

Coös County Commissioners
Budget Work Session
Coös County Nursing Hospital - W. Stewartstown, NH
November 2, 2015

Present: Commissioners Tom Brady, Paul Grenier and Rick Samson; County Administrator Jennifer Fish; Director of Finance Carrie Klebe; Nursing Home Administrator Louise Belanger; Superintendent Craig Hamelin; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Chief Deputy Brian Valerino; Captain Keith Roberge; County Treasurer Fred King; County Attorney John McCormick; Registrar of Deeds Tanya Batchelder; Deputy Registrar Sally Pelletier; Larry Barker, UNH/Cooperative Extension; Representative Robert Théberge; Representative Wayne Moynihan; Sarah Kilbourn, Coös County Conservation District; Don Tase and a member of the press.

Commissioner Brady opened the Commissioners' Budget Work Session at 9:40 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Coös County Attorney McCormick led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Approval of the Agenda: A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the agenda. All approved 3-0.
2. Approval of the Minutes of the October 12, 2016 meeting: A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2016, regular meeting, as distributed.

Commissioner Samson requested that his vote on the following motion be corrected:

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson, that it was with deep regret that the Board accepted Superintendent Craig Hamelin's retirement letter effective December 31, 2016. Superintendent Hamelin agreed to stay on a part time basis, 32 hours per week up to March 31, 2017 at an estimated salary of \$1,207 per week. All approved 3-0.

He stated that in nonpublic he had opposed Superintendent Hamelin working part time for an additional three months. Linda Harris replied that the motion was written as it was on the recording. Commissioner Brady stated that the recording was available for review. Commissioner Samson stated that he wanted to listen to the recording. Commissioner Grenier withdrew his motion and Commissioner Samson withdrew his second. The minutes would be discussed at the end of the meeting.

3. Hearing of the Public:
Laura Mills, NHA, reported that she had received notification from the State that the Nursing Hospital had obtained a deficiency-free survey. She asked the Board to sign the letter thanking staff which will be included with the \$25 bonus. The Board signed the letter.
4. Review of the 2017 proposed budget:
 - a. County Attorney: County Attorney John McCormick provided a brief overview of his budget. He announced that a new attorney had been hired and would begin employment next week. The meeting to discuss drug court, which was held at the prison in Berlin, was well attended and the group will meet again in the future. Based on information from the meeting, expenses relating to Drug Court were not included in the budget.

Commissioner Grenier stated that the overall budget showed a 1.8 million increase. He asked the County Attorney to reduce expenses by 5-6% or find revenues. Commissioner Brady supported Commissioner Grenier's request. The budget as presented showed a 12.9% increase on the county tax. He explained that the budget is a work in progress. Commissioner Samson also agreed. The county tax is the second highest tax rate on property tax bills.

- b. The Victim Witness Advocacy Program: The increases were related to salary and benefits.
- c. Conservation District: The increase in the budget was due to a change in health insurance plans.
- d. Registry of Deeds: Increases in this budget were related to salary and benefits. Commissioner Grenier noted that the estimated revenues were low. Registrar Tanya Batchelder replied that revenues were not increased as she cannot forecast the 2017 market. Commissioner Grenier asked that she review the budget to decrease expenses or increase revenue.
- e. UNH/Cooperative Extension: Larry Barker reported that the budget included a .7% consumer price index increase for the contracted services and funding for the position discussed at the October 12 meeting. Commissioner Grenier asked Mr. Barker to review and decrease the budget by 5-10%.
- f. Sheriff's Department: The replacement of two cruisers and the replacement of ballistic vests were part of the proposed budget. Chief Deputy Valerino anticipates applying for a grant to offset some of the cost of the ballistic vests. Commissioner Grenier asked for a reduction of \$50,000 - \$60,000 in appropriations or an increase in revenues.
- g. Department of Corrections: The budget included the payment of personal leave and sick time for Superintendent Hamelin upon his retirement and funding of his salary up to March 31, 2017. Commissioner Grenier inquired if funds from the Sick Leave Trust could be used for the payment of personal and sick time. County Administrator Jennifer Fish stated the trust could be used with Delegation approval.
- h. Nursing Hospital: The increases were employee related. Seven retirements totaling \$177,835 were included in the budget. Additional hours were requested for a restorative nurse to cover physical therapy hours. Commissioner Grenier noted that revenues were conservative and asked an increase in the private pay revenue. He also asked for a reduction of \$50,000 in expenses.

Commissioner Samson asked that the Board considered referral and weekend bonuses. Commissioner Grenier replied that he was not in favor of increasing costs at this time but was willing to revisit the policies in February during the budget review.

Commissioner Samson also asked if the outside agencies could absorb the same budget cuts as the county departments. He realized that the agencies provide services to the residents of the county but these agencies should have the same requests as the other departments. Commissioner Grenier agreed with Commissioner Samson.

County Treasurer Fred King noted that as costs continue to go up the County may not be in a position to fund other programs.

Commissioner Brady added that some of the increases in costs have come from federal requirements.

- i. Nursing Home: This budget included \$102,644 in personal leave and sick time due to retirements. Louise Belanger inquired if funds from the sick leave trust could be used. Commissioner Grenier also asked for reduction in this budget.

Commissioner Grenier noted that once the nursing home becomes skilled it will help with the deficit and filling empty beds.

The Board recessed for lunch and reconvened at 12:37 p.m.

Approval of the Minutes of the October 12, 2016 meeting: A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2016, regular meeting, as distributed.

Commissioner Samson stated that he had listened to the recording and he was inattentive when the motion was made. The minutes were approved 3-0.

- j. Unincorporated Places: Commissioner Grenier noted that the five year revaluation of the Unincorporated Places would begin in 2017 and he asked Linda Harris which Unincorporated Places would be affected in 2017. Linda Harris replied Atkinson & Gilmanton Academy Grant, Cambridge, Dix Grant, Dixville, Erving's Grant, Millsfield, Second College Grant and Wentworth Location.

Commissioner Grenier asked that all budget changes be submitted to the Director of Finance Carrie Klebe by the end of the week. A revised budget will be forwarded to the Board for review prior to the meeting.

Commissioner Samson asked when the outside agencies' requests would be submitted. Commissioner Grenier replied at the November 9th meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to enter nonpublic session per RSA 91-A:3, II(c) at 12:51 p.m. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to come out of nonpublic session at 1:03 p.m. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to seal the minutes regarding the personnel issue. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to adjourn the meeting at 1:03 p.m. All approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Samson, Clerk