

**WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT SESSION
MARCH 2, 2023**

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

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

FINANCIAL REPORT

Finance Director Patricia Parker reported the following:

The County Checkbook balance is \$684,795.54 and the Jail Checkbook balance is \$161,570.41.

Tax Anticipation Note: Total borrowed is \$560,000.00; \$300,000.00 from the County side, and \$260,000.00 from the Correction/Reentry side. On the mid-February warrant, \$150,000.00 was borrowed, and the interest paid was \$362.05 for that two-week period.

The accounts are listed in the binders for the Commissioners. Total collected interest for February was \$21,447.94 but doesn't include interest from the County and Jail checkbooks, health insurance, and ARPA.

County Appropriations/Revenue:

15% of the County 2023 budget has been expended. 0% of the County revenue has been received.

Corrections Appropriations/Revenue:

13% of the Corrections 2023 budget has been expended. 0% of the Corrections revenue has been received.

WARRANTS

P. Parker reviewed all the expenditures on both County and Jail warrants.

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the March 2, 2023 General Fund Accounts Payable and Reserve warrant and payroll in the amount of \$345,234.31.**

Discussion: P. Parker listed the reserve accounts that refunded the County because all payroll is initially paid by the County and those reserve accounts are used for some specific aspects of payroll.

Unanimous.

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to authorize payment of the March 2, 2023 MCRRC (Corrections) Accounts Payable and Reserve warrant and payroll in the amount of \$106,545.84.**

Discussion: P. Parker listed the reserve accounts that refunded the County because all payroll is initially paid by the County and those reserve accounts are used for some specific aspects of payroll.

Unanimous.

A. Fowler asked what the "Bee Whisperer" was that was listed. P. Parker and W. Shorey explained that this was an order for bees for the County Garden.

W. Shorey asked for the undesignated funds balance. P. Parker said there is about \$400,000.00 minus what had been just spent; she would need to check. W. Shorey said that for 10 years the County has

kept about \$500,000.00 in undesignated funds for unanticipated needs, so as soon as that account got down to about \$600,000.00, they started using TAN funds. P. Parker said she hadn't understood that, and her intention was to drain that down and then borrow on the TAN. After speaking with Commissioner Shorey the other day, she understood that she should not drain this any further and so she borrowed from the TAN this time around. The undesignated funds are now around \$430,000.00, which is about \$70,000.00 less than the \$500,000.00. Her intention had been to take it down to zero to pay invoices because she had not known that is not what the Commissioners wanted. W. Shorey said he had been asking about the balance because that money is almost untouchable to keep the County solid. He said probably in her mind, P. Parker was trying to save the County from having to pay interest, but this is not the way it was done. She apologized and said she would borrow on the TAN and borrow an additional amount to bring the undesignated funds back to the \$500,000.00 threshold.

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

HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

H.R. Director Annette McLaggan reported the following:

1. During last two weeks, A. McLaggan made a correction to Joshua Staples' original rate of pay change. The letter had an incorrect figure, as it was supposed to be \$28.53. Noted by the Commissioners.
2. John Shirk was paid the second installment of his sign-on bonus.
3. Payroll Process Review: The W-2 issue has been resolved, she has met with a few employees to explain and review it, and she has put on her calendar to make sure it is all set next year. Because it is called a W-2C, she had spoken with Maine Revenue, MainePERS, and the County's attorney to be sure she had the correct legal understanding and backing on this matter. Waldo County had opted for it to be post-tax and it has been put back into iSolved as post-tax consistent with the historical data. The payroll system is very difficult to use; for example, to set up an employee as a supervisor with employees under them was a difficult and time consuming process. Initial setup programming issues have been found and are being resolved. Too many restrictions were initially set up. Employees should be able to change their hours worked or taken as leave before submitting to the supervisor. She is spending time with supervisors at their locations so everyone understands how to enter various hours, and is interested in employee feedback on what works with payroll, what could be changed, improved, etc. The 1095's are very difficult to set up. One of the Sheriff's employees has been a big help to her and has offered to come down and help. The Commissioners encouraged her to take training that will assist her and said they hadn't realized how difficult the payroll system was. W. Shorey said he's encouraged her to talk to other payroll companies at the conference she will be attending. The SHRM HR group will hold their 3 or 4-day conference in May, which she will register for and gets one day free due to membership status.

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to pay for the H.R. Director to attend all four days of the H.R. Conference in May. Unanimous.**

5. Yesterday she met with the Maine Municipal Association Workers Compensation loss control representative. The prior H.R. Director set it up for the County to be on the premium plan, Tier 3, because as an employer, the County is doing all it can to promote work safety via policies, equipment, etc. There are also safety grants she plans to apply for. The rep will come back and do a site walkthrough inspection of each of the County locations.

6. The Facilities Manager position posting has been extended to Friday, March 10, 2023. The posted Deeds Clerk P/T position closes tomorrow. Advertising open positions was briefly discussed. Along with Indeed, jobs are posted on public bulletin boards.

2023 VEHICLE BIDS

Chief Deputy Matthew Curtis and Lt. Cody Laite reported that vehicles cannot be ordered at this time because they aren't being built. All dealerships are in the same situation - they can provide a price, but no idea of when these will be available. Only non-law-enforcement trucks are available. Last year one of those non-pursuit Chevrolet trucks was purchased for non-patrol work. Current pricing for a RAM is \$36,913 per unit and \$42,905.00 for a Chevrolet. No SUVs are available. They are piggybacking on the state police bid pricing on the units that they order. He's been searching and has been hesitant to order a vehicle that may not arrive for a long time and hold up County funds. Up to five (5) units were requested for RAM 1500's, F150 Pursuits, and non-hybrid Explorers because the hybrids needed so many repairs. M. Curtis recommended purchasing two non-pursuit Chevy trucks for non-primary patrol employee functions, such as the School Resource Officer. A. Fowler felt it was important for the on-the-road patrol officers to have the newer, better vehicles. M. Curtis said he already moved the Lieutenant's vehicle into the patrol fleet and put the Lieutenant in a non-pursuit-rated vehicle. All five of the recently acquired vehicles that were ordered a few years ago have been allocated for the on-road deputies. The patrol vehicles are wearing out because they've been used longer due to the vehicle shortage. The Commissioners authorized the Chief Deputy and Lieutenant to do what they could to obtain the necessary vehicles. Available funds were briefly discussed. It is difficult to know if there will be enough funds for all five vehicles. The Commissioners agreed to purchase two non-pursuit trucks as recommended.

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to accept the recommendations of the Chief Deputy and Lieutenant to purchase two non-pursuit vehicles. Unanimous.**

DISCUSSION RE: WORKFORCE COLLABORATIVE

Present were Edward Wright, Director of Maine Community College System and the Alford Center for the Advancement of Maine's Workforce, Chief Deputy Matthew Curtis, and Lt. Cody Laite. This is the central office, covers the entire state, and offers some two-year programs and certificate programs. They also support workforce development and partner with all Maine businesses to assist them with educational goals. This is on top of the community college funding that is available. The transactional funding is the Alford Fund grant which sets up training for nearly all employees. \$1,200.00 is available per year per employee as a training pool on request by an employer who feels it is important training for the employee, including online courses. Funds are matched 50/50. The employer makes the funding request in advance, must register with the vender and pay the vendor, but must provide the registration followed by proof that that employee took it and passed or failed, although no refund of the funds to Alford is necessary if an employee fails. If someone can't show up, it is better to send someone, or they can try to balance out for the one who didn't attend. There is no cost other than the match funds. The County will be reimbursed if the request is made and approved ahead of time, not after the fact, for up to 50%. It is a 3-page form online. This is an investment in Maine Workers, is not intended for CEOS but for front-line employees who do the work. Funds can be used to pay for up to half of law enforcement training and also other County departments' internal training. It is only a one-page form to enroll as an employer, and a 1.5 page Memorandum of Agreement. Invoices should be kept track of, but do not have to be sent. Registration much be tracked. They are a "Compact Member Organization", so employees also have access to take

up to 2 classes per term up to 18 courses over 3 years at 50% of the cost. It was thought that this should be administered through the County Human Resources office.

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to enroll with the Maine Workforce Development Compact. Unanimous.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Present was J. Bailey and new IT Technician Ray Monreal, new IT Tech.

1. There was a web site outage for about a week and one half. He's looking for another company as the current company has not been working out well. It's running for now.
2. A new printer/scanner/copier from Transco is at the Comm center. The original was having problems, and a loaner was sent, so the Communications Director purchased a countertop machine and asked Transco to pick it up. The contract will be paid until it's finished, but with parts and equipment shortages, this will probably save money in the long run.
3. The Register of Probate's PC crashed, a new one is up and running, and the ICON scanner will soon be operational as soon as ICON remotes in and sets it up.
4. The phone and computer move at the Sheriff's Office are being finished, trading off equipment among employees, and also set up for a new employee.
5. He attended a congressional funding event, it is open again and he can try to obtain some funds for the departments.
6. Spillman cost sharing information is still being researched with other counties and he will bring that information to the Commissioners during an executive session, as some of the information would be non-public. A. Fowler said up to this point, the County hasn't charged other agencies to use the County's Spillman Computer Assisted Dispatching system. Some counties charge every municipality for Spillman more than their communication budget is. J. Bailey said it has been challenging obtaining the information because all the counties do it differently. Some charge just to dispatch, then more if you use Spillman; some charge nothing; some use a separate tax base.
7. FOIA and FOAA Process: The Sheriff's Office is receiving a lot more requests for records, including videos, and this requires a lot of time. His main concern is whether all departments are handling FOAA/FOIA the same way across the board, and he recently spoke with B. Arseneau about this. B. Arseneau explained that as Public Records Officer, she has taken courses over the years and this type of thing gets discussed – what the trends are, what constitutes a public record, who should handle it, etc. It is good to have a process that is as uncomplicated and consistent as possible. J. Bailey wondered if it should go through one person. B. Arseneau said that each department usually handles their FOAA/FOIA requests. Department heads do contact her with questions as needed, and occasionally an attorney is consulted. The State Rules for Disposition of Records are a good resource because confidential and public records are often identified there. She appreciated J. Bailey bringing his concerns to her because FOAA/FOIA requests are becoming more complicated, and she will do more research to see if a simple process above what already exists is needed.

CORRESPONDENCE

County Clerk Barbara Arseneau reported correspondence as follows:

1. As requested, she's drafted a County Budget Funding Request Form for the Commissioners' review. This allows organizations to make a formal request, the Commissioners to review it, and then make a decision.
2. Notice to reschedule the Tax Abatement Appeal Hearing Petition #380 to the April 20, 2023 Court Session has been mailed certified and regular mail.
3. All 2023 Municipal Tax Assessment letters were sent out in February on schedule.
4. Office Assistant Susan Prisco's training is going very well. She has completed the Municipal Devotion Certificates and sent all but two towns who haven't responded with their information yet. Plans and preparations are underway for the Spirit of America Ceremony in April.
5. Half of the 2016 files that have met their disposition schedules have been set aside for destruction, have been recorded, and will be presented for disposition in the future.
6. She's been assisting and answering questions for the new employees in the office.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None finished at this time.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

1. A. Fowler reported an all-day Zoom session with Executive Council that is still waiting for a final response and will report on that when it is appropriate.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

**** B. Johnson moved A. Fowler seconded to go into executive session for discussion of non-public information as permitted at 10:42 p.m. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to come out of executive session at 11:13 a.m.**

W. Shorey stated that he was going to make a motion that they have given a lot of consideration, he believed would be in the best interests of everyone, and they had received legal advice on as follows:

****W. Shorey moved, A. Fowler seconded for probationary employment to terminate for Patricia Parker immediately. Unanimous.**

P. Parker asked if she could ask a question. W. Shorey said that no questions would be entertained, a letter would be sent out to her, and she was to leave immediately.

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