

**WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT SESSION
OCTOBER 6, 2022**

PRESENT: Commissioners Amy R. Fowler (Chairman), William D. Shorey, and Betty I. Johnson. Also present was County Clerk Barbara Arseneau to take minutes.

Call to Order: Commissioner Fowler called the court session to order at 9:00 a.m.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Finance Karen Trussell reported the following

1. Newly hired Finance Director Patricia (“Trish”) Parker was introduced to the Commissioners. Her starting date will be Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at \$57,000.00 per year.

The County Checkbook balance is \$11,068,907.95 and the Jail Checkbook balance is \$734,890.76.

TAX ANTICIPATION NOTE:

The total Tax Anticipation Note is \$3,620,000.00 has been borrowed; \$2,275,000.00 by the County and \$1,345,000.00 by Corrections. A payment of \$500,000.00 each has been paid on both sides with property taxes received by the Towns. She will pay more as taxes are paid.

County Appropriations/Revenue:

70% of the County 2022 budget has been expended and it could be 75%. 110.25% of the County revenue has been received at this time.

Corrections Appropriations/Revenue:

68% of Corrections 2022 budget has been expended and could be 75%. 139.47% of the Corrections revenue has been received at this time.

The following towns have paid property taxes: Troy, Knox, Burnham, Winterport, Thorndike, Freedom, Montville, Searsmont, Unity, Stockton Springs, and Searsport.

****W. Shorey moved, B. Johnson seconded to file the Financial Report. Unanimous.**

WARRANTS

****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to authorize payment of the September 30, 2022 General Fund Accounts Payable and Reserve warrant and, September 15 and 29, 2022 Payrolls in the amount of \$760,047.38. Unanimous.**

****W. Shorey moved, B. Johnson seconded to authorize payment of the September 30, 2022 MCRRC (Corrections) Accounts Payable and Reserve warrant and September 15 and 29, 2022 payrolls in the amount of \$514,805.10. Unanimous.**

EMA REPORT

EMA Director Dale Rowley was present to report the following:

1. EMA has been working with three school districts on implementing radio handheld communications. Some handhelds are being provided for buses so there can be communication between them and the schools. Often cell phones don't work during emergencies. Also, with radios, everyone will hear the call on their channel. This has taken a fair amount of time to set up.

SWANVILLE PROJECT UPDATE:

1. The slab is in for the new EMA building. Lambeth will start building this coming Monday.
2. Foundation walls for the warehouse should be poured today, and Lambeth will also build this warehouse. The EMA building will be done first, with the goal of getting the walls and roof up on the warehouse, too, before winter. The earthwork contractor did an excellent job.
3. Communication lines, power lines, septic, and water are being installed. The wells were tested and there is a bacteria issue. This water will be just used for outside purposes, but if the Commissioners want it to be drinkable, a water purifier would be needed.
4. He will be meeting with Solar Logics today about solar batteries and panels. In an emergency, it is hoped that EMA could operate off the batteries. If electricity produced by the building is more than what is needed, it can be used for credits for another County building. They plan to do three phases, and the solar panels will be mounted on the metal roof. He suggested putting masts on the ends of the storage building and running the wire across the roof, so it wouldn't be in the way of garden equipment, vehicles, etc.
5. So far, the project is well within the budget. Concrete will be about half the initial proposed cost. The kitchen cabinetry is very expensive, but has been ordered, along with windows, garage doors, and other things with long lead-times.

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Communications Director Michael Larrivee reported the following:

1. New Hire: He presented Hunter Reynolds as a new hire conditional on the background check, starting September 27, 2022 at \$18.89 per hour.

****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to hire Hunter Reynolds as Dispatcher Trainee September 27, 2022 at \$18.89 per hour, pending a background check. Unanimous.**

2. Melissa Bisson was promoted as Supervisor September 15, 2022 at the rate of \$29.44 per hour. The Commissioners noted that promotion.

3. New Radio System: RCM has started installing the new equipment at the tower sites and has been removing some equipment not in use. They should be finishing the Stockton Tower this week and then moving on to the water tank in Belfast.

5. Liberty Tower: The Liberty tower location is still in the works. Consultant Norm Boucher spoke a representative with American Tower (ATC) and their rate was \$3,500.00 per month. Norm got them down to \$2,500.00 per month, if the County commits to a 14-year lease.

6. They are still waiting to hear from US Cellular about their tower.

4. The SBA representative has not been responding to M. Larrivee's emails and questions, so M. Larrivee will be reaching out to the representative's supervisor today to explain the County's situation. There was discussion of the feasibility of the County having its own tower.

7. When EMA moves into its new building, M. Larrivee will get another generator as it's his understanding that D. Rowley is taking the current generator with him. It will likely cost about \$1,000.00 and will need a trailer to haul it, which will be about \$400.00. This could be funded from the Tower Sites line in the Comm. Center Budget.

8. The former director started a free program that wasn't quite finished. They partner with Simply Safe Home Security. If an alarm goes off, the person's name and info come up. They also team up with Uber and Chick-fil-e. Sirius XM is also a partner and records the telematics of the event. One of the schools has teamed up with Honeywell Security systems, and the camera has gun detection which can detect a person holding a gun in the parking lot and alert people.

SHERIFF'S REPORT

Sheriff Jeffrey Trafton was present to report the following:

1. New Hire: Sheriff Trafton presented Trinity Dearborn to be hired as Full-Time Corrections effective October 6, 2022 at the certified 8-year pay rate of \$22.29 per hour, and eligible for the \$15,000.00 sign-on.

****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to approve the hire of Trinity Dearborn as Full-Time Corrections Officer effective October 6, 2022 at the 8-year certified rate of \$22.29 per hour and eligible for the \$15,000.00 sign-on bonus. Unanimous.**

2. New Hire: Mack Page has been chosen to fill a vacant Part-Time Corrections Officer position effective October 6, 2022 at the uncertified part-time rate of \$18.78 per hour.

****W. Shorey moved, B. Johnson seconded to approve hiring Mack Page effective October 6, 2022 at the uncertified rate of \$18.78 per hour. Unanimous.**

3. The LPR electricity is now installed, and that system will be up and operational soon.

4. J. Trafton announced that the Patrol/Reentry is now at full staff and Waldo is the only County fully staffed at this point. He said he believed that the hiring sign-on bonuses have helped a lot.

5. The four-county jail collaboration is still going well, and there should be another meeting this month. Major Porter believes they can start talking about hiring a traffic manager. It would be a full-time position hired by all four counties, all pitching in. Inmate transport between the four counties can have "many moving parts" and will require someone with a Corrections background.

6. There was brief discussion on inmate population and staffing in both Knox County and Two Bridges Jails.

7. Four employees are out on maternity/paternity leave, and some are moose hunting, so everyone is pitching in to help with the workload, including one of the Corrections Officers.

8. Last Friday Chief Deputy Jason Trundy organized a well-attended Officer First Responder Wellness workshop at the Hutchinson Center and invited all the law enforcement and EMS agencies in the County to attend. J. Trafton said he believes first responding agencies need to do a better job taking care of the first responders, who see a lot of bad things, and he commended J. Trundy for putting this together. .

DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE NEW HIRE

Prosecutorial Assistant Eric Harvey gave the following report:

1. New Victim/Witness Advocate. E. Harvey stated that there were six great applicants, and two rounds of interviews. He presented Kelly Lewicki, former Dispatcher, to fill the vacant Victim/Witness Advocate position starting October 24, 2022 at pay Class VII, 6-month level of \$22.91 per hour. After the one year probationary period, she would move to the 2-year level. This was in recognition of her years of service and experience working at the communications center.

****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to approve hiring Kelly Lewicki as Victim/Witness Advocate effective October 24, 2022 at the Class VII, 6-month level of \$22.91 per hour and after successful completion of the probationary period, will move to the 2-year level.** Discussion: A. Fowler asked if this position was shared with Knox County and was told no. **Unanimous.**

2. E. Harvey explained a wage correction for Legal Secretary Amber Reynolds, who was promoted from part-time to full-time effective January 1, 2022 but was unfortunately not changed to the full-time pay scale Class VI at the 6-months rate of \$21.69 per hour. As of July 1, 2022, she was scheduled to move to the 1-year Class VI rate of \$22.62 per hour. He has figured out the back pay, as she is entitled to it.

****W. Shorey moved, B. Johnson seconded to pay the unpaid earned wages to Legal Secretary Amber Reynolds as requested. Unanimous.**

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY REPORT

IT Director J-sun Bailey reported the following:

1. Phone System Upgrade Research: He is still working on phone system quotes. All the phone lines at the Sheriff's Office and the 9-1-1 lines are recorded, so he's trying to figure out how that will fit into a new phone system.

2. He has been working on the radio system, as it needed fiber connected between the two buildings.

3. Generator Malfunction: During the recent weekend storm, the Sheriff's Office lost power, one generator didn't start, and one kicked in but it didn't switch over, so the servers shut down. He explained what malfunctioned, the repairs performed, and there was brief discussion about who should be starting these generators up once a month now that the Facilities Technician has retired. He had scheduled a meeting with Keith Nealley and Dale Rowley to discuss this but the day of the meeting, illness prevented it. He will keep an eye on the generators until another Facilities Technician is hired.

3. A network switch also died as part of that storm power shortage, so he has ordered another and is using backup equipment to keep things functioning until the replacement arrives.

4. He has ordered a new computer, monitors, and printer/scanner for the Archive that is large enough to scan the large books. Laser is the more appropriate for the Archive than an ink jet printer. It took him some time to find an HP printer with a flatbed that was available.
5. He is setting up 4 or 5 new employees that need to be set up on Spillman.
6. B. Johnson's replacement cell phone seems to be ready to go, so he will give that to her.
7. The interview room system at the Sheriff's Office is up and running except for the one replacement camera they are waiting for.
8. He must report for Jury duty on October 19, 2022.
9. He would like to attend a free conference, including hotel in Portsmouth, that Green Pages is hosting and there will be a few phone system vendors there that he has been researching. He thought it would be good to physically view the phone system, meet with them, and ask some questions. The Commissioners approved this travel. When asked, the ultimate drop-dead date the new phone system needs to be in will be when they move new people into the Sheriff's Office, as there is no more room on that system. There was additional discussion on the benefits of looking at the system and asking questions in person.
10. He discussed cell phones and potential ways to archive text messages, the cell providers that are currently used, etc.
11. He will test the portable generator for the Sheriff's Office to see if it powers what they believe it will.

CORRESPONDENCE

County Clerk Barbara Arseneau reported correspondence as follows:

1. The Commissioners' mileage is due Friday for the period of 9/3 through 10/7, 2022.
2. The Budget Committee set the Public Hearing/Final Budget Meeting date early so she can put the notice in the newspaper a little earlier than normal.
3. She has been researching and assisting with road and map questions, and while doing that has been scanning the indexes to accomplish two things at once.
4. There may be another tax abatement appeal coming before the Commissioners.
5. The old, spare Maine Reporters are still in the New Archive and after reaching out to all the Maine Counties and all the municipalities in Waldo County, nobody has claimed them. They will be disposed of soon.
6. United Midcoast Charities has requested a donation from the County. She will send a letter explaining how to submit requests during the budget process.

7. The FAA thinks the County still owns the Little River Property near the airport and sent a notice that they are looking at helicopter patterns. She will notify them the property has been sold.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

August 4, 18, and 31, 2022 Minutes completed back in and sent for last court session.

***B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to approve the minutes from the August 4, August 18, and August 31, 2022 Commissioners Court Sessions. Unanimous.**

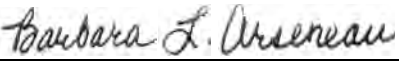
COMMISSIONERS MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

W. Shorey requested an executive session for the Commissioners to discuss non-public information.

****W. Shorey moved, B. Johnson seconded to go into executive session at 10:06 a.m. for discussion of non-public information as permitted by M.R.S.A. Title 1§405(6)(F). Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to come out of executive session at 10:38 a.m.**
Commissioner Johnson will be reaching out to KelLee Gray regarding doing evaluations.

****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to adjourn at 10:38 a.m. Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted by  Waldo County Clerk
Barbara L. Arseneau