

Coös County Commissioners
Budget Work Session
Coös County Nursing Hospital
November 6, 2019

Present: Commissioners Tom Brady, Paul Grenier and Rick Samson; County Administrator Jennifer Fish; Director of Finance Carrie Klebe; Coös County Attorney John McCormick; Sheriff Brian Valerino; Captain Keith Roberge; Superintendent Ben Champagne; Register of Deeds Leon Rideout; Deputy Registrar Sally Pelletier; Brendan Prusik and Mary Tichy, UNH/Cooperative Extension; Haven Neal, Chair-Conservation District Board; Carolyn McQuiston, Coös County Conservation District; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Acting Nursing Home Administrator Lynn Beede; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris.

1. Commissioner Brady opened the budget work session at 9:06 a.m. Register of Deeds Leon Rideout 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 9, 2019 regular meeting, as presented: A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the minutes of the October 9, 2019, regular meeting, as presented. All approved 3-0.
4. Hearing of the public: There was no public comment.
5. Discussion & Review of 2020 proposed budgets:
County Administrator Jennifer Fish noted cost of living (COLA) increases were not included in any of the budgets. The health insurance line items were budgeted with a 15% increase. The not to exceed rate will not be known until December. The budget also included the 53rd payroll in all departments.

Commissioner Grenier stated that the budget as presented reflected a \$2.3 million increase over the 2019 budget. He added that all departments would need to reduce their budgets.

- a. County Attorney John McCormick stated that several increases in the County Attorney's budget were related to step increases and benefits.

The County Attorney noted an increase to the contracted services line item due to upcoming trials; a request for a part-time investigator of eight hours per week; and a salary adjustment to the part-time legal secretary. The total budget increase was less than 5%.

Commissioner Grenier asked that he reduce the budget by \$25,000.

Victim/Witness: The budget increase of \$6,280 was due step increases and benefits; and contracted services. The revenue offset was the same as the previous year.

Medical Referees: Director of Finance Carrie Klebe reported that she had increased the budget by \$1,000. Commissioner Grenier asked that the budget be level funded.

The County Attorney stated that he would contact the Director of Finance regarding the grant.

- b. Coös County Conservation District: Mr. Haven Neal and Carolyn McQuiston were present. The Director of Finance stated that the budget included the payout for Ms. McQuiston who is retiring in 2020. After meeting with Ms. McQuiston prior to the meeting, it was determined that the proposed budget will be reduced by \$10,000.
- c. Register of Deeds: Leon Rideout and Sally Pelletier were both present.

Mr. Rideout reported that the budget was mostly level funded from 2019. He asked to increase the index processing line item by \$5,000 for additional security features and increase the revenue surcharge line item by \$5,000.

- d. UNH Cooperative Extension: Brendan Prusik and Mary Tichy presented the budget which included the transfer of the County employee to UNH in order for the employee to take advantage of the tuition benefits provided by UNH. The budget also included \$15,000 for office renovations with a UNH match. Mr. Prusik stated that he was in the process of obtaining quotes for the renovations and was hoping for a lower price. UNH will be managing the project. Commissioner Grenier asked for written confirmation that the renovations would be split 50/50 between the county and UNH. Mr. Prusik replied that he would request the letter.
- e. Sheriff's Department: Sheriff Brian Valerino and Captain Keith Roberge were present.

The Sheriff reported that the department now leases tasers which showed a \$5,000 increase in the Dues and Fees line items. Two cruisers were also included in the budget. The mileage on the current cruisers was 118,000 and 127,000. The vehicle repair line item was increased by \$5,000 in case the purchase of one of the cruisers was removed from the budget. A request of \$18,000 for a new ATV was also included. The engine blew in the current ATV. The cost to repair was estimated at \$3,500/\$3,800 and would be worth \$5,000 if fixed.

The revenues were reviewed. Commissioner Grenier noted that the total revenue had significantly reduced from 2019. Captain Roberge stated that there were no campground patrols last year due to the campground renovations; however, patrols are being scheduled for 2020. The line item was increased to reflect the change. The reduction in the juvenile transport line item is due to the State is now transporting juveniles unless there is an issue. Commissioner Brady stated that when comparing the expenses and revenues, the budget showed an increase of \$100,000. Commissioner Grenier asked that the budget be reduced to make it budget neutral.

- f. Department of Corrections: Superintendent Champagne reported that the budget included funding from the IDN and the Town of Stewartstown Water Department expense. The Board requested that a new line item for case management be included in the budget. The food/meals line item was reduced by \$15,000.

The Superintendent reported that the towns had approved a level funded Recycling Center budget which included the purchase of a new truck.

While reviewing the Transfer Station budget, Ms. Fish noted that the revenues did not offset the expenditures. Superintendent Champagne stated that he would review the contracts and contact the Town of Columbia to discuss options.

- g. County Administration: County Administrator Jennifer Fish reported that the IT contracted services line item was increased in all budgets. She also noted that the reduction in retiree benefits line items was due to a change in prescription plan.

The first payment for Water System was included in Debt Service.

While reviewing County Specials, Ms. Fish noted that the water system project was not closed out as the State had granted an extension to complete additional projects.

The county house renovations were also included with a revenue offset. The Director of Finance reported that she has a grant/loan through USDA with an application deadline in early December. The Board agreed that the application should be filed and asked that the Delegation be notified of the project at their next meeting.

- h. Unincorporated Places: Ms. Fish noted that the Dixville legal services line item was reduced. She also added that there may be changes to the budgets by March for emergency, fire and ambulance services.
- i. Coös County Nursing Hospital: The Nursing Hospital Administrator reviewed the budget which included step increases, benefits and the 53rd payroll.

The Nursing Department Nursing Assistants' Salaries line item included \$100,000 in retirements.

Quality Management: All of the salary is now included in the budget. Some of the hours were previously budgeted in the nursing department.

Plant Operations: The West Stewartstown water system line item was estimated at \$45,000.

Housekeeping: Two retirements were budgeted.

The dentist line item was increased as staff will need to transport residents for dental services.

Activities Department: One retirement has been budgeted.

Physical Therapy: One retirement has been budgeted. Hours were increased in physical therapy and reduced in the nursing department.

Specials: wheelchair accessible van \$53,000; bariatric hoist lift \$9,300; 85 lb. washer \$21,500; and a 60" commercial mower.

Commissioner Grenier stated that the budget needed to be reduced by \$300,000 - \$400,000 or split the difference between expenses and revenues.

- j. Coös County Nursing Home: Prior to the review of the Nursing Home budget, Lynn Beede, Acting Nursing Home Administrator, reported that the Health Information Director had resigned. Mrs. Beede recommended not replacing the individual and distribute the hours and workload to the clerks. This change was not included in the budget. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the recommendation. All approved 3-0.

Administration: Eight hours were added to an existing 24 hour position. Bad Debts/Allowance & Recovery was budgeted at \$42,300.

Staff Development: The in-house education line item was budgeted at \$17,000 to include the RELIAS program.

Plant Operations: The building repairs line item was budgeted at \$39,000.

Specials: four electric beds to replace older beds \$7,700; ice machine \$7,050; dining system \$16,500; and paving of the employee/delivery entrance \$25,000.

Ms. Beede added that both she and Ms. Mills had not included the suggested \$2 per hour wage increase in the nursing budgets for both facilities which estimated at \$950,000.

Commissioner Grenier replied that the request would be discussed at a later date.

6. Other Business:

- a. Opening of electricity bids: The Director of Finance reported that only one bid was received. Commissioner Grenier opened and reviewed the bid. He asked that Mrs. Klebe provided a report to the Board at the November 13 meeting.
- b. Members of the Board signed the nursing home license as presented by Laura Mills, NHA.

7. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to enter into a non-meeting to discuss collective bargaining at 1:55 p.m. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to come out of non-meeting at 2:15 p.m. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to accept the proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement between Coös County and Coös County Corrections Chapter 53 State Employees' Association SEIU Local 1984. All approved 3-0.

The November meeting will be held November 13, 2019 at the Coös County Nursing Hospital in West Stewartstown, NH beginning at 9:30 a.m.

The December meeting will be held December 18, 2019 at the Coös County Nursing Home in Berlin, NH.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to adjourn the meeting at 2:17 p.m. All approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Commissioner Rick Samson, Clerk