WALDO COUNTY 2026-2027 BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 8, 2025
9:00 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M.
Waldo County Commissioners Courtroom and Remote Teleconference (Zoom)

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

Call to Order/Review Minutes – Chairperson Bob Kurek called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.
R. Tarantino reviewed the figures she had created related to Tax Anticipation Note and also "Actuals" in expenditures over the most recent couple of years. She just emailed it to the County Clerk but B. Arseneau couldn't print it because it was not in a format that could be printed there.

The committee briefly discussed when tax payments historically are received by the County, noted that the larger towns don't pay until later, and concern was expressed that the way things currently are, there is a high probability that other towns may also be paying later this year.

R. Tarantino said the TAN is totally tied to the total budget amount, and that it was 42% higher one year. She believed that after looking at the annualized figure, the TAN should fall under this year's budget. Other line item figures were also reviewed.

MINUTES:
****MOTION: E. Lenharr/T. Higgins to approve both October 24, 2025 and October 25, 2025 Budget Meeting Minutes. A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed 7 in favor; R. Tarantino and D. Thomas abstained because they had been absent.**

COUNTY JAIL – presented by Sheriff Jason Trundy.
He was specifically asked back to come back to provide more detail about boarding, the Jail kitchen renovations, and a building maintenance line that was going to be transferred to Facilities. The Budget Committee stated that they would like it all to be called "Corrections" rather than sometimes "Jail" for budget review purposes.

J. Trundy reported receiving a letter from Knox County with a large charge for inmates. Knox and Two Bridges appeared to have had discussions, and the day before the meeting when he expected everyone to arrive, he received a letter from Two Bridges, who had met with Knox County and as the two fully functioning Jails in the district, they decided they would not offer a boarding Jail contract to Waldo County but would extend spare beds on their terms. He was assured that there was no deal or contract between Knox and Two Bridges, but they had refused several of his requests to meet with him and chose to send letters instead. Anticipating there may not be spare beds, as he was preparing for the first budget meeting, given the climate across the state, he didn't expect any other county to be interested in a contract with Waldo or even a simple response. Surprisingly, Somerset County contacted him and stated they were interested in talking with Waldo. If nothing had been worked out with Knox and Two Bridges, come January it would have been a tough situation. He met with Somerset, explained the history with boarding the past several years, and that Waldo needs a long-term relationship with a flagship jail. An excellent conversation resulted and Somerset found they had room for Waldo's inmates. He then met with Commissioner Kelley, Correctional Administrator Matthew Magnussen, and Somerset's finance director. Every jail is required by law to give medication, including medication for addiction. Somerset does the MAT (Medication Assisted Treatment) addiction medication by injections because it is easier to manage but more expensive. MAT injections were generally for opiate addiction. It will cost $138.00 per day for females, and $95.00 per day for males. The boarding rate on average will be $1.5 million. MAT injections will make it $400,000.00, and the total would be $1.9 million, a little less than it was with Two Bridges. The mileage driven is about the same, but Somerset County is in a different prosecutorial district. This is Waldo County's only option at this time. J. Trundy felt it should be a minimum of a 3 to 5 year contract because the receiving jail will have to increase staff and needs confirmation that Waldo will enter a longer contract. It's a benefit to them and to Waldo. He would prefer dialogue about a permanent long term relationship. It's more beneficial for Waldo to work with a Jail that already has room rather than building a new jail in Waldo. Somerset's jail is 18 years old and built to expand if needed. There was brief discussion about trials sometimes being delayed because inmates don't want to go to the State prison. The State will not board county inmates by statute. They have held county inmates only if they meet very specific criteria. Waldo County has a very good relationship with the State and they do help when they can.

Inmate Medical/Surgical line: J. Trundy said it seems more appropriate to pay inmate medical from this line rather than the boarding line so it can be more accurately tracked and more transparent, so it has been separated out for this reason. M. Curtis said that Waldo has a little bit of an emergency at this point and needs to do something. In talking with Correctional Administrator M. Magnusson and his experience in the State system, some of it can be offset, there are opportunities, and they will work diligently. The medical line is a true representation. The conversation next time may be different. He noted that Waldo has jumped back and forth between Somerset and Two Bridges for boarding arrangements based on cost.

Previous boarding rates were briefly discussed. Somerset does some things differently, so the boarding is less but the MAT injections are more expensive. It isn't possible to use a model of looking at trends and actuals when dealing with contracts. L. Greeley asked if there is any money that comes back from the State or federal government to help. J. Trundy said that the State is supposed to fund certain things. Each county has to go request a supplemental budget, and the Governor has said the State will only cover MAT costs. This is part of the budgeted offset and the only revenue that is received to help with this. When asked, J. Trundy explained the budget for Waldo's medical doctor is accounted for in the P/T line. There are two different types of medical expenses. There are certain things included with the medical provider piece in the average daily boarding. When an inmate has an issue and goes to the hospital or has something beyond normal everyday care, the County pays above and beyond, and some years are better than others. The rate is the same as the Medicare rate. Years ago when Waldo was boarding with Somerset, the capacity wasn't what it is now. Now they are assisting more people to go back to the community. Reentry planning is dependent on the level of participation of the inmates transitioning out and how much help they are willing to accept to reduce risk of recidivism. The recidivism history was briefly discussed. It was noted that a relatively small number of people are the ones driving the costs up. J. Trundy expressed his view that society has failed to take care of this issue other than put people in jail. If counties were trying to save money by not having mentally ill people and substance abusers in jail, they would do it on the front end, not continue to incarcerate people. He stated that the 60-year track record of the war on drugs is miserable.

The Community Liaison position is going up 2.7%. It was noted that the Full-time line does not add up and this page needs to be reviewed. The Committee reduced the total to the lessor amount.

Total Capital Outlay is now $38,910.00.

The Sheriff was commended for knowing his numbers and his budget. The Jail budget has nearly doubled in three years. The Committee discussed taxpayers struggling even at the workforce level are struggling and the Budget Committee has the unfortunate task to look at this budget and some felt that the Budget Committee could not go back to the towns with these increases. Some note that they had already made reductions in this budget. J. Trundy commented that the only reduction he could see not being detrimental is the line with $42,000.00. RJP was moved out of that line, and backfilled. They could survive if reduced that there will be less driver hours, less counseling. Statutorily the Office of Sheriff is obligated to provide for a jail and the people in it. He is not mandated to do patrol by statute. Nationwide it is one cop for every 400 people. Waldo is one cop for every 1,800 people and the miles driven are high. He listed amounts increased for more driving time, counselors, VOA would have to learn to live without a cost of living. Some on the Committee expressed concern about reducing counseling. The Corrections Director had hoped not to keep pulling from their staff to provide rides for the residents. The Sheriff's Office is not statutorily required to do this counseling, etc. The entire reason for the Reentry is the model of risk reduction. There is a very small core of people that drive the reoffending over and over. Substance abuse and mental issues are the biggest but some are poor social skills, lack of education, lack of employment. All the programming is geared to address the reoffenders highest risk factors so that when they get back into the community, they break the cycles that cause their reoffending. 5 years after the Reentry opened, in 2015, the rate was about 50% did not reoffend. Rather than think in statistics, he looks at people he's dealt with his entire career to help people get their lives on track. The system has lost its way in that really the people who need help are the victims. You can't quantify the victims who are no longer victims because the person is not offending. He's asked VOA to find grant funds to do a study. The cost is dependent upon who is hired to do it. L. Greeley said her soapbox is for the young families who are working hard and obeying the law and to see the help given to the addicts and then to see the law abiding senior citizens who are struggling. B. Kurek said there is a responsibility to the county and the committee, and this budget set him back on his heals. E. Lenharr said that she looks at it as someone hired to drive addicts to treatment as creating a paying job for the driver.

Discussion about OPIOID funds 2022 through to roughly 2038. The County spent about $150,000 in 2024. Looking to the standing committee to come up with a business plan for where to use these funds. He thought that it might make sense to use OPIOID funds to go toward MAT. B. Kurek asked if the budget could be reduced by that amount and it was agreed that the OPIOID committee needed to weigh in on these things and hasn't been fully established yet.

There was discussion about the additional $42,000.00 in the Restorative Justice line. For many years, that $42,000.00 has been pretty steady and has been part of the VOA contract. Because, for some reason, it has created some conflict in the past, the Sheriff pulled it out and set it as its own line. He would have to back fill it by utilizing Corrections employees. He stated that if the committee wanted to reduce the budget by $42,000.00, it needed to be the Restorative Justice line. Chief Deputy M. Curtis said that there are still fixed costs that it didn't affect. J. Trundy said having a co-responder to help divert people from coming back to jail helps the person and also the taxpayers, and he truly believes the Reentry and the programs keep the community safer.

****MOTION: M. Mortier/L. Greeley, after extensive conversation, to reduce line 4025 VOA by $42,000.00 to $417,000.00 and leave line 4027 at $42,000.00.**
Roll Call:
In favor: B. Bridges. B. Bebb , D. Thomas, T. Higgins.
Against: L. Greeley, R. Tarantino, B. Kurek, E. Lenharr, and M. Mortier. Motion failed.

Changes made:
Reduced F/T line to $1,458.911
Reduced Community Liaison to $95,000.00.
Reduced Inmate Boarding to $1,900,000.00.
Reduced Capital Outlay to $38,910.00

SHERIFF'S OFFICE – presented by Sheriff Jason Trundy
Discussion of budget lines that didn't appear to be expended and one explanation was that the vehicle line is taking longer to be expended with the vehicle lease arrangement. The Committee asked if information could be provided earlier, and J. Trundy said he could try to start getting a cruiser in this year's budget, but didn't want to "cook the books". He couldn't think of any other capital projects that were needed and said that compared to the previous year, it is lower, which was understood. M. Curtis said he has to budget for this year's lease and that will continue for the next five (5)years while cars are being added. The vehicle lease company manages the lease, and the payments are for the vehicles and the equipment in them, but tires and repairs are still paid for. The fuel line and maintenance lines have not moved with inflation the way one might think.

Changes made: None.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY – presented by IT Director J-sun Bailey
L. Greeley requested from the Commissioners copies of the Capital Reserves and General Fund so the Committee can see the balances, and she wished they could see how IT was funded all these years with reserve funds.

M. Mortier said IT Director J-sun Bailey is a fabulous addition to the County staff and came with great experience but she compares the County IT budget with the City of Belfast budget, which is a contracted service and everything comes under that umbrella. There are other costs than just salary with a hired employee, and she cited one example as the Motorola Summit, which is training. She compared what the City of Belfast pays per year with what the County pays, and what the County pays is beyond the capability of the County taxpayers. B. Kurek said the only thing that he could see to reduce was training but that bothers him. Cyber security training is needed. He also wished he could see how things were paid from reserves. D. Thomas said that the overall scope for the County is possibly larger than the City of Belfast and other towns. It was noted that the County has been paying for the entire County's use of Motorola for the EMS agencies. B. Bebb asked why an additional person needed to be hired. J. Bailey explained that for example, he has been dealing with work related to 911, among many other things and can't get to projects. He is working alone right now. When asked why he was budgeting overtime, he explained that the new employee would rotate being on call one week on, one week off. Currently he is always on call and is salaried and receives no overtime pay. The new employee's position is hourly and anything over 40 hours per week would be overtime.

Travel/Mileage includes the airplane and lodging for two people. J. Bailey said he would go alone and reduced it to $3,500.00.

Another device is needed for patrol to use video and computer at the same time because they cannot run both right now.

Adobe Acrobat is needed for redactions at the Sheriff's Office. He unintentionally added Microsoft Office twice on the original budget request and has adjusted that.

VMware is a product that allows four servers to turn each server into 10 servers. These servers are under warranty for another 5 years.

B. Bebb said that there is no way to know how the reserves work and how they are funded. She stated that the budget is not on the website and minutes, agendas and such are not timely.

The committee insisted that reserve accounts be available so they can see what is being funded for the future, etc. They feel they can't understand the County budget without that information.

County Website discussion: ADA compliance must be addressed, and FOAA requests should be archived and the rest is for FOAA requests including text messages which must be available for seven (7) years. These are software licenses fees. L. Greeley asked how he knew how to get figures for this budget, and he stated that he has had to research most of it. He obtains quotes, reaches out to other agencies, other counties, the State Police, etc. CJIS stipulates that if you have a digital device that could have any of that data, it has to be "findable" so it can be wiped. There is a lot of interpretation. The Sheriff's Office receives the most FOAA requests and the County Clerk receives the second highest number of requests for information.

J. Bailey stated that Public Facing Digital is all new and will address website issues, etc. He reviewed Motorola costs, wiring and harnesses for equipment in each Sheriff's vehicle. In 2021 the old server was operating on Unix and had to move to Linux. Motorola sent a bill that was 4 years old in the amount of $13,000.00 and he couldn't find a statute or law with a statute of limitations and because there isn't funds for this in the 2025 budget, he will try to pay it in 2026. The Technology Reserve will be built up for servers, fiberoptic wiring, second monitors for efficient working, and four (4) printers because there are some on their last legs.

The Commissioners said they will put the Reserve information on the table for the Committee to see.

Severance also has had to be funded to care for retiring employees with earned unexpended leave buyouts. K. Kelley stated that the Commissioners are trying to make things transparent so people can make an informed decision. They are trying to get a handle on the accounting issues. There are legislators who are saying that they should be voting on County budgets, but this board appreciates the budget process with the Budget Committee. Waldo does not have a County Administrator and the Commissioners are very interested in running things.

B. Bebb asked if there could be some cuts from the Technology Hardware and Infrastructure line. J. Bailey said he could reduce this to $99,000.00.

Changes made:
Travel/Mileage was reduced to $3,500.00.
Training was reduced to $5,000.00.
Software as a Services (SAAS) Licenses was reduced to $105,014.00.
Public Facing Digital Platforms was increased to $77,069.00.
Training was reduced to $5,000.00.
Public Safety Technology was reduced to $191,066.00.
Technology Hardware and Infrastructure was reduced to $99,000.00.
Computer/Technology Supplies & Accessories was reduced to $0.00 (zero.)

The Committee reviewed R. Tarantino's spreadsheets with Actuals columns for 2023 and 2024. She mentioned that one of the documents she sent was the wrong one and was unfinished.

Next meeting is November 21, 2025 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. to revisit the Health Insurance Budget Line and vote on all budgets for Proposed Budget for Final Hearing.

The last meeting is December 12, 2025 for the Public Hearing and Final Budget Meeting.

****MOTION: M. Mortier/T. Higgins to adjourn at 1:00 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by Barbara L. Arseneau Waldo County Clerk
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