

Coös County Delegation  
Annual Meeting of the 2022 Proposed Budgets  
March 21, 2022 @ 10:00 a.m.  
North Country Resource Center - Lancaster, NH  
*Amended May 16, 2022*

Present: Representatives Robert Théberge, Chair; Troy Merner, Vice Chair; Larry Laflamme, Clerk; Kevin Craig; Arnold Davis; Eamon Kelley; and Dennis Thompson. Also, Present: Commissioners Thomas Brady, Paul Grenier and Raymond Gorman; County Administrator Jennifer Fish; Director of Finance Carrie Klebe; Superintendent Ben Champagne; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Sheriff Brian Valerino; Captain Keith Roberge; Register of Deeds Leon Rideout; Coös County Attorney John McCormick; County Treasurer Sue Collins; Heidi Barker, UNH Cooperative Extension; Chief Steven Sherman, DNCR; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris and representatives of the various outside agencies.

Chairman Théberge called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The roll was called by the Clerk, Representative Laflamme. There were seven members present. Representatives Hatch and Tucker were ~~absent~~ excused.

*Review & Approval of the Minutes of the March 7, 2022, quarterly meeting, as distributed:* A motion was made by Representative Laflamme, seconded by Representative Davis to approve the minutes of the March 7, 2022, quarterly meeting, as distributed. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

*Opening remarks:* County Administrator Jennifer Fish welcomed everyone to the Annual Coös County Budget Meeting and highlighted some of the changes to the budget since the Public Hearing in December.

When the preliminary 2022 budget was presented at the Public Hearing, the estimated amount to be raised by taxes was \$20,063,774. After all the recommended revisions to various revenue and appropriations line items were made, the recommended amount to be raised by taxes is \$16,160,183. The Commissioners are proposing a level funded budget.

The County Administrator provided the following bulleted highlights:

- The budget includes wage increases for all departments based on new wage schedules with a minimum base of \$15.00 per hour.
- \$35,000 for a new Berlin Nursing Home special for a transportation van.
- \$90,000 for the relocation of the Berlin Nursing Home Propane Tanks.
- \$19,500 for weapons and ammunition for the Sheriff's department.
- \$7,000 for data cabling for Lancaster offices.
- \$10,000 for a generator to run the County Administration Office building.
- The recommended surplus to reduce taxes is \$6,855,580
- Not included in the budget was a request of \$4,700 to be added to the Berlin Nursing Home for the repair of a leak on the generator.

The Commissioners also recommended the Tranche 2 payment in 2022 of ARPA funds of \$3,056,078 be allocated as follows:

1. Premium Pay Stipends and Payroll Taxes for Nursing Home, Nursing Hospital and Corrections employees \$834,150.
2. West Stewartstown Nursing Hospital HVAC \$1,500,000
3. Department of Corrections Heating System \$300,000
4. Berlin Nursing Home New Windows \$300,000
5. Berlin Nursing Home Engineer Fee for new entrance \$7,500
6. Cybersecurity Software and Training \$100,000
7. Audit Fees and Administration of Federal Funds \$15,000

The total Unincorporated Places budget for 2022 is \$1,516,728 compared to the 2021 approved budget of \$1,601,799.

The County Administrator began the review of the Nursing Hospital budget by department. The total proposed expenditures were \$13,826,798. There were no specials requested.

The Berlin Nursing Home budget was reviewed. Ms. Fish noted that the cost for the repair of the generator leak would need to be added to line item 02-05650-8100. The updated total expenditures were \$15,451,740. Total specials were \$148,300. The revised total Berlin Nursing Home proposed expenditures with specials totaled \$15,600,040.

Ms. Fish continued with the review of the County Government budgets which with specials totaled \$15,515,892.

The total proposed appropriations for the Coös County budget were \$46,179,360.

The County Administrator continued with the review of the anticipated revenues.

Ms. Fish noted that \$4,700 from the facility funds would need to be moved from the committed funds and to the 2022 budgeted revenues. The Clerk, Representative Laflamme read the following resolution:

#### RESOLUTION #11

Be it resolved that \$4,700 of the Facility Funds be removed from the Committed Funds and moved to the 2022 budgeted revenues. A motion was made by Representative Thompson, seconded by Representative Craig to approve Resolution #11. The motion passed by a roll call vote 7-0.

The total revised revenues were \$46,179,360.

The following resolutions were read by Representative Laflamme:

#### RESOLUTION #1

Be it resolved by the Coös County Delegation duly convened on this twenty-first day of March 2022, that the sums hereinafter detailed in this resolution are hereby appropriated and the total amount for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2022, shall be \$46,179,360 for the County budget not including the Unincorporated Places. A motion was made by Representative Merner, seconded by Representative Craig to approve Resolution #1. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

#### RESOLUTION #2

Be it resolved by the Coös County Delegation that the sum of \$29,865,900 is hereby adopted as the estimated income from sources indicated for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2022. A motion was made by Representative Thompson, seconded by Representative Davis to approve Resolution #2. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

A motion was made by Representative Merner, seconded by Representative Davis to amend Resolution #2 to \$23,010,320. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

#### RESOLUTION #3

Be it further resolved that the total appropriation being in excess of the total estimated income in the amount of \$16,313,460. The Treasurer shall issue her warrant to the Towns and City in the County for this amount. A motion was made by Representative Merner, seconded by Representative Davis to approve Resolution #3. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

#### RESOLUTION #4

Be it resolved that \$6,855,580 of the operating surplus for the year 2021 be appropriated in the 2022 Budget for the purpose of reducing taxes for 2022. A motion was made by Representative Kelley, seconded by Representative Thompson to approve Resolution #4. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

The County Administrator continued with the review of the Unincorporated Places budgets. The total appropriations and revenues for all Unincorporated Places totaled \$1,516,728. There were no questions.

Representative Laflamme read the following resolutions:

#### RESOLUTION #5

Be it resolved by the Coös County Delegation duly convened on this twenty-first day of March 2022, that in order to comply with Department of Revenue Administration instruction, the Delegation separately approves total appropriations of \$1,516,728 and revenues of \$1,516,728 for the Coös County Unincorporated Places for calendar year 2022. The Unincorporated Places Budgets for 2022 are adopted separately from the Coös County Budget.

Atkinson & Gilmanton Academy Grant	23,254
Bean's Grant	2,243
Bean's Purchase	13,869
Cambridge	103,013
Chandler's Purchase	3,516
Crawford's Purchase	7,271
Cutt's Grant	2,040
Dix Grant	19,824
Dixville	222,254
Erving's Grant	1,069
Green's Grant	96,102
Hadley's Purchase	40
Kilkenny	799
Low & Burbank Grant	4,983

Martin's Location	13,461
Millsfield	501,431
Odell	42,364
Pinkham's Grant	90,939
Sargent's Purchase	31,015
Second College Grant	32,109
Success	134,578
Thompson & Meserve's Purchase	59,966
Wentworth Location	<u>110,588</u>
Total	\$1,516,728

A motion was made by Representative Thompson, seconded by Representative Davis to approve Resolution #5. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

#### RESOLUTION #6

Be it resolved that \$847.34 of the 2021 Budget Surplus Balance be reserved and added to the following accounts for interest earned in 2021:

Interest on Sick Trusts 2021	\$ 45.43
Interest on Facility Fund 2021	9.36
Interest on Vehicle Reserve Fund 2021	10.87
Interest on ARPA Cash Account	781.68

A motion was made by Representative Thompson, seconded by Representative Davis to approve Resolution #6. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

#### RESOLUTION #7

Be it resolved that \$7,329 of the 2021 Budget Surplus Balance be encumbered to the accounts:

Berlin: Renovation & Equipment for the Berlin Nursing Home Engineering  
for the Propane Project \$5,000  
WSNH: Renovation & Equipment for the West Stewartstown Ice Machine \$2,329

A motion was made by Representative Thompson, seconded by Representative Kelley to approve Resolution #7. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

#### RESOLUTION #8

Be it resolved that \$101,500 of the 2021 Budget Surplus Balance be encumbered to the accounts for capital projects:

Reserve for Berlin Nursing Home Propane Project	\$40,000
Reserve for Berlin Nursing Home Car	\$35,000
Reserve for Lancaster Cabling Project	\$7,000
Reserve for Sheriff's Office Guns	\$19,500

A motion was made by Representative Davis, seconded by Representative Merner to approve Resolution #8. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

#### RESOLUTION #9

Be it resolved that \$519,500 of the 2021 Budget Surplus Balance be encumbered to the following reserve accounts:

Reserve for 53 <sup>rd</sup> Payroll 2026 Fund	\$50,000
Reserve for Gasoline/Fuel Expense	\$50,000
Reserve for Facility Fund	\$350,000
Reserve for Sick Leave Trust	\$69,500
Reserve for Finance/Accounting Software Upgrade	\$300,000

A motion was made by Representative Thompson, seconded by Representative Kelley to approve Resolution #9. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

#### RESOLUTION #10

Be it resolved that \$2,293,590 of the 2021 Budget Surplus Balance be encumbered to the accounts:

Reserve for ARPA: Broadband	\$200,000
Reserve for ARPA: City of Berlin	\$250,000
Reserve for ARPA: Town of Jefferson	\$224,402
Reserve for ARPA: Town of Gorham	\$216,000
Reserve for ARPA: Town of Colebrook	\$229,000
Reserve for ARPA: Town of Stratford	\$90,667
Reserve for ARPA: Town of Pittsburg	\$50,589
Reserve for ARPA: Unallocated ARPA Funds (Tranch 1)	\$1,032,932
<i>(County \$560,904; District 1 \$70,493; District 2 \$70,493; District 3 \$140,639)</i>	

A motion was made by Representative Davis, seconded by Representative Merner to approve Resolution #10. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

#### Other Business:

- a. Approval of SEA Collective Bargaining Agreement - Cost Items: The County Administrator reported that a tentative agreement had been reached with the SEA (Department of Corrections Union) on wages for the fiscal years 2022, 2023 and 2024.

Article	Subject	FY22	FY23	FY24
14.1 Wages	2022 New wage schedule retroactive to January 2, 2022	\$809,740		
14.1 Wages	2023 2% COLA wage increase effective January 1, 2023		\$825,089	
14.1 Wages	2023 2% COLA wage increase effective January 1, 2023			\$851,165

Representative Thompson stated that he could not support the proposed agreement since the employees were also receiving a stipend. Superintendent Champagne stated that the \$60,000 in stipends was not only for SEA members but for all Department of Corrections employees. Each employee will be receiving a one-time \$3,000 payment.

A motion was made by Representative Merner, seconded by Representative Davis to approve the financial part of the SEA Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Article	Subject	FY22	FY23	FY24
14.1 Wages	2022 New wage schedule retroactive to January 2, 2022	\$809,740		
14.1 Wages	2023 2% COLA wage increase effective January 1, 2023		\$825,089	
14.1 Wages	2023 2% COLA wage increase effective January 1, 2023			\$851,165

The motion passed by roll call vote 6-1. *(Representative Thompson)*

- b. ~~Chairman Th  berge expressed that he was disappointed with Representatives Hatch and Tucker for not attending the budget meeting.~~

The Chair also noted that the proposed redistricting that will be presented to the Governor for review will be vetoed by the Governor.

The next Quarterly Delegation meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 16, 2022 at 10 a.m. at the North Country Resource Center.

A motion was made by Representative Thompson, seconded by Representative Kelley to adjourn the meeting at 11:14 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Larry Laflamme, Clerk