

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 12, 2019**

After light refreshments were served Commissioner Chairman Peter Baldacci, facilitator called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Members in attendance were: Glenburn Council Chair Christopher Grotton, Representative Steven Foster, Hampden Councilor Ivan McPike, Brewer Councilor Jerry Goss, Senator Dr. James Dill, Alton Selectwoman Brenda Kennedy-Wade, Bangor Councilor Benjamin Sprague, Holden Councilor Rod Black, Bradley Councilor Duane Lugdon, and Corinth Selectman David Dunfee. Also in attendance were County Commissioners Laura Sanborn and Andre Cushing, Treasurer John Hiatt, Finance Director Judith Alexander and all Department Heads.

Dept. 3 – EMA (Emergency Management)

Director Michelle Labree introduced her Deputy Director, Brad Nuding. Michelle highlighted activities in 2019. EMA has hosted nine trainings where 196 people have attended; 110 have been public safety personnel. EMA has facilitated and participated in 13 exercises including a structure fire with loss of network at UM; an active shooter exercise at Bangor International Airport; a helicopter crash in Glenburn and a Civil Support Team weapons of mass destruction exercise (Waterville Team). The EMA office continues to work closely with regional partners such as the Coast Guard on the ice-cutting on Penobscot River, EMERA Maine with power outages and restoration and our military partners.

The EMA (Department 3) budget request reflects a 2.94% (\$6,242) increase. Councilor Black moves to approve the budget request of \$218,270 with projected revenues of \$92,988. The motion is seconded by Councilor Goss. The motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 14 - Unorganized Territory Administration

Commissioner Baldacci introduced Director Barbara Veilleux at her last budget presentation. After 23 years working for Penobscot County, Barb is retiring at the beginning of the year.

Barb explains that Department 14 provides municipal services in the unorganized territories, in addition to overseeing the TIF (Tax Increment Financing) program on the Grand Falls Wind Project. The TIF has provided funding for a major repair on the Matagamon Dam; two new trail drags for Bowlin Matagamon Snowmobile Club; a rapid response vehicle for Mt. Chase Fire Department and a \$75 K grant for Katahdin Area Trails for the construction of a world class mountain bike trail system.

Department 14 administrative budget falls under the county. It includes payroll, medical and office expenses. Most of the increase is from payroll this year under the health insurance. There is also a small increase in telephone and clothing allowances with very little change with elsewhere.

The UT Administration (Department 14) budget requests does reflect a 9.20% increase (\$14,855) with projected revenues estimated at \$70 K. This covers payroll for our road agent. Selectman Black moved to approve the budget request of \$176,392 as presented. The motion is seconded by Selectman Lugdon. The motion passed unanimously.

Unorganized Territory

Director Veilleux explains that her department is responsible for providing municipal services to 39 unorganized territories in the County. This budget is a fiscal year July 1, 2020 until June 30, 2021. Barbara reported snow removal is up \$38 K due to the significant increases in snow plow contracts; solid waste is up \$9,588 due to PERC fees being increased; Fire Protection is up \$7,027 due to the changes in a Fire Departments closing and having to contract with other fire agencies. Barbara has included a new line for Law Enforcement coverage in the event that the State Police no longer will call share. These monies will be used for: two (2) patrol positions, vehicles, firearms and uniforms for a total cost of \$240,000. Capital Reserve has decreased \$9,500. Revenues: are very close to last year. Total budgeted appropriations are \$2,009,001, estimated revenues of \$387,290 with total deduction of \$411,547 for a tax assessment of \$ 1,597,454. Our tax cap limit is 4.65% - with adding this law enforcement expenses, the increase in assessment is 41.88% which is 37.23% over our cap.

Selectmen Grotton moves to approve the increased budget as presented. The motion is seconded by Representative Foster. The motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Dunfee moves to approve to increase the cap. The motion is seconded by Councilor Goss. The motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 35 - Penobscot County Extension Service

Commissioner Baldacci states that County Extension is a long standing operation residing at the University of Augusta, Bangor Campus. Our role is to assist with this State and County program which gives residents access to the resources and expertise of the UMaine System.

The Penobscot County Extension Service (Department 35) budget request reflects a 4% (\$3,028) budget increase. Council Sprague moves to approve \$78,722.00. The motion is seconded by Councilor Grotton. The motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 30 - EMDC (Eastern Maine Development)

Commissioner Baldacci stated that EMDC leverages our state and federal dollars.

EMDC (Department 30) budget request is flat funded from last year. Councilor Lugdon moves to approve \$62,000. The motion is seconded by Councilor Sprague. The motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 34 - Program Donation's Accounts

Green Valley, Rape Response, Bangor Homeless Shelter, B.I.L.L.S., Orono Hazmat Team, and Pine Tree Hospice all requesting the same as prior year. B.A.R.N. (Bangor Area Recovery Network) is reducing their request by \$7,500. Hirundo Wildlife Refuge received a \$1,500 increase to \$10,000

Senator Dill moves to approve the agencies Program Donation's Accounts (Department 34) requests totaling \$81,800. The motion is seconded by Councilor Grotton. The motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 36 – Penquis

Commissioner Baldacci reports that this organization is important as it assists residents in poverty. Many of our town officials serve on the board of directors such as our Administrator Bill Collins who previously served as President.

Penquis (Department 36) budget request is flat funded from last year. Senator Dill moves to approve \$18,500. The motion is seconded by Councilor Grotton. The motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 38 – Soil and Conservation

Commissioner Baldacci report that there is only one employee in this department. The 36.56% (\$18,597) increase reflects a change in health insurance plans from a single to a family plan.

Councilor Lugdon moves to approve the Soil and Conservation (Department 38) budget request of \$69,469. The motion is seconded by Representative Foster. The motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 2 – Human Relations

Commissioner Baldacci introduced our new Director of Human Relations, Erika Honey. The County had gone many years without a Human Relations department. Erika has been a tremendous resource to the County and we are extremely pleased to have her.

Erika reports that her budget was carved out of Administrations budget to capture and track expenses and what it would mean to the County. Payroll consists of her position and a shared (with Administration) administrative assistant. Erika's focus will be working on employee engagement. She will be working on policy development, working with legal; developing an employee assistance program for the betterment of our employees focusing on wellness and mental health. Erika has included training education in her budget for all the county employees. Erika is working on streamlining processes within the departments as well as recruitment and retention.

Councilor Black moves to approve the Human Relations (Department 2) budget request of \$143,562. The motion is seconded by Councilor Sprague. The motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 4 – PRCC (Penobscot Regional Communication Center)

Director Christopher Lavoie reports that in 2018 Penobscot County PRCC was the second busiest 9-1-1 call centers in the State right below Cumberland County. Chris reports that he is satisfied with staffing right now. Costs that were increased include: legal assistance (redacting the transcribed 9-1-1 calls for trials); traveling for training and registrations; automobile maintenance (we have an older car); radios, software licensing (I AM RESPONDING) and there was a newly-budgeted item for Spillman Mapping (\$40,000). This is a 4-year payment plan in which we have two additional years to budget for this expense.

PRCC (Department 4) budget request reflects a 2.86% budget increase (\$92,962) Councilor Grotton moves to approve the overall budget request of \$3,344,381 with projected revenues of \$203,176. The motion is seconded by Senator Dill. The motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 5 – District Attorney

DA Marianne Lynch reported the DA and ADA's are paid by the Attorney General's office. Maine law requires the County to pay all other expenses. DA Lynch wanted to thank HR Director Erika Honey for the training she has incorporated in the County and other personnel assistance she has provided her office. Marianne discussed the prosecution diversion program that she has been expanded since she started. This program is for first offenders with minor offenses and keeping them out of jail which is a second chance for them. Marianne refers it as to the likes of a "Stone Soup" where everyone has their piece in putting this program together from housing to educational. Marianne states that she is working with the Sheriff and staff prioritizing inmates as well as working with Maine Pre-Trial in which there is a great working relationship. Marianne has added a new part-time ADA in Newport (Janice Sturver). She also reported that Penobscot County will be the first Court in the state to go paperless and that will start this year.

DA (Department 5) budget reflects 5.85% increase (\$56,369) Councilor Goss moves to approve the budget request of \$1,019,227 with projected revenues of \$12,500. The motion is seconded by Councilor Sprague. The motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 8 – County Buildings

Facilities Manager Cap Ayer explains that his department consists approximately 110K square feet that consists of the Courthouse, Annex, Jail, Post Office Building and the parking lots. Staffing includes of two mechanical supervisors (including himself) and five custodians (four full time and one part time).

County Buildings (Department 8) budget is showing an overall increase of 5.07% (\$44,054) due to the increase in payroll and payroll benefits. Councilor Black moves to approve the budget of \$912,146. The motion is seconded by Senator Dill. The motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 32 – Building Improvement

Cap states that he is requesting an increase of \$100 K set aside in a capital reserve for a new boiler. These boilers are over 30 years old and we are living on borrowed time.

Councilor Lugdon moves to approve the Building Improvement (Department 32) budget of \$225,000. The motion is seconded by Selectman Dunfee. The motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 10 – Registry of Deeds

Register Susan Bulay, serving Penobscot County for the past 25 years explains that Deeds is not a high profile department but this is the place where public records are recorded. Since 2014, we process 40 K documents a year with a small staff which includes herself, deputy director and two full-time clerical specialists. Susan reports that the biggest change in her budget stems from her long time deputy retiring.

Registry of Deeds (Department 10) budget reflects an overall decrease of 1.77% (- \$7,190). Total expenditures are budgeted at \$399,941 with projected revenues at \$990,000. Councilor Goss moves to approve this budget. Councilor Black seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 11 – Registry of Probate

Probate Judge, Amy Faircloth explained that Probate Court is a busy part time county judgeship, not a state judgeship. This court that deals with people and families such as guardianships, name changes, trust and estates, certain adoptions and certain parental right matters. Judge Faircloth stated that the office has a Registrar, Deputy and three staff members. This office is run very efficiently and very open to the public.

Registry of Probate (Department 11) budget has a slight increase of 1.45% (\$6,724), expenditures are budgeted at \$472,038 with the proposed revenue at \$190,000. Councilor Black moves to approve this budget as presented. Selectwoman Kennedy-Wade seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 15 – IT (Information Technology)

Director Cliff Warren explains that his department is responsible for the IT infrastructure throughout the County campus and Piscataquis County, including server, software for PRCC and records management for all the first responders in both Counties, switching and the phone system. Cliff's department is run by himself and two other employees for a 24 – 7 operations.

Cliff reports that his Support Specialist left this summer and we will be advertising to fill this position.

Information Technology (Department 15) budget has an increase of 3.79% (\$25,296) including upgrading a position in his department. Expenditures are budgeted at \$692,002 with projected revenues of \$10,000. Councilor Black moves to accept the budget as presented. Councilor Lugdon seconds the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 6 – Administration

Judy Alexander, Finance Director presented the Department 6 – Administration budget for Administrator Bill Collins. This budget includes funding for the Commissioners', Administrator, and a shared Administrative Assistant (with HR).

Administration (Department 6) budget has a -28.29% (\$-136,359) decrease of expenditures. Representative Foster moves to accept the budget of \$345,663 with projected revenues of \$110,749 as presented. Councilor Sprague seconds the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 7 – Treasury

Finance Director Judith Alexander and Treasurer John Hiatt presented Department 7 – Treasurer's budget. This budget funds a Finance Director, Assistant Finance Director, Treasurer and a new part time clerical assistant.

Treasurer's (Department 7) budget has an overall increase of 11.86% (\$24,514). Representative Foster moves to approve the budget of \$231,191. Councilor Black seconds the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 12 – Sheriff's Patrol

Sheriff Troy Morton introduced members of his department – Chief Deputy William Birch, Lt. Keith Hotaling with 37 years' service, Jail Administrator Capt. Rick Clukey with 38 years and Lt. Jim Ellis with 13 years. Sheriff reports that this is the largest County department made up of 31 deputies; three admin staff in rural patrol and five in our investigative division. We service 54 communities from Newport to Patten. In 2018 there were 19,505 calls for service, a 7% increase from 2017. This year we are seeing those numbers increase again. Sheriff's department is showing a 17.28% (\$712,726) increase mainly because of hiring seven new officers which will include uniforms, computer, and telephone expenses. However, if you look at the increase in Revenues, in all actuality the overall increase is a 2.99%. The majority of revenue will come from contract services from several small towns as well as our two new larger contracts (Orrington and Hermon).

Sheriff's Patrol (Department 12) expenditures are budgeted at \$4,837,435 with projected revenues of \$1,322,000. Selectman Dunfee moves to accept the budget as presented. Councilor Grotton seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 13 – Civil

Sheriff Morton reports that the Civil Department has two full-time officers, ten part-time officers and one clerical specialist. This department serves 8,000 to 10,000 papers a year.

Civil (Department 13) budget has an increase of 1.19% (\$4,120), with projected revenues of \$200,000. Selectman Lugdon moves to accept the budget as presented. Councilor McPike seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Dept. 9 - Jail

Sheriff Morton states that he normally staffs 81 positions. We have ten open. Corrections statewide is experiencing severe staffing shortages. Unfortunately, this places a tremendous burden on our current correction officers who are already working in a very difficult environment. Our jail was designed for 157 inmates when renovated in 1988. We receive 5,000 admissions a year as we provide regional booking. When law enforcement brings the arrestee to the jail for booking the officer leaves the inmate and we provide the services (photos, fingerprinting, bail, etc.). Our current average daily population for the jail is 238 with 56 boarded out dropping us to 182 housed at our jail. We currently have 89 inmates enrolled in Maine Pre-trial that focuses on low risk/no risk inmates. This affords inmates the opportunity to be released out of the jail to their homes, work programs, mental health or substance abuse programs. Maine Pre-trial monitors them with daily or weekly follow ups. Sheriff said there is discussion of a future new jail. Our 35 year old Jail is simply falling apart. Also it's not the number of inmates in the jail, more so of the inability to provide services to these inmates.

Councilor Goss wants a plan set for a new jail. He feels that Penobscot County citizens should not be responsible for paying for a new jail and the State or Federal Government should be responsible. He feels the right path to take this discussion is in Augusta.

Commissioner Baldacci injected that we are looking at tearing down the old Y building as a potential more reasonable Jail site. We are looking for a Government Center Campus that is cost effective. We are currently working on details and are goal is looking for a June primary vote.

Jail (Department 9) budget has an increase of 5.79% (\$563,011), with projected revenues of \$9,405,472. There is a projected deficit of \$875,917. Selectman Lugdon moves to accept the budget of \$10,281,389. Representative Foster seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The following department's budgets were presented as one group:

Dept. 18 MPERS

MainePERS (Department 18) has an increase of 6.82% (\$150) budgeted at \$2,350

Dept. 19 – Health and Safety

Health and Safety (Department 19) is flat funded with a budget of \$6,000

Dept. 22 – Retiree Insurance

Retiree Insurance (Department 22) is flat funded with a budget of \$43,000

Dept. 24 – Bridges

Bridges (Department 24) is flat funded with a budget of \$100

Dept. 31 – TAN Loan Costs

TAN Loan Interest (Department 31) has an increase of 104.76% (\$22,000) with a budget of \$43,000

Dept. 39 Labor Negotiations

Labor Negotiations (Department 39) is flat funded with a budget of \$8,000

Dept. 40 – Wage and Adjustment

Wage and Adjustment (Department 40) is flat funded with a budget of \$30,000

These departments were approved as presented by Councilor Black moves to accept these as presented. Motion seconded by Councilman Grotton. The motion passes unanimously.

Budget Summary

Commissioner Baldacci asks for consideration of the overall budget with a 3.671% (\$1,248,269) increase which is under our LD 1 Cap of 4.13%. Councilor Goss moves to approve the overall budget of \$20,730,945. Councilor Grotton seconds the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

The budget hearing ended at 9:16 p.m.

Witness

Peter K. Baldacci, Chairman

Laura J. Sanborn

Andre E. Cushing, III