

# KNOX COUNTY COMMISSION KNOX COUNTY BUDGET COMMITTEE

## Joint Commission & Budget Committee Review Meeting

**Knox County Commission and Budget Committee      Tuesday – November 22, 2022 – 5:00 P.M.**

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A Joint Commission and Budget Committee Review Meeting was held on Tuesday, November 22, 2022, at 5:00 P.M., Knox County Courthouse, 62 Union Street, Rockland, Maine. The Administrative Assistant was present to record the minutes of the meeting.

**Commission members present:** Commissioner Dorothy G. Meriwether District #1 and Commissioner Richard L. Parent, District #2.

**County staff present included:** County Administrator Andrew Hart, Administrative Assistant Wendy Galvin, Finance Director Kathy Robinson, Corrections Administrator Bob Wood and IT Director Zachary Greene.

**Budget Committee members present:** Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, and Nick Lapham.

*Absent: Sharyn L. Pohlman, District #3, Charles Grover, Randy Stearns and Vera Roberts.*

**Others Present:** Marina Kinney, Development Director WCAP, Michael Hallundbaek, Director of Transit System WCAP & Mark Lovett, Regional Programs Director of Penquis.

### Joint Commission & Budget Committee Review Meeting Commission Hearing Room Tuesday – November 22, 2022 – 5:00 P.M.

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|-------------|-------------|--|
| <b>I.</b>   | <b>5:00</b> | <b>Meeting Called To Order</b> (Chair Roger Peabody for the Knox County Budget Committee, Commission Chair Dorothy Meriwether for the Knox County Commission)  |
| <b>II.</b>  | <b>5:01</b> | <b>Public Comment</b>  |
| <b>III.</b> | <b>5:05</b> | <b>Approve Minutes</b> (Chair Roger Peabody for the Knox County Budget Committee, Commission Chair Dorothy Meriwether for the Knox County Commission)<br>1. Minutes of the Joint Budget Meeting of November 17, 2022   |
| <b>IV.</b>  | <b>5:10</b> | <b>Budget Review</b><br>1. Waldo Community Action Partners (WCAP)      (Pg. 27)<br>2. Penquis      (Pg. 27)<br>3. Finance      (Pgs. 21-22)<br>4. County Administration & IT      (Pgs. 10-11)<br>5. Debt Service & Insurance      (Pg. 27)<br>6. American Rescue Plan (ARPA)      (Pg. 8)<br>7. Other |
| <b>V.</b>   | <b>5:35</b> | <b>Discussion Items</b><br>1. General Discussion of the 2023 Budget  |
| <b>VI.</b>  | <b>5:40</b> | <b>Final Vote on all Departmental Budgets (in preparation for Public Hearing)</b>  |
| <b>VII.</b> |             | <b>Adjourn</b>   |

**I. Meeting Called to Order**

The November 22, 2022 Joint Commission and Budget Committee Review Meeting was called to Order by Budget Committee Chair Roger Peabody and Commissioner Chair Dorothy Meriwether at 5:00 P.M.

**II. Public Comment:  
None.**

**III. Approve Minutes**

1. Minutes of the Joint Commission and Budget Committee Review Meeting of November 17, 2022.
  - *Nick Lapham made a motion to approve the Minutes of the Joint Commission and Budget Committee Review Meeting of November 17, 2022. Gayle Gallant seconded the motion. A vote was taken with all in favor.*
  - *Commissioner Parent made a motion to approve the Minutes of the Joint Commission and Budget Committee Review Meeting of November 17, 2022. Commissioner Meriwether seconded the motion. A vote was taken with all in favor.*

- ***Please note: All votes taken at each Joint Commission & Budget Committee Budget Review Meetings on Departmental Budgets are “straw votes”, with the exception of the December 15, 2022 Final Vote on the 2023 Knox County Budget.***

**Administrator Hart spoke:**

- We provided the Agenda, Minutes from November 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, a 2023 revised Budget and a revised five (5) year Capital Plan that was distributed to all. A letter from Captain Wood was sent regarding the Diversion Deputy position. We have distributed a letter from the Sheriff in support of new HR Manager.
- The changes from the original (November 3<sup>rd</sup>) version – includes open enrollment for Health Insurance, Flexible Spending and Retirement. Health Insurance there was an increase. We had budgeted 8%, right now it's 7% roughly. Workers Comp was an 8% increase. The reason for this is the increase in wages. Our MOD went down. This is because we are in the SHAPE program and in the Workers Comp Incentive program. We hit the highest tier and get the highest percentage off, which is 10%. We have saved \$37,000 on our premium by being in those two (2) programs. Our MOD will go down significantly next year because 2020 was a bad year for Workers Comp, and that will be the lowest rated year this year percentage wise. It is 1.12% right now, and this could go below 1% next year. Electricity may increase substantially in all departments because of the rate increase from CMP. LETCF, which is a local assistance program, will be getting \$50,000 and the rest in 2023. When we receive this money this will help offset one of our projects. We added the remaining Jail project into the Capital Plan, which is around \$20,000 to go towards the tank removal project.
- The version of the Budget everyone had on November 3<sup>rd</sup> there was an 11.77% increase, and the new one tonight is a 12.72% increase. It is about an \$82,000 increase from the November 3<sup>rd</sup> draft that was distributed. There were some changes but mainly the Electricity was the big item that increased.
- *Gayle Gallant – It looks like we had another \$80,000 increase in the Communications from last week. It does affect what we charge to the Towns. That looks like it went from \$1,409,000 to \$1,091,000 did we have an increase in the communications budget?*
- *Finance Director Robinson – Primarily that change is because of their open positions, and whether their overtime should be increased.*

**Captain Wood: (Answering questions)**

- *Bob Duke – My first question is, right now we are what capacity?*

- **Bob Wood** – We are at 55-60.
- **Bob Duke** - What percentage of those are Waldo County inmates?
- **Bob Wood** – We are in a collaboration with Two Bridges right now, and this is due to the staffing shortage. If we had their inmates with us it would be about thirty (30). If we had our inmates and Waldo's right now it would be eighty (80) inmates.
- **Bob Duke** – Relative to your letter the DOC requires what we have for budgeted staffing, the positions we have budgeted are required by DOC?
- **Bob Wood** – That is correct.
- **Bob Duke** – So, it doesn't matter how many inmates we have we have to be staffed at that level.
- **Bob Wood** – That is correct. That was the agreement when the Jail opened up in 1990.
- **Bob Duke** – Do we fall in violation at any time during the year because we don't have enough staff?
- **Bob Wood** – DOC wants to make sure we have ratio staffing populations. If we didn't have that then they would put the heat on and say you're going to have to come up with a different option. They do dictate to us what we can do as far as our staffing vs. inmates at the Jail.
- **Nick Lapham** – Hypothetically, if your inmate population went down to 40, would the DOC staffing requirement be adjusted?
- **Bob Wood** – We would have to show that our population is staying down low enough to maintain that. It would probably take a little while before we could do that. We cannot dictate our population. We would have to maintain a certain population for a while (couple years) before DOC would say something.
- **Nick Lapham** – Currently, the staffing requirement is based on maximum capacity?
- **Bob Wood** – It's the capacity and the structure of the facility.
- **Bob Duke** – The investment in the Diversion Deputy – let's say we approve this, what type of offsets would we see in future years. Is there a medical benefit, a food consumption benefit?
- **Bob Wood** – We cannot predict this. If population stays decreased we would then saving money. It will take time to build that up. My concern is the population has been growing on a regular basis ever since the Jail has opened up. We started out with thirty-two (32) inmates and now on an average we have about seventy to eighty (70-80) at times. Having this program would help us to manager the population we have now just in case that starts going up.
- **Nick Lapham** – Are we taking people from Waldo County?
- **Bob Wood** – We have a contract with Waldo County to take their inmates.
- **Nick Lapham** – They're paying a proportional share
- **Bob Wood** – Yes.
- **Bob Duke** – What is the term on this contract with Waldo County?
- **Bob Wood** – We will be up for negotiations next year in September.
- **Bob Duke** – I understand the financial aspects of it, but under the circumstances you guys have been under for the last few years, it would seem ridiculous we would have any type of contract and bringing folks into our facility when we are trying to just get by every day.
- **Commissioner Parent** – The individual that would be overseeing inmates, would that individual be a Deputy?
- **Bob Wood** – They would under the umbrella of the Corrections Division but would be a Law Enforcement Officer.
- **Commissioner Parent** – Would this person be in your budget or the Sheriff's budget?
- **Bob Wood** – The person would be in the Corrections budget.
- **Randy Stearns** – So, we have a population of 50-60 people at the Jail. If the Diversion Officer approved, we have potential to reduce the staffing of inmates by up to twenty-five (25) individuals? Because of the contract with Waldo County, is the potential for Waldo County to provide another 20-25 inmates so you're right back up to the same staffing of inmates as you are currently?
- **Bob Wood** – When we get to that point to negotiate things then those are the things we are going to have to discuss.
- **Randy Stearns** – I just want to be clear that in a perfect world, Knox County ends up with zero inmates and we're just being great people for a change. But we are housing 50-60 inmates from other Towns and we are paying the same salaries and everything else to bring people from out of town to bring people to this Jail. It doesn't make sense. The overtime is killing us and it's killing you guys. What you guys put up with I tip my hat to you. The money isn't great, the conditions aren't great and the inmates generally don't treat you very well. It takes a pretty special person to be doing that. But that is not the discussion for tonight. I am struggling with the fact that we are going to spend more money to pull people out of the Jail just so we can flood it back full from inmates from other Towns. What's the benefit to the County?

- **Commissioner Meriwether** – *I don't think the primary objective of the Diversion Deputy is necessarily to cut our budget. The Diversion Deputy's primary role is to get people out and back into society. It could potentially be a bonus to cut the budget. Captain, how realistic is it truly that we are going to be..... Knox County, given it's higher than State wide averages of certain crimes, what is the realistic chance that we will be dropping below forty (40) population? There are staffing issues throughout the State. You cannot sit here and realistically say we should just be keeping our population up in order keep other Counties out. When in fact, other Counties are just going to poach our people, which is what's happening already. Knox County is overworked, understaffed, underpaid so they will go to an easier Jail.*
- **Barry Norris** – *When is contract with Waldo up?*
- **Bob Wood** – *September 2023.*
- **Barry Norris** – *If this Officer is in place, that gives history for almost six (6) months so you can negotiate a contract. I see benefit to the program. I do not see the initial savings. I think it's going to take some years to find out what the real savings are. By taking people out, your staff that is in is going to have more stress. The more people you have in there the more heartache there is with each other, and it takes a Correctional Officer to separate that heartache, and if you can have a Diversion Officer take that heartache outside the Jail you are now reducing stress on the people that are presently working in it. This could entice other people to come to work for you by seeing you are trying to take care of the situation. This will take about two (2) years to see the impact this will have. In Sagadahoc County this did work. Tonight with this Officer we are doing our due diligence in showing DOC we are least trying to do something.*
- **Nick Lapham** – *Of the twenty-five (25) prisoners that would qualify for this, would those all be Knox County prisoners?*
- **Bob Wood** – *That would be the focus, yes.*
- **Nick Lapham** – *In our contract do we charge them a fully loaded cost, or just salary and wages?*
- **Bob Wood** – *I cannot answer that right now because this was put together by the former Sheriff.*
- **Nick Lapham** – *If we're taking prisoners and charging Waldo County it should be a fully loaded cost. I would like that reassurance that we should be getting fully reimbursed.*
- **Bob Wood** – *In the Agreement that we have with Waldo, they are giving us resources that we are not paying for.*
- **Commissioner Meriwether** – *Not all Jails are created equal nor do they all fulfill the same functions. Waldo is a Reentry Program. Their Jail does not house inmates. Do we send our people to Waldo to participate in the Reentry Program?*
- **Bob Wood** – *We do, that is correct. That is part of the contractual agreement.*
- **Commissioner Meriwether** – *These are people coming out of our Jail and are being brought back into society in Waldo through an entire program that is devoted specifically to that.*
- **Nick Lapham** – *I'm just looking for transparency and make sure we're covering all the costs associated with these prisoners.*
- **Shawn Levasseur** – *How long does the contract run?*
- **Bob Wood** – *The contract is for three (3) years.*
- **Shawn Levasseur** – *Is contract something that can be emailed to us?*
- **Administrator Hart** – *We have never provided contracts to the Budget Committee. It is a Public document. Normally, the contracts are negotiated by the Department Managers and Commissioners. The Commissioners have the final say on approving a contract. This contract was done by two Sheriffs of Knox and Waldo County that is no longer the Sheriff for either County. Captain Wood will be involved in this contract and play a bigger role as he should, he's involved in this. We will be having a different contact if we even have one. We can provide it, but will it be changing due to the new Sheriff's.*
- **Commissioner Meriwether** – *The Attorney that is working on this, Peter Marchesi, has been around longer than any of us. More importantly, the Jail Administrator for Waldo County was our Jail Administrator for a while. We had enough confidence in him to hire him and would hire him back in a hot second if he was available. He simply did not have time to handle two (2) Jails. How many of us are qualified to look at a contract and provide oversight? There are a lot of experienced people working on this.*
- **Barry Norris** – *The Captain and Administration knows the short falls of what is or is not in the contract. With the knowledge they have that they would negotiate the best contract for the County that they can possibly have. That's why we pay them to make these decisions for us. We have people in place that are doing a job, and we need to let them do it. Let them negotiate the contacts as they know the best.*
- **Nick Lapham** – *Are we fully accounting for the all of the cost to house an inmate?*
- **Bob Duke** – *At the end of the day we are here for one purpose only. That is to ensure that each budget is responsible. This budget for Corrections is up 15%. Not everyone is getting an increase this year. We do need to do our job and digging into a contract does not make sense. I have a question on bullet #5 "the*

*estimating average of rate of successful individuals is 70%”, what does that mean? What does success mean? A path to being a law abiding citizen?*

- **Administrator Hart** – *I don’t know. I am assuming it means people that don’t re-violate or.....*
- **Bob Wood** – *I do believe the information provided is the people that are successful in the Diversion Program.*
- **Commissioner Meriwether** – *I was having a conversation with somebody that was a Corrections Officer at Knox County. He participated in the Job Fair we held last year and people were coming up and saying they were getting paid more at Walmart. The problem with this budget is it is simply not discretionary. If we want to get staff in the Jail, Deputies, Dispatchers we have to be willing ..... we just cannot get away without paying people. It’s happening all across the Country. We have to be able to attract and retain employees to do these jobs.*

- **Budget Review:**

- 1. **Waldo County Action Partners (WCAP) (Pg. 27)**

Marina Kinney, Development Director & Michael Hallundbaek, Director of Transit Systems spoke:

- Since the closure of Coastal Transportation in Rockland in 2016, we have been providing an increasing amount of transportation services in Knox County (*In addition to Lincoln, Sagadahoc Brunswick and Harpswell*).
- Marina passed out an updated service report. The original list showed the value of services a little over \$440,000, and that is just for the Agency vehicles and drivers. This now shows the total miles for Knox County.
- Each year, we ask all the Waldo County Towns and the Waldo County Commissioners to contribute a small amount to support the programs and services we provide. Most of the funding we receive is from Federal and State contracts. This never covers the need in the communities. In addition, they require WCAP to raise matching funds for various programs.
- As our transportation services increase in other Counties, such as Knox, we are seeking additional program support from these new communities in our service area. Municipal funds are “unrestricted dollars” and are used, for example; to cover operating costs for transporting the general population to act as a match to our contracts to purchase transit system vehicles, and to cover the costs that allow the office to remain open year-round which provides client assistance.
- We have enclosed a brief description of our organization, our transportation program and our most recent service report. This is for transportation services rendered to individuals in Knox County.

**Questions:**

- **Bob Duke** – *You started offering services to Knox County. Was that a spread from Waldo Count, did you provide to them first and then you moved into Knox County?*
- **Michael H.** – *Yes. In 2013 Maine Care and Medicaid decided to start a Broker System for Maine Care services. That consists of approximately 40,000 Maine Care members in the region that can request transportation to eligible medical services. We became a broker in 2014. A couple years after that there was another public transportation here in Town called Coastal Transportation. They closed and asked if we would try to provide services. We said we would certainly try. We have gone through a steep and rapid expansion. Now trying to get back into a more structured involvement with municipal leaders. With COVID we lost a very large number of drivers.*
- **Nick Lapham** – *Have you gone to the Towns to ask for assistance?*
- **Michael H.** – *Yes. We started that process in 2018-2019. In Waldo County, all Towns, Municipalities and Commissioners have supported us. This is a building process. One of the challenges in Maine is that the State’s share of Public transportation is equal to about \$0.86 per (inaudible). The average in the United State is \$41.00. We use this program to educate, to inform the communities of the services and to raise money.*
- **Nick Lapham** – *I am looking at these numbers for the first time. When I look at Rockport and Rockland I see 296 individuals served by Rockland for a value of services of \$422,000, and then Rockport for 43 with a value of services for \$276,000 so it seems there’s a pretty significant disparity per basis unit.*
- **Michael H.** – *We break everything down on a very granular basis based on actual services. So the total cost and the value is the total cost and value taken out of our systems and calculated into those*

Towns where there are tickets that are generated with the cost. Then what we do is we take a base, 2 ½%, of the value of services and we request that of all Municipalities and Counties in the program. It is always 2 ½% of the value.

- **Bob Duke** – \$5,000 isn't a lot of money. I didn't understand the formula. My fear with a new expense, the numbers may go up are the numbers based on a formula
- **Michael H.** – Traditionally Waldo County Commissioners have contributed \$3,500 for many years. Over the years they increased this to \$5,000. Towns are already contributing. We are looking for a number that comes out of what Waldo County Commissioners have been contributing.
- **Commissioner Parent** – How far will you take someone?
- **Michael H.** – It depends to the type of service. If they are a MaineCare member then we have to take them anywhere they need to go. We can only take people who are residents within the Counties that we serve.
- **Commissioner Parent** – Do you ask them for any compensation?
- **Michael H.** – For public transportation we do. We have a sliding scale. We have a number of contacts, and have a program internally that schedules 20,000 trips per month.

**A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator's 2023 Budget recommendation of \$5,000:**

In favor: 5 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns)  
Against: 2 (Nick Lapham and Gayle Gallant)  
Abstained: 0

**A consensus vote was taken by the County Commission on whether to approve the Administrator's 2023 Budget recommendation of \$5,000:**

In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0

## **2. Penquis (Pg. 27)**

Mark Lovett, Regional Programs Director for Knox County spoke: (Provided updated numbers \$5.946 million dollars)

- Penquis operating for fifty (50) years and in Knox County for fifteen (15) years. Most of our money comes from Federal and State.
- Penquis is requesting \$143,634 from Knox County to support its ongoing social service activities. This amount is equal to 3.05% of the monetary value of services received.
- During the year ending May 31, 2021, Penquis assisted residents of Knox County with services valued at \$4,709,312. Enclosed are copies of material providing additional information regarding services provided and this request for funding. In addition, an Annual Service Report for the year ending May 2021 is available at [www.penquis.org](http://www.penquis.org).
- Penquis provides services to help residents meet basic needs, increase self-sufficiency and to improve well-being. This work has been all the more crucial since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent rise in inflation. An appropriation from Knox County will provide funding for direct services as well as enable us to leverage support from State and Federal agencies to maximize resources for residents and support healthy, vibrant communities.
- Penquis is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping Maine people stay safe, healthy, connected and financially secure. Penquis is a Community action agency, a licensed mental health agency, a Community development corporation and a Community housing development organization. Its subsidiaries include a Community development financial institution, a sexual assault services agency and housing development organizations. Penquis primarily serves low-income individuals and families in Knox, Penobscot, and Piscataquis Counties. Penquis touches the lives of 6,000 people each day.

**Questions:**

- **Bob Duke** – If you have been doing this for fifty (50) years why are we still have the significant problems?
- **Mark L.** - Income to quality has widened in ways everything keeps going up except wages. Wages are not keeping pace. One of the great blessings of the pandemic is the denial balloon has popped. People are now realizing the crisis we are living in.
- **Nick Lapham**– Do you serve the homeless community specifically and what is the status?
- **Mark L.** – It is a significant issue. Our services do partner with Homeless Coalition, Habitat for Humanity and AIO Food Pantry. We work wherever we’re invited.
- **Shawn Levasseur** – What geographic area does Penquis cover entirely?
- **Mark L.** – Where we operate is in Knox County, Piscataquis County and Penobscot County.
- **Shawn Levasseur** – How long has Penquis been serving Knox County for?
- **Mark L.** - We’ve been serving Knox County for over fifty (50) years.
- **Gayle Gallant** – The problem I have with this is a lot of these funds are covered by other agencies. AIO covers oil and food. If we say yes to one, are all of these other people going to expect donations as well.
- **Mark L.**– One of the efforts that has been productive is called Community Investors. It’s a place where case managers can lift up a case, problem solve it and send it out for a response. They are considered gap filler.
- **Randy Stearns** - The summary for 2021 you provided showed the lead inspection where five (5) clients were served for a total of \$76,000. Why are these inspections costing \$15,000 per household inspection?
- **Mark L.** - All the money we have is from Federal contract and grants.
- **Bob Duke** – You administer the LI-HEAP program?
- **Mark L.**– Yes.
- **Administrator Hart** – Do you request funding from Municipalities?
- **Mark L.** – We do. Not sure how much we receive.
- **Bob Duke**– Knox County has been structured in Finance County operations. Social services are not something Knox County has done. Things you are doing are great. It is really challenging of do we embrace what you are doing. It’s the challenge of as a County do we break into Funding social services vs that being funded a different way.
- **Mark L.** – We are really looking at a crisis so will take whatever we can get.
- **Commissioner Meriwether** – Agrees with Bob. He has articulated the problem. Wish you had come with your request when we were designating the ARPA funds. Given our budget now and historically who we have given to, I recommend in the future ask for what is realistic. What we have to do already is painful. Your request is three (3) times what others are asking for.
- **Commissioner Parent** – You’re at County level requesting money if you are going to Towns aren’t they paying the tab? Seems like you’re double dipping.
- **Bob Duke** – I didn’t see a breakdown of funding sources locally. It would be helpful. It would also be helpful to see what other Counties do.

**A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s 2023 Budget recommendation of \$143,634:**

In favor: 0  
Against: 7 Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)

Abstained: 0

**A consensus vote was taken by the County Commission on whether to approve the Administrator’s 2023 Budget recommendation of \$143,634:**

In favor: 0  
Against: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)

Abstained: 0



**3. Finance (Pgs. 21-22)**

Finance Director Robinson spoke:

- Finance Director Robinson – The biggest change to their budget is the long time Deputy Finance Director will be retiring in February 2023. So there will be a change in Personnel. There is a budget in there to pay for retirement. This is the employee’s banked accrued time that we are required to pay them for.

**Questions:**

- **Bob Duke** – *The County doesn’t have a Reserve for retirement?*
- **Finance Director Robinson** – *We do. I do a projection and then budget for 50% of that cost. Going in to 2023, that fund has basically nothing in it. So the goal is to start to build that. I needed to budget 100% of what I believed the value to be. She is retiring before retirement age.*
- **Finance Director Robinson** – *Finance does have two (2) projects listed on the ARPA page do we want to discuss that or table that for now?*

**A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s 2023 Budget recommendation of \$344,699:**

*In favor: 5 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, and Nick Lapham)*

*Against: 0*

*Abstained: 2 (Bob Duke & Randy Stearns)*

**A consensus vote was taken by the County Commission on whether to approve the Administrator’s 2023 Budget recommendation of \$344,699:**

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)*

*Against: 0*

*Abstained: 0*

**4. County Administration & IT (Pgs. 10-11)**

Administrator Hart & IT Director Green spoke:

- Personnel - Request for FT HR manager – 40 hour in house.
- Legal – Reduced based off expenditures to date. The legal has shifted to Airport and Jail mainly due to contracts and inmate medical contract and lots of legal review for the Airport.
- Internet webhosting – increase in the two (2) Vendors GWI and Google.
- Dues membership – We are looking at a possible increase due to MCCA which is our biggest dues and membership.
- Training, Seminars & Conferences – We have \$1,850 for MUNIS for training if the HR position is approved, \$1,500 is for Spillman for our IT Director to attend. This would be remote and is a onetime expenditure.
- Computer Repairs & Maintenance – There is a projected increase in the Spillman contract.
- Employee Recognition – This has been revamped and there are a few retirements.
- Computer Supplies & Equipment – This is currently down.

**Questions:**

- **Gayle Gallant** – *If we are now not going to be contracting a HR person, should we be seeing a decrease?*
- **Administrator Hart** – *The Consultant line for the current year is \$42,000 and this year it is \$10,000. The anticipation is we might not have someone until March.*
- **Gayle Gallant** – *This person would be in charge of hiring for all Departments?*
- **Administrator Hart** – *Yes. The HR person would come with a recommendation for the hiring Department.*
- **Gayle Gallant** – *The whole cost of the salary is here, it’s not being spread across other Departments.*



- **Administrator Hart** – Yes.
- **Randy Stearns** – Do you have someone in mind or lined up?
- **Administrator Hart** - We have advertised, but it's a hard time to advertise right now. People aren't really looking to start a job this time of the year. We will re-advertise if we cannot find someone. The other thing we are up against is Barbie is retiring and she handles all the Benefits/Administration. We are moving Benefits/Administration back to this HR position. It makes sense for one person to deal with this.
- **Nick Lapham** – How much of Health Insurance increase is attributed to the new hire?
- **Finance Director Robinson** – A family health plan is \$27,000.
- **Nick Lapham** – So this position is about \$100,000?
- **Finance Director Robinson** – Yes.
- **Commissioner Meriwether** – Barbie is one of our most senior employees. So when you budgeted for wages you have increased 7% over the 2022.....isn't some of that going to be reduced? You'll be hiring someone with less seniority and some of the job responsibilities will be moved.
- **Finance Director Robinson**– The new person will be a forty (40) hour week position. We have an overlap of a month for the transition. We're hoping to hire someone with experience.
- **Nick Lapham** – How much of the work was the consultant doing right now of the HR position?
- **Finance Director Robinson** – A portion of the HR position will be the tacking, training and certification and managing that process.
- **Administrator Hart** – The HR will be doing Workers Comp., Risk Pool insurance renewals and some of these things are taking me all day to complete. This will free me up do other things. The HR will be able to go out and meet with other Departments and Employees. This person will be an Accreditation Manager as well. When I started here a person was trying to do HR and it just wasn't working. We tried a contract position which worked until about the last year and a half due to COVID. It's a lot more work than what it used to be.

**A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator's 2023 Budget recommendation of \$734,785:**

*In favor:* 4 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Gayle Gallant and Barry Norris)

*Against:* 2 (Bob Duke & Randy Stearns)

*Abstained:* 1 (Nick Lapham)

**A consensus vote was taken by the County Commission on whether to approve the Administrator's 2023 Budget recommendation of \$734,785:**

*In favor:* 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)

*Against:* 0

*Abstained:* 0

## **5. Debt Service & Insurance (Risk Pool) (Pg.27)**

Administrator Hart spoke:

- The principal payment is the same \$165,000, and the interest payments are \$17,531. This is the payment on the Public Safety Building.
- Insurance is at \$70,535 (Risk Pool Insurance)
- The final assessment figure has not been received from the Risk Pool.

**Questions:**

- None

*A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s proposed 2023 Budget recommendation of \$192,531 (Debt Services)*

*In favor: 7 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)*

*Against: 0*

*Abstained: 0*

*A consensus vote was taken by the Commissioners on whether to approve the Administrator’s proposed 2023 Budget recommendation of \$192,531: (Debt Services)*

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)*

*Against: 0*

*Abstained: 0*

*A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s proposed 2023 Budget recommendation of \$70,535 (Insurance)*

*In favor: 7 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)*

*Against: 0*

*Abstained: 0*

*A consensus vote was taken by the Commissioners on whether to approve the Administrator’s proposed 2023 Budget recommendation of \$70,535: (Insurance)*

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)*

*Against: 0*

*Abstained: 0*

**6. American Rescue Plan (ARPA): (Pg.8)**

Administrator Hart:

- Pagers for the Sheriff’s Office & Corrections this totals \$137,012
- Building Maintenance – We already discussed.
- Office software upgrade this totals \$36,080
- HR Software implementation totals \$23,571
- Finance – Time and Attendance Software totals \$27,000 and scheduled software for \$16,023.
- Source of funding is from ARPA for a total of \$530,136. The Local System and Travel Consistency Fund which will be restoring the records in the back room totaling \$78,568. This is a onetime expense.

**Questions:**

- **Finance Director Robinson** - *If we move forward with time and attendance software this will impact the budget each year as this will be \$15,000 per year going forward.*
- **Bob Duke** – *What is benefit for County?*
- **Finance Director Robinson** – *From an HR perspective as far as tracking applications and training and anything relating to HR it is currently done very manual. Right now, the whole process of timesheets is a manual process. This is very labor intensive to Department Managers as far as getting them correct and signatures. It is also labor intensive for Finance as well as we are having to verify and putting the information into a system. Time & Attendance would automate all of that. This would also allow managers to be able to see their employees time they need to use, have used, sick time etc.*
- **Commissioner Meriwether** - *It moves us into 21<sup>st</sup> century.*
- **Finance Director Robinson** – *Communications, Corrections and the Sheriff’s Office support it.*
- **Nick Lapham** – *How can we measure the financial benefit to the County?*
- **Finance Director Robinson** – *Once we get this up and running this may not be in 2023 it may be in 2024 depending on how quickly my department comes up to speed. We would see soft costs as far as*

*savings of time from a Managers perspective, we will see less errors, and improvement of employee satisfaction.*

- **Nick Lapham** – Will that produce a financial savings?
- **Finance Director Robinson** – *The financial savings will be a soft cost. If we are able to implement this in the beginning of 2024, maybe I would be able reduce some hours for employees in Finance.*
- **Nick Lapham** – Can this be installed/implemented without bringing in a Consultant?
- **Finance Director Robinson** – *The quote is to add programs into our existing MUNIS system. In order to do that there has to be a Consultant from MUNIS to guide me as to how to make this happened. The cost you are seeing is to implement this, to pay for the yearly cost and training.*
- **Commissioner Meriwether** – *How much are we anticipating this year and next*
- **Finance Director Robinson** – *We've received \$50,000 this year, and in the wording it says we should receive another \$50,000 next year as long as the funds are still available. Andy and I talked about this and we will move along in two (2) phases.*
- **Randy Stearns** – *You are looking at adding another \$15,000 to every year's budget.*
- **Finance Director Robinson** – *(wanted to make an observation) – A couple of times tonight it was talked about that we do not support programs that are also asking for funds from our tax paying Communities. I believe WCAP stated they were getting money from Towns. Although it's a low amount, I think that goes a little bit against what some of the things that have been said tonight.*

**A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator's proposed ARPA and LATCF 2023 Budget recommendation of \$608,704:**

*In favor: 7 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)*

*Against: 0*

*Abstained: 0*

**A consensus vote was taken by the Commissioners on whether to approve the Administrator's proposed ARPA and LATCF 2023 Budget recommendation of \$608,704:**

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)*

*Against: 0*

*Abstained: 0*

### **Airport Projects (Pg.9)**

**A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator's proposed Airport Projects 2023 Budget recommendation of \$1,855,000:**

*In favor: 7 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)*

*Against: 0*

*Abstained: 0*

**A consensus vote was taken by the Commissioners on whether to approve the Administrator's proposed Airport Projects 2023 Budget recommendation of \$1,855,000:**

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)*

*Against: 0*

*Abstained: 0*

## **VI. Final Budget Review (Straw re-vote) In Preparation for Public Hearing:**

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator's Budget recommendation for Admin & IT:**

*A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s 2023 Budget recommendation of \$734,785:*

*In favor: 4 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris,  
Against: 3 (Randy Stearns, Bob Duke and Nick Lapham)  
Abstained: 0*

*A consensus vote was taken by the Commission on whether to approve the Administrator’s 2023 Budget recommendation of \$734,785:*

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0*

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator’s Budget recommendation for Building Maintenance (Courthouse):**

*A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s 2023 Budget recommendation of \$441,873:*

*In favor: 7 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0*

*A consensus vote was taken by the Commission on whether to approve the Administrator’s 2023 Budget recommendation of \$441,873:*

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0*

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator’s Budget recommendation for Building Maintenance – Public Safety Building:**

*A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s 2023 Budget recommendation of \$110,361:*

*In favor: 6 (Roger Peabody, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)  
Against: 1 (Shawn Levasseur)  
Abstained: 0*

*A consensus vote was taken by the Commission on whether to approve the Administrator’s 2023 Budget recommendation of \$110,361:*

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0*

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator’s Budget recommendation for Deeds:**

*A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s 2023 Budget recommendation of (\$289,178):*

*In favor:* 7 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)

*Against:* 0

*Abstained:* 0

***A consensus vote was taken by the Commission on whether to approve the Administrator’s 2023 Budget recommendation of (\$289,178):***

*In favor:* 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)

*Against:* 0

*Abstained:* 0

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator’s Budget recommendation for District Attorney Office:**

***A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s 2023 Budget recommendation of \$561,865:***

*In favor:* 6 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)

*Against:* 1 (Bob Duke)

*Abstained:* 0

***A consensus vote was taken by the Commission on whether to approve the Administrator’s 2023 Budget recommendation of \$561,865:***

*In favor:* 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)

*Against:* 0

*Abstained:* 0

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator’s Budget recommendation for EMA:**

***Questions:***

- ***Gayle Gallant*** – I have a question about the amount she put in for the EMA match. I think the total number is being skewed. She said part of it was going to be used this year so she didn’t put in the full amount they expect to get from them. I’m a little uneasy with that because I’m thinking the revenues are understated here.
- ***Commissioner Meriwether*** – I do not think that is the case. It has been cut and do not expect it go back to what it was before.
- ***Bob Duke*** – They received a grant for this year, and part of next year. What I had an issue with was the remainder of the year for 2023 is not in the number. There is no confirmation of a number.
- ***Commissioner Meriwether*** – Some of that is she is trying to be realistic based on the fact that...should she be budgeting for something that’s she’s heard the money may not actually come in?
- ***Finance Director Robinson*** – As long as I’ve been here it’s been a 50% match. I think it would be hard to say we’re not going to be getting any level of funding. The comments of not budgeting anything for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2023....it is realistic to say there should be some number in there. We have to make projections on what the DOC is going to pay us every year, with the hope that they will continue doing what we need from them. We never know until it comes all the way through.
- ***Administrator Hart*** – I need to ask Kathy something. Would it make sense to have this number approved, we look at it and then we’d be reducing the budget from what it is. It would give us time to look at it before sending the budget out. The number would be lower at the Public Hearing. I’m not comfortable right now increasing it not knowing what the number should be.
- ***Finance Director Robinson*** – I don’t think we can make that assumption as far as what it should be increased to. I think that you as a County Administrator, Commission or Budget Committee

*assumption based on how it is today of what we could expect in the last quarter of 2023. Then we are supporting their assumption, and if it doesn't happen then we know that is a risk.*

***A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator's 2023 Budget recommendation of \$224,634:***

*In favor: 4 (Roger Peabody, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, and Nick Lapham)  
Against: 1 (Bob Duke)  
Abstained: 2 (Shawn Levasseur and Randy Stearns)*

***A consensus vote was taken by the Commission on whether to approve the Administrator's 2023 Budget recommendation of \$224,634:***

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0*

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator's Budget recommendation for Finance:**

***A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator's 2023 Budget recommendation of \$344,699:***

*In favor: 7 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0*

***A consensus vote was taken by the Commission on whether to approve the Administrator's 2023 Budget recommendation of \$344,699:***

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0*

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator's Budget recommendation for Probate:**

***A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator's 2023 Budget recommendation of \$174,976:***

*In favor: 6 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, and Nick Lapham)  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 1 (Randy Stearns)*

***A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator's 2023 Budget recommendation of \$174,976:***

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0*

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator's Budget recommendation for Sheriff:**

***A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator's 2023 Budget recommendation of \$2,725,462:***



*In favor:* 7 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)  
*Against:* 0  
*Abstained:* 0

***A consensus vote was taken by the Commissioners on whether to approve the Administrator’s 2023 Budget recommendation of \$2,725,462:***

*In favor:* 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)  
*Against:* 0  
*Abstained:* 0

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator’s Budget recommendation for Miscellaneous:**

***A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s Budget recommendation of \$119,531:***

*In favor:* 7 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)  
*Against:* 0  
*Abstained:* 0

***A consensus vote was taken by the Commissioners on whether to approve the Administrator’s Budget recommendation of \$119,531:***

*In favor:* 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)  
*Against:* 0  
*Abstained:* 0

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator’s Budget recommendation for Planning & Economic Development:**

***A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s Budget recommendation of \$174,375:***

*In favor:* 1 (Shawn Levasseur)  
*Against:* 6 (Roger Peabody, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)  
*Abstained:* 0

***A consensus vote was taken by the Commissioners on whether to approve the Administrator’s Budget recommendation of \$174,375:***

*In favor:*  
*Against:* 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)  
*Abstained:* 0

**Questions:**

**Bob Duke**– There isn’t a County policy that states whether we do or we don’t. I would worry about double dipping to Rick’s point. If they are going to go Town by Town then we should not be asked for help.

**Gayle Gallant** – What does this mean for Knox County Mutual Aid? Do they go Town by Town and get funding?

**Bob Duke** – Well they are not a social services

**Barry Norris** – We did make a motion to approve it.

**Nick Lapham** – Are we going to second it and then vote it down?



**Bob Duke** – *When we are having a discussion like this, Roberts Rule orders, you are not supposed to be discussing the outcome of the vote. You can say what you think but you're not supposed to be strategizing how it's going to go.*

**A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator's Budget recommendation of \$169,375:**

*In favor: 7 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)*

*Against: 0*

*Abstained: 0*

**A consensus vote was taken by the Commissioners on whether to approve the Administrator's Budget recommendation of \$169,375:**

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)*

*Against: 0*

*Abstained: 0*

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator's Budget recommendation for Debt Service:**

**A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator's Budget recommendation of \$192,531:**

*In favor: 7 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)*

*Against: 0*

*Abstained: 0*

**A consensus vote was taken by the Commissioners on whether to approve the Administrator's Budget recommendation of \$192,531:**

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)*

*Against: 0*

*Abstained: 0*

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator's Budget recommendation for Insurance:**

**A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator's Budget recommendation of \$70,535:**

*In favor: 7 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)*

*Against: 0*

*Abstained: 0*

**A consensus vote was taken by the Commissioners on whether to approve the Administrator's Budget recommendation of \$70,535:**

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)*

*Against: 0*

*Abstained: 0*

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator’s Budget recommendation for Airport:**

*A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s 2023 Budget recommendation of \$0:*

*In favor: 7 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)*  
*Against: 0*  
*Abstained: 0*

*A consensus vote was taken by the Commissioners on whether to approve the Administrator’s 2023 Budget recommendation of \$0:*

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)*  
*Against: 0*  
*Abstained: 0*

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator’s Budget recommendation for Airport Security:**

*A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s Budget recommendation of \$0:*

*In favor: 7 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)*  
*Against: 0*  
*Abstained: 0*

*A consensus vote was taken by the Commissioners on whether to approve the Administrator’s Budget recommendation of \$0:*

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)*  
*Against: 0*  
*Abstained: 0*

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator’s Budget recommendation for Corrections:**

*A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s Budget recommendation of \$4,793,892:*

*In favor: 3 (Roger Peabody, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris)*  
*Against: 3 (Shawn Levasseur, Nick Lapham and Bob Duke)*  
*Abstained: 1 (Randy Stearns)*

*A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s Budget recommendation of \$4,500,000:*

*In favor: 1 (Shawn Levasseur)*  
*Against: 5 (Roger Peabody, Barry Norris, Gayle Gallant, Bob Duke and Nick Lapham)*  
*Abstained: 1 (Randy Stearns)*

*A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s Budget recommendation of \$4,643,000:*

*In favor: 3 (Shawn Levasseur, Nick Lapham and Bob Duke)  
Against: 3 (Barry Norris, Gayle Gallant and Roger Peabody)  
Abstained: 1 (Randy Stearns)*

*A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s Budget recommendation of \$4,693,892:*

*In favor: 3 (Shawn Levasseur, Nick Lapham and Bob Duke)  
Against: 3 (Barry Norris, Gayle Gallant and Roger Peabody)  
Abstained: 1 (Randy Stearns)*

*A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator’s Budget recommendation of \$4,733,892:*

*In favor: 5 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Barry Norris, Nick Lapham and Gayle Gallant)  
Against: 1 (Bob Duke)  
Abstained: 1 (Randy Stearns)*

*A consensus vote was taken by the Commissioners on whether to approve the Administrator’s Budget recommendation of \$4,793,892:*

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0*

**Questions:**

- **Bob Duke** – Folks, this budget is up like 17%. This is ridiculous. We’ve got a lot of folks struggling out there. I feel there has to be a limit. That’s why I feel there has to be some sort of adjustment.
- **Administrator Hart** – When we first started the budget process we were at like 19 almost 20%. When we had our twenty (20) meetings for ARPA it was relayed to us that we need to fix the problem with the wages. So we fixed the problem with the wages, and that’s what you’ve got right here. If we hadn’t fixed that you would not have been seeing this increase, honestly.
- **Bob Duke** – That’s not true Andy . If you start looking at these other.....When you get outside of wages and benefits you have all these other contractals, commodities.... I know commodities have gone up, but in Corrections alone unless we’re putting 100 people in that Jail every day commodities are up 31%. I understand food cost has gone up.
- **Administrator Hart** – Heating and fuel has gone up. I’m not happy about it either but it is what it is at this point.
- **Gayle Gallant** – The problem I’m having here is when I look through the list to find an individual or even a combination of items that I see is worthy of taking out of this budget I just can’t see it. If I could see it I would easily vote for a lower number.
- **Barry Norris** – This is Corrections. If you want to save money take a Deputy off the road. You are mandated to have a Jail. You are mandated to have Correction Officers. (interrupted) I am making a statement here. If you want to save money go somewhere where you are not mandated. You’re mandated to have a Jail. You are mandated to have people take care of Corrections. If you have a problem with the budget let’s take the Diversion guy out. Don’t come up with \$100,000 or \$50,000 when the DOC says you’re mandated to do something. If we don’t do it they can fine us. Cut something to we are not mandated to do. We are mandated to run the Jail properly.
- **Nick Lapham** – By proposing a flat number just \$100,000 that could be made up of cutting the Diversion Officer or not getting another vehicle this year. I would feel more comfortable with some kind of a reduction. I want to get to a number where we can thread the needle a bit.
- **Barry Norris** – What would a consensus people can live with? How about \$60,000?

- **Nick Lapham** – I would be comfortable with a \$60,000 reduction too.
- **Barry Norris** – I can support a cut for \$60,000. There are areas that maybe come up to that amount.
- **Bob Duke** – I need to ask Kathy a question. Looking at Corrections budget for actual expenditures through October, are there any large dollars that have not cleared that will hit us in November or December?
- **Finance Director Robinson** – When you're looking at October year to date it's actually expenses through September.
- **Bob Duke** – I put thirteen (13) weeks on to that number and we will spend \$3.4 million dollars this year. I know we are short people so that means the wages and benefits are lower. We're talking about whatever the cut is. Let the Department head choose where he wants to reduce it.
- **Shawn Levasseur** – Were any of our current absent members present during the (inaudible)?
- **Roger Peabody** – Charles and Randy were absent.
- **Nick Lapham** – If we're budgeting for whole staffing, correct? So if I look at the Undesignated Fund Balance summary for Corrections in 2020 it was basically \$356,000, in 2021 it was \$423,000, what I'm getting at is if we're ten (10) people short that Undesignated Fund Balance should increase.
- **Finance Director Robinson** – Not necessarily because if you are short individuals, but they still have to staff so they are mandated. So you pay them overtime that wasn't budgeted. So if you look at overtime we are way over budgeted in overtime. It's not dollar for dollar, but one offsets the other.

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator's Budget recommendation for Communications:**

***A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator's Budget recommendation of \$0:***

*In favor: 4 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Barry Norris, and Nick Lapham)  
Against: 2 (Gayle Gallant and Bob Duke)  
Abstained: 1 (Randy Stearns)*

***A consensus vote was taken by the Commissioners on whether to approve the Administrator's Budget recommendation of \$0:***

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0*

**Straw re-vote on the Administrator's Budget recommendation for American Rescue Plan (ARPA)**

***A consensus vote was taken by the Budget Committee on whether to approve the Administrator's Budget recommendation of \$608,704:***

*In favor: 7 (Roger Peabody, Shawn Levasseur, Bob Duke, Gayle Gallant, Barry Norris, Randy Stearns and Nick Lapham)  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0*

***A consensus vote was taken by the Commissioners on whether to approve the Administrator's Budget recommendation of \$608,704:***

*In favor: 2 (Commissioner Meriwether and Commissioner Parent)  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0*

- *The next Public Hearing and Final Vote of the 2023 Knox County Budget with the Budget Committee & Commission will be held on December 15<sup>th</sup> @ 6:00 P.M.*
- *Administrator Hart told everyone their Budget binders will be collected after the Final meeting on December 16th.*

**VII. Adjourn**

- *Roger Peabody made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Shawn Levasseur seconded the motion. A vote was taken with all in favor.*
- *Commissioner Parent made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Meriwether seconded the motion. A vote was taken with all in favor.*

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Galvin  
Administrative Assistant

**The Knox County Budget Committee and Knox County Commission approved these minutes at the Joint Budget Meeting held on December 15, 2022.**