

WALDO COUNTY 2026-2027 BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
OCTOBER 9, 2025
6:00 P.M. TO 9:00 P.M.
Waldo County Commissioners Courtroom and Remote Teleconference (Zoom)

PRESENT: Budget Committee Members Bob Kurek (Chairperson), Douglas Thomas, Mary Mortier, Breanna Bebb, Elizabeth Lenharr, and Robyn Tarantino; Tammy Higgins was present by Zoom. Laura Greeley came later in the meeting. (Brandy Bridges was absent.) Also present were County Commissioners Betty I. Johnson, Kevin J. Kelley, and Timothy A. Parker. Staff present were Finance Director Kari Hunt, Treasurer Owen Smith, Chief Deputy Matthew Curtis, IT Director J-sun Bailey, Sheriff Jason Trundy, Office Associate Danielle Murray, and County Clerk Barbara Arseneau to take minutes.

Call to Order/Review Minutes – Chairperson Bob Kurek called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: October 4, 2025 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes.

Edits submitted: Remove Timothy Parker as present because he was absent, correct the meeting date in the footnote, clarify that it was Kevin Kelley who commented that language in the union contracts needed to be removed, add the word “interest” before the word “figure” under the Interest Budget, and correct the interest figure to 5.33%.

****MOTION: B. Kurek, M. Mortier to approve the October 4, 2025 minutes as amended.**

Roll Call vote: B. Kurek, T. Higgins, E. Lenharr, D. Thomas, B. Bebb, M. Mortier, R. Tarantino were all in favor. None opposed. **Passed unanimously.**

The committee agreed to continue reviewing the budget requests line by line for all.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS BUDGET – Presented by Register of Deeds Stacy Grant.

S. Grant stated that some lines have been consolidated. Travel/Meals now includes Meals, Mileage, and Lodging. Equipment Repairs/Maint has combined Repairs-Map Copier, Repairs-Copier, and Typewriter Repairs. Additional funds are budgeted in case any repairs are needed for two older copiers she is trying to keep working. **The committee reduced Equipment Repairs/Maint line to \$3,300.00 for 12 months and \$2,100.00 for 6 months.**

Office Supplies was reduced by the Committee to \$3,300.00 for 12 months, and \$1,625.00 for 6 months.

Telephone has been removed as it was moved to the Information Technology budget. Training/Education now includes Record Books and Subscriptions, since they all apply to training and education.

REGISTRY OF PROBATE BUDGET – Presented by Register of Probate Sharon Peavey.

S. Peavey said she had already reduced some lines after looking at previous experience. She reduced Travel Auto to \$1,250.00. After some discussion about the previous two years’ spending, **the committee reduced it to \$1,000.00 for 12 months and \$500.00 for 6 months.**

S. Peavey had already reduced the Meals lines by \$250.00 due to the new County meals reimbursement policy. **The committee reduced Meals to \$400.00 for 12 months and \$200.00 for 6 months based on previous years.**

Travel Air is used by the Judge for a couple of out-of-state seminars, and train travel was also coded to that line. **The committee reduced it to \$2,000.00 for 12 months and \$1,000.00 for 6 months.**

The Committee also made the following reductions:

Repairs/Furniture was reduced to \$500.00 for 12 months and \$250.00 for 6 months.

The committee reduced Repairs/Copiers to \$400.00 for 12 months and \$200.00 for 6 months. S. Peavey said this made her nervous for the 6 months because more documents are being printed each year for the Judge, but she said she would try to make it work.

Officers Fees was reduced to \$400.00 for 12 months and \$200.00 for 6 months.

Schools/Training was reduced to \$1,500.00 for 12 months and \$750.00 for 6 months.

COMMUNICATIONS BUDGET – Presented by Communications Director Michael Larrivee.

M. Larrivee said that he has examined the Travel line and was willing to reduce it to \$200.00 for 12 months and \$125 for 6 months.

The Vehicle Fuel line was discussed and the committee reduced it to \$2,500.00 for 12 months and \$1,250.00 for 6 months.

On the I Am Responding line, **M. Larrivee said he inadvertently used the 2027 quote, so this could be reduced to \$13,657.00 for 12 months but it would remain \$8,000.00 for the 6 months as it went to another contract period.**

The tower on Point Lookout in Northport will be under a new contract, and M. Larrivee is not sure what the new property owners will charge.

Program Software is a new budget line, which he combined with the old scheduling program and the software he requested in the Capital Outlay line last year which is contracted. The other software is the policy program, which notifies dispatchers immediately of policy changes. With new policies, it includes a training program for dispatchers with quizzes and tasks to ensure that they understand the new policy, and also records their signatures. This program will be used for their quality assurance program, as well.

Supplies Maintenance covers Spectrum, shredding, and other office supplies but based on previous years' expenditures. **The committee reduced Supplies Maintenance to \$2,000.00 for 12 months and \$1,000.00 for 6 months.**

RECORDS PRESERVATION BUDGET – Presented by County Clerk Barbara Arseneau

The committee asked why some years funds are requested for this budget and other years it isn't. B. Arseneau explained that the records are no longer housed where they were, did not end up where they were originally intended to go due to problems with that building, and are temporarily housed in the new warehouse at the Emergency Management Agency site. This is the best place they could be stored currently, and after checking them recently, reported that they seem to be doing well there. There are still records in the room behind the Commissioners' courtroom that need to be boxed and plans put in new tubes, so she will continue working on those. Keeping in mind that money is extremely tight, no new large records projects are scheduled now as there is still this work to finish, so no funds have been requested during this budget cycle. She noted that all counties struggle with records preservation and retention and meeting State requirements for fireproof vaults, etc.

Meeting Schedule Adjustments - At B. Kurek's request, the committee changed the meeting schedule to: **October 24, 2025, start at 6:00 p.m. and end at 9:00 p.m.**

Facilities

October 25, start at 9:00 and end at 4:00 p.m.

Waldo Community Action Partners, Waldo County Firefighters Association, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Waldo County Soil & Water Conservation County Commissioners, Human Resources, and Employee Benefits.

November 1, start at 9:00 and end at 2:00 p.m. (Cancelled)

~~1030 Facilities, 1080 Special Appropriations (WCAP, Waldo County Firefighters Association), 2005 University of Maine Cooperative Extension, 2035 Waldo County Soil & Water Conservation~~

November 8, start at 9:00 and end at 1:00 p.m.

Second Reviews with: Jail, Sheriff, Information Technology and any others the Committee has determined must return for additional review; any who cannot attend on 10/25/2025.

The Public Hearing date will be determined later and requires at least 3 weeks' lead time for notification to the media and public. It will likely be in December.

There was brief discussion on why the 2021 County Audit is the most recent completed. The reasons include COVID, a shortage of auditors, and the fact that there were several different Finance Directors from 2022 through 2023. The Commissioners reported that they met with the auditor recently and learned that 2022 is nearly finished and 2023 is also in progress. The Commissioners had paused those audits because they did not want to accept the initial opinion that the auditor recommended, so the goal is to have the audits finished by December 31, 2025.

There was brief discussion on reserve accounts. When asked, the Commissioners stated that they know that there are actual funds in these accounts. The Commissioners, by statute, have full authority over the reserves and can vote to move undesignated funds to the reserves. Roofs will need replacing and buildings must be maintained. The Commissioners are in the process of updating the reserve accounts, including use specification, existing funds, and how the funds can be expended. Reserve accounts should not be used to offset a budget line. Some reserves are being consolidated, such as 4 to 5 reserves that are facilities related. The OPIOID funds account is now a separate reserve, has a separate policy, separate warrants, and separated expenses for line items so that the account is very clear and there will be no questions about it in future decades.

The Commissioners are updating and creating policies, they are trying to be as transparent as possible, are looking into the health care plan, Finance is working on the check reconciliations, and still trying to figure out finances that were handled by multiple hands. The Commissioners are discussing disaster recovery planning for payroll. The new accounting system database will go into the "cloud." The Commissioner Liaison program was also started this past year, in which each commissioner is appointed to certain departments to better understand and communicate with these departments.

Prior to the current IT Director, an outside consultant and other outside contractors performed the work, which was funded from a Technology reserve. The Commissioners changed it from being contracted to a full-time employee. That reserve has been drained and now there is an operating budget for IT.

Waldo County is the only one in Maine with no administrator because the Commissioners believe it is their role.

****MOTION: R. Tarantino, D. Thomas to adjourn at 8:28 p.m.**

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