

**WALDO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT SESSION  
DECEMBER 15, 2022**

**PRESENT:** Commissioners William D. Shorey (Chairman), Amy R. Fowler, and Betty I. Johnson (via video teleconference.) County Clerk Barbara Arseneau was absent.

**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 \$2,053,651.02, and the Jail Checkbook balance is \$933,018.73.

**TAX ANTICIPATION NOTE:**

The total Tax Anticipation Note has been paid in full, and the interest paid was \$28,094.00.

**ASSESSED TAXES PAID TO DATE:**

All the towns have paid their taxes.

**County Appropriations/Revenue:**

86% of the County 2022 budget has been expended and could be 96%. 104.24% of the County revenue has been received.

**Corrections Appropriations/Revenue:**

75% of the Corrections 2022 budget has been expended and could be 96% expended. 105.37% of the Corrections revenue has been received.

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

**WARRANTS**

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, A. Fowler seconded to authorize payment of the November 30, 2022 General Fund Accounts Payable and Reserve warrant and November 24, 2022 payroll in the amount of \$1,575,384.72. Unanimous.**

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to authorize payment of the November 30, 2022 MCRRC (Corrections) Accounts Payable and Reserve warrant and November 24, 2022 payroll in the amount of \$491,428.00. Unanimous.**

**TAX ANTICIPATION NOTE BID PROPOSALS:**

Present were Business Development Officer Niki Janczura and Commercial Lender Ed Varney with First National Bank, and Pool Doody with Camden Nation Bank.

1. Camden National Bank submitted a bid of 5.14% interest.
2. First National Bank submitted a bid of 4.9% interest.

P. Parker requested that she be allowed some time to examine the details of the bid proposals before a vote was taken to award the bid.

## **CLOSING BOOKS FOR 2022**

### **REGISTRY OF PROBATE**

Register of Probate Sharon Peavey presented the total earnings from December 2021 through November 2022 and the Finance Director's numbers matched as follows:

Fees - \$137,446.99

Surcharge - \$3,550.00

Restitution - \$3,318.75

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to approve the books for the Registry of Probate for 2022. Unanimous.**

S. Peavey requested authorization to close her office for lunch one day next week for Christmas and will post it on the door in advance. The Commissioners gave permission.

S. Peavey reported that two Judges have been coming to fill in during the vacancy in the Probate Judge position. They have been most helpful, so she asked if she could give them each a small gift as a token of their appreciation. The Commissioners agreed.

### **REGISTRY OF DEEDS**

Register of Deeds Stacy Grant presented the year-end figures and the Finance Director's numbers matched as follows:

Fees - \$310,670.83

Surcharge - \$24,609.00

Interest - \$146.82

Transfer Tax - \$155,281.39

Grand Total: \$490,708.04

S. Grant said she sent a letter over earlier requesting permission to close the office for their annual Christmas luncheon December 22, 2022 from 1:30 to 1:00 p.m. The Commissioners gave permission.

**\*\*A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to accept the Deeds report with figures that match the Finance figures for 2022. Unanimous.**

### **SOLAR PANEL PRESENTATION**

Present were Facilities Manager Keith Nealley, Guy Marshall of Revision Energy, and EMA Director Dale Rowley. K. Nealley has provided the electricity usage information for the Public Safety Building, and it is about 10% over last year, and asked G. Marshall to make his presentation.

G. Marshall explained that co-owner Andrew Kahrl created the budget, initial design, and preliminary proposal that would be reviewed with the Commissioners.

95,920 kilowatt hours were used in 2021, and it is nearly 89,000 through this past October, so it will end up being about 110,000 for 2022. The array they have designed, maximizing all the exposure on the southeastern facing roof, can provide a little less than half of what is needed. It is not always possible to get even to 90% of what is used. He explained how the panels are installed and that inverters convert energy for lights, video cameras, etc. If there is a protected server, this will be discussed further, can be monitored internally, and won't take away from the usage.

Once this is set up, Revision Energy will work with CMP and will apply for interconnection. CMP would give credits to the County by billing as they normally would, but whatever the County produces, they will bill for the net difference in what the County produces. He anticipates that because the County would be using around 50% saving, so the net do would be somewhere between 45% to 50%.

There are two ways to put energy out to the grid:

1.) Net Energy Billing: Every KW hour produced on the array goes to grid and is credited for one kilowatt hour as an even trade. The County is at the "medium general service" rate and would get discounts at that rate. The kilowatt energy hour in 2022 is 12.14 cents and will go up to 17.3 cents in 2023.

2.) CNI Tariff Rate: The PUC has required both CMP and Versant to credit a dollar amount rather than a kilowatt hour. On a "medium general service" rate, CMP would credit 18.9 cents per kilowatt but on the bill, they would only charge 12.14 that was pulled from CMP. It's required with the Tariff rate. The County would make money on the energy produced, so the 12.14 cents is covered but also would receive an additional 6.75 cents for every kilowatt hour produced. The proposal will be adjusted with the 2023 rates, which will be 17.3 charged and 23.6 cents reimbursed. The difference will be 6.3 cents, however the cost per kilowatt hour is higher and the County will still get 6.3 cents per kilowatt hour produced.

The Federal solar rebate is a separate rebate form and not part of the Federal tax return. Municipalities are the same as non-profit in that they get a rebate – it's not really a credit. The Federal Government will only give 30% of the cost of the hardware and labor to install it, which in this case is \$173,773.00. There was discussion about whether a rebate would be allowed on funds that had already come from the Federal Government, such as ARPA funds, and there was no answer at this time. There was discussion regarding storing energy versus sending it out on the grid for reimbursement. G. Marshall said the goal is never to produce more energy that is used because CMP will keep it. Revision quotes the kilowatt hour, which includes the kilowatt charge and the energy charge. Batteries are technologically where they should be, so the grid is storing the energy. If batteries were put in the building, the electricity stored would only be worth 17.3 cents, but the only way to get the tariff rate is to put it back on the grid. D. Rowley said they will be using batteries at the EMA building so that they can be off the grid. It is unknown how long the tariff will be with CMP, because it's all regulated by the PUC. Regarding installation, Revision Energy handles all the permits, etc. for installation.

The Commissioners wished to move forward, and G. Marshall said that once the County signs a contract, they go into the installation queue. If a company drops out of the queue, the County will be closer to starting installation. G. Marshall will have the answer to their questions tomorrow. He will find out if federally funded projects can receive the rebate.

## **FACILITIES REPORT**

Facilities Manager Keith Nealley reported that Facilities Technician Christopher Bryant is working out really well, is very personable, a quick learner, and helping projects get caught up.

## **2022 SAFETY PRIZE WINNER**

The only safety suggestion was submitted by Corporal Christopher Albert, who was awarded the safety prize of \$100.00. The suggestion was for the ductwork at the Reentry Center be cleaned. To Keith's knowledge, it has not been done in 15 years and an excellent suggestion. The Commissioners presented the prize check and thanked Corporal Albert for his suggestion.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

1. P. Parker inquired about how solar energy would affect the CMP bills, and D. Rowley explained that if one building produces more than it needs, it can reduce electric bills for other County buildings. D. Rowley briefly described the solar plans for the buildings and noted that there is ability to install more panels if desired later. Solar Logics is performing the work, which is good as the County is using two different companies to do solar work in different places. There was discussion that the bills are currently paid separately for every building. She will follow up on this after the solar equipment is installed. There was brief discussion between the Commissioners, E. Higgins, and P. Parker about solar tariffs benefiting companies that could generate solar energy whereas homeowners with solar energy won't benefit from those.

2. E. Higgins said Freedom will not be holding the Christmas Fair this year due to staffing issues, but instead will have a raffle for children's items, they are waiting for the broadband grant to come in sometime in January, and otherwise it has been quiet in town.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY REPORT**

IT Director J-sun Bailey reported the following things he is working on:

1. The IT Technician job has been posted and there are about a dozen applicants so far, so interviews will start soon.
2. Laptop computers are being worked on for Detention Manager and Jail Administrator.
3. He's researching a recording system with the Communications Director.
4. He set up the laptop for the Probate Judge.
5. Because some data must be kept for 7 years, he's trying to figure out what best to do when repurposing equipment for employees. He will look at storing some of the records physically in the Archive and has reviewed that with the County Clerk.
6. He's migrated Probate over to the new mail system and will be installing new software for the Probate Judge.
7. He has set up the new Deeds Clerk, and is setting up the new cell phone for Human Resources Director today, putting a second monitor at the D.A.'s Office, etc.

8. Quality Communications is installing data hookups in the Former New Hope For Women Office at the Sheriff's Office as the new sheriff will be moving in there. It had no network ports, so those are being installed.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT**

K. Gray was absent due to being in a car accident on Monday, so she asked B. Arseneau to present the following:

1. Dispatcher Paige Morgridge reached the 2-year step December 8, 2022 with a pay increase to \$22.32. The Commissioners noted this.
2. Human Resources Director KelLee Gray submitted her resignation on Monday, December 12, 2022, effective December 30, 2022.  
**\*\*A. Fowler moved, B. Johnson seconded to accept the resignation of H.R. Director KelLee Gray effective December 30, 2022. Unanimous.**

## **CORRESPONDENCE & APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

County Clerk Barbara Arseneau reported the following:

1. Maine Department of Transportation sent a required notice that the Marsh Bridge in Prospect is under preliminary engineering for a deck replacement.
2. Minutes from November 17, 2022 and December 14, 2022 were submitted to the Commissioners.  
**\*\*A. Fowler moved, W. Shorey seconded to approve the minutes from the November 17, 2022 and December 14, 2022 minutes as presented. Passed by two; Commissioner Johnson abstained because she wasn't present for those sessions.**

## **SHERIFF'S REPORT:**

Present was Chief Deputy Jason Trundy, who reported the following:

1. COPS Grant Update: J. Trundy has been told that someone would contact them regarding the status of the COPS grant that the Sheriff's Office has applied for. Sheriff Trafton asked some State grant folks, who reached out to folks at Maine Drug and they said they thought Penobscot was the only county awardee at this point. J. Trundy reached out to the Penobscot Chief, and he reported that they had been notified that they received it, and the other awardees were municipal police departments. Apparently, those who have received the funds have been notified. J. Trundy said he can only speculate that the reason he has not heard one way or the other is the grant folks are waiting to see if the agencies awarded the funds will actually use them before telling people they are not receiving funds. He reminded the Commissioners that they included the positions that this grant would have covered in the budget so that funds would be there in case the grant fell through.
2. He believes Volunteers of America has applied to three other funding sources for grants and were awarded two of them. The Federal Government allots Representatives and Senators a certain amount of funds to disburse to their constituents for various projects, and VOA secured one of those. Senators Collins and King together had offered one and about \$500,000.00 was awarded for the work they are doing regarding the OPIATE crisis in Waldo and Knox Counties. It may also bolster other services. He will try to get that information to the Commissioners. They also secured another \$1,000,000.00 grant.

## MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

1. B. Johnson proposed joining the National Association of Counties (NACo) again because they can help Waldo County in more ways than just the prescription drug program. She indicated NACo has been very effective in helping counties receive the American Rescue funds.

**\*\*B. Johnson moved, W. Shorey seconded to re-enroll with NACo in 2023.** Discussion: She believes enrollment will cost about \$600.00 and noted that Franklin County has rejoined NACo.  
**Passed unanimously.**

A. Fowler asked B. Johnson to supply some information on how NACo benefits counties. B. Johnson indicated that some of the comments and reports she has seen showed how hard they were working for the counties to have the money come directly to the counties at the federal level.

## TAX ANTICIPATION NOTE, CONTINUED

P. Parker reported that one bank (First National) offered what they do for revenue interest and the other bidding bank did not. She wondered if she could contact the other bank and inquire about it. W. Shorey thought that to avoid doing anything wrong, the County should accept the bid proposals as they were received, and not inquire. The Commissioners asked if P. Parker was comfortable with the bid from First National, as the Commissioners felt that First National came in the best. P. Parker stated that what First National was offering as revenue interest is double, and that with Camden National, they only charge interest on what the County takes. She was not sure about First National on the TAN but would read into it more to make sure. The Commissioners agreed to wait until she reported back to them.

**\*\*W. Shorey moved, A. Fowler seconded to adjourn at 10:25 a.m. Unanimous.**

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