

**WALDO COUNTY FY2013 BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 17, 2012**

PRESENT: Budget Committee Members Roger Lee, David Barrows, Peter Curley, Richard Desmarais, Chairman Bill Sneed, James Bennett, Harry Dean Potter, Clement Blakney and Islesboro Town Manager Janet Anderson. Also present were County Commissioners William D. Shorey, Amy R. Fowler and Betty I. Johnson, Treasurer David Parkman, Deputy County Clerk Linda Kinney and County Clerk Barbara Arseneau to take minutes.

Call to order: Chairman Bill Sneed called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and asked everyone to make introductions for the benefit of the new people present.

BUDGET PROCESS OVERVIEW:

B. Sneed: Does anyone know where we are on the Julian calendar? (Members of the group determined that it was day 322, which was 87% into the year.) Let me call attention to the Y-T-D Variance Percentage on the Appropriation Report, specifically the EMA Department Totals line. They are at 87% and are right on track with the amount of their budget expended so far this year. Revenue control is one of the great mysteries of the universe in how it's figured. The Reserve Accounts have some restricted and some are less restricted. The first page is January to June this year and the last page is what they expect to spend through December from each one of these Reserve Accounts. Some of them are very narrowly defined and some of them have a little more wiggle room. It's up to the Commissioners to wiggle around in those rooms as they see fit. At some point, we, the Budget Committee, will be asked to add monies to some or all of these Reserve Accounts. Some years they ask for none and others they ask for the moon. I don't know where we are this year.

Let's look a somewhat normal budget. Let's pick 1010 – Emergency Management. You'll see on the very first page four sections: Personnel, Contractual, Commodities, and Capital. Based on legal opinion that the Commissioners got years ago, the actual personnel line, itself, is off limits to the Budget Committee. All the rest of it is fair game to us. That being said, the bottom line can be cut, the total can be cut; then the Commissioners just have to wiggle around and move money around as they see fit to cover it if we do cut budgets. Within any given department, the department head, Commissioners, or both can move money around as they see fit between lines. What the Commissioners cannot do is move money around from department to department. They can do it, but it's a clumsy mechanism to do so. They have to call the Budget Committee back in, get permission of the departments, and get the Budget Committee to vote to approve it. In the 11 years I've done this, we have never had to come back, thankfully. They always seem to find the money. It just comes when needed. We will go through a couple of these today. Any changes we make now are in a sense "interim" change. The final changes will be made, if any, at the public hearing; probably sometime in December. The public hearing consists of two parts, the first being a public hearing where the public has an invitation to stand up and ask all nine of us and all three of the Commissioners any questions they choose on any topic they choose, within reason. At the end of that, we actually have a Budget Meeting where the Budget Committee will make the final decisions of each individual department, and, if necessary, we will go through line by line again. It's not often necessary to do that, but sometimes it has been in the past. Finally, and I know we're not paying much attention to LD 1 any more; in theory there is a third part. If the

County budget has increased more than the LD 1 limit specified by the State, there is a joint meeting of the three Commissioners and the Budget Committee to decide whether we are going to increase or exceed the LD limit of the previous year. Blessedly, that hasn't occurred in the last few years. I think that's it. Bill, do you have anything to add? Amy?

W. Shorey: No, that's a good, short analysis.

A. Fowler: No, thank you. That was really good. I appreciate that.

B. Sneed: Let's start with our beloved Treasurer. We're going to look at the Treasurer's Department – 1025.

TREASURER'S BUDGET (1025):

D. Parkman: Before I get on my specific account, let me say that that was a very good rendition of what the Budget Committee's duties are and what you can and cannot do. I just want to take five minutes to let some of the newer members know where we've been. My first year on the job was 2003. I was a selectman in Palermo and even in Palermo; we didn't have to borrow money until about June. It was the third day in January and my worthy assistant came to me and said we have to borrow money for the payroll. I thought that was quite unusual to have to do that three days into the year. It was because we just didn't have anything to back up the year with. We have increased quite well. It took us three to five years of skimping around – I'm a slow learner – but since 2005 or 2006, the cash situation has improved immensely. In fact, we used about \$500,000.00 to \$600,000.00 of Reserve Accounts on the new Sheriff's building and we took some of the cash we had and put it towards that so we didn't have to go out for a bond issue. This county, and I'm very proud of this, is debt free. Long-term debt free, there is no long term debt. We don't have much to show for it, but there is no long term debt. In today's financing, that's very healthy. I just wanted to go over some of what the last 10 years has brought. The only increase I have on my budget is Karen, my Deputy, gets a raise, which is 3%. I get a big paycheck of about \$9,000.00.

J. Anderson: Seriously?

D. Parkman: I'm only part-time.

H. Potter: How much of a fund balance or surplus would you need in order to avoid borrowing money for the year?

D. Parkman: The County cannot retain more than 20% of its undesignated funds. It has to go back to the towns. Two or three years ago, we brought \$300,000.00 back to the towns, as some of you remember. That was the jail situation that allowed that. We have been within LD 1 several years. Bill is absolutely right about that. I think it increased for the first time last year. For over ten years, I think it's only been increased about two or three times. Three years of the last five, the Commissioners budget didn't go up much. One year was zero. We've been high and dry, as you might say.

R. Lee: What do you pay for interest currently?

D. Parkman: I believe its one and a half percent. When we get to interest, I want to talk about that more.

B. Sneed: The unencumbered fund at the end of the year, the County carries a contingency fund of \$100,000.00. Law specifies that amount. It's a percentage of the total budget, but now, it's \$100,000.00. That is truly mad money in case of natural disasters, attacked by Canada, whatever.

D. Parkman: Emergencies, it's supposed to be for emergencies only and it has to be paid back first.

B. Sneed: Any unencumbered funds on December 31 have to go back to pay any money borrowed from the contingency. Then they can save up to 20%, and then they have to send back the remaining balance to a reduction of taxes at the end of the year.

D. Parkman: Right now I think the surplus or the unappropriated balance is right around \$400,000.00 to \$500,000.00. We took a lot and put towards the Sheriff's building so we didn't have to borrow.

A. Fowler: Which is more than most counties can say; that they've just built a new public safety building debt free and your Communications Center is paid off. That's impressive.

D. Parkman: This County, if my memory serves me right, had between \$300,000.00 and \$400,000.00 in 2003 in Unappropriated Balances, so we've come back to where we were in 2003.

W. Shorey: David, could I add one thing to your report? For the benefit of the new members, when David talks of raising the cap last year; that came on the heels of a quarter million dollars two years ago, half a million last year which adds up to coming down three quarters of a million dollars in two years on the budget. The third year comes up and most managers will tell you that you have to face a raise because you've cut too much and you can't survive where you are. That was the reason for the raise last year.

B. Sneed: David, what is line 7011 – Capital Outlay?

D. Parkman: I think that is something that we share with the Commissioners, technology stuff.

B. Arseneau: (to D. Parkman) I think it's related to your accounting software.

A. Fowler: It's specific just to the Treasurer's Office; therefore, it's not in the Technology Budget.

D. Parkman informed the Committee that the only increase in his budget was for the Deputy Treasurer, who was receiving a pay step increase in addition to the 3% COLA.

J. Bennett: I think that at this time 3% is a lot of money when towns can't pay their bills. The towns don't get raises every year. I think there needs to be a plateau. I don't think we can give everyone in the County a 3% increase every year.

W. Shorey: I would like to answer that Jim. I agree with you that it's plenty. In the four years that I have been here, we had a mixed bag for several years. Remember we had union contracts in effect which with we have to comply. We had one union that got a quarter of a percent one-year and two percent the next year because the agent left them and they had to reorganize. As you go through this budget you will see that we have a step system that you would have to be a mathematical genius to figure out, but it was out of step. You will see adjustments made. As of today, everyone is on the same playing field, I can't speak to you what it will be going forward, but I can tell you, as the person that negotiates for the County, it will be on the front burner as we start negotiations next year. We will have three contracts to work through. Now, the County people and the Union people are all on a level playing field. It has taken a long time to get there. I know that three percent is hard to swallow for anybody at any time. It was a work in progress and is about the only way we could figure out to be fair. I would make the comment that our sister county is facing a budget of 18% to 20%, not that this justifies that we have to be more. When we change one contract, we then have three coming ahead – two in one year and one the next – so once you start that process you are either locked in or you are going to spend \$50,000.00 - \$80,000.00 in lawyer fees. The choice has to be made. Next year we start in on a new process to take us through the next cycle and that is when the major adjustment has to be made.

D. Parkman: When I was first elected in 2003, we had one union. That came over from Belfast when Belfast came to the Communications Center. That was the first union here. It was only about 2005 or 2006 when you people looked over the Employee Benefits lines. I think people got scared and they all joined unions. As far as my help and other help in the Executive positions here, it's only fair that what the unions get should be provided to these people also.

R. Lee: I would like to make a point. The three Commissioners negotiated the union rate that you currently have and they are out of line. They are higher than what you would find if you compare, at least, to municipalities. It could be that as a County, they are not out of line. The second point I would like to make; it's interesting, if you think about it, local governments, municipalities that we all work for are constrained in our budgets because there is enormous visibility. The citizens know what's going on, they see the bills directly, and they get upset at their meetings. It's possible to raise money at the local level. You can raise the budget 20% or 30% because there is an automatic way to raise the extra money. It just goes straight out to real estate taxes; everybody in the community pays it, no problem. The State level can't raise any more money because they have to balance the budget – sales tax, income tax, etc. are affected by the economy. They are not going up, so there's constraint there. There's not a lot of visibility as to what they're doing because they are so far away from the citizenry. The County sits in the middle, supported by real estate taxes, which can easily be raised. You can always get money from people who own real estate because if they don't pay it they lose their real estate. There is little visibility. People don't know where you spend your money. People don't even know, actually that budgets go up. They just get upset, in our case, the City of Belfast got blamed for raising it's taxes 10% last year. I think if you went around asking people in this city why, they

would say that the City is spending out of control. That's not true. Actually, it only raised its spending by a percent or less. It's the schools and the County. My point is, you couldn't get away with the level of increases you propose year after year if you were at the state or municipal level. It's only here in the County that you can get away with it.

W. Shorey: Can I respond, Mr. Lee, for the new members here? There were 32 consecutive years of an average rate increase of 8.6% in County budget. The last four years - this is including the Jail - the average increase is 1.87%. I think that speaks well for the management that the County is under.

R. Lee: The last four year figures have to be changed because you have, undoubtedly included the Jail. The Jail is now capped. You can't include the Jail.

W. Shorey: It's a fact that is indisputable. I can go downstairs and get the records. The average increase in this County budget for 32 years was 8.6%.

R. Lee: The Jail is, in effect, a State program and the County's share is fixed year after year.

W. Shorey: I understand that. I'm making the point that the County, using the same metrics, is 1.87% in the last four years.

R. Lee: My memory is that last year and this year we were asked to raise taxes in the single digit range. I don't remember what the numbers were but they were comparable to what you are asking this year. I do remember that a couple of years before that when we had quite a relief. One or two years there was no increase, or maybe one percent. Then in the first one or two years I was on this committee, there were huge increases, back in the days when the jail was increasing every year. I know that if the City of Belfast wanted to increase its own taxation by 7%, the City Councilors would appreciate that they would probably lose the next election. They don't know what you do.

D. Parkman: You said a few things that I agree with. When I was first here ten years ago, we had two newspapers. Their reporters were there at every Commissioner's meeting, once a month. The last 5 or 6 years, since the Waldo Independent went out of business, we get no coverage. It frustrates me to no end. I would rather have them sitting there taking it all down and reading my name in the paper about what a jerk I was or something. These people have no idea, you are right; about what this government is doing.

R. Lee: I still felt the County was insulated because the average citizen does not have a clue how the money is spend.

B. Johnson: I think one of the things we have to remember is that the State Valuation came in and everyone was increased. Lincolnville went way up. Naturally, that makes taxation higher for County tax. This is what is driving the cost, not the County budgets. The budgets pretty much stayed the same.

R. Lee: If some towns go up, others go down.

B. Johnson: The towns that were paying the most did go up. I know Belfast was one of them, Lincolnville was one, and Islesboro...pretty much it was my District that went up. There were very few that went down.

R. Lee: The only affect that State Valuations have on this process is that when the valuation goes up, the taxes don't go up; it just distributes the burden differently.

B. Sneed: Does anybody want to take some numbers? Not including the Jail: 10.23% was the budget increase in 2010. 1.66% in 2011. 2012 was 1.70%. With the Jail in 2008 was 8.65%, 2009, including the Jail was 1.23%. 2010 with Jail was 1.05 %. In 2011 it was 1.03%. In 2012 it was 6.4%. That will save Bill from running down the stairs.

W. Shorey: I would like to make one more comment. The County is thinking of setting up these budgets accounts differently the next year. When you come to the Commissioners budget, it will show a 27% increase or something like that. If the Technology budget for the Technology upgrade were not included in the Commissioners budget, that budget would be lower than the previous year. That's how figures can easily become distorted.

R. Lee: I don't really understand what the step system is. It is mentioned in here.

W. Shorey: I appreciate that you don't and I really don't either. The Commissioners have adjusted their own staff [lower] because the step along with the COLA was too much. The pay should be uniform across the whole County and it isn't. Those step systems were enacted before I became a Commissioner. When there are three different unions, this cannot be changed immediately.

B. Sneed: Somewhere around 2005, the Commissioners hired a Personnel Consultant to come up with a system for pay steps and the Commissioners at the time decided not to act on it.

B. Arseneau: The reason the Commissioners didn't go with that proposal at that time is that it would have cost nearly \$30,000.00 to have followed it. Just so you know, it wasn't because they didn't want to follow the advice; it was that the County didn't feel they could afford to.

A. Fowler: It would have cost that much to bring the pay steps up.

R. Lee: I've been on the Belfast Council for five years now. The first few years I didn't really appreciate that the average employee in Belfast, there is a 3% step increase every year. When you see the overall scale increase that is negotiated by the unions and then applied to the employees, that means the city's employees receive 6%. It's basic math. What I don't have a sense for is what the average employee of the County is receiving every year.

S. Story: The Winters' study was no good because it compared county positions with other agencies, businesses, etc. out of Boston somewhere and it made no sense. I commend the Commissioners for putting the brakes on that. Some of the pay scales get 3%. There is not another 3% added onto that. Some non-union pay step scales do happen as you say. Those steps

are staggered in increments of one year, five year, eight year, twelve year and twenty year. In most of the scales with the unions, the step is closer to 1.5% to 2% increases. On the year that you get a 3% COLA according to your contract, if you are fortunate enough to be hitting a step increase, you will get more, but it is not every year. Non-union ones have one pay scale that is every year, the rest are such that in some cases, such as in his case, there were not a pay step for several years.

W. Shorey: When you come to the Administrative end of the budget this year, you will see that the steps are frozen in place. They were stopped this year and the COLA was put in. That one scale is going to change next year because it is out of step with everything.

J. Bennett: I don't know how this could be achieved, but I wanted a zero increase in their budget this year. We have shaved our budget so that there is nothing left to shave. The County should join us and do the same.

B. Sneed: Just a reminder, whatever we do today is not final. The final takes place at the public hearing. We really should move on, Roger.

R. Lee: One of the problems with this whole Budget Committee process is that not enough time is spent by our group on these budgets.

****H. Potter moved, B. Sneed seconded to appropriate \$67,467.00 for the Treasurer's Budget (1025). Unanimous.**

AUDIT BUDGET (1090):

D. Parkman: There was an increase resulting from the need to have a federal audit for grant funds that are expended in excess of \$500,000.00 in a year. I've fussed at the Commissioners and fussed at the department head who obtained the grant funds because I'd like to see administrative costs included in the budget line.

I have met with a new auditor and like him very much. He is going over last years audit and I will meet with him again before the first of the year. Most likely I will have the figures for the audit line before the public hearing – maybe.

****J. Bennett moved, B. Sneed seconded to appropriate \$9,500.00 for the Audit Budget (1090). Unanimous.**

TAX ANTICIPATION NOTE BUDGET (2000):

D. Parkman: When the jails left us in 2008 there were other departments affected. We borrow money, so there is an interest line. We have \$16,000.00 that we pay. That amount is capped. The interest is right where it should be. I think we can take about \$10,000.00 off this budget request of \$23,000.00, making it \$13,000.00.

R. Lee: Why \$13,000.00, when last year was \$4,193.00?

D. Parkman: We didn't borrow that year until May. This year we borrowed in March.

****J. Bennett moved, P. Curley seconded that the Tax Anticipation Note Budget (2000) be appropriated at \$10,000.00. Unanimous.**

COMMUNICATIONS BUDGET (1076):

O. Smith passed out an informational sheet depicting his budget.

O. Smith: The only line item of any significance other than personnel on my account is the tower accounts. The rest is all people. There is no way to offset the percentage of people. You are talking about longevity steps; we did look at how to even out the steps. They are very sporadic. The big jump occurs between two and five years. I have two people that hit that mark this year, one of them with a promotion as well.

A. Fowler: One of them hit the five-year mark and received a promotion, so it looks rather shocking.

O. Smith. We are bound by a union contract. We negotiated that contract hard and got some concessions to help the operation. If I am still around in two years, we will go after other things. A union has represented them since 2003 since the dispatchers came up from Belfast. Since then, the Sheriff's office and staff have gone union.

B. Sneed: If you look at the Personnel section, specifically lines 3100 and 3001; these numbers being proposed for the coming year are significantly lower than they have ever been in my recollection. The Commissioners and Owen deserve some credit. It used to be that the Comm. Center employees' overtime was nearly congruent with the Sheriff's Deputies.

O. Smith: Let me explain the difference between the two departments. He may have a sudden call-out and not necessarily have to fill a cruiser seat. The Communications Center has to fill the seat. We always fill the seats out of necessity. Only the Jail and the Comm. Center have that demand. I can remember years ago sitting around with the Board of Directors trying to figure out what we needed total for part-time and overtime. It was just a guess as to how much of it we were going to use. When we started out, every single hour of vacation, sick, comp, and holidays was covered by overtime or part-time. That's why we changed the scheduling in 2008, giving us a float shift to fill these shifts. Going into 2011, I had several Family Medical Leaves that went on for 12 weeks. One ended in the separation of a person of his or her own accord. Those have a dramatic affect on the overtime and comp time because you have to fill the seats. We got lucky this year in that we have only had one serious Family Medical Leave situation. I don't have a crystal ball. If I did, I'd open a storefront in downtown Belfast and make a lot of money.

B. Sneed: On Travel, you are asking for \$4,100.00 in one line and then another line asking for \$3,300.00 for Travel for Training.

O. Smith: I want to identify what it is costing us only for education. Many people are going just to seminars or classes. There are no other expenses involved other than travel for that educational experience. I think we should know what it truly costs us for education, including the traveling

like we did with Tower Sites a few years ago. We put everything in Tower Sites; light bill, phone bill, everything.

R. Desmarais: The Supervisors are making close to \$60,000 with benefits included. These are very highly paid employees.

O. Smith: I have one supervisor that is at the 13-year level and that is reflected in the longevity scale as well as the salary. One of my others has hit the 5-year mark with another hitting it in 2013. I don't know what it figures with benefits. I guess we roughly figure 30%.

R. Desmarais: In our town, we have the benefits separated so we know the true operating cost of the department. Here it's grouped into Employee Benefits.

O. Smith: At times, it's frustrating. At times, I go to H.R. to put figures together as to how much it costs per department.

R. Desmarais: I think there should be a line for employee benefits in each budget so that it could be known, without actually knowing which employee has what.

P. Curley: The Tower Sites line is up considerably as compared with 2012. What is the reason for that?

O. Smith: The budget was cut by \$23,333.00 last year. We are at \$25,000.00 right now and my best guess for the rest of the year is we will be at \$28,000.00 for the year. In addition, I have two sites I have that increase every year. That Tower Site line should be closer to \$30,000.00 than it was last year. We can't shut down a tower, so we took the money out of the rest of the budget. We got lucky with what we did this year. You can't shut down the tower sites.

R. Lee: What are the major elements of cost for tower sites?

O. Smith: Rent, lights, power, one site has an internet connection, and maintenance. Rent is paid in Searsport, South Liberty and at Point Lookout. Searsport is \$600.00 per month, South Liberty is \$1,400.00 plus a quarter, Point Lookout changes every year. I believe it is about \$800.00 per quarter, plus paying for the lights.

R. Lee: Why it was necessary to have a Director that does not fill in as a Dispatcher when there are vacancies?

O. Smith: How would you do the duties of the Department Head? I have budget responsibilities, AED responsibilities. You have to deal with the day-to-day operation and deal with problems that come up. If you are filling in as a dispatcher, you can't step out of the room to deal with problems that come up that the Director needs to deal with.

R. Lee: I don't know a lot about the Communications Director's position, I think that a full-time Director for this department is a stretch. I think I just don't really know what you do.

O. Smith: I think what would help with your frustration is to visit the Communications Center. I participate in organizations and in County government. I probably work 50-55 hours per week, get called in the night, have to go out in the night to deal with tower issues, etc. These centers are of such a nature that the Directors rarely, if ever, work the desk.

R. Lee: I thought we had some information that there are comparable dispatch centers in the state that have the Director work as a dispatcher.

A. Fowler: No, I'd know if there were, Sir.

O. Smith: Hancock, occasionally, will work the desk. She has a much smaller operation and has far less calls, but even she is getting away from that.

R. Desmarais: Back in 1980, it was run differently. The Director worked the board 20 hours a week. Any business that had to be taken care of that could be handled by appointments were made when the Director was off the board. If an emergency came up, he would call in someone to relieve him from the board. I know it's not the same today. I have to agree with Roger, in a sense, I don't know what your full job is. I can envision your people rotating. You wouldn't want them staying on the board for four hours at a stretch. I worked at a Communications Center for 31 years.

O. Smith: These dispatchers don't leave the room once they go into it. There are a few times when they are not all busy, but there are also many times when they are too busy and could use another person. Today, 9-1-1 is a far cry from what it was in the '80's. You don't see other agencies compared to us, as labor intensive as Communications is, where the Chief Officer works on a regular basis on the road or on the desk.

B. Sneed: Why, on Capital Outlay, is there \$1,000.00 connected to the Spillman Network? What are you using now?

O. Smith: We just got a pin-mapping program that identifies where all the calls are. Ideally, we would have a flat screen on the wall that would show us that. \$1,000.00 is an arbitrary figure to purchase it, installation and connection to the Spillman Network.

B. Sneed: Will there be a personnel line for a technology budget?

W. Shorey: The basic technology is about \$160,000.00 a year. Anything other than that is considered Capital Outlay and the labor is included in that.

J. Bennett: I want to go back to the Tower Sites. What does the Tower Sites budget include?

O. Smith: Anything related to the sites. Maintenance, upgrades, lights, phone, plowing the snow up at the buildings, and generators.

A. Fowler: When we have issues at these tower sites, Owen has been troubleshooting at the towers when there are issues. Now Yankee Communications is now doing tower coverage. The

County has now contracted with them. Generators are built into this cost. Generator maintenance is taken care of by Facilities.

J. Anderson: Why did the Tower Site operation go up \$18,000.00?

O. Smith: Last year we had a \$23,330.00 cut of the budget last year and we are overdrawn in that line as of this last appropriation. We are overdrawn by \$14,600.00.

A. Fowler: It was a gamble. The Budget Committee cut it from that particular line and this is the year that we had issues.

****J. Bennett moved, R. Lee seconded to reduce line 4620 to \$25,000.00.**

O. Smith: With all due respect, arbitrarily, if Tower Sites run in deficit, we can't shut down a tower site. We can continue to do this year after year, but you have to operate the tower sites. You tell Belfast P. D., Searsport P.D. and Fire South that you're shutting down the tower site on Mt. Ephraim because you don't have money. Who will answer to that?

B. Sneed: We took \$24,000.00 out of tower sites last year and, miraculously, they all continued to operate. At this date with 87% of the budget gone, something miraculous happened.

O. Smith: Nothing miraculous. All the savings was due to a floater position. There were concessions in the union contracts and the new floater position has saved a lot of money in the overtime and part-time costs.

R. Lee: What do the Shift Supervisors do as opposed to dispatchers?

O. Smith: They all have their own individual tasks and they are all in the room. We don't have any non-working supervisors. One of them handles the scheduling for everyone along with their duties on the board, one is a TAC [Terminal Access Coordinator] and security officer that takes care of teletype, generates forms and does some minor technology work and minor radio repair; the third does Quality Assurance and does paperwork and filing for educational testing. Their primary responsibility is the desk. As a supervisor, when it really hits the fan, they are the third person in the room that makes sure everything is done. There was a homicide last night in Stockton. We had a supervisor on that was there to make sure everyone was notified that needed to be notified.

R. Lee: This is powerful evidence that administrative responsibilities have been handed over to others. If you have three people in the room from 7 – 2 and the third person is, some of the time, you, I think we would save some money. You could be doing the same thing and save on part-time.

O. Smith: You have no way to pick and choose when the 9-1-1 call comes in. The job is such that if you don't do it every day, you can't do it. It is too complicated to occasionally go out and do it.

R. Lee: I understand that and I don't expect that this line of questioning is going to change the budget this year, but I happen to think that the case has not been made very persuasively, for me, that it wouldn't be possible for the Director to mix desk work and supervision. I think you could mix it and these lines that add up to \$39,500.00 (part-time and overtime) could be eliminated.

O. Smith: You cannot eliminate it because you cannot plan it. If you have to run the operation, you have to have qualified people. You're talking about safety to the public and safety to the people in the offices. You start fooling around with personnel issues, you start impacting performance and safety. We have a state Dispatch Center with a different system than we do. They have four or five people on duty. The 9-1-1 phone rings in that center, and if all operators are busy, the call goes into a queue. A 9-1-1 call is put on hold because they don't have enough people to answer the phone. That is somebody's life that's in danger. The State says you have to answer within 10 rings. If you don't, it goes into an automatic answering system that says, "9-1-1, please stand by." You don't want to do that to the public of Waldo County.

R. Lee: I totally understand that and agree with that. I'm just saying that the Director could sit in for a few instances during the year when someone is out sick or someone had to leave early.

B. Sneed: We have a question in the audience. Who are you?

Dick LaHaye: I am a citizen of the community, Chair of the Comm. Center Board, and Chief of Police in Searsport. I appreciate all the Committee does. I believe L.D. 1 has been around for a few years now and I think we can see the effects. As a resident of the State, I think this budget is directly related to the safety of the citizens. When I get called to respond to a 9-1-1 call, I try to get there as soon as possible. If that call isn't answered and goes into a queue, I don't want to be left holding the bag. I don't think Owen Smith wants to be left holding the bag. I don't believe the County of Waldo wants to face a lawsuit down the road because a 9-1-1 call of your family member goes into a queue. Also, there are so many mandates across the state for quality assurance. He [O. Smith] has been involved in the last year and a half in EMD protocols. These are making sure that his dispatchers ask the right questions of the person on the other end of the line. Understand that fire and law enforcement is right behind. The State is mandating that Owen and all other Comm. Centers across the state comply with this Quality Assurance. Every month or two that we meet we hear about Quality Assurance. There's not enough time in the day for his dispatchers and his supervisor, who is hearing all of these calls, to do their job and be responsible for a headset. I acknowledge that the Budget Committee has a tough job, but this is a public safety matter. When you call 9-1-1, you want to see a police officer, an ambulance or the fire department show up.

B. Sneed: Public Safety is funded by taxpayer dollars. The nine of us are up here to protect the taxpayer's dollars as best as possible, and that's our bottom line. The Budget Committee has to move on.

****B. Sneed moved, R. Desmarais seconded, to approve \$841,689.00 for bottom line of the Communications Center Budget (1076). Passed with one opposed. (H. Potter)**

(BREAK)

SHERIFF BUDGET (1075):

Present were Sheriff Scott Story and Chief Deputy Jeffrey Trafton.

S. Story: I'll just give you a quick rundown. Personnel Services is the only substantial increase. We have [union] contract negotiations for step increases and 3% for those of us that are not in the contract. The income in red is for Patrolman Lincoln. That is reimbursed by the school system as an expense for the School Resource Officer. That does not come out of this budget. We have come in under the budget for them quite nicely, particularly around our fuel and maintenance costs. As you go down through, overtime and part-time are up a bit; simply because of the increase in pay and pay steps. We use the same formula every year and we are relatively close on it most years. One thing I did do differently this year are lines 4200 and 4210. I broke down Maintenance and Fuel. You'll see a substantial cut compared to last year. The experience with fuel seems to be getting better. If fuel costs stay down, we should be right on target with what I budgeted. Keep in mind that should cover me up to \$4.00 per gallon. I actually pay less taxes at the pump. The number is actually calculated at \$3.20 at the gallon with the taxes being taken off for us as a government entity.

Vehicle maintenance has been cut. We have had a good run with Chrysler products. We started buying the Dodge Chargers with the extended warranty about six years ago; paying the same amount as we did for the Crown Victoria's that had regular warranties, and we have had good luck with maintenance. We have nine Chargers in our fleet that have all hit the 100,000-mile mark without any engine or transmission replacements. We are sticking with the Chryslers.

On Capital Outlay, we are down a bit on the cost of the vehicles. We are trying Dodge 4-wheel drive pick-up trucks in 2013. Dodge is offering an exceptional police package at the same price as cars. I don't have to put some of the equipment in them that goes into the cars, so I will save a bit of money. They will consume a bit more fuel, but I personally own one and it's not going to be that far off. The total budget is up under 2%. I really tried to keep the budget down this year.

Personnel full-time is just a bit off from where it should be but that usually works out at the end of the year. Our overtime is a little low right now. My Chief manages that exceptionally well. Overtime is a "crap shoot". Part-time is down substantially this year. Part of that is because we are having a hard time finding part-time guys. We are leaving some shifts open. We would like to have three or four out some nights. Last night, with the homicide, we only had one guy left covering the County because two were on the homicide. That can make for a long night for the one guy running to cover the County. We are doing the best they can with what we have.

Vehicle maintenance, gas and tires are down. Building maintenance is high. With the move, we had to buy new cleaning equipment. Dues are over a bit because of a new organization affiliation called "A Child Is Missing". If we have a child - or a senior with Alzheimer's - walk off, we pick up the phone and call this organization and they do a 10-square-mile phone sweep that calls phones that are in that vicinity and alerts them. They have never asked for money, but this year asked for a small donation.

Office Maintenance and Supplies will be over at the end of the year. Most of that was due to having to buy a ton of boxes for archiving when we moved.

Training Schools and Supplies: I had part-timers that we had to do some training with. By the time you outfit them and get them trained, it's expensive. We had a few that we had to cut this year that, for whatever reason, couldn't finish the program. We were a little high on that expense.

Capital Outlay: We did an excellent job. We still have some bulletproof vests to pay for, but I think I'm going to turn about \$12,000.00 of that back from last year. Police auctions have not been very good, so we tried trading the cars in. Most of that money comes from those trade-ins. We got a great amount for them and they were sold to a taxi service in Boston. There will only be three cars to sell this year. The 1.93% I'm up on the budget is mostly personnel costs.

B. Sneed: I noticed that you have a new line under Commodities – Firearms Training and Qualification.

S. Story: I split that out. If you take that line and Training Schools and Supplies line, it should be about the same...maybe up a bit. We need tazers for each officer. I obtained a Bullet Proof Vest grant, so that is why that is lower. Our Watchguard In-Cruiser video cameras have been a big help. I would like to see them in all units. Most of the units have them but they are starting to get old and repairs are expensive. I want to rotate a new one in every year. Not only are they good for playing back arrests, etc., but it keeps the officers behaving professionally and also a tape can be pulled that shows how fast the officer is going because it records at all times. It's one of the best tools I've ever had and I think the patrolmen are driving a lot better because of that.

R. Lee: You talked about part-time and overtime being way down, but budgeted for more.

S. Story: Yes. I would have used more part-time funds but just haven't had many part-time officers. We have been doing with fewer people on a shift, but this does affect service. We can get by with less, but you won't have the same level of service that you would get if I have more.

R. Lee: Fuel economy of the trucks compared to the Chargers - what are the numbers?

S. Story: Ballpark; the Chargers can get 16-20 [miles per gallon] based on use. The pick-ups will be 15-18. These are semi-extended cab.

R. Lee: What about transporting people in the back?

S. Story: You can put cooperative people in the front, handcuffed with a seatbelt. You can also put in them in the back. If the person is uncooperative, somebody with a cruiser is usually nearby and can pick them up with a caged unit. I am going to assign these trucks to the supervisors this first year to see how it works out.

B. Sneed: Volunteers of America, Reentry, is usually discussed a little bit.

S. Story: This is under the Jail budget. The Waldo County Jail was linear, so it was not as efficient. The facility was “closed” except for the 72-hour hold. I laid off several people. Then we developed a staffing plan and partnered up with VOA [Volunteers if America], a non-profit group that are experts in rehabilitation, incarceration and reentry. We do “prescriptive programming”. We will help find them a job, try to help them move back where they came from. We will help with education also. This is in the last year of their sentence. The average person coming out of the prison system has 58% recidivism. Maine Coastal Regional has knocked it down to 25% or so. We spoke in Singapore because they are very interested in what we’re doing and how we’re doing it. This is very cutting edge. I invite anyone to come up and check it out.

J. Bennett: Is the 7011 line just vehicles and equipment?

S. Story: It is three vehicles - \$72,000.00, all equipment for these vehicles - \$15,975.00, three tazers for \$5,010.00, three bulletproof vests at \$2,400.00 and video for vehicles at \$5,375.00.

****J. Bennett moved, P. Curley seconded to fund the Sheriff’s Budget (1075) at \$1,328,524.00. Unanimous.**

Proposed Budget Meeting Schedule:

November 27, 2012 @ 6:00 p.m.

December 7, 2012 @ 6:00 p.m.

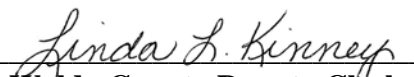
December 14, 2012 @ 6:00 p.m. (IF NEEDED ONLY)

PUBLIC HEARING:

The Public Hearing will be set at the November 27, 2012 Budget Committee Meeting.

****B. Sneed moved, J. Bennett seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:53 a.m.**

Respectfully submitted by


Waldo County Deputy Clerk