

COÖS COUNTY DELEGATION  
QUARTERLY MEETING  
Monday, August 3, 2015 - 10:00 a.m.  
North Country Resource Center - Lancaster, NH

Present: Representatives Robert Théberge-Co-Chair; John Tholl-Co-Chair; Yvonne Thomas-Clerk; Alethea Lincoln Froburg, Wayne Moynihan, Larry Rappaport, Herb Richardson and Leon Rideout. Also present: County Commissioners Tom Brady and Rick Samson; County Administrator Jennifer Fish; Superintendent Craig Hamelin; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Director of Finance Carrie Klebe; County Treasurer Fred King; Steve Turaj, UNH/Cooperative Extension; and members of the press.

Representative Tholl requested all to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. The roll was called by the clerk, Representative Yvonne Thomas. There were 8 members present. Representatives Hatch and Fothergill were absent.

*Review & Approval of Minutes:* Representative Tholl asked if any changes or corrections needed to be made to the minutes of the May 1, 2015, meeting. A motion was made by Representative Rideout, seconded by Representative Rappaport to approve the minutes of the May 1, 2015 meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved by a voice vote.

*Review & Approval of the Second Quarter Financial Statements:*  
The Coös County expenditures and revenues for the second quarter were reviewed.

Representative Rappaport asked why the recycling center was expended to 62%. Superintendent Hamelin replied that an unplanned employee retirement occurred and accrued personal and sick time was paid.

A motion was made by Representative Théberge, seconded by Representative Rideout to approve the second quarter expenditures for Coös County. The motion was approved by roll call vote 8-0.

Representative Tholl continued with the review of the second quarter revenues.

Representative Lincoln Froburg asked why the Miscellaneous Income line item which was budgeted as \$15,000 actually received \$65,880. The Finance Director did not have the detailed information on hand. Ms. Fish noted that she would get the information to the Delegation.

Representative Moynihan noted that the Medicaid Proportional Payment which was budgeted for \$1,550,000 actually received \$2,412,608. He asked if this was the line item that is difficult to budget as the County does not know what the State will submit. Ms. Fish replied in the affirmative. This amount is the difference between the Medicaid and Medicare rate.

Representative Richardson asked if the recycling center revenue would offset the payment of accrued sick and personal leave. Supt Hamelin replied that commodity revenue cannot be used to pay off employee benefits. A budget transfer will be needed at some point.

A motion was made by Representative Rappaport, seconded by Representative Théberge to approve the second quarter revenues for Coös County. The motion was approved by roll call vote 8-0.

Representative Tholl continued with the review of the Unincorporated Places expenditures.

A motion was made by Representative Rideout, seconded by Representative Rappaport to approve the second quarter expenditures for the Unincorporated Places. The motion was approved by roll call vote 8-0.

Representative Tholl continued with the Unincorporated Places second quarter revenues.

Representative Moynihan inquired about the Dixville and Millsfield revenues. Ms. Fish replied that the payment in lieu of tax from Granite Reliable Power was received in February.

A motion was made by Representative Th  berge, seconded by Representative Rappaport to approve the second quarter revenues for the Unincorporated Places. The motion was approved by roll call vote 8-0.

Hearing of the Public:

- a. Steve Turaj, UNH Cooperative Extension Field Specialist, provided a short presentation on the agricultural resources.
- b. Andrea Gagne & Michael Coughlin - Tri County CAP - Discussion of office closures in Co  s County. The representatives from Tri County CAP were not present at the meeting. Representative Th  berge reported that there had been a miscommunication and Tri County CAP has requested to be placed on the October agenda. Several members of the Delegation criticized Tri County CAP's decision to close offices in Colebrook and Groveton. People in Pittsburg and Colebrook will need to travel to Berlin to apply for fuel assistance. Representative Rideout noted that the Town of Lancaster approved a donation to Tri County CAP because the office was located in Lancaster. Shortly after the donation the office was closed and moved to Groveton only to be closed permanently. Several members of the Delegation noted that if Tri County CAP representatives do not attend the October meeting the Delegation would not support further funding of Tri County CAP programs.

Old Business:

Representative Th  berge asked for an updated report on the water system and on the water at the County house. Ms. Fish replied that HEB Engineers are currently working on a report to provide recommendations to the Commissioners.

The well at the County house was tested. The well can be used but a treatment system will be needed for the water with an estimated cost of \$10,000. Representative Richardson stated that a decision needs to be made in regards to the county house - either make offices or sell the house. Representative Rideout stated that it was decided that the house should be sold; however, due diligence has to be done. Commissioner Brady agreed the house cannot be marketed until these issues are resolved. Representative Moynihan stated that he did not recollect a meeting where it was agreed to sell the house. The subcommittee's recommendations were to keep the barn going and look at alternatives for use of the house. It is the determination of the Commissioners not the Delegation as to how the house is used. The duties of the subcommittee have been completed and the use of the house is back in the Commissioners' hands. He asked if an appraisal of the house had been completed yet as mentioned in a previous meeting. Representative Rideout stated that ultimately the Commissioners will make a recommendation to the Delegation.

New Business:

- a. *Approval of supplemental Department of Education distribution:* Ms. Fish reported that the Secure and Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 was reauthorized for one year as of April 15, 2015. Due to the reauthorization a supplemental payment was authorized to the State of NH for Coös County. The supplemental payment was in the amount of \$32,710.01. The Commissioners voted at their July 22, 2015 to recommend to the Delegation that the amount should be evenly distributed to the school districts in Coös County. Each district would receive \$2,973.64. A motion was made by Representative Rideout, seconded by Representative Lincoln Froburg to evenly distribute the supplemental payment, as recommended by the Board of Commissioners.

Ms. Fish explained the funds received are for the Unincorporated Places with National Forests. Since there are no school districts in those areas, the funds are used for the tuition of students in Millsfield. The remainder of the funds is evenly distributed to the school districts for books and supplies. Representative Richardson stated that the distribution should be per student and not per district and would vote no. Representative Lincoln Froburg stated the law states per district and not per student. The motion was approved by roll call vote 7-1. (*Representative Richardson*)

- b. *Nursing Hospital Licensed Staff hourly wage increase proposal:* Laura Mills reported that the Nursing Hospital as well as the entire North Country is hurting for nurses. Currently the facility has two 32-hour positions on 3-11; a 24-hour position on 11-7; and, an 8-hour position on 7-3. The starting pay for an LPN is \$16.69 per hour and a basic RN, who must act as charge nurse, \$23.72 per hour. The salary schedules cannot compete with the other healthcare agencies in the area as we pay less than both the local hospital and home health. The salary schedules for floor nurses, both LPNs and RNs are lower than the same positions at the Berlin Nursing Home. It has been determined that the cost impact to the budget if the salary schedules were adjusted as of October 1 would be \$23,370.67. Since two positions that include health insurance have not been filled, there is enough surplus in the Nursing Department Health Insurance line item to cover the increase. The Board of Commissioners approved the salary schedule adjustment contingent on the Delegation's approval.

Representative Moynihan asked if this proposal affected a labor contract. Laura replied no. Representative Thérberge noted that the Nursing Hospital needs to be competitive. Representative Rideout replied he would vote no as it is late in the fiscal year and this should be discussed as a budget item. Representative Richardson moved the question. A motion was made by Representative Richardson, seconded by Representative Thérberge to approve the salary schedule adjustment to the RN/LPN salaried line items. The motion was approved by roll call vote 6-2. (*Representative Rappaport and Representative Rideout*)

- c. Representative Tholl announced that he had received notice that the State would be closing the Judd Gregg Training Center in Littleton due to budget cuts. This will affect small town police departments who are sending part-time police officers for training. These individuals will now have to travel to Concord 3 days a week for training.
- d. Representative Rideout thanked all the Delegation members for working together on several issues over the past year.

Subcommittee Reports

- a. Representative Moynihan reported on behalf of the County Attorney that the new Assistant County Attorney is doing well. The Governor signed the Felonies First Bill which means that felonies will be

prosecuted in Superior Court only. The County Attorney does not anticipate any staffing problems but the subject could come up for discussion at a later date. Representative Tholl reported that he was involved in the Felonies First issue. The bill has passed; however, it will be initiated in phases. Coös County will be the last county to be initiated. The program will be a cost increase to the County. He anticipated one if not two additional attorneys and possibly support staff may be needed.

- b. Representative Rappaport reported on Coös Economic Development Corporation. CEDC has given out two grants this year. CEDC is also looking for someone to serve as executive director. Edith Tucker, *The Coös County Democrat*, asked if Mr. DeAngelis was leaving the position of executive director based on the ad in the newspaper. Representative Rappaport replied that he was not his title will be changing at a later date.

Representative Thérberge stated that he was looking at the week of October 18 to set the next meeting. He asked that the Delegation members contact him with suggestions. The meeting will be held Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday in order that Representative Fothergill may attend. Representative Moynihan asked if a copy of the balance sheet which is supplied at budget time could be included with the agenda and financials. Ms. Fish replied that the balance sheet is completed only at the end of the year. Representative Lincoln Froborg asked if a copy of the minutes could be included with the agenda and financials. Representative Moynihan noted that all of the minutes are available on the website.

Ms. Fish stated that she had information on a previous question regarding the miscellaneous revenue. The County received escheated funds from the State of NH in the amount of \$65,168. Representative Moynihan explained that escheated funds are abandoned accounts and checks.

A motion was made by Representative Rappaport, seconded by Representative Rideout to adjourn the meeting at 12:11 p.m. All approved by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Yvonne Thomas, Clerk