

**WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT SESSION
NOVEMBER 3, 2022**

PRESENT: Commissioners Amy R. Fowler (Chairman), William D. Shorey, and Betty I. Johnson. Also present were Freedom Selectperson Elaine Higgins, and 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 that the County Checkbook balance is \$856,869.00, and the Jail Checkbook balance is \$927,703.65.

TAX ANTICIPATION NOTE:

The total Tax Anticipation Note is \$5,500,000.00. \$2,620,000.00 has been borrowed; \$1,775,000.00 by the County and \$845,000.00 by Corrections. \$25,778.94 in interest is owed.

County Appropriations/Revenue:

77% of the County 2022 budget has been expended and it could be 92%. 110.93% of the County revenue has been received at this time.

Corrections Appropriations/Revenue:

66% of the Corrections 2022 budget has been expended and could be 92%. 139.55% of the Corrections revenue has been received at this time.

Seven towns have not submitted their 2022 property taxes at this time.

P. Parker has been sending questions by email to the former Finance Director and receives answers the next day.

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

WARRANTS

****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to authorize payment of the October 28, 2022 General Fund Accounts Payable and Reserve warrant and payroll in the amount of \$806,954.64. Unanimous.**

****W. Shorey moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the October 28, 2022 MCRRC (Corrections) Accounts Payable and Reserve warrant and payroll in the amount of \$591,076.79. Unanimous.**

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Director Michael Larrivee reported the following:

1. The radio system is coming along. They will be on Mt. Waldo today, which is the second to last site as there is still no agreement on the Liberty tower. They need to wait a week for Mount

Waldo as Blueberry Broadcasting is up to full power right now and doesn't want to have anything put on the tower yet but has given permission to start things on the ground.

2. Voter Repeaters – Belfast: He explained that he and Consultant Norman Boucher overlooked something while planning the radio system. Everything links to the water tank, which is the primary site, and there is one link back to the Comm. Center from the water tank. The voter repeaters are stored at EMA. If that one link goes down, they go down. The recommendation is to install a redundant set of voter repeaters at the water tank so if one goes down, the other picks it up. The quote is resolve this is \$18,180.00, and he stated his preference that it be paid from a reserve account. Before discussing this further, W. Shorey asked if there was any progress with tower space rental negotiations with SBA in Liberty. M. Larrivee said he is still in discussions, it seems that they're good with it, but he must get permission from higher up. Rent shouldn't increase for 10 years. W. Shorey said that if this goes through, the County will have a fixed rental price for years. The Commissioners then discussed a reserve account and decided to fund it from the Communications Reserve 0261.

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to expend the \$18,000.00 from 0261 reserve for the redundant voter repeaters. Unanimous.**

3. A. Fowler asked for an update on the congressional grant funds. M. Larrivee reported that he sent an email to Carole Woodcock, she explained that things are stalled until after the elections and likely nothing will be done until after that, possibly as late as spring.

HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

Present was Human Resources Director KelLee Gray.

1. Facilities Custodian Hire: Facilities Manager Keith Nealley sent a letter recommending hiring Dartagnan Gray as full-time Custodian effective November 1, 2022 for a minimum of 32 hours week at the hourly wage of \$18.50 per hour. With review of custodial duties, it could be up to 40 hours a week for special projects. K. Nealley is also requesting to expend \$1,000.00 for training for this position and has funds in his budget.

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to hire Dartagnan Gray as full-time Custodian for a minimum of 32 and up to 40 hours per week at \$18.50 per hour effective November 1, 2022.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to expend \$1,000.00 for the training. Unanimous.**

2. 2023 Health Insurance Open Enrollment: The Commissioners have proposed to increase the total annual premium for each level by 12% as follows:

Employee only:	\$9,250.80
Parent/Child:	\$17,196.72
Employee/Spouse:	\$18,151.92
Family:	\$26,003.52

The 15% of the overall premium paid by the employees, split over 24 payments per year as in the past, is as follows:

Employee only:	\$57.82
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Parent/Child: \$107.48
Employee/Spouse: \$113.45
Family: \$162.52

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to increase the health insurance premiums as recommended by Malcolm Ulmer and presented. Unanimous.**

The Commissioners asked for copies of the health insurance rates, and K. Gray will also provide the rates to the employees.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY REPORT:

IT Director J-sun Bailey reported the following:

1. He is still working on the Reentry computer system.
2. He is still researching phone systems and the recorder system with Mike Larrivee, since the recorder records the phone system 9-1-1 calls and radio traffic, and they are trying to determine whether it needs to be upgraded or can still be used with a new phone system.
3. He is working on web site updates and notices for meetings, adding recordings and minutes of meetings as they become available, etc.
4. There are three (3) new Belfast employees and a new D.A.'s Office employee that need to be set up for Spillman logins, Maine Crash Reporting system, etc. He said it takes a minimum of half an hour to set each person up. All these systems integrate. He also does this for other agencies such as Searsport and Stockton Springs, and Northport.

Freedom Selectboard member Elaine Higgins asked about use of personal cell phones in public municipal work. J. Bailey said that it's his understanding that any public government work done on a personal or municipal/county device is public record and can be FOIA/FOAA requested, subject to subpoena, etc. He recently attended FOAA/FOIA training and someone from a town who did a presentation shared that they had a dispute over a road, and the upset party inundated them with a FOAA request that involved their personal devices. For the County, SEGIS compliance requires using county phones. It is "best practices" to use a work device. Also, a public record must be maintained by retention schedules for a certain number of years. This can include cell phone text messages and emails.

CORRESPONDENCE

County Clerk Barbara Arseneau reported correspondence as follows:

1. On October 28, 2022, Restorative Justice Project submitted a letter to the Commissioners stating that effective November 1, 2022, they were providing 60 days' notice that they will be vacating the rental space at 39A Spring Street, Belfast on December 31, 2022.

****A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to accept the letter from Restorative Justice Project with 60 days' notice that they will vacate the rental space at 39A Spring Street on December 31, 2022. Unanimous.**

The Commissioners noted that this will work well, as the Registry of Deeds can move from their current location at the Old Superior Courthouse to 39A Spring Street. Dennis Frye will start renovating that space hopefully in April of 2023. The Commissioners also plan to move the District Attorney's Office to the former EMA space as soon as possible and hopefully will be able to move the Registry of Deeds sometime in the fall of 2023. W. Shorey said he has encouraged S. Grant to take her associates and go view the space so they can start planning.

2. The Public Hearing for the 2023 County Budget is tomorrow night at 6:00 p.m. She will send the agenda out again today as a reminder.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None available currently.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

1. W. Shorey asked for an executive session for discussion of non-public information.

****W. Shorey moved, A. Fowler seconded to go into executive session for discussion of non-public information as permitted by M.R.S.A. Title 1§405 6.F. at 9:23 a.m. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to come out of executive session at 10:15 a.m. Unanimous.**

2. B. Johnson reported that the Belfast Creative Coalition is putting on a conference this weekend at the Crosby Center, the Hutchinson Center, and different places for awareness of the Opiate situation as a follow up from two years ago, since they had not been able to do it every year due to COVID-19. Fund raising has been good, but she recommended that the County donate \$2,000.00 to assist with the expenses of the conference. She recommended making this donation from funds that will be received by the County from the Opiate settlement that has been ongoing.

****B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to award \$2,000.00 to Belfast Creative Coalition from Opiate Settlement funds received by the County. Unanimous.**

****B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler moved, W. Shorey seconded to adjourn at 10:17 a.m. Unanimous.**

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