

**WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT SESSION
OCTOBER 3, 2024**

PRESENT: Commissioners Betty I. Johnson (Chairman), Amy R. Fowler, and William D. Shorey participated via Zoom teleconference. County Clerk Barbara Arseneau took the minutes.

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

FINANCIAL REPORT

Finance Director Kari Hunt reported the following:

1. Tax Anticipation Note: 35% of the Towns' taxes have been collected and a total of 18 towns have paid. The funds collected have not been applied to the TAN yet. \$4.8 million of the \$6 million TAN has been borrowed.
2. The County Health Insurance account balance, including September, is \$287,000.00.
3. The County Checking Account balance is \$1,137,087.28. About 69% of the County budget has been spent and could be 85% expended. So noted.
4. The Jail Checking Account balance is \$2,332,884.12. 65% of the Jail budget has been spent and could be 85% expended. So noted.

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

WARRANTS

****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to authorize payment of the October 3, 2024 General Fund Accounts Payable and Reserve warrant in the amount of \$155,766.65 and the September 24, 2024 payroll of \$195,670.80 for a total \$351,437.45. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to authorize payment of the October 3, 2024 MCRRC/Corrections Accounts Payable and Reserve warrant in the amount of \$53,396.89 with the September 24, 2024 payroll of \$46,119.70 for a total of \$99,516.59. Unanimous.**

FACILITIES REPORT

Facilities Manager Christopher Bryant reported the following:

1. The intercom project is completed at the Jail, and he is waiting for the final payment.
2. Facilities Tech R. Melanson and C. Bryant have installed gutters at the Communications Center with leftover materials. This should alleviate water draining and icing on walking areas near the building during winter.
3. C. Bryant, R. Melanson, and the County Clerk have established a plan for moving the Jail records out of the Old Jail Archive and hopefully that will be done in the next few weeks.

4. Fuel oil is being checked in all the buildings in preparation for winter.
5. A sign for the Registry of Deeds has been ordered and will be added to the existing sign.
6. A. Fowler requested that the windows be scraped and caulked near the Probate Judge's chambers.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY REPORT

IT Director J-sun Bailey reported the following:

1. All the VPNs have been updated except for Islesboro and Stockton Springs.
2. New workstations for the Communications Center have come in and he will install them.
3. Regarding the 911 outage in Knox County that occurred yesterday, Waldo County temporarily took Knox's 911 calls. J. Bailey wasn't aware of any issues.

ENTERPRISE VEHICLE OPTION DISCUSSION

Present were Lt. Cody Laite, Sheriff Jason Trundy, and Finance Director Kari Hunt. C. Laite reviewed and submitted documents to the Commissioners from Enterprise for the Sheriff's fleet management proposal. The Sheriff or Chief can sign as Commissioners' signatures aren't required. The Commissioners and Finance Director asked questions, there was discussion about potential savings in the 2025 Sheriff's Capital Outlay budget line, but the fuel and maintenance lines are budgeted for those portions of the Enterprise agreement. The Commissioners stated that they need time to review the documents and asked that all updated information and answers to questions be submitted to them in advance of the October 17, 2024 Commissioners' court session during which they will decide.

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded for the Sheriff and Lieutenant to continue to obtain more information on the contract before a decision is made.** Discussion: W. Shorey felt it was potentially a very good program and it helps that Searsport Auto has agreed to be on the maintenance list. While he would like to review the documents, he would also like to pursue this aggressively. **Unanimous.**

HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

Human Resources Director Annette McLaggan reported the following:

1. During the last court session, A. McLaggan asked about gift cards for employees from the Wellness program and was told to order them. An official vote is needed, and she has prepared an invoice for the Commissioners to sign.

****A. Fowler moved, W. Shorey seconded to order gift cards for employees as discussed, to be funded from the ARPA administrative line.** Discussion: One card will be given to employees in November, the other December, in appreciation for all they do. **Unanimous.**

There are currently only three members on the Wellness Committee. A. McLaggan asked employees to send her an email if they wish to join.

2. Two grievances presented several months ago have now moved on to arbitration, so the County is waiting to hear from the arbitrator, the county attorney, and the union. So noted.

3. Deputy Bobby O'Leary, hired September 11, 2023, will receive the 1-year (not certified) pay increase from \$27.51 to \$28.61 per hour retroactive to September 11, 2024. So noted.
4. Deputy William Nichols, hired September 13, 2023, will receive the 1-year pay increase from \$28.88 to \$30.04 per hour retroactive to September 12, 2024. So noted.
5. Deputy Jacob Grinnell, hired September 19, 2023, will receive the 1-year (not certified) pay increase from \$27.51 to \$28.61 per hour retroactive to September 19, 2024. So noted.
6. 12 residents are at the Maine Coastal Regional Reentry, with 36 inmates boarded out. So noted.
7. There are two conditional offers for the full-time officer position, which have been accepted pre-background check. The offers are inhouse. So noted.
8. The D.A.'s Office Victim Witness Advocate position is still vacant, with a second group of applicants soon to be interviewed.
9. There is a dormant vacant dispatcher position while waiting for a trainee to progress further.
10. A School Resource Officer position in Winterport has been posted internally and will result in a vacancy in the Sheriff's Office. It is believed that this will be set up similarly to the other SRO arrangements. The Lieutenant can answer any questions the Commissioners may have about this.
11. The Office Associate position job description has been put together by Human Resources, Finance, County Clerk, and Commissioner Johnson and was submitted to the Commissioners for approval.
****A. Fowler moved, W. Shorey seconded to approve the job description for the Office Associate position. Unanimous.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Commissioner candidate Elise Brown asked the Commissioners about their experience related to tax abatement appeal hearings. The Commissioners shared some of their observations and what they consider when ascertaining what is fair and equitable. State figures and revaluations often result in abatement appeal requests. The Commissioners consult with an attorney at times, as needed. Poverty abatements can be among the most difficult. Sometimes the Commissioners are not in unanimous agreement but agree with the process. They encouraged E. Brown to attend Maine Municipal Association workshops on tax abatement appeals. It was thought that there may be many tax abatement appeals soon due to increases in taxes.

TRAVEL POLICY DISCUSSION

Prosecutorial Assistant Eric Harvey was present to discuss an invoice from a conference that two of the D.A.'s staff attended. The invoice separated the meals out. Two of the meals were more expensive than anticipated, at \$56.00 more than the County travel policy allows. The Commissioners stated that

if the total per person was within the allotted \$65.00 per day for food, it was allowed. Since breakfast was not purchased, it turned out it was \$1.00 over. A. Fowler volunteered to pay that.

****A. Fowler moved, W. Shorey seconded regarding attendance at the conference, knowing and utilizing the food allowance per person per day, the overage of \$1.00 would be contributed by Commissioner Fowler.** Discussion: The Registry of Probate recently had a similar situation, and they paid their own overage. **Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to add the D.A. staff conference registration cost to the current warrant, which will increase the total by \$696.00. Unanimous.**

E. Harvey said they've finally hired another Assistant District Attorney who will start soon. The Victim Witness Advocate position is still open, and more interviews will start soon.

CORRESPONDENCE

County Clerk Barbara Arseneau reported that a notice was received from the Belfast Design Review Committee of a public hearing on October 10, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. regarding installation of exterior heat pump condensers on the exterior of the Belfast City Library. She also reported that she is working on disposition of records in the Commissioners' Office that have met retention cycles.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Commissioners received draft minutes from the September 19, 2024 court session by email and tabled this until next court session on October 17, 2024.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

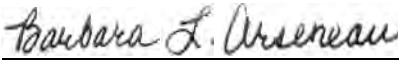
None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to go into executive session at 10:17 a.m. for discussion of non-public information as permitted by MRSA Title 1§405(6)(F). Unanimous.**

****A. Fowler moved, W. Shorey seconded to come out of executive session at 12:45 p.m. Unanimous.** No action taken.

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to adjourn at 12:45 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by  Waldo County Clerk
Barbara L. Arseneau