

COÖS COUNTY DELEGATION
QUARTERLY MEETING
Friday, November 2, 2012 - 10:00 a.m.
North Country Resource Center - Lancaster, NH

Present: Representatives John Tholl-Chair; Herb Richardson-Vice Chair; Yvonne Thomas-Clerk; Gary Coulombe, Duffy Daugherty, Evalyn Merrick, Larry Rappaport, Bill Remick (*arrived at 10:33*), Robert Théberge and Marc Tremblay. Also present: County Commissioners “Bing” Judd and Tom Brady; County Administrator Suzanne Collins; County Administrator /Director of Finance Jennifer Fish; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris; County Treasurer Fred King; Sheriff Gerry Marcou; Assistant County Attorney John McCormick; members of the press and public.

Chairman Tholl called the meeting to order at 10:12 a.m. and requested all to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. The roll was called by the clerk, Representative Yvonne Thomas. There were 9 members present. Representatives Hatch and Remick were absent.

Hearing of the Public:

County Treasurer Fred King provided an update on the status of the study on the economic impact of the Umbagog Refuge and other federal land ownership on the local economy. He reported that the County Commissioners have entered into an agreement with the North Country Council to request an unbiased analysis of federal land purchases in Coös County. A request for proposal has been submitted to various newspapers and firms. Mr. King has spoken with a representative of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in Massachusetts who indicated that they would assist with the funding of the study. Mr. King will provide an update at the Delegation’s next meeting.

Review & Approval of Minutes:

Chairman Tholl asked if any changes or corrections needed to be made to the minutes of the August 10, 2012 meeting. A motion was made by Representative Merrick, seconded by Representative Théberge to approve the minutes of the August 10, 2012 meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved by a voice vote.

Other Business:

Assistant County Attorney John McCormick reported to the Delegation that due to an upcoming case, there may not be enough money in the contracted services line item for the case which is docketed for January 2013. The expert witness needed is top in his field and the cost may be higher than previously budget. Chairman Tholl stated that whatever funds are remaining at the end of 2012 can be encumbered for 2013. Due to the fact that the County budget is not approved until March, the Delegation can allow payment of the expert due to special circumstances.

Chairman Tholl added that he hoped that the newly-elected Delegation will be more than willing to assist the County Attorney. He reiterated that the funds at the end of the year be encumbered and that Mr. McCormick request additional funds if needed. Mr. McCormick thanked the Delegation.

Review & Approval of the Third Quarter Financial Statements:

The Coös County expenditures and revenues for the third quarter were reviewed.

Representative Merrick asked why the revenue to date for the Unincorporated Place of Millsfield was high and Chairman Tholl replied that it was due to the Payment in Lieu of Tax pertaining to the wind turbines.

Chairman Tholl noted that the outstanding budget transfers needed to be approved and signed at the meeting. Representative Rappaport stated that he thought he kept all the hard copies and Chairman Tholl replied that was not the case. The members of the committee sign the transfers and are given a copy after the fact.

Representative Remick arrived during this discussion.

A motion was made by Representative Richardson, seconded by Representative Tremblay to approve the third quarter expenditures and revenues for all funds. The motion was approved by roll call vote 10-0.

Old Business:

Representative Th  berge reported that the final performance audit results have never been received and it is an embarrassment to the Delegation. A motion was made by Representative Th  berge, seconded by Representative Richardson that a letter be sent to Representative Hatch to obtain the final copy of the performance audit of two years ago. The motion was approved by roll call vote of 10-0.

A motion was made by Representative Daugherty, seconded by Representative Rappaport that a copy of the letter be sent to the firm of Melanson Heath, who performed the audit. The motion was unanimously approved by a voice vote.

New Business:

- a. Resignation of County Attorney Robert Mekeel: Sue Collins reported that per RSA 661:9 (1) if the vacancy is less than one year the County Convention shall by majority vote to fill or leave the vacancy. She added that the Assistant County Attorney works at the pleasure of the County Attorney.

Chairman Tholl suggested that since the election was in a few days that the position remain vacant. The Assistant County Attorney has indicated that he would remain until the end of the year, regardless of the outcome of the election. He suggested that if Mr. McCormick wins, he should start advertising for an assistant county attorney following the election.

Representative Tremblay asked if County Attorney Mekeel will be paid through the end of the year. Sue replied that he would be paid through November 7, his official resignation date.

Representative Th  berge stated that Mr. McCormick is taking on additional responsibility and asked if he should be compensated. Chairman Tholl noted that Mr. McCormick is not an elected employee. At the moment, Mr. McCormick is focused on getting things done during the transition. Representative Daugherty noted that it would be nice to compensate him but it would be viewed as arbitrary.

Representative Richardson took a moment to thank County Attorney Mekeel for serving the residents of Co  s County.

A motion was made by Representative Daugherty, seconded by Representative Merrick to accept the resignation of County Attorney Robert Mekeel as of November 7, 2012. The motion was unanimously approved by a voice vote.

A motion was made by Representative Rappaport, seconded by Representative Coulombe to leave the position vacant according to RSA 661:9 (1). The motion was approved by roll call vote of 9-1.

- b. Budget Transfers: Jennifer Fish presented several budget transfer requests for Delegation approval. Chairman Tholl and Representative Rappaport signed the budget transfers.

CCNH - Berlin:

To:	Equipment Rental		\$ 4,000
From:	Education & Conferences	\$ 1,500	
	Nursing Supplies & Expense	1,000	
	Health Information Clerks	1,500	
To:	New Equipment		2,800
From:	Longevity Pay	2,800	
To:	MNA Salaries		32,000
From:	Nursing Health Insurance	32,000	
To:	LPN Salaries		70,000
From:	Health Insurance	70,000	

CCNH - W. Stewartstown:

To:	Contract Nurses		8,000
From:	Education	4,000	
	Workers' Comp.	4,000	
To:	LPN Salaries		30,000
From:	RN Salaries	30,000	
To:	Housekeeping Supplies & Expense		5,500
From:	Housekeeping Workers' Comp.	1,700	
	Laundry Workers' Comp.	1,600	
	Laundry Supplies & Expense	1,000	
	Housekeeping Health Insurance	1,000	
	Housekeeping Education	100	
	Housekeeping Travel	100	

Department of Corrections:

To:	Corporals' Salaries		27,500
From:	Correctional Officers' Salaries	27,500	
To:	Training Salaries		6,000
From:	Correctional Officers' Salaries	6,000	
To:	Medical Services Nurse		3,000
From:	Nursing Services	3,000	
To:	Prisoners: Other Institutions		44,000
From:	Health Insurance	20,000	
	Workers' Comp.	6,500	
	Legal Services	2,000	
	Electronic Monitoring Services	5,000	
	Building Repairs & Maintenance	4,000	
	New Equipment	2,000	

Retiree Benefits	4,500
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Unincorporated Places - Dixville:

To: Planning Board Professional Services	2,500
From: Contingency	2,500

To: Professional Services	2,500
From: Contingency	2,500

c. Appraisal and Surveyor Estimates - County House:

Sue reported that she had obtained a quote from Dana Masson of FW Cowan & Sons in Canaan, Vermont to perform a survey of a 5-acre parcel on which the County Administrator's house is situated. The quote is \$1,400. This survey would also address a septic system easement.

Sue reported that she had two quotes for the appraisal of the house:

- Androscoggin Appraisal Associates (Peggy Gallus): \$475 subject to additions for easements and other issues.
- John Trumbull & Associates \$700 (all inclusive).

A motion was made by Representative Daugherty, seconded by Representative Remick to accept the survey estimate from FW Cowan.

Representative Tremblay noted that he had previously voted against selling the impressive piece of property. The building could be used for office space in the future. He continued that in light of its proximity to the recycling center it is worth more to keep than to sell it.

Representative Richardson agreed with Representative Tremblay. He continued that the Delegation needs to look at everything at once instead of piece meal.

Representative Remick stated that the survey should be done before anything further is discussed.

Representative Daugherty reminded the Delegation that they had voted overwhelmingly to sell the property and the group needs to move on.

Chairman Tholl noted that the sale of the house can be revisited at any time. However, the discussion was currently on the survey and the cost of \$1,400.

Representative Rappaport stated that the survey and the appraisal is needed to move forward.

Representative Merrick asked what the benefit of the survey was and if it was cost effective to spend \$1,400.

Representative Th  berge agreed with Representative Rappaport that the estimates were needed.

Chairman Tholl asked which line item the funds would come from. Sue replied that the Delegation Expense did not have any funds available. However \$2,000 could be transferred from the Bureau of Provider Audits line item which has funds available. The motion was approved by roll call vote of 8-2.

A motion was made by Representative Daugherty, seconded by Representative Th  berge to accept the appraisal bid of Trumbull & Associates in the amount of \$700 as it was all inclusive. The motion was approved by roll call vote of 8-2.

A motion was made by Representative Th  berge, seconded by Representative Daugherty to transfer \$2,100 from the rate setting line item to the delegation expense line item for the survey and appraisal of the county house. The motion was approved by voice vote of 8-2.

- d. Co  s Economic Development Corporation Board Seat: Representative Richardson asked that the Delegation discuss this item after the election. Currently this seat is held by Representative Hatch and he was not at the meeting. Chairman Tholl suggested waiting for the new Chair of the Delegation to appoint a member to this seat.
- e. At this point, the Delegation discussed the date of the organizational meeting which needs to be held the second week of December. The meeting will be held at the North Country Resource Center on Wednesday, December 11 at 10 a.m.

Any Other Business:

- a. Representative Th  berge noted that he represents the Delegation on the Cooperative Extension Board and wanted everyone to be aware that the Cooperative Extension is organizing a day at the State House in the Spring.

Representative Th  berge suggested that a binder with all of the RSAs should be provided to any new members of the Delegation after the elections.

- b. Representative Richardson thanked Representatives Remick and Tremblay for all of the work they've done. Representative Tremblay thanked the Delegation, Administration and the media. It has been a wonderful experience. He continued that he has been working on an OHRV registration system and offered his assistance in presenting testimony.
- c. Representative Daugherty stated that his previous request for discussion on the consolidation of county functions is beyond a tabletop discussion. He stated that a professional economic study needs to be done on this issue. A motion was made by Representative Daugherty to have the County Administrator include a line item in the 2013 budget to fund an economic study. The County Administrator shall also put this out to bid and obtain proposals.

Chairman Tholl stated that this request should be part of the budget meeting. He added that some members of the current Delegation may not be re-elected. His personal opinion was to wait until after the first of the year once the Delegation has been presented the budget in December. Representative Daugherty stated that the budget is currently being prepared and the issue needs to be addressed. Chairman Tholl added that the Delegation does not have the authority to put anything in the budget but they can make recommendations. Representative Merrick asked if there was a price as she could not vote for an open-ended request. Commissioner Brady noted that the recommendation should be made to the Board of Commissioners. The County Administrator takes direction from the Commissioners as they set the budget. Representative Daugherty amended his motion: The Delegation recommends to the County Commissioners that a line item be included in the 2013 budget to fund an economic study of consolidating county-government functions in one location. The motion was seconded by Representative Rappaport. Representative Th  berge suggested that \$1.00 be used as a placeholder in the budget. Commissioner Brady noted that it is the Commissioners' duty to prepare the budget and present it

to the Delegation. The Delegation then can makes changes. He believed that this request was setting precedence that should not be set. The motion failed by roll call vote 3-7.

Chairman Tholl noted that the Commissioners are now aware of the Delegation's intent.

Chairman Tholl thanked everyone for having worked together professionally during his two years as Chair of the Delegation.

The public hearing on the 2013 proposed budget will be held on Saturday, December 15 at 9:00 a.m. in West Stewartstown.

With no other business to discuss, a motion was made by Representative Richardson, seconded by Representative Tremblay, to adjourn the meeting at 12 Noon. All approved by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Yvonne Thomas, Clerk