

**WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT SESSION
DECEMBER 19, 2024**

PRESENT: Commissioners Betty I. Johnson (Chairman), and Amy R. Fowler, Human Resources Director AM, and County Clerk Barbara Arseneau to record the minutes.

Call to Order: Commissioner Johnson called the court session to order at 9:00 a.m. and requested a moment of silence in memory of Commissioner William D. Shorey, who passed away December 12, 2024.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to go into executive session at 9:03 a.m. for discussion of non-public information as permitted by MRSA Title 1§405(6)(A). Unanimous.**

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to come out of executive session at 9:35 a.m. Unanimous.**

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to go into executive session at 9:36 a.m. for discussion of the Waldo County Deputy Sheriff's Association contract negotiations according to MRSA Title 1§405(6)(D). Unanimous.**

Commissioner Johnson called public session to order at 9:49 a.m. and opened with the flag salute.

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to approve the 2025 Health Insurance rates at the Document "C" proposal and for the employee contribution to be divided in all pay periods over the year. Unanimous.**

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to approve the actuary's recommended health insurance COBRA premiums for 2025. Unanimous.**

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to ratify and sign the Deputy Sheriff's Association Contract for 2025-2027. Unanimous.**

CLOSING BOOKS – REGISTRY OF DEEDS

Present were Finance Director Kari Hunt and Register of Deeds Stacy Grant.

Register of Deeds Stacy Grant read the 2024-year end revenue figures for the Registry of Deeds as follows:

Fees:	\$261,829.51
Transfer Tax:	\$136,179.89
Surcharge:	\$19,164.00
Interest:	\$114.11
Total:	\$417,287.51

K. Hunt stated that the Deeds revenue numbers agreed with the Finance records.

Register of Probate Sharon Peavey read the 2024 year-end revenue figures for the Registry of Probate as follows:

Fees:	\$139,154.47
Restitution:	\$3,756.00
Surcharge:	\$3,030.00
Total:	\$145,940.47

K. Hunt stated that the Probate revenue numbers agreed with the Finance records.

FINANCIAL REPORT

1. Finance Director Kari Hunt received notice from the IRS that an internal revenue service contractor has been charged with unauthorized inspection and disclosure of the County's tax return or return information between 2018-2020. The Government's assessment is it was narrow in scope; examples such as issued to a business, and recipient tax identification numbers. The IRS included the case against the defendant, so K. Hunt researched the name on the court documents, and the person was charged as a felon in January 2024 and is serving five (5) years in prison. The County was just notified on December 17, 2024. K. Hunt noted that so far, she has not received any notice that the County has been compromised.

2. EMA Director Dale Rowley submitted an invoice in the amount of \$1,884.00 that he received recently from R.H. Lambeth for the District Attorney's Office remodel. This project was done with ARPA funds, which had been closed. K. Hunt mentioned a few options for paying the invoice, and the Commissioners chose to pay it from Facilities, All Other reserve.

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to pay the \$1,884.00 invoice submitted by R.H. Lambeth from the Facilities, All Other Reserve. Unanimous.**

3. On October 17, 2024, the Commissioners voted to pay a 3-year Sophos contract in the amount of \$27,792.25. It was coded to Technology Reserve 0265. The current balance in Technology is \$15,626.56, but this warrant overdraws it by \$12,165.34, so she recommended paying it from the Future Technology Reserve 0266.

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to pay the entire \$27,792.25 Sophos invoice from Future Technology 0266 Reserve. Unanimous.**

4. Invoices from the Garden have always been reviewed and approved by Commissioner Shorey, so K. Hunt asked how to handle the most recent invoices and who they should be referred to. Commissioners Johnson and Fowler approved the invoices for payment.

5. A check in the amount of \$22,925.00 was received for the auction of three 3 cruisers. Usually those funds would go into the Vehicle Reserve. However, the Commissioners felt that now the County has signed a vehicle lease, it would not go into the Vehicle Reserve. A. Fowler recommended putting it into 0210 Future County reserve.

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to place the \$22,925.00 from the three (3) cruisers auctioned into 0210 Future County reserve. Unanimous.**

6. The Congressional grant received for the Communications Center has been extended but K. Hunt said she would like to pay the invoices once they are received before the end of this year. This will be paid from the MUNIC funds, will be requested from the grant, and will be transferred.

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to authorize payment of these invoices as soon as they are received. Unanimous.**

7. K. Hunt presented the 2025 Tax Anticipation Note documents for borrowing \$5,000,000.00 for 2025, which is lower than last year, and the interest rate will be 5.31% which is slightly higher than the quote given to the Budget Committee, but she is confident there are enough funds to pay the estimated interest to be paid at \$290,440.90. This must be signed before the January 2, 2024 closing. Because two Commissioners will no longer be serving by January 1, 2024, the attorney at Eaton Peabody included a clause in the resolution essentially stating, "The people who are officers as of the date this paperwork is signed are authorized to sign it, even though some of them may not be officers as of the date of the closing."

8. \$5.5 million will be borrowed this year, lower than last year. The interest rate is at 5.31% which is slightly up from the quote given to the budget committee but is confident there are enough funds. \$290,449.73 anticipated to be paid in interest.

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to sign the Tax Anticipation Note for 2025. Unanimous.**

9. The County budget is currently about 93% expended, and one to two more warrants are anticipated. EMA is over budget, but this doesn't reflect income from ARPA, and Communications is also overbudget due to the collective bargaining agreement that was signed.

10. The Jail budget is currently 80% expended, and she will be moving \$304,000.00 over to a reserve.

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to file the Financial Report. Unanimous.**

WARRANTS

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to authorize payment of the December 19, 2024 General Fund Accounts Payable and Reserve warrant in the amount of \$257,542.97, the December 13, 2024 special payroll for the Communications Center in the amount of \$15,613.73, and December 19, 2024 payroll of \$174,352.24 for a total of \$447,508.94. Unanimous.**
(This included retro payment for the Communications Center employees per recent union negotiations.)

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to authorize payment of the December 19, 2024 MCRRC/Corrections Accounts Payable and Reserve warrant in the amount of \$216,403.29 and the December 19, 2024 payroll of \$71,411.93 for a total of \$287,815.22. Unanimous.**

HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

Human Resources Director Annette McLaggan reported the following:

1. Updated 2025 pay scales for non-union employees were submitted to the Commissioners, as voted on in the budget. The new commissioners will review and vote on them at the next court session.

2. A. McLaggan presented new hire Office Associate Liza Clark at \$21.00 per hour for 24 hours per week, starting December 16, 2024 at a reduced schedule until after January 1, 2025.

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to approve hiring Liza Clark as Office Associate effective December 16, 2024 at \$21.00 per hour for 24 hours per week. Unanimous.**

3. She reported end of employment for Dispatcher Erin Lubin, effective December 11, 2024. Vacation payout will be processed, and comp time has already been processed.

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to accept end of employment for Dispatcher Erin Luben effective December 11, 2024. Unanimous.**

4. A. McLaggan presented for new hire P/T Corrections Officer Cameron Paige at \$19.53 per hour effective December 29, 2024.

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to approve hiring Cameron Paige as P/T Corrections Officer at \$19.53 per hour effective December 29, 2024. Unanimous.**

5. Salary for Register of Probate Sharon Peavey will be \$69,158.00 effective January 1, 2025 as she has been newly elected again.

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to approve Register of Probate Sharon Peavey's salary at \$69,158.00 effective January 1, 2025. Unanimous.**

6. Since two new Commissioners have been elected and will start January 1, 2025, the salary for both the new Commissioner in District 2 and new Commissioner in District 3 will be \$13,679.70 each.

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to accept the pay for the new Commissioners at \$13,679.70 each. Unanimous.**

7. Officer Jacob Grinnell graduated from the Criminal Justice Academy and is Certified Law Enforcement Officer with an increase in pay from \$28.61 per hour to \$30.64 effective December 20, 2024. So noted.

8. Officer Bobby O'Leary graduated from the Criminal Justice Academy and is Certified Law Enforcement Officer with an increase in pay from \$28.61 per hour to \$30.04 effective December 20, 2024. So noted.

9. A. McLaggan said she greatly appreciated the past two years working as A. Fowler's H.R. Director, has learned a great deal from her, and said she will be missed.

FACILITIES REPORT

Facilities Manager Christopher Bryant was present and reported that he has filled all the propane tanks so this should be done for the year. He will be taking some leave time. Facilities Technician Rodney Melanson does an excellent job and will be taking care of things in his absence. A. Fowler

commended the good condition of the Facilities budget. C. Bryant wished A. Fowler good luck and said he appreciated everything she has done.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY REPORT

IT Director J-sun Bailey reported the following:

1. Earlier in the week there was Consolidated Communications experienced an outage, and the County had no internet service until Consolidated replaced a part in a router. The County experienced a server issue of its own the same day. All was resolved and is back up and running.
2. A. Fowler said that she would like to purchase her County iPad.
3. J. Bailey is setting up the Commissioners' cell phones and computers.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

B. Johnson said she would miss Commissioner Fowler, it was a pleasure working with her, she had learned a lot from her, and felt she could always call Commissioner Fowler any time and ask questions. A. Fowler said it was a privilege to work for the County for 20 years. She noted that while they were of differing political parties, the Commissioners could always joke and get along and even if they didn't always agree, they always worked together.

CORRESPONDENCE/CLERK'S REPORT

County Clerk Barbara Arseneau reported the following:

1. At the first January 2025 Commissioners Court Session, the Commissioners will need to vote for the 2025 Commissioner Chairman. They will also need to discuss, decide, and let MCCA Risk Pool Director Malcolm Ulmer know who will be serving as Waldo County's appointed representative to the Risk Pool's Board of Directors in 2025, the authorized individual who will serve as proxy on that board, and who will be the primary point-of-contact with the Risk Pool.
2. The Commissioners had been notified that the Sheriff's Office wished to apply to the Stanton Foundation for grant funds to be used in replacing the retired Waldo County K9. The Commissioners' official approval and a written letter was needed.
****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to approve a letter of approval from the Commissioners for the Waldo County Sheriff's Office to apply for funds to assist with the Waldo County K9 Unit. Unanimous.**
3. B. Arseneau submitted a County of Waldo disposition form documenting disposal of County records that had met their retention schedule, including paper and digital, during the months of October and November 2024.
****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to approve the records disposition form for October through November 2024. Unanimous.**
4. Register of Probate Sharon Peavey sent a memo to the County Commissioners advising that they wished to close the Probate Registry on December 23, 2024 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for the annual Christmas lunch. Noted by the Commissioners.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Discussion of the draft November 7, 2024 Commissioners Court Session minutes had been tabled at the December 5, 2024 session. Both Commissioners had read them and stated that they could be approved.

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to approve the minutes from the November 7, 2024 Court Session. Unanimous.**

CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION

The Commissioners called former Correctional Administrator Raymond Porter to the front and B. Johnson presented a certificate of appreciation for his many years of service in various positions at the County Jail/Maine Coastal Regional Reentry Center. She stated that Commissioner Shorey had respected and relied on him for help with the County Garden, that all the Commissioners respected and appreciated his excellent work over the years, and that he will be greatly missed.

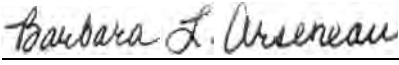
PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Treasurer Owen Smith thanked Commissioner Fowler for her service, and her support of the Communications Center over the years that she was involved with legislature. He also noted that Commissioner Fowler was the first two-time President of the Maine County Commissioners Association.

2. Commissioner Johnson noted that a Certificate of Appreciation was awarded to Commissioner William Shorey for his years of service to the County of Waldo from 2009 until his recent death in December. She shared that she and Commissioner Shorey had birthdays two days apart and that one day each year, they were the same age.

A. Fowler acknowledged many in the room by name, spoke briefly about their positions and accomplishments, and thanked all for coming. There were snacks and refreshments after the Court session.

***B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler adjourned at 11:03 a.m. Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted by  Waldo County Clerk
Barbara L. Arseneau