

Coös County Commissioners  
Budget Work Session  
Coös County Nursing Hospital - W. Stewartstown, NH  
November 7, 2012

Present: Commissioners Bing Judd, Paul Grenier and Tom Brady; County Administrator Suzanne L. Collins; County Administrator/Director of Finance Jennifer Fish; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Nursing Home Administrator Louise Belanger; Superintendent of Corrections Craig Hamelin; Sheriff Gerry Marcou (*arrived at 9:15*); Chief Deputy Keith Roberge; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris; County Treasurer Fred King; Commissioner-Elect Rick Samson; Dr. Robert Soucy and Evelyn Earley, Medical Services Nurse.

Commissioner Judd called the budget work session to order at 9:10 a.m.

Mr. King reported on the status of the economic impact analysis. Any phone calls received are forwarded to the North Country Council. Mr. King also prepared a folder that contains all correspondence and information pertaining to the study. A folder was provided to each Commissioner and will be provided to the Delegation.

Commissioner Judd asked if any information had been received on the health insurance rates. Sue replied that a not to exceed rate increase of 7.5% was included in the proposed budget for the second half of the year.

CCNH - W. Stewartstown:

After reviewing the Dietary Department budget, Commissioner Brady suggested looking at the State Surplus facility in Concord for office furniture. Commissioner Grenier asked if the water filter was for the whole facility. Laura replied it was for the dish machine only.

Commissioner Grenier questioned the cost of \$900 for recharging fire extinguishers in the Staff Development budget. Laura explained that it was the cost of refilling the fire extinguishers after education was completed by staff each year.

Commissioner Grenier questioned the cost of \$500 for Eastern Fire in the Plant Budget. Sue replied it was a contract which she could provide after the meeting. Three items (Dremel tools, auto feed for a snake and an inspection camera kit) were removed from the new equipment line item totaling \$1,003.

Commissioner Grenier asked the amount of mattresses being ordered. Laura explained that a rotation replacement system has been set into place whereas so many mattresses will be ordered per year.

The total Nursing Hospital budget was up \$40,192.

The Nursing Hospital request for new positions was reviewed. Commissioner Grenier suggested that requests for new positions for all departments be reviewed in February with the new County Commissioner and Delegation members. Commissioners Judd and Brady agreed.

Department of Corrections:

Dr. Soucy and Evelyn Earley spoke of the nursing coverage issue at the Department of Corrections. Currently, there is a lack of continuity during weekends as the Nursing Hospital provides coverage. The weekend shift is a burden on the Nursing Hospital staff. Superintendent Hamelin proposed that the 12-hour position be increased to a 28-hour position nights and weekends or a 30-hour position nights and weekends. However, the 30-hour position would trigger health insurance benefits. The nursing hospital

staff would only be used in case of emergency or under special circumstances. Superintendent Hamelin would like to advertise right away. The individual currently filling the 12-hour position is leaving for Florida in mid-December and another nurse has agreed to assist with coverage until the beginning of the New Year. Commissioners Judd and Grenier agreed with the 28-hour position but did not want to advertise prior to the budget approval. Superintendent Hamelin explained that the hours are already budgeted for payment to the nursing hospital. This would be like a line item transfer. Commissioner Grenier stated that this issue will need to be made clear at the public hearing. It is not a new position but a transfer from one line item to another. The Board agreed that the Superintendent could advertise the 28-hour position right away. Sue stated that this item will be highlighted in the cover letter sent to the Delegation with the budget.

Dr. Soucy and Evelyn Earley left the meeting at 9:51 a.m.

Coös County Sheriff:

Commissioner Grenier noted that the department's budget was up due to NH Retirement rate increases and Operation Stone Garden (which has revenue offset). Commissioner Brady questioned if the Sheriff had budgeted enough in the gasoline line item. There were no changes made to the Sheriff's budget.

CCNH-Berlin:

While reviewing the Nursing Home budget, Commissioner Brady made the following suggestions to Louise:

- ask the Dietary Manager if the department has pointer thermometers for food temperatures; and
- contact Sysco and obtain information regarding paper towel holders for the Nursing Home.

Louise reported that the boiler is leaking and a section may need replacement. The quote she has received for repairs was \$9,000. Commissioner Judd suggested that the Plant Manager contact Daniel Hebert for a quote on repairs. Sue will ask Dennis Sweatt if the Nursing Hospital still has old sections that could be used for replacement in Berlin.

The total Nursing Home budget was up \$17,405.

Commissioner Judd stated that the requests for new positions will be reviewed in February.

While reviewing the Nursing Home specials, Louise stated that if repairs are to be done to the front entrance of the facility the proposed electrical panel upgrade amount will need to be changed.

County Administration:

Jennifer reported that she has received requests from Commissioner Brady and Representative Tholl regarding the purchase of iPads for the Commissioners and Delegation members. Jennifer stated that she recently attended a workshop which indicated that any public officials' personal information on a computer used for business is subject to public disclosure. Several employees' in other municipalities have been issued iPads or smart phones for this reason. Commissioner Brady added that all minutes, correspondence, county business and the budget would be sent to the iPad. Commissioner Judd asked if funds were available in the 2012 budget. Sue replied there were funds in the Commissioners' budget but not the Delegation. Commissioner Grenier stated that this request should be considered as a new budget item for 2013. It would appear self-serving to purchase these items now. Commissioner Judd entertained a motion to purchase three iPads in 2012. A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Grenier for discussion purposes. Commissioner Brady asked Commissioner-elect Samson for his opinion. Mr. Samson replied that it was a good idea but agreed with Commissioner Grenier that it should be a 2013 budget item. Sue stated that \$1,500 could be included in the 2013 budget.

Commissioner Brady asked that \$1,500 be included in the Commissioners' budget for 2013 and \$5,000 be included in the Delegation's budget. This item will be discussed with the Delegation.

County Finance:

Commissioner Grenier asked for a status update on applications for the Director of Finance position. Jennifer replied that she had received some good applications and was getting ready for interviews.

County Report:

Commissioner Brady asked if the amount of reports printed could be decreased in 2013. He explained that several of the towns have reported they throw away the reports. Sue replied that she had searched for the RSA that specified the minimum amount of county reports required and could not find any information. Currently 2,000 reports are printed each year. When Linda requests bids for the printing of the county report, she will request pricing for 1,500 and 2,000 copies.

County Attorney:

Based on the John McCormick's request at the Delegation meeting on Friday, Sue reported that funds from the contract services line item will be encumbered at the end of this year. Any funds remaining in the attorney's salary line item will also be encumbered for contract services.

Victim/Witness:

The request for additional hours was denied.

Register of Deeds:

Jennifer reported that an error had been made while calculating the office rent line item. It was increased by \$8,950.

Department of Corrections (continued):

Superintendent Hamelin reported that the prisoners: other institutions line item was increased by \$32,000 due to the current population. This line item will be revisited in February. After some discussion, Superintendent Hamelin will research other food cart possibilities. The new equipment line item was reduced by \$800. A portable heater and pneumatic impact wrench were removed.

Conservation District:

Commissioner Judd asked if Diane Bennett could attend the Commissioners' meeting on November 14 to discuss the necessity of a full-time position.

Delegation Expense:

The line item was increased by \$5,000 for the proposed purchase of iPads.

Other Special Appropriations:

The Board stated that the Coös Economic Development request for \$65,000 could be determined by the Delegation.

Commissioner Brady suggested that the \$45,000 allocated for economic development in 2012 remain in the budget and should be discussed with the Delegation.

Commissioner Brady also asked that the potato program allocation remain in the budget. He has been discussing the possibility of having Grafton County grow potatoes for our program next year.

The County Government budget increased by \$130,023.

Sue reported that the Notre Dame CDBG application was approved.

The recycling center budget meeting was held on November 1. The towns voted to transfer \$20,000 from savings in order to build a pole barn.

Unincorporated Places:

Commissioner Grenier stated that Commissioner Judd has been providing timber assessments at no extra cost as County Commissioner. Now that his term is ending someone will need to be contracted to provide this service and this amount will need to be included in the budget.

Sue reported that she had received a budget request from Brad Simpkins of DRED in the amount of \$67,500 for the upcoming budget. The increase of \$2,500 is not included in the proposed budget.

Captain John Acardi also contacted Sue in regards to the timber tax assessments. He stated that DRED could provide this service for \$2,500 making DRED's total budget request of \$70,000.

Commissioner Grenier did not have a problem with DRED's request. However, he asked if Commissioner Judd would be interested as a private citizen to perform this service. Mr. Judd stated that he was. Commissioner Grenier proposed continuing the timber tax assessments with Mr. Judd and that a dollar figure will be needed for the proposed budget. A contract will be prepared after Mr. Samson is sworn into office. Commissioner Brady agreed. Commissioner Grenier also specified that this item needs to be brought to the attention of the Delegation. He does not want this to appear underhanded.

Sue inquired about the original DRED appropriation request of \$67,500. The Board agreed unanimously to level fund this budget at \$65,000.

As previously discussed with the Board, Sue noted that she will be available to work as an unincorporated places consultant with Jennifer on an "as needed" basis until Jennifer indicates she is no longer needed. Sue also serves as planning board clerk whereas she prepares all information pertaining to the meeting and takes the minutes. The individuals who are on the planning board do not get paid; however, she would expect to be paid for preparing the minutes as they are quite extensive. There is a lot of work involved in the Coös County Planning Board. There will be a lot of intense work coming up in Dixville due to the rebuilding of The Balsams.

Sue reported that the Delegation voted at its November 2 meeting to approve the survey of a 5-acre lot on which the administrator's house is located. She presented a contract in the amount of \$1,400 which needed to be approved and signed. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to have the Chairman sign the contract with FW Cowan. All approved 3-0. Mr. Masson has indicated that the survey should be complete by December 1. Sue will contact the appraisal firm after completion of the survey.

Commissioner Judd presented a proposed plan for redesigning the Berlin Nursing Home front entrance. It is currently a safety issue concerning the residents. This design would also add handicap parking in front of the Administrator's office. Louise stated that she had received a proposal of \$164,000 for the project. The proposal was prepared on the high end as the company did not know what to expect prior to digging. Commissioner Judd stated that this project needs to be done and the project will go out to bid. Sue suggested adding a line item under the Nursing Home Specials in the amount of \$100,000 to be revisited in February. The Board agreed.

Commissioner Brady asked to revisit a line item. He asked Sue where the appropriation was located in the budget pertaining to assisting Jennifer with the unincorporated places and the amount requested. Sue replied under General Government, consulting services were budgeted for one day per week although it may not be needed for that much time. Commissioner Brady asked if Sue had a total figure for her

services as the question will be forthcoming at the budget hearing. Sue replied \$20,000 for both the timber tax assessor and unincorporated places consultant to be equalized throughout the unincorporated places. Commissioner Brady stated that the Delegation would not approve this request as there is a huge opposition to spending that kind of money to a former administrator. Commissioner Judd stated that funds not used will be returned to fund balance.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to enter into nonpublic session per RSA 91-A:3 II (a) at 12:10 p.m. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to come out of nonpublic session at 1:00 p.m. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to adjourn the meeting at 1:00 p.m. All approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas M. Brady, Clerk