

Coös County Commissioners
Special Meeting
Coös County Nursing Hospital - West Stewartstown, NH
June 6, 2016

Present: Commissioners Tom Brady, Paul Grenier and Rick Samson; County Administrator Jennifer Fish; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Representative Herb Richardson; and Administrative Assistant Linda Harris.

1. Commissioner Brady opened the Commissioners' meeting at 7:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.
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. Other Business:

Ms. Fish announced that both Collective Bargaining Agreements (SEA and AFSCME) had been approved by their union memberships. These are three year contracts.

Ms. Fish reviewed cost items agreed upon by both union memberships. These changes will also affect all nonunion employees:

- The health insurance will change from an HMO \$15 \$500 to a HMO Super \$20/\$40 \$1,000. There are minor changes to co-pays. The deductible will increase from \$500 per person/\$1,500 per family to \$1,000 per person/\$3,000 per family. The Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) will no longer be offered to help offset the deductibles. The cost savings to the County \$592,560.90.
- A 2% cost of living increase for the next three years. The projected 2016 expense \$299,146.
- The payment in lieu of health insurance (opt-out) will increase from \$1,250 to \$2,000. The cost savings to the County \$5,923. Ms. Fish stated that AFSCME declined this proposal.

Commissioner Grenier noted that it would be good business sense to offer the benefit county-wide.

- As noted earlier, Ms. Fish noted that the HRA will no longer be available; however as of January 1, 2017 a flex account will be available for each employee. Each employee will be able to contribute pre-tax to the account. Employees will not be able to carry anything over \$500. If the funds are not spent at the end of the year, the funds will be returned to the County. This cost item will be a 2017 budget item.

Commissioner Samson asked if an individual that retires will be able to withdraw the funds they contributed. Ms. Fish replied no.

- Another comparable plan HMO HSA \$5,000 must be offered in order to be in compliance with Affordable Care Act.

Commissioner Samson asked if the new health insurance plan was in compliance with the proposed Cadillac tax. Ms. Fish replied that the County will be okay for this contract; however, the County will need to change insurance in three years. Both CBAs have a clause that states that negotiations will reopen if the Cadillac tax were to kick in.

Ms. Fish noted that employees will notice little change in their weekly pay deduction.

Commissioner Samson noted that he did not have a problem with Commissioner Grenier voting on the AFSCME contract. Commissioner Grenier stated that he would abstain from voting on the AFSCME contract due to conflict of interest.

a. Ratification of the Collective Bargaining Agreement with SEA:

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

b. Ratification of the Collective Bargaining Agreement with AFSCME:

A motion was made by Commissioner Samson, seconded by Commissioner Brady to ratify the Collective Bargaining Agreement between Coös County and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) for certain employees at the Coös County Nursing Home in Berlin. The motion passed 2-0-1. Commissioner Grenier abstained.

3. Any Other Business:

Representative Richardson stated he was unable to attend the June 8 regular meeting and thanked the Chairman for granting his request to speak at the meeting. Representative Richardson had a few items to report to the Board:

- Golf Links Road - Representative Richardson stated that some County officials stated in past meetings that they were not aware of the project. He noted that 25 public hearings have been held by the Department of Transportation and provided a copy of the amended house bill.

The department of transportation shall not commence construction on the road project named Dixville-Colebrook, project number 40518, until such time as all approvals necessary for the road project are received and the financing required for commencement of commercial operations at the facility on the east side of NH 26 at the Balsams is secured. Project number 40518 shall be contingent upon an agreement between the towns and/or county to take ownership of the road prior to construction. Construction costs shall not exceed \$2,500,000.

Representative Richardson added that once the project is completed the State will transfer the ownership of the road to the County and the County will have the authority to transfer ownership to The Balsams. Commissioner Grenier stated that since it will be a real estate transaction the Delegation will make the final approval.

Commissioner Samson presented a letter to the Board as he would not be attending the June 8 meeting. The letter read as follows:

Concerning the letter May 27th that DOT Commissioner Sheehan sent to the county commissioners I would like at this time to go on record as opposing the county taking ownership of the Golf Links Road and then turning it over to the Balsams development Corp.

I feel that this subject should and needs to be discussed in public by all three commissioners and that the new amended section 20 of RSA 228:20 fully explained and be fully followed.

- Representative Richardson also noted that he and Councilor Kenney have been told by constituents the reason that the bridge project between West Stewartstown and Beecher Falls, VT is currently on hold was because the funds were being used for the Dixville/Colebrook project. The funds were not taken from this project for Dixville. An easement is needed from the State of Vermont to continue construction. It is hoped that the project will move forward by the end of the summer.
- Representative Richardson also reported that the State of NH would be purchasing four camps on Umbagog Lake and adding them to the Umbagog Lake State Park. The governor and council approved the purchase.

Commissioner Brady stated that he took offense with Commissioner Samson's letter. As Chairman he follows the law. All permits will need to be enforced prior to the transfer of ownership and the permits will not be available by June 8.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to adjourn the meeting at 7:32 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Samson, Clerk