After reading the proclamation submitted to them by Communications Director Owen Smith, the County Commissioners voted as follows:

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to sign and enthusiastically support Public Safety Telecommunicators week and to issue a proclamation explaining what these people do for Waldo County in the great State of Maine. Unanimous.**

4. 2011 Health Insurance Renewal Documents:

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to approve and sign the paperwork for the 2011 Renewal and health-reform changes in the County's health insurance plan. Unanimous.**

5. Possible Waldo County Board of Assessment Review: B. Johnson recommended that the County Commissioners consider the future development of a Board of Assessment Review to handle tax abatement appeal hearings. She explained that Knox County pays no money to the people who volunteer to serve on their board, and she recommended that Waldo consider setting up a similar arrangement. B. Johnson explained that she would recommend that an attorney sit on that committee. She stated her view that the County Commissioners are not experts on tax abatements and felt that lack of knowledge made this part their job very difficult. She believed that having a separate board would be helpful. She noted that many towns have stopped having their own assessment review and go directly to the County Board of Assessment Review. A. Fowler agreed that this would be an excellent idea to develop this board and said she felt problems could be avoided this way. She believed that the Commissioners should move forward toward this end. W. Shorey thought this was a good idea, but expressed his concern that the County might find it hard to find people willing to sit as volunteers several times a year to deal with these cases. B. Johnson explained that Knox County has no problem in this regard. She added that attorneys get a type of "credit" for pro bono work. She said that other counties have boards of assessment review besides Knox. She believed this would lessen some of the Commissioners' duties and would be a good idea to create one to handle these cases. W. Shorey said he would like to schedule a workshop to look into this further. He said he hoped that Waldo County would find it has as many "charitable" people to serve on this board as Knox has. B. Johnson noted that the Town of Lincolnville always has an attorney present during the hearings, and also to write up the legal order. She noted that this goes to Superior Court, if it is appealed, and a lawyer would be involved in that. There would otherwise be the concern as to whether or not the order was written up "legally enough." An appraiser would also be a valuable asset. W. Shorey reminded the Commissioners that some of the cases are pretty cut and dried, but said he was in no way objecting to looking into forming a board. Both A. Fowler and W. Shorey stated that the County simply could not afford to have an attorney sit on each County Commissioners Tax Abatement Appeal hearing.

W. Shorey wondered how many of the cases the Commissioners had heard have actually gone to Superior Court during the past few years.

The Commissioners scheduled a workshop to discuss this further on April 11, 2011 at 1:00 p.m. B. Johnson said she may speak with some of the other counties and may even bring someone from one of the counties with her to speak on the subject.

6. MMA is holding a workshop on May 12, 2011 on Assessments. B. Johnson already has signed up through the Town of Lincolnville. A. Fowler, W. Shorey and B. Arseneau will also attend.

7. B. Johnson said she had been speaking with the office staff about some ways to educate the public about County services, particularly in view of the fact that April is National County Government month. B. Johnson is working on a brochure, and B. Arseneau will email her some information and bullet points. B. Johnson said she thought this would be good to get county government knowledge out there. She also recommended that the Commissioners each visit the school. B. Arseneau used to have schools send down classes of students and she would provide a little tour and tell students how about County Government, but B. Johnson said she thought each Commissioner should meet with the classes in their own district. Also, to give the kids something, she had thought of presenting them with pins. If the County did this, it would cost about 25 cents per button. A. Fowler wondered about recognition coins, such as what the Sheriff's Association does for each of the counties. Buttons would be at least \$1.00 each. B. Johnson submitted different styles of pins.

W. Shorey agreed that it would be good to develop a little bullet sheet brochure and start to do it with one grade level, so that each year it would catch each grade level. There would need to be discussion with Superintendents to see if Commissioners could come in. A. Fowler thought it might be a good idea to hold one for high school level, too. B. Johnson said she wanted to run it by the Commissioners and figure out when to meet with the schools, with something put together so they would all be saying the same thing.

A. Fowler said she has been invited to several speaking engagements in various towns, as has the Treasurer. B. Johnson said that someone had also asked her if the Commissioners would be interested in speaking about what County government does. Both A. Fowler and W. Shorey agreed that reaching out to the schools would be a nice idea. B. Johnson said she'd like to see something happen this April and agreed to take this on herself, if the others would not be able to do this. Both A. Fowler and W. Shorey said they could not do this during this April as they already had a number of previous commitments. B. Johnson agreed to speak with the superintendents of each Commissioner District, etc. to see how this could be done. W. Shorey said that the Y has senior dinners and they are always looking for speakers. D. Parkman, who was now also present, stated that it was a nice idea to speak to the children in schools, but many adults just don't know what County government offers, and he recommended speaking to the adults. B. Johnson agreed, noting that when she was running for Commissioner, many people asked her what the Commissioners do. D. Parkman said he has been to every town meeting and has also spoken to Lions' Club and the Rotary Club. He said it is just amazing the discussion that takes place.

It was agreed that parts could be ordered and funded from the Discretionary Account. These buttons could be attached to a brochure. The Commissioners discussed spending up to \$250.00 to get it started as a pilot project.

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, W. Shorey seconded to spend up to \$250.00 on supplies to get a pilot project underway for National County Month. Unanimous.**

8. HALL OF FLAGS – April 28, 2011. A. Fowler is working with Deputy County Clerk Veronica Spear, Jail Administrator Robert Walker and VOA Director Mike Tausek. She intended to focus on the Jail as the main feature of Waldo County's table at the Hall of Flags.

