

**WALDO COUNTY 2025 BUDGET COMMITTEE
ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 20, 2024
In-person and Remote Teleconference (Zoom)
6:00 p.m.**

PRESENT Budget Committee Members Robyn Tarantino (Lincolnvile), Mary Mortier (Belfast), Tammy Higgins (Winterport), Elizabeth Lenharr (Stockton Springs), and Bob Kurek (Palermo). (Absent: Tim Parker from Unity.) Also present were County Commissioners Betty I. Johnson, Amy R. Fowler, and William D. Shorey; Finance Director Kari Hunt, IT Director J-sun Bailey, and County Clerk Barbara Arseneau to take minutes.

CALL TO ORDER Commissioner Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the flag salute.

INTRODUCTIONS Commissioner Johnson asked all to introduce themselves.

BUDGET PROCESS OVERVIEW

B. Johnson explained the process, that this meeting would be open for participation by Zoom and recorded by Zoom. The Budget Committee can decide whether they would have future budget meetings recorded by Zoom, but budget meetings are at least audio-recorded for accuracy in the minutes.

ELECT BUDGET COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

****M. Mortier moved to nominate Bob Kurek as Budget Committee Chairman for 2025.**

Nominations ceased.

****B. Kurek was voted as 2024 Budget Committee Chair; passed unanimously.**

DISCUSS VACANCIES ON BUDGET COMMITTEE

Jeffrey Trafton of Thorndike has resigned from the Budget Committee. B. Kurek will check to see if Thorndike will fill this with another select person. If not, B. Kurek will reach out to someone else from the district, such as the other person who had originally tied with Jeff Trafton for this seat. If that person is not interested, he may check with the three other select persons who each received one vote for this seat.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSIONS RE: BUDGET PROCESS

A. Fowler said that the District Attorney's Office was notified by the State that there would be an increase that would impact the District Attorney's budget; \$7,190.00 and \$8,140.00 for an additional amount of \$15,330.00 that was not included in the current budget figures.

Finance Director K. Hunt reminded the Committee that she emailed information to them about two weeks ago regarding corrections and has updated figures to give them.

The Committee thanked the Commissioners for starting the budget process earlier this year, as had been requested last year by the Budget Committee.

The Budget Committee discussed whether to meet by themselves before meeting with the departments to see if there were questions and discuss which departments might require less or more time. Mention was made about being respectful of each department's time, and the importance of the department heads be able to speak because they have worked hard to prepare and present their budget requests. The Committee decided that each committee member should review the budget on their own, suggest the amount of time each department might need, and to give the departments advance notice.

FUTURE BUDGET MEETINGS

The Committee set the schedule for budget meetings as follows:

October 5, 2024 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. to meet with: EMA, Commissioners, Human Resources, Finance, Technology, Deeds, Probate, Advertising and Promotion, Audit, Debt Service, Interest, U of M. Extension, Soil & Water, Records Preservation, Reserves (*later Registry of Probate switched with Employee Benefits for this day.*)

October 16, 2024 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. to meet with Communications Center, and Employee Benefits (*Later Employee Benefits switched with Registry of Probate for this day.*)

October 26, 2024 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. to meet with Facilities, Sheriff, Jail, District Attorney

November 6, 2024 Public Hearing at 6:00 p.m.

W. Shorey briefly mention that Two Bridges Correctional Center decided to increase the cost of boarding Waldo County's inmates from \$853,000 to \$1,300,000.00, which has increased that budget a great deal. It is not possible to hold more inmates in Waldo's Jail. There was brief discussion on the backlog in the court system, not enough D.A.'s to move court cases along, which results in people sitting in jail for a long time before going to court.

The Budget Committee would like to submit questions to the County Clerk to send to the corresponding department so that they can be prepared with the answer.

****R. Tarantino moved, M. Mortier seconded to adjourn at 8:29 p.m. Unanimous.**

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