

COÖS COUNTY
QUARTERLY DELEGATION MEETING
Friday, October 25, 2013 - 10:00 a.m.
Coös County Nursing Hospital - W. Stewartstown, NH

Present: Representatives Robert Théberge-Chair; Larry Rappaport-Vice Chair; Yvonne Thomas-Clerk; Marcia Hammon, Wayne Moynihan and Leon Rideout. Also present: County Commissioner Rick Samson; County Administrator Jennifer Fish; Director of Finance Carrie Klebe; Superintendent Craig Hamelin; Nursing Home Administrator Louise Belanger; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris; County Treasurer Fred King; The Honorable James Michalik; members of the press and public.

Chairman Théberge called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. and requested all to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. The roll was called by the Clerk, Representative Thomas. There were 6 members present. Representatives Coulombe, Enman, Hatch and Richardson were absent.

Hearing of the Public:

- *The Honorable James Michalik - The Family Resource Center (FRC):* Judge Michalik provided a fact sheet on The Family Resource Center. The FRC's primary office is located in Gorham, NH with satellite offices in Colebrook, Lancaster and Littleton. He highlighted three items provided by the FRC: Family Programs, Afterschool Programs and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance.

- The Family Program offers the following programs:
 - Home Visiting Program for at-risk pregnant mothers and young families. The program is mostly funded through State grants;
 - Parenting & Co-Parenting Education;
 - Court & DHHS referrals for at-risk families (92% of families do not return to DCYF);
 - Early Childhood Development Programs;
 - Veterans Supports/Deployment Cycle Support Program;
 - Support for homeless individuals with US military service;

The above programs serve 200+ families annually.

- The Afterschool Programs are located in the Berlin-Gorham area for grades K-8. The program is one of three accredited in New Hampshire and serves 225+ students. Representative Rappaport asked if there was an afterschool program in Colebrook. Judge Michalik replied that there currently is no program in that area. The program would need to be initiated by the principals and superintendents.
- Volunteer Income Tax Assistance:
 - Advanced Certified Tax Preparers/Trained and Certified Volunteers;
 - Each preparer takes an annual exam;
 - Free tax preparation for anyone earning no more than \$58,000;
 - Serving all of Coös County and Northern Carroll;
 - Since 2005, 3,000 +/- federal tax returns have been prepared and filed;
 - In 2013, will be in collaboration with Granite United Way.

He explained that presently approximately 60% of the annual funding for the FRC comes from specific federal grants (indirect), direct state contracts and municipal government appropriations. The remaining 40% of funding comes from private foundations, corporate foundations and donors from the North Country, the seacoast, Southern New Hampshire and Massachusetts. Judge Michalik concluded by listing the current issues and concerns affecting the FRC: state funding issues, uneven appropriations for Coös County, managed Medicaid, transportation, Medicaid rules and costs for eligibility. Chairman Thérberge inquired if Judge Michalik would be making a similar presentation to the Coös County Commissioners to request funding. Judge Michalik replied in the affirmative and also mentioned that he would be meeting with Grafton County. Representative Moynihan asked if the FRC received County funds. Judge Michalik replied that the FRC did not receive funds from the County but would be honored to ask for and receive funds from the County.

Review & Approval of Minutes:

Chairman Thérberge asked if any changes or corrections needed to be made to the minutes of the August 5, August 27 or October 11, 2013 meetings. A motion was made by Representative Moynihan, seconded by Representative Rideout to approve the minutes of the August 5, August 27 and October 11, 2013 meetings. The minutes were unanimously approved by a voice vote.

Review & Approval of the Third Quarter Financial Statements:

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

County Treasurer Fred King explained that he was quite surprised to see that the County Treasurer line item was over-expended. The over-expenditure occurred because of two reasons. Bank fees have increased substantially since last year. He has been working on two projects on behalf of the County Commissioners. One was the land use study, which was a result of a vote by the Coös County Planning Board. The travel done for this project has nothing to do with the County Treasurer position. The study is now ongoing and his traveling for this project is done. The other is a Medicaid commission, which Mr. King was appointed to through the NHAC. Mileage for the Medicaid Commission should be charged to the Commissioners' expenses line item.

Representative Moynihan noted that the Medicaid Proportional Payment received at the end of the third quarter was at 245%. Jennifer explained that the State pays the difference between the Medicare rate and the Medicaid rate. The payment is not just for nursing homes but for a range of programs provided throughout the County. The Medicare rate went up and the Medicaid rate went down and the federal government paid the difference. Representative Moynihan stated that the answers provided were not helpful and he would follow up privately.

Chairman Thérberge announced that Representative Rappaport had to leave the meeting and the Delegation needed to approve the financials. He explained that questions on items would continue after the vote. The Chair read the totals for Coös County and the Unincorporated Places expenditures and revenues. A motion was made by Representative Rideout, seconded by Representative Thomas to approve the Coös County and the Unincorporated Places Third Quarter Expenditures and Revenues. The motion was approved by roll call vote 6-0.

Representative Rappaport left the meeting.

Representative Moynihan asked what kinds of programs were covered under State Assistance Programs. Jennifer replied that the programs all relate to the ProShare Payment. The County pays a portion of the

nursing home rate for any Coös County resident that resides in a nursing home, Home Health Services for Coös County residents and Juvenile placements. Representative Moynihan replied that the amount expended was on track. Jennifer added that the ProShare funds are part of a federal program. The payment is shared 50% with the State.

Representative Moynihan asked why the Federal Funds line item was only expended at 7.72%. Jennifer explained that the Federal Funds line item contains the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). The CDBG for Brookside Apartments was approved in September and has seen little activity. Also, included in the line item is another CDBG placeholder in case a municipality presented a request during the year.

Representative Moynihan asked if the County had borrowed money as the Debt Service line item was zero. Carrie Klebe replied that the County has been borrowing funds. The note and interest expense will be paid in December.

Representative Rideout asked why the total revenues showed only 48% received as of September 30. Jennifer replied that the County Tax is due December 17.

Representative Moynihan questioned the Land Management line item. Jennifer explained that the rent on the barn is based on the property taxes. The amount budgeted was based on last year's property taxes; however, the Town of Stewartstown's property taxes increased this year.

Chairman Théberge asked if the Yield Taxes revenues had increased from the prior year. Carrie replied that it had. *(The amount received in 2013 was \$275,139 an increase of \$28,263 over last year).*

Old Business:

- **Barn Update:** Representative Rideout reported that three meetings were held where the subcommittee gathered information. The subcommittee would like to visit and tour the Grafton County Farm as it is successful operation. The subcommittee would also like to tour Cheshire County as the former county farm has been leased to a private family. The sentiment is to preserve the barn and farm. Representative Rideout reiterated that the goal is to not burden the taxpayers. County Treasurer Fred King asked if there was a price tag to get the farm up and running. Representative Rideout replied figures were provided by the farm committee, who toured the barn on July 17, on returning the facility to a dairy farm. Representative Rideout did not know if this was direction the subcommittee wanted to take. Several ideas have been mentioned including setting up a County Farm Committee which would be made of people with agricultural experience and the possibility of growing vegetables. Edith Tucker, *The Coös County Democrat*, asked if a figure will be provided in time for the Public Hearing on the 2014 Budget. Representative Rideout replied no. He continued that both the Delegation and Commissioners agreed to a one year moratorium and no decision will be made until midsummer. Funds will be appropriated in the 2014 budget for the continued maintenance of the barn.

New Business:

- **WIFI Issue/Funds:** Chairman Théberge tabled the discussion on the WIFI as there was not a quorum.
- **PILT legislation update:** Chairman Théberge reported that he did not have the final language from the attorney on the proposed bill regarding the current issue in the Unincorporated Places. The bill did ask that the DRA honor the current payment in lieu of tax; and a portion of the bill requests that

the revenues in the future be distributed throughout the County. Representative Rappaport also presented a PILT bill that does away with all PILTS. Existing PILTS could be grandfathered.

- *Subcommittee reports:* Chairman Théberge reported that the Cooperative Extension held its annual meeting, and there will be a 22.1% increase based on the CPI in the budget request.
- In regards to the budget process, Chairman Théberge stated that he will request copies of the written proposals by the department heads. In the past, the Delegation has not been aware of what was provided to the Commissioners and what was removed by the Commissioners. Some members would like further information and he will contact Jennifer as to what information may be requested. For example, in the nursing home budgets, the Delegation members do not know what was presented to the Commissioners by the department heads and what was cut by the Board.
- *Easement Request - Phillip and Donna Caron:* Jennifer reported that Phillip & Donna Caron attended the Commissioners' September meeting requesting an easement for a spring and water line on the County's land that has supplied water to their home for about forty-three years. The Commissioners requested that the item be added to the Delegation's agenda due to the interest in real estate. Representative Moynihan stated that it appeared that the reason the Commissioners referred the easement matter to the Delegation is because the transfer of the easement is a transfer of an interest in land. He agreed that the Commissioners were correct to obtain the consent of the delegation before transferring the interest. The only mention of a "gift" came up in the context that, to transfer the property without some payment for its value would make the transfer appear to be a gift. Representative Moynihan suggested that it would be a bad precedent to transfer an interest in land of the county, even an interest that has no determined value, without some exchange. It would be the equivalent of a gift. He did not oppose the easement. Representative Rideout agreed with Representative Moynihan. He agreed that a vote of the Delegation was in order. Jennifer explained that the Caron's agreed to pay for the legal expenses relating to the issue. Jennifer also had a "draft" deed prepared by Attorney Frizzell. The document included a signature page for the Commissioners. Mr. King suggested that a signature page be included with the Delegation's names.
- Chairman Théberge announced that a special Delegation meeting will be held on November 7 at 9 a.m. in Concord in Room 203 of the LOB to discuss the WIFI issue and the Easement Request. Representative Moynihan asked Jennifer to email a copy of the "draft" deed to the members of the Delegation.

With no other business to discuss, a motion was made by Representative Moynihan, seconded by Representative Rideout, to adjourn the meeting at 12:10 p.m. All approved by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Yvonne Thomas, Clerk