

COÖS COUNTY DELEGATION  
2017 ANNUAL BUDGET MEETING  
Friday, March 31, 2016 - 10:00 a.m. (*corrected April 28, 2017*)  
Coös County Nursing Hospital - W. Stewartstown, NH

Present: Representatives Robert Théberge, Chair; Wayne Moynihan, Vice-Chair; Larry Laflamme, Clerk; William Hatch, Bing Judd, Troy Merner, Herb Richardson, Yvonne Thomas and Edith Tucker. Also present: County Commissioners Tom Brady and Paul Grenier; County Administrator Jennifer Fish; Superintendent Ben Champagne; Nursing Home Administrator Louise Belanger; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Director of Finance Carrie Klebe; Sheriff Brian Valerino; Captain Keith Roberge; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris; County Attorney John McCormick, Registrar Tanya Batchelder; County Treasurer Sue Collins; Larry Barker, UNH Cooperative Extension Service; representatives of outside agencies; a member of the press and the public.

Representative Théberge asked everyone to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. The roll was called by the Clerk, Representative Larry Laflamme. There were 9 members present. Representative Fothergill was excused.

Review & Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Representative Richardson, seconded by Representative Moynihan to approve the minutes of the March 6, 2017, meeting, as distributed. The minutes were unanimously approved by a voice vote.

A motion was made by Representative Merner, seconded by Representative Thomas to approve the minutes of the March 24, 2017, meeting, as distributed. The minutes were unanimously approved by a voice vote.

Subcommittee Reports:

Representative Judd stated that he had spoken with the County Administrator and recommended that the County house be sold. A subdivision will be required prior. Chairman Théberge stated that the County house will be placed on the agenda for the April meeting.

Chairman Théberge reported that he and Representative Thomas had met with the Berlin Nursing Home Administrator.

There were no other subcommittee reports.

Opening Remarks:

County Administrator Jennifer Fish welcomed everyone to the 2017 Annual Budget Meeting.

When the preliminary 2017 budget was presented at the Public Hearing, the estimated amount to be raised by taxes was \$15,778,071. After all the recommended revisions to various revenue and appropriations line items were made, the new recommended amount to be raised by taxes is \$15,064,635, an increase of 4.6% over the 2016 county tax. The Commissioners have recommended a net total of \$540,725 decrease to appropriations and a net total of \$222,590 increase to revenues. The County ended the year with a \$3,647,682 surplus. The Commissioners recommended encumbering \$103,625 of the surplus and using \$2,972,590 of the surplus to reduce taxes.

Ms. Fish noted the following items in regards to the 2017 budget:

- The proposed budget included a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) adjustment for all employees. The budget also included step increases for employees who have not reached the top step on the salary schedule. Longevity and sick time payments on hours accrued over 720 hours were also included.
- The proposed budget included appropriations for the Coös County Nursing Home to transition to offering skilled nursing care in the second half of 2017.
- The proposed budget included an increase of 19% in employee health insurance premiums for July thru December 2017. Ms. Fish stated that she was currently working with both unions to seek out less costly health insurance plans but still provide an excellent benefit for employees.

The total proposed 2017 appropriation budget (excluding the Unincorporated Places) was \$35,017,248 compared to the 2016 approved budget of \$35,965,016 which was a decrease of \$947,768 or 2.6%.

The total proposed Unincorporated Places budget for 2017 was \$1,588,411 compared to the 2016 approved budget of \$1,498,483.

Budget Review:

Chairman Th  berge began the review of the Nursing Hospital budget by department and continued with the Nursing Home budget. Representative Richardson asked if the pay rates were comparable to the surrounding facilities. Both Nursing Home Administrators stated that both facilities were still below other facilities. Representative Moynihan added that the county offers great retirement and benefits. Louise Belanger replied that the culture of the younger staff is different. The retirement benefit is not a priority; but the rate of pay is.

Upon reviewing the County Attorney's budget, a motion was made by Representative Moynihan, seconded by Representative Merner to authorize the County Attorney to expend up to \$4,000 for law school loans from the education line item.

Representative Tucker suggested that a committee be created prior to the setting of salaries for elected officials to review all salaries and possibly increase the County Attorney salary in order that he pay his own loans. Representative Moynihan noted that the County Attorney does not qualify for federal assistance as he is in an elected position. Representative Richardson agreed that the funds should be part of the salary. The motion passed by roll call 7-2. (*Representatives Judd & Richardson*)

Representative Richardson also asked that the Register of Deeds salary be reviewed prior to the setting of elected officials' salaries.

Upon reviewing the Sheriff's Department budget, a motion was made by Representative Th  berge, seconded by Representative Richardson to increase the Deputy Transportation Line Item by \$7,000. The motion passed by roll call 9-0.

A motion was made by Representative Judd, seconded by Representative Richardson to recommend the purchase of four vests. The current vests have exceeded life expectancy. Sheriff Valerino stated that the vests are \$800 each; however he is applying for a grant that would require a 50/50 match. The grant

is good for two years. Representative Judd stated that the part-time deputies should also get new vests. Representative Judd asked to amend his motion to six vests. Representative Richardson agreed that the vests were a safety issue but could not support purchasing them all this year. He suggested purchasing eight. Commissioner Grenier suggested the purchase of six vests. There is a turnover with the part-time deputies and the vests are custom fitted. Representative Tucker asked the Sheriff if the policy will state that wearing the vest will be mandatory. Sheriff Valerino replied that he is providing the equipment and the equipment is available. It is up to the deputy to use it. Representative Laflamme inquired about the life expectancy of the vests. Sheriff Valerino replied 5-7 years. The Sheriff also informed the Delegation that the vests were not included in the budget presented. The funds in the new equipment line item were for the setup of the two new cruisers. Representative Judd amended his motion as follows: to increase the uniform line item by \$5,000 for the purchase of new vests, Representative Richardson seconded the amended motion. The motion was approved by roll call 9-0.

County Attorney McCormick reported that he had spoken with Alex Casale. The federal grant application for ~~Felonies First~~ the drug court has been placed. If the application is denied, the state will pick up the program. A group of individuals from Coös, Carroll and Belknap counties is being sent to observe a drug court in another state. The State will pay all expenses.

While reviewing the Cooperative Extension budget, a motion was made by Representative Th  berge, seconded by Representative Moynihan to increase the contracted services line item by \$10,356. Representative Richardson agreed with the motion but asked that the Delegation line item be reduced by \$10,000. The motion passed by roll call 8-1. *(Representative Richardson)*

A motion was made by Representative Richardson, seconded by Representative Thomas to reduce the contingency line item under Delegation expense by \$10,000. The motion passed by roll call 8-1. *(Representative Th  berge)*

A motion was made by Representative Merner, seconded by Representative Moynihan to increase the Child Advocacy Center line item, under Other Special Appropriations, to \$15,000. Representative Merner explained that the funds are needed to obtain matching funds. Representative Moynihan stated that this program had an important function with law enforcement personnel. Representative Richardson also stated that at a previous meeting he had stated that the CAC had obtained funding from Lancaster. The CAC did not obtain funding from the Town of Lancaster. Representative Tucker stated that the CAC takes testimony from certain settings and used in court. Representative Hatch also stated that the funding mechanism has changed. The towns are no longer asked for funding. The motion passed by roll call 7-2. *(Representatives Judd, Richardson)*

Representative Richardson protested the cuts from senior citizens and low income programs. The cuts were not in the best interest of the people.

Representative Hatch left the meeting at 12 noon.

A motion was made by Representative Moynihan, seconded by Representative Merner to approve the proposed 2017 budget expenditures in the amount of \$35,037,404. The motion passed by roll call 7-1. *(Representative Richardson)*

The revenues were reviewed. The County tax figure was changed to \$15,084,791 to reflect the changes to the budget.



A motion was made by Representative Judd, seconded by Representative Laflamme to approve the 2017 anticipated revenues in the amount of \$35,037.404. The motion passed by roll call 7-1. (*Representative Richardson*)

A motion was made by Representative Richardson, seconded by Representative Tucker to approve the total Unincorporated Places expenditures and revenues in the amount of \$1,588,411. The motion was approved by roll call 8-0.

County Administrator Jennifer Fish read the Proposed Reserves and Encumbrances:

1. Interest on Sick Trusts 2016	\$ 583.90
2. Interest on Facility Fund 2016	155.14
3. Interest on Decommission Fund 2016	86.46
4. Interest on Vehicle Reserve Fund 2016	75.69
5. 53 <sup>rd</sup> Payroll	50,000.00
6. Deeds - Optical Disk Conversion	1,000.00
7. WSNH Dietary New Equipment	6,000.00
8. Berlin Nursing Home Roof Project (Facility Fund Withdrawal	25,000.00
9. Roof & Air Exchange Units (HEB Engineering)	8,461.11
10. Video Surveillance Equipment	7,272.94
11. Landvest - marking of lines	5,000.00
<b>Subtotal Reserves and Encumbrances</b>	<b>\$103,635.24</b>

A motion was made by Representative Judd, seconded by Representative Richardson to approve the proposed reserves and encumbrances. The motion was approved by a roll call 8-0.

A motion was made by Representative Tucker, seconded by Representative Moynihan to approve the (unaudited) net surplus of \$500,137.10. The motion was approved by roll call 8-0.

#### **RESOLUTION #1**

*Be it resolved by the Coös County Delegation duly convened on this thirty-first day of March, 2017, that the sums hereinafter detailed in this resolution are hereby appropriated and the total amount for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2017, shall be \$35,037,404 for the County budget not including the Unincorporated Places.*

*A motion was made by Representative Tucker, seconded by Representative Thomas to approve Resolution #1. The motion passed by a roll call 8-0.*

#### **RESOLUTION #2**

*Be it resolved by the Coös County Delegation that the sum of \$16,980,023 is hereby adopted as the estimated income from sources indicated for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2017.*

*A motion was made by Representative Judd, seconded by Representative Merner to approve Resolution #2. The motion passed by a roll call 8-0.*

**RESOLUTION #3**

*Be it further resolved that the total appropriation being in excess of the total estimated income in the amount of \$15,084,791, the Treasurer shall issue his warrant to the Towns and City in the County for this amount.*

*A motion was made by Representative Judd, seconded by Representative Th  berge to approve Resolution #3. The motion passed by a roll call 8-0.*

**RESOLUTION #4**

*Be it resolved that \$2,972,590 of the operating surplus for the year 2016 be appropriated in the 2017 Budget for the purpose of reducing taxes for 2017.*

*A motion was made by Representative Merner, seconded by Representative Judd to approve Resolution #4. The motion passed by a roll call 8-0.*

**RESOLUTION #5**

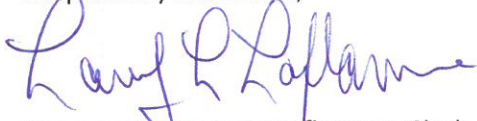
*Be it resolved by the Co  s County Delegation duly convened on this thirty-first day of March 2017 that in order to comply with Department of Revenue Administration instruction, the Delegation separately approves an appropriation of \$1,588,411 and revenues of \$1,588,411 for Co  s County's Unincorporated Places for calendar year 2017. The Unincorporated Places Budget for 2017 is adopted separately from the Co  s County Budget.*

*A motion was made by Representative Tucker, seconded by Representative Moynihan to approve Resolution #5. The motion passed by a roll call 8-0.*

The next quarterly meeting will be held on Friday, April 28, 2017 at the Co  s County Nursing Home in Berlin at 10 a.m.

A motion was made by Representative Judd, seconded by Representative Th  berge to adjourn the meeting at 12:45 p.m. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Representative Larry Laflamme, Clerk

