

COÖS COUNTY DELEGATION
QUARTERLY MEETING

Meeting held remotely in accordance with the
Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04
April 24, 2020 (*Amended May 1, 2020*)

As Chair of the Coös County Delegation, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically. Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting. All members of the Coös County Delegation have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone # 1-646-558-8656 and meeting ID # 782 6771 1334, or by clicking on the following website address: www.zoom.us/join .

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom or telephonically. Instructions have also been provided on the website of the Coös County Delegation at: www.cooscountynh.us .

If anybody has a problem, please call 246-3321 Ext. 1211 or email at: jennifer.fish@cooscountynh.us
In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled.

Please note that **all votes** that are taken during this meeting shall be done by **roll call vote**.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law.

The following Delegation members were in attendance remotely: Representatives Wayne Moynihan, Chair; Edith Tucker, Vice-Chair; Larry Laflamme, Clerk; Kevin Craig, Troy Merner, Henry Noël, Yvonne Thomas. There were seven members present. Representatives John Fothergill, Michael Furbush and William Hatch were absent.

Also present remotely: County Commissioners Tom Brady, Paul Grenier and Rick Samson; County Administrator Jennifer Fish; Superintendent Ben Champagne; Nursing Home Administrator Lynn Beede; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Director of Finance Carrie Klebe; Sheriff Brian Valerino; Captain Keith Roberge; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris; County Attorney John McCormick; Scott ~~Mason~~ Mason; Representative Erin Hennessey; and a member of the press.

A moment of silence was observed.

Chairman Moynihan noted that he had invited two members of the Governor's Office for Emergency Relief and Recovery (GOFERR) to join the meeting: Scott ~~Mason~~ Mason from Stratford and Representative Erin Hennessey from Littleton.

Mr. ~~Masson~~ Mason stated that he represented industries, agriculture, the North Country and utilities. He has reached out to the three chambers of commerce to develop an accurate outlook of the North Country.

Representative Hennessey is a member of the advisory group which consists of eight legislators. This group has been in contact with: Department of Health & Human Services, Department of Education, Department Correction, Department of Transportation, Department of Economic Affairs, Mayors, Town Administrators, Nursing Homes, Counties, Hospitals, lodging, restaurants, BIA, contractors, nonprofits, CDFA and BFA.

The group will develop recommendations in the upcoming week on the distribution of funds. Ten percent has been reserved and allocated by the Governor's office. She noted that funds have already been distributed to three Coös County Hospitals.

Chairman Moynihan stated that the Governor's decision to supplement the income of individuals working in nursing homes has created budgetary issues. The county will be incurring the cost of payroll taxes which is not budgeted. It will be an unplanned cost out of the county's budget. He asked if funds would be available to cover the payroll taxes. Representative Hennessey asked for the amount of payroll taxes. Chairman Moynihan replied \$75,000.

Representative Merner has met with the rotary to discuss on how to feed kids over the weekends. Three restaurants in town are interested in doing so. He will be contacting Mr. Masson.

Representative Craig will forward the Lancaster Chamber contact information to Mr. Masson.

Review & Approval of Minutes of the March 7, 2020, budget work session and the March 27, 2020, annual budget meeting: A motion was made by Representative Merner, seconded by Representative Noël to approve the minutes of the March 7, 2020, budget work session and the March 27, 2020, annual budget meeting. The motion was approved by roll call vote 7-0:

Representative Craig	yes	Representative Merner	yes
Representative Fothergill	absent	Representative Moynihan	yes
Representative Furbush	absent	Representative Noël	yes
Representative Hatch	absent	Representative Thomas	yes
Representative Laflamme	yes	Representative Tucker	yes

Hearing of the Public: There was no public comment.

Review & Approval of the Financial Statements of Coös County and of the Unincorporated Places for the Period Ended March 31, 2020: Chairman Moynihan reported that the Finance Department has been working on the financials but were not completed and available for the meeting. He asked for an update from the Director of Finance and County Administrator.

Director of Finance Carrie Klebe reported that everything was ok with the first quarter. Any additional expenditures and revenues relating to COVID19 will be in the second quarter. County Administrator Jennifer Fish reported that it was business as usual until March. The effects of COVID19 will not be seen until the second quarter.

Chairman Moynihan stated that the review of the financials would be waived for this meeting. Representative Tucker asked that the material be emailed to the Delegation as soon as they were completed via email.

The following departments reported on their respected departments:

- Department of Corrections: Superintendent Champagne reported that the effects on the Department of Corrections is unknown at this time. Obtaining PPE has been a challenge. He has been working with the Sheriff's Department on picking up PPE at Echo Lake. Nonessential activities have been suspended. He is working on tablet sessions for case management. He is looking at obtaining a \$1,400 laptop through a grant. Chairman Moynihan asked if the Superintendent had looked at furlough options. Superintendent Champagne reported that he had looked but there is no one at this stage for furlough.
- Sheriff Valerino reported that Captain Roberge and Superintendent Champagne are working closely together. The deputies are still patrolling the back roads. Some transports and arrests are ongoing. The department will be inundated once this is over. If stressed that if anyone needs anything transported to please call the department.
- Nursing Hospital: Laura Mills, NHA, reported that there is a need for more supplies especially PPE. Some temporary staff has opted to not work at this time. Some have resigned and will return once COVID 19 is over. Hiring travelers is a risk. The agencies now want Coös to pay for the two weeks of quarantine.
- Nursing Home: Lynn Beede, NHA, reported that she has the same issues as West Stewartstown. There is no FEMA assistance. Currently the Nursing Home has enough supplies because of extended use.

Representative Tucker thanked all of the frontline people on behalf of the Delegation.

Old Business:

- a. *HB 540 bonding for Balsams development, consider removing from active agenda.* There was no discussion on this item.
- b. *Discussion of development of County Delegation Handbook:* Representative Noël reported that he has been worked on a handbook and emailed copies to Chairman Moynihan, the County Administrator and the Director of Finance. Chairman Moynihan stated that the handbook would be discussed further at a later meeting.
- c. *HB 1119 Muni. deposits in OOS banks:* Chairman Moynihan reported that all legislative activity is in limbo.
- d. *Status of broadband access and coverage in Coös County:* Representative Tucker that the need in Coös County has been pushed to the front burner. She suggested obtaining a list from the Superintendents in the county to find out where students do not have broadband service. This is a good time to obtain the information. She offered to draft the letter. The County Administrator verified that the letter should inquire where there is no broadband service in each of their districts. Chairman Moynihan asked if Representative Tucker would put together a subcommittee to obtain information on the status of broadband in municipalities in Coös County. Representative Tucker replied in the affirmative.

New Business:

- a. *Discussion and setting of the 2021-2022 elected officials salaries:* Chairman Moynihan stated that he did not realize that the County Commissioners could participate in the County's health

insurance. The County Administrator reported that any elected official qualifies for health insurance.

The County Commissioners' salaries are currently \$10,000/Chair and \$9,000/others. A motion was made by Representative Merner, seconded by Representative Thomas to set the Commissioners' salaries as follows: the Chair \$10,000, the Vice Chair and Clerk \$9,000. The motion was approved by roll call 7-0.

Representative Craig	yes	Representative Merner	yes
Representative Fothergill	absent	Representative Moynihan	yes
Representative Furbush	absent	Representative Noël	yes
Representative Hatch	absent	Representative Thomas	yes
Representative Laflamme	yes	Representative Tucker	yes

The County Treasurer salary is currently at \$4,000. A motion was made by Representative Tucker, seconded by Representative Merner to set Treasurer's salary at \$4,000. The motion was approved by roll call 7-0.

Representative Craig	yes	Representative Merner	yes
Representative Fothergill	absent	Representative Moynihan	yes
Representative Furbush	absent	Representative Noël	yes
Representative Hatch	absent	Representative Thomas	yes
Representative Laflamme	yes	Representative Tucker	yes

The Register of Deeds salary is currently at \$45,000. Representative Merner noted that the Register of Deeds salary is the lowest in the state. He recommended increasing the salary by \$5,000. Representative Craig agreed that the salary should be increased but could not vote to do so at this time. Representative Tucker agreed that the salary should be increased but not by \$5,000; she suggested \$2,500. Chairman Moynihan stated that he could support some increase. A motion was made by Representative Tucker, seconded by Representative Merner to set the Register of Deeds salary at \$47,500. The motion was approved by roll call 5-2.

Representative Craig	no	Representative Merner	yes
Representative Fothergill	absent	Representative Moynihan	yes
Representative Furbush	absent	Representative Noël	yes
Representative Hatch	absent	Representative Thomas	no
Representative Laflamme	yes	Representative Tucker	yes

The County Attorney salary is currently at \$81,000. Chairman Moynihan noted that the County Attorney is the lowest paid in the state. He supervises two attorneys plus other office staff. He would support an increase of up to \$5,000. Representative Tucker noted that this position changed. The county has had significant complicated cases. She proposed a \$5,000 increase. Representative Merner noted that attorneys in the private sector make more money. The county needs to keep people and maintain consistency in the office. Representative Laflamme also supported the increase. A motion was made by Representative Laflamme, seconded by Representative Merner to set the County Attorney salary at \$86,000. The motion was approved by roll call 6-1.

Representative Craig	no	Representative Merner	yes
Representative Fothergill	absent	Representative Moynihan	yes
Representative Furbush	absent	Representative Noël	yes
Representative Hatch	absent	Representative Thomas	yes
Representative Laflamme	yes	Representative Tucker	yes

The Sheriff salary is currently at \$59,000. A motion was made by Representative Tucker, seconded by Representative Noël to set the County Sheriff's salary at \$59,000. The motion was approved by roll call 7-0.

Representative Craig	yes	Representative Merner	yes
Representative Fothergill	absent	Representative Moynihan	yes
Representative Furbush	absent	Representative Noël	yes
Representative Hatch	absent	Representative Thomas	yes
Representative Laflamme	yes	Representative Tucker	yes

- b. Approval of National Forest Reserve Funds Distribution: The County Administrator stated that historically the National Forest Reserve Funds have been distributed first for the actual tuition for students in the unincorporated Places. Currently, there are four students attending the Errol School District: one from Cambridge and three from Millsfield. Any remaining funds are distributed equally to the school districts in the county. A motion was made by Representative Merner, seconded by Representative Noel to approve the distribution of the National Forest Reserve Funds per the Commissioners' recommendation. The breakdown was as follows:

Berlin School District 183 Hillside Avenue Berlin, NH 03570	\$ 346.02	Pittsburg School District 21 Academy Street Colebrook, NH 03576-1101	346.02
Colebrook School District 21 Academy Street Colebrook, NH 03576	346.02	Stark School District 15 Preble Street Groveton, NH 03582-1408	346.02
Errol School District 123 Main Street Gorham, NH 03581-1686	101,476.14	Stewartstown School District 21 Academy Street Colebrook, NH 03576-1101	346.02
Gorham School District 123 Main Street Gorham, NH 03581-1686	346.02	Stratford School District 15 Preble Street Groveton, NH 03582-1408	346.02
Milan School District 123 Main Street Gorham, NH 03581-1686	346.02	White Mountain Regional School District 14 King Square Whitefield, NH 03598-1098	346.02
Northumberland School District 15 Preble Street Groveton, NH 03582-1408	346.02	TOTAL	\$104,936.39

The motion was approved by roll call 7-0.

Representative Craig	yes	Representative Merner	yes
Representative Fothergill	absent	Representative Moynihan	yes
Representative Furbush	absent	Representative Noël	yes
Representative Hatch	absent	Representative Thomas	yes
Representative Laflamme	yes	Representative Tucker	yes

- c. Approval of Cost Items for AFSCME Collective Bargaining Agreement: The County Administrator reported that a tentative agreement had been reached with AFSCME. There were still a few language issues to be worked out. However, cost items were agreed upon. The agreement would be effective January 1, 2020 and is a three year contract. The cost items include a 1.5% wage increase and the \$1.00 per hour wage increase for the licensed nursing staff which are included in the 2020 budget.

Salaries and Health Insurance FY2020	223,847
Salaries and Health Insurance Savings FY2021	(\$30,100)
Salaries and Health Insurance Savings FY2022	(\$27,719)

A motion was made by Representative Thomas, seconded by Representative Merner to accept the cost items as presented. The motion was approved by roll call 7-0.

Representative Craig	yes	Representative Merner	yes
Representative Fothergill	absent	Representative Moynihan	yes
Representative Furbush	absent	Representative Noël	yes
Representative Hatch	absent	Representative Thomas	yes
Representative Laflamme	yes	Representative Tucker	yes

- d. Supplemental Budget Discussion: The County Administrator reported that the Governor's proposal of the Long Term Care Stabilization Fund for healthcare workers has a budgetary impact on the county's budget. Both nursing homes have applied and are waiting for confirmation of their application. Full-time employees would receive \$300 per week and part-time employees would receive \$150 per week. The program runs from April 19 through June 30. County homes will need to submit a payroll weekly and employment security will submit a check. The county will cut the check for employees and will incur the payroll taxes. Currently there is no line item in the budget to accept and disburse the funds.

The Berlin Nursing Home received unbudgeted Medicare Cares Act funds from the Federal government. This amount was \$102,450.

Chairman Moynihan noted that the Commissioners had previously discussed whether employees were to be paid as earned or wait for the state funds. Chairman Moynihan stated that employees should be getting paid as worked from the budget and once the funds are received the budgeted lines items should be reimbursed. Commissioner Grenier stated that interest will be incur by borrowing from the tax anticipation note. The Commissioners agreed that the employees should be paid up front and the line items reimbursed once the funds are received from the state. Commissioner Grenier stated that Delegation approval was needed.

Representative Noël did not have an issue with the expense up front and if the TAN is used. Representative Tucker did not support the proposal without a public hearing. She also wanted an accurate number of employees receiving the stipend. Commissioner Grenier stated that there will not be an accurate number as some part-time employees may working extra hours and receive the full-time stipend. Ms. Fish also noted that the Berlin Nursing Home requested to adjust their numbers.

Representative Laflamme asked when the payment of stipends will begin. Ms. Fish replied that the nursing homes were waiting for approval of their applications.

Regarding the supplemental budget, Ms. Fish stated that notices will need to be sent out. Chairman Moynihan stated that the meeting would be held within a week.

A motion was made by Representative Noël, seconded by Representative Merner that the Delegation affirms that the County Commissioners proceed with the stipend, paid as earned and supplemented by appropriations after the public hearing. The motion was approved by roll call 7-0.

Representative Craig	yes	Representative Merner	yes
Representative Fothergill	absent	Representative Moynihan	yes
Representative Furbush	absent	Representative Noël	yes
Representative Hatch	absent	Representative Thomas	yes
Representative Laflamme	yes	Representative Tucker	yes

A motion was made by Representative Merner, seconded by Representative Thomas to adjourn the meeting at 12:06 p.m. The motion was approved by roll call vote 7-0.

Representative Craig	yes	Representative Merner	yes
Representative Fothergill	absent	Representative Moynihan	yes
Representative Furbush	absent	Representative Noël	yes
Representative Hatch	absent	Representative Thomas	yes
Representative Laflamme	yes	Representative Tucker	yes

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Larry Laflamme, Clerk