

COÖS COUNTY DELEGATION
QUARTERLY MEETING
Friday, January 30, 2015 - 10:00 a.m.
North Country Resource Center - Lancaster, NH

Present: Representatives Robert Théberge-Co-Chair; John Tholl-Co-Chair; Yvonne Thomas-Clerk; John Fothergill, Alethea Lincoln Froborg, Wayne Moynihan, Larry Rappaport, Herb Richardson and Leon Rideout. Also present: County Administrator Jennifer Fish; Superintendent Craig Hamelin; Nursing Home Administrator Louise Belanger; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Director of Finance Carrie Klebe; Sheriff Gerald Marcou; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris; Register of Deeds Tanya Batchelder; County Treasurer Fred King; Larry Barker & Dr. Ken Lavalley, UNH/Cooperative Extension; Michael Bergeron & Benoit Lamontagne, State of NH DRED; members of the press and the public.

Representative Théberge requested all to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. The roll was called by the clerk, Representative Yvonne Thomas. There were 9 members present.

Hearing of the Public:

Dr. Ken Lavalley provided an overview of the UNH Cooperative Extension via satellite due to the weather.

Larry Barker noted that the educators from the UNH Cooperative Extension office in Lancaster would like to meet with the Delegation on a quarterly basis to make a presentation on the services offered.

Representative Moynihan thanked Dr. Lavalley and Mr. Barker. He asked if the County Forester could be the first presentation in order to bring the Delegation up to date on the County Forest.

The Delegation was invited to a Cooperative Extension breakfast at the State House on March 4.

Review & Approval of Minutes: Representative Théberge asked if any changes or corrections needed to be made to the minutes of the December 12, 2014, meeting. A motion was made by Representative Tholl, seconded by Representative Richardson to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2014 meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved by a voice vote.

Review & Approval of the Fourth Quarter Financial Statements:

The Coös County expenditures and revenues for the fourth quarter were reviewed. There were no questions pertaining to the fourth quarter expenditures.

Representative Richardson congratulated the County Administrator and staff for keeping track of what was spent. Representative Moynihan asked where the nursing home deficits were located. Jennifer explained that the difference between the appropriations and the revenues was the amount to be raised by taxes.

Representative Théberge continued with the review of the Unincorporated Places expenditures and revenues.

A motion was made by Representative Richardson, seconded by Representative Tholl to approve the fourth quarter financials for all funds. The motion was approved by a roll call vote 9-0.

Old Business:

- *Discussion relative to the Coös Economic Impact Study of Current and Proposed New Federal Land Ownership:* Representative Thérberge noted that not all members of the Delegation had read the report. He suggested that the item be discussed at a future meeting. He also added that the Commissioners have asked for a joint meeting to discuss the study with the citizens of Errol. An evening meeting would be best as citizens could attend.

Representative Moynihan stated that the taxpayers paid a significant amount of money for the study and it has never been discussed. There are recommendations in the report that need to be discussed. He also inquired if the people who drafted the report would be available to attend the meeting.

Representative Rappaport stated that the Delegation should do whatever is necessary to stop future federal purchase of land. Representative Rideout stated that he had looked at the study and it stated that the federal ownership of land has a negative impact on the county.

Representative Moynihan also asked if dates of future meetings could be available sooner in order to adjust his schedule.

New Business:

- *Discussion with Benoit Lamontagne/Michael Bergeron, NHDRED:* Mr. Lamontagne and Mr. Bergeron's presentation provided information on DRED's Business Recruitment Overview. *(A copy of the presentation is on file.)*

Representative Fothergill and Representative Richardson left the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

- Delegation members provided updates on committee assignments.
- Sheriff Marcou and Register of Deeds Tanya Batchelder explained that both departments had experienced issues with the phone lines which were old and obsolete. A quote was obtained from Goulet Communications that totaled \$5,860. The Commissioners recommended the appropriation of \$5,860 from the facility fund and waived the bid process for this project at their January 14, 2015 meeting.

Representative Rideout stated that he would approve the request but would have preferred bids. Representative Moynihan stated that he was at the meeting at which the Commissioners scrutinized the issue. Representative Tholl also noted that the vendor selected is always available and lives locally. A motion was made by Representative Lincoln Froburg, seconded by Representative Tholl to transfer \$6,000 from the Facility Reserve Fund to the General Fund. The motion was approved by roll call vote 6-1 (Representative Rideout).

Subcommittee Reports:

Representative Moynihan stated that he could not be an alternate member of the Planning Board for the Delegation. It is not part of the Planning Board's by-laws. He asked that his name be removed as an alternate. County Treasurer Fred King noted that the Planning Board has been updating some of its documents and suggested that the Delegation mention a change to the by-laws.

Representative Rideout stated that what to do with the County House is still an open question. Representative Th  berge asked that Jennifer send a copy of her suggestions to the Delegation. Representative Moynihan stated that the use of the house and barn is up to the Commissioners. The Delegation submitted its report and does not have a say in what the Commissioners decide to do with the building. The Delegation only has a say in the financial decisions.

Any other business:

Jennifer Fish, County Administrator presented to the Delegation a copy of a letter sent to Commissioner Toumpas from Laura Mills, Nursing Hospital Administrator appealing the “new” nursing home rates. The proposed \$7 million cuts will hurt the two nursing homes. Representative Tholl stated that he had also received a call from The Morrison Nursing Home in regards to the proposed budget cuts. Representative Moynihan asked if Jennifer had an impact in dollar figures. Jennifer replied that the impact at the West Stewartstown Nursing Hospital for the first six months of 2015 will be \$140,000.

Representative Rideout stated that the wrong area was being cut in the State’s budget. Property taxes will go up and the local government will be blamed. The downshift is unacceptable.

Representative Lincoln Froburg left at 12:05 p.m.

Both, Representative Tholl and Representative Rideout stated that changes will need to be made in the Senate.

A motion was made by Representative Rappaport, seconded by Representative Rideout to adjourn the meeting at 12:10 p.m.

The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Yvonne Thomas, Clerk