

Coös County Commissioners  
Budget Work Session #2  
North Country Resource Center - Lancaster, NH  
October 31, 2018

Present: Commissioners Tom Brady, Paul Grenier and Rick Samson; County Administrator Jennifer Fish; Coös County Attorney John McCormick; Victim/Witness Advocate Christine Brann; Register of Deeds Tanya Batchelder; Sally Pelletier; Brendan Prusik, UNH/Cooperative Extension; Haven Neal, Chair-Conservation District Board; Superintendent Ben Champagne; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Director of Finance Carrie Klebe; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris.

1. Commissioner Brady opened the budget work session at 9:02 a.m. Attorney McCormick led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Approval of the Agenda: A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the agenda, as presented. All approved 3-0.
3. Approval of the Minutes of the October 22, 2018 budget work session, as presented: A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2018 budget work session, as presented. All approved 3-0.
4. Hearing of the public: There was no public comment.
5. Discussion & Review of the following 2019 proposed budgets:  
Finance Director Carrie Klebe noted that cost of living (COLA) increases were not included in any of the budgets. The health insurance line items were budgeted with a 10% increase. The rate will not be known until December.
  - a. County Attorney / Victim Witness: County Attorney John McCormick introduced Christine Brann as the new Victim/Witness Coordinator.

The County Attorney noted that increases in the County Attorney's budget related to step increases and health insurance. An increase in the new equipment line item was to purchase a new computer. He hopes to begin the rotation of replacing older computers, which were about 6/7 years old, by purchasing a new computer per year.

He has asked the IT department to obtain some kind of auto responder for his department's email system in order to notify senders when someone is out of the office.

Victim/Witness: This budget decreased from 2018. The County Attorney asked that the pay scale for this position be compared to other counties as he felt that it was lower than it should be.

Commissioner Grenier stated that he had spoken to the County Administrator on upgrading to a county-wide computer system. Ms. Fish stated that she met with a firm from Claremont who is willing to perform an assessment of all Coös County systems (Berlin, Lancaster and West Stewartstown) and will make a recommendation.

- b. Register of Deeds: Tanya Batchelder and Sally Pelletier were both present.

Mrs. Batchelder noted that \$8,300 was budgeted from book repairs. Health insurance for the new register of deeds was not included in the budget as it is not known what plan may be selected. Commissioner Grenier suggested increasing the line item by \$23,000 for a two-person plan. He suggested contacting the winner after next week's election to verify.

The Board thanked Tanya for her years of service to Coös County.

- c. UNH Cooperative Extension: Brendan Prusik presented two options to the Board in regards to the clerical position. The first: the employee would remain a County employee; the second: the employee would be transferred to UNH employment. Commissioner Grenier stated that the Board was happy with the current County employee option. Commissioner Samson agreed.
- d. Conservation District: Haven Neal, Chair of the Conservation District Board, presented a level funded budget. Mr. Neal requested a \$1,500 line item for mileage reimbursement.
- e. Department of Corrections: Superintendent Champagne indicated that he had included a vehicle lease in his budget to replace the 2011 cruiser which no longer passes inspection. The vehicle would be used for EM checks and travel for staff training and meetings. The payments could be made in two or three installments and the vehicle could be purchased for \$1 at the end of the lease. Commissioner Grenier suggested that the lease be moved under Corrections Specials.

Commissioner Grenier suggested that the Superintendent obtain pricing on a cooling system for the IT room.

Ms. Klebe noted that an adjustment was needed with the Superintendent's Salary line item to be increased by \$2,050. The adjustment also affected the benefits line items associated with the salary.

- f. Nursing Hospital: Laura Mills, NHA, reviewed the changes to the departmental budgets. Commissioner Grenier asked how many residents were budgeted on the revenue side. Ms. Mills replied that she had budgeted 76 residents even though the capacity was currently 82 with a waiting list. Private pay revenue was decreased but the NH Medicaid increased.

Specials:

- A wheelchair accessible van: \$38,200.
- Food wagon: \$18,100. Ms. Mills explained that there have been several workers' comp claims in regards to the doors opening on the food wagon.
- Air conditioning \$17,000. Ms. Mills noted that the amount was only a placeholder. There was not a definite amount at this time. Commissioner Samson stated that he wanted the air conditioning issue resolved in the kitchen and needed to be addressed.

Commissioner Grenier noted that the water precinct figures will need to be revisited in February.

- g. County: Ms. Klebe noted that \$5,000 needed to be added to the Finance budget for the electric bids which will be done Fall 2019.
- h. Unincorporated Places: Ms. Fish highlighted line items that were increased: fire services in Pinkham's Grant and Errol Transfer station fees increased in certain budgets. Ms. Klebe noted that the budgeted amount for the riverbank project in Wentworth Location had been adjusted to reflect the refinanced figure.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 a.m. All approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Samson, Clerk