

Coös County Delegation  
Quarterly Meeting  
May 1, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.  
North Country Resource Center  
629 Main Street Lancaster, NH

Present: Representatives Troy Merner, Chair; Arnold Davis, Vice Chair; Corinne Cascadden, Clerk; Seth King; Henry Noël; Mike Ouellet; and James Tierney. Also, Present: Commissioners Raymond Gorman and Robert Théberge; Director of Finance Carrie Klebe; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Nursing Home Administrator Lynn Beede; Superintendent Ben Champagne, Administrative Assistant Linda Harris; Ericka Canales, Coös Economic Development Corporation (CEDC); Doug Arion, Mountain of Stars; and Brook Kaufman (Zoom).

Chairman Merner opened the Delegation Meeting at 10:07 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The roll was called by the Clerk, Representative Cascadden. There were seven members present. Representatives Hatch and Kelley were not present.

*Review & Approval of the Minutes of the March 20, 2023, annual budget meeting, as distributed.* A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Davis to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2023, annual budget meeting, as distributed. The minutes were approved in the affirmative by voice vote.

*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, 2023:* Representative Cascadden began the review of the Coös County financials. The total expenditures for the period ending March 31, 2023, were \$9,889,543 or 20% expended. The total revenues for the period ending March 31, 2023, were \$9,431,744 or 19% received. There were no questions.

Representative Cascadden continued with the Unincorporated Places financials. Total expenditures were \$125,778 or seven percent expended, and total revenues were \$41,237 or two percent received. There were no questions.

A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Davis to accept the first quarter financials for Coös County and the Unincorporated Places, as presented. The motion was approved by roll call 7-0.

*Old Business:* There was no old business to discuss.

*New Business:*

- a. *Approval of Mike Ouellet and Ericka Canalas as regular members to the Coös County Planning Board per the Board of Commissioners' recommendation.* A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Davis to approve Mike Ouellet and Ericka Canalas as regular members to the Coös County Planning Board per the Board of Commissioners' recommendation. The motion was approved by roll call 6-0-1.

- b. *Approval of Arnold Davis and Paul Grenier as alternate members to the Coös County Planning Board per the Board of Commissioners' recommendation.* A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative King to approve Arnold Davis and Paul Grenier as alternate members to the Coös County Planning Board per the Board of Commissioners' recommendation. The motion was approved 6-0-1.
- c. *Approval of NFR Funds per the Board of Commissioners' recommendation:* Administrative Assistant Linda Harris stated that historically the National Forest Reserve Funds have been distributed first for the actual tuition for students in the Unincorporated Places. Currently, there is one student from Millsfield attending the Errol School District, one student from Millsfield attending the Colebrook School District and one student from Wentworth Location attending the Milan School District. Any remaining funds are distributed equally to the school districts in the county. A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Davis to approve the distribution of the National Forest Reserve Funds as recommended by the Board of Coös County Commissioners. The breakdown was as follows:

| School District                         | Distribution |
|---|--------------|
| Berlin School District                  | \$3,057.36   |
| Colebrook School District               | \$22,993.78  |
| Errol School District                   | \$37,897.26  |
| Gorham School District                  | \$3,057.36   |
| Milan School District                   | \$23,163.80  |
| Northumberland School District          | \$3,057.36   |
| Pittsburg School District               | \$3,057.36   |
| Stark School District                   | \$3,057.36   |
| Stewartstown School District            | \$3,057.36   |
| Stratford School District               | \$3,057.36   |
| White Mountain Regional School District | \$3,057.36   |
| Total                                   | \$108,513.72 |

The motion was approved by roll call 7-0.

- d. *Update on Eclipse Planning:* Ericka Canales, CEDC and Doug Arion, Mountain of Stars presented information on the total eclipse that will occur on April 8, 2024. The duration of the eclipse will last about 3 minutes, 45 seconds in Pittsburg, NH. The eclipse will begin at 1:30 p.m. and will peak at 3:30 p.m.

Mr. Arion noted that this will be a huge opportunity for Coös County especially for lodging, restaurants and retailers. Some of the challenges noted were mud season in the north country; traffic (there are only two routes into the Northwoods Route 3 and Route 16); bussing people from outside locations to Pittsburg, and parking. New Hampshire DOT will need to determine the traffic situation for this event. Economic Development assistance will be needed.

Mr. Arion noted that this event will be a great educational. In his opinion, schools should have a modified schedule for the day instead of cancelling school altogether. He also added that the schools in the North Country will be receiving glasses for their students.

Representative Ouellet noted that the weather in the north country is unpredictable. What happens if it's a cloudy day? Mr. Orion replied that people will still come.

Brook Kaufman from Wyoming joined the meeting briefly via zoom to offer her experiences from a prior eclipse. She stated that people will come. They did not anticipate the traffic congestion. The media will be there no matter what the weather conditions may be. She also suggested that there should be a place to call for information either a chamber of commerce or economic development. People will be inquiring about private airports.

Superintendent Champagne noted that strong conversations need to be held with town police, EMS, fire departments and state police. This may need to be collaborative effort with the towns in the north country. Public safety should be the first priority especially for the citizens of those towns.

*Subcommittee Reports:* There were no reports.

*Any other business:*

Commissioner Gorman announced that the new County Administrator begins on May 15, 2023.

He also urged the Delegation members to visit the nursing homes, department of corrections, county attorney, registry of deeds and the county sheriff's offices.

*Dates of upcoming meetings:* Chairman Merner reminded the Delegation members to note the following dates. There are only nine members and attendance at the meeting is important.

- Monday, July 31, 2023, Quarterly Meeting @ 10 a.m. at North Country Resource Center, Lancaster, NH
- Monday, October 30, 2023, Quarterly Meeting @ 10 a.m. at North Country Resource Center, Lancaster, NH

A motion was made by Representative Davis, seconded by Representative King to adjourn at 11:27 a.m. The motion was approved in the affirmative.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Corinne Cascadden  
Clerk