

WALDO COUNTY 2026-2027 BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 21, 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), Mary Mortier, Breanna Bebb, Elizabeth Lenharr, Tammy Higgins, Robyn Tarantino, Douglas Thomas, Laura Greeley, and Brandy Bridges via Zoom. Also present were County Commissioners Betty I. Johnson and Kevin J. Kelley, and Commissioner Timothy A. Parker was present via Zoom. Staff present were Finance Director Kari Hunt, IT Director J-Sun Bailey, and Office Associate Danielle Murray to take minutes.

Present on Zoom – Courtney Meade, Communications Director Mike Larrivee, Register of Probate Sharon Peavey, IT Director J-Sun Bailey. Present in the room were Sheriff Jason Trundy, Lorraine Trundy, EMA Director Dale Rowley, Treasurer Owen Smith.

Call to Order/Review Minutes – Chairperson Bob Kurek called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

B. Kurek asked where things stood with the audit. Finance Director Kari Hunt stated that the 2022 audit won't be done until the end of December.

B. Kurek said the IT Budget is also bothering him. K. Hunt stated that she and the IT Director sat down with the Commissioners in February & March and \$50,000 was approved by the Commissioners. K. Hunt clarified that the Commissioners have the authority to create a contingency fund of up to \$100,000, that there isn't one currently and the IT expenses are currently paid from the General Fund.

B. Bebb and B. Kurek wanted to know why the IT department has been funded this way. K. Hunt stated that the IT Director and she had asked for an IT budget in the past and had been told "No", so what could they do?

B. Bebb said that truth telling is good. Commissioner B. Johnson stated that in the past it was always a contracted position. Then an IT Director was hired, and it continued to be paid out of the reserve; why, she doesn't know. B. Bebb wanted to know if there has ever been an IT budget presented in the past? R. Tarantino said that she has only ever seen the IT salary. Commissioner B. Johnson stated it was difficult for IT to come up with a budget. B. Bebb says she was good with that explanation.

Revisit Health Insurance Budget Line – Presented by Human Resources Director Tracy Benton

T. Benton advised that the numbers were bigger than the previous budgets because those were only the premiums. Now it's been broken out; \$1.3 million for County and \$1.7 million for the Jail/Corrections. The dental insurance is now separate. L. Greeley wanted to know where the "offset money" goes. K. Hunt stated it goes to a GL (General Ledger.) T. Benton explained how the County pays for health insurance premiums and claims, including the collection of employee contributions and the use of stop loss insurance. The committee discussed how increases in premiums, claims and stop loss coverage had led to a department request for \$4.9 million. The committee discussed accounting for employee contributions and credits in the budget. M. Mortier expressed frustration about lack of information and clarity in previous meetings, emphasizing the need for a better understanding to make informed decisions.

T. Benton, K. Hunt and Commissioner K. Kelley discussed together how they may be able to reduce this budget. It was agreed to reduce the weekly claims coverage by \$300,000.00, bringing the total for 2026 to \$4,398,890.00. The Dental amount was reduced to \$32,250.00. The committee discussed concerns about the stop loss insurance and workers compensation rates, with T. Benton stating the workers comp

audit salaries accounted for were incorrect. The committee decided to maintain the current workers' comp budget of \$88,000.00 for county and \$52,000.00 for the jail despite potential rate increases. B. Kurek asked if the group agreed with those totals. All committee members responded "Yes."

B. Kurek reviewed the budget list with the grand total of \$5,439,889.56. R. Tarantino questioned the Maine Family Medical Leave. K. Hunt explained that the County secured a private plan through the State of Maine that eliminated the premium payments after April, but the County would have to start paying again next year. M. Mortier also explained and recommended moving on from that discussion.

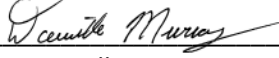
Revisiting Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) Interest

M. Mortier brought up the TAN and the County borrowing. K. Hunt confirmed she's paid it back in the full amount of \$88,010.20 yesterday. R. Tarantino felt the number was very cautious given the actual borrowing patterns. B. Bridges suggested staggering the billing to the towns to better align with cash flow and reduce the need for TAN loans. K. Hunt stated the towns can pay at any time, but the deadline by statute is 11/30. M. Mortier proposed \$175,000.00 based on a compromise from R. Tarantino's charts and K. Hunt's estimates with plans to revisit this figure at the December Public meeting.

****MOTIONS AND VOTES:** B. Kurek asks for motions to approve the following budgets:

1010 EMA	\$195,732.45	Motion M. Mortier/2nd D. Thomas/Unanimous
1015 DA's	\$330,047.00	Motion M. Mortier/2nd D. Thomas/Unanimous
1020 CTY COMMISSIONERS	\$355,228.00	Motion M. Mortier/2nd T. Higgins/Unanimous
1021 HUMAN RESOURCES	\$129,462.92	Motion M. Mortier/2nd D. Thomas/Unanimous
1025 FINANCE OFFICE	\$192,271.23	Motion T. Higgins/2nd M. Mortier/Unanimous
1030 FACILITIES MGMT	\$412,638.50	Motion M. Mortier/2nd T. Higgins/Unanimous
1035 INFORMATION TECH	\$878,484.00	Motion T. Higgins/2nd D. Thomas/ 2 opposed 7 in favor
1065 REGISTRY OF DEEDS	\$260,259.00	Motion T. Higgins/2nd D. Thomas/Unanimous
1070 PROBATE	\$345,992.00	Motion M. Mortier/2nd T. Higgins/Unanimous
1075 SHERIFF	\$2,900,825.00	Motion T. Higgins/2nd D. Thomas/Unanimous
1076 REG. COMM/DISPATCH	\$1,415,262.59	Motion M. Mortier/2nd D. Thomas/Unanimous
1080 SPECIAL APPROPRIATIOS	\$12,500.00	Motion B. Bridges/2nd B. Bebb/ 1 opposed 8 in favor
1090 AUDIT	\$30,000.00	Motion B. Bebb/2nd M. Mortier/Unanimous
1095 DEBIT SERVICE	\$0.00	Motion R. Tarantino/2nd D. Thomas/Unanimous
2000 INTEREST	\$175,000.00	Motion T. Higgins/2nd R. Tarantino/Unanimous
2005 U. OF M EXTENSION	\$50,764.00	Motion T. Higgins/2nd D. Thomas/Unanimous
2025 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$5,439,889.56	Motion B. Bebb/2nd R. Tarantino/Unanimous
2035 W.C. SOIL & WATER	\$25,000.00	Motion M. Mortier/2nd R. Tarantino/Unanimous
2040 RECORDS PRESERVATION	\$0.00	Motion M. Mortier/2nd R. Tarantino/Unanimous
2045 RESERVES	\$386,000.00	Motion M. Mortier/2nd T. Higgins/Unanimous
2050 GRANT WRITING	\$0.00	Motion R. Tarantino/2nd M. Mortier/Unanimous
TOTAL COUNTY	\$13,535,356.25	Motion T. Higgins/2nd L. Greeley/Unanimous
TOTAL JAIL	\$3,878,663.00	Motion B. Bebb/2nd R. Tarantino/Unanimous
GRAND TOTAL	\$17,414,019.25	Motion M. Mortier/ 2nd T. Higgins/Unanimous

****Motion to Adjourn: R. Tarantino/Elizabeth Lenharr to adjourn. Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted  Office Associate
Danielle Murray