

Coös County Delegation
Coös County Commissioners
Special Meeting
Wednesday, June 22, 2016 (*amended August 17, 2016*)
Coös County Nursing Hospital - W. Stewartstown, NH

Present: Representatives Robert Théberge, Co-Chair; Yvonne Thomas, Clerk; John Fothergill, Alethea Lincoln Froburg, William Hatch, Wayne Moynihan, Herb Richardson and Leon Rideout. Also present: County Commissioners Tom Brady, Paul Grenier and Rick Samson; County Administrator Jennifer Fish, Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills, Superintendent Craig Hamelin and Administrative Assistant Linda Harris.

Representative Théberge requested all to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance which was led by Representative Théberge. The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

A motion was made by Representative Richardson, seconded by Representative Rideout to approve the agenda as presented. All approved in the affirmative.

Representative Moynihan stated that the wording on the agenda was inaccurate. The Delegation's purpose was to approve the cost items associated with the SEA and AFSCME union contracts as the contracts were previously approved by the Commissioners. A motion was made by Representative Moynihan, seconded by Representative Froburg to change the wording as follows: *"Discussion and approval of the cost items associated with the SEA and AFSCME union contracts."* The motion was approved by roll call vote 8-0.

Hearing of the Public:

Commissioner Grenier provided handouts to the Delegation explaining the cost items relating to the collective bargaining units. The contracts were negotiated by the County Administrator and Attorney Mark Broth and presented to the Board. He also noted that the health insurance needed to be Cadillac tax compliant.

County Administrator Jennifer Fish reviewed the cost items listed on the handouts:

- Health Insurance Benefit: The total 2016 Budget for Health insurance is \$4,262,127. Effective July 1, 2016 the health insurance plan will change to a Harvard Pilgrim HMO \$1,000 deductible plan. By making this change to the insurance the County's estimated health insurance expense will be \$3,669,566. This will be a savings of \$592,561 in health insurance to the 2016 Budget.
- For employees that wish to "opt out" of the County's health insurance, the annual payment in lieu of benefit will be increased from \$1,250 to \$2,000. Total increase to 2016 Budget: \$10,200.
- The County will offer to employees the opportunity to open a Flexible Savings Accounts for their health insurance expenses. The employee may have pretax deductions from his or her paycheck to be deposited into this account. Employees may use the amounts saved in the Flexible Savings Accounts to pay insurance copays, deductibles, and other eligible medical expenses.
- Cost of Living Annual Increase: 2% for 2016, 2% for 2017, and 2% for 2018 (The 2016 increase will be retroactive to January 3, 2016). The total salary expense increase for the 2016 Budget will be

\$299,146.

- Employees that have been employed with the County for 30 years or more will receive a \$100 increase in longevity. The total increase to 2016 Budget: \$1,400.
- The County will make a lump sum contribution to employees' Flexible Savings accounts in January 2017 and January 2018. The total expense estimated for 2017 Budget is \$80,000.

The 2016 Budget Expense Summary:

Cost of Living Increase	\$299,146
Opt Out Payment Increase	10,200
Longevity Bonus Increase	<u>1,400</u>
Total 2016 Increases to Budget	\$310,746
 Total Health Insurance Savings	 (\$592,561)
 Net savings:	 (\$281,815)

Representative Moynihan stated that at the budget meeting was there was no COLA for 2016. Commissioner Grenier stated that there was no cost of living adjustment built in the budget as negotiations were ongoing. Representative Moynihan added that he did not support increases for the elected officials because *the Commissioners did not propose in the budget that county employees did* receive increases. Commissioner Brady stated that COLAs could not be discussed due to negotiations. Representative Hatch asked if the COLAs were published or negotiated figures. Ms. Fish replied that they were negotiated figures with the unions. Commissioner Grenier stated that the Boston CPA was 2.6%. Representative Moynihan noted that the Social Security COLA increase was zero. Representative Froburg noted that the employees will be taking on increased costs in their health insurance which means their benefit package has decreased. The COLA will assist in the cost increase.

Representative Moynihan asked if the health insurance plan was now Cadillac tax compliant. Commissioner Grenier replied that the plan was compliant for now. Ms. Fish added that the Cadillac tax comes into effect in 2020.

Representative Fothergill asked if services at the local hospital are considered when health insurance plans are negotiated. Ms. Fish replied that she makes sure that the local physicians are in the network. Representative Richardson stated that Obamacare has hindered benefits.

Commissioner Samson stated that Attorney Broth negotiates several contracts. The health insurance plan was changed to encourage people to rethink the uses of the health insurance.

Representative Richardson asked if all employees, including the deputies, would be receiving the 2% increase. Commissioner Grenier replied all but the elected officials.

Representative Moynihan asked if it was clear to the unions while negotiating contracts that the same benefits would apply to non-union employees. The people who negotiate the cost items pay union dues and others who do not pay dues also benefit. Commissioner Grenier replied that it has been past

practice.

Ms. Fish stated that non-union employees do not negotiate cost items. Commissioner Brady stated that all employees must be treated the same. Representative Rideout noted that more than likely all employees would have received the 2% increase one way or another.

A motion as made by Representative Richardson, seconded by Representative Rideout to approve the cost items associated with the SEA Collective Bargaining Agreement. The motion was approved by roll call vote 8-0.

A motion as made by Representative Richardson, seconded by Representative Rideout to approve the cost items associated with the AFSCME Collective Bargaining Agreement. The motion was approved by roll call vote 8-0.

Representative Moynihan proposed a language change to item *"c. Discussion & Approval of Proposed Wage Increase for non-union employees"*. In his opinion, the wording was not accurate. After a period of discussion, a motion was made by Representative Moynihan, seconded by Representative Froburg to change the wording as follows *"Discussion & Approval of Proposed Wage Increase for All County Employees not covered under a Collective Bargaining Unit"*. The motion was approved by a roll call vote 5-3. (Representatives Richardson, Rideout and Th  berge)

A motion was made by Representative Froburg, seconded by Representative Thomas to approve the proposed wage increase for all county employees not covered under a collective bargaining unit. The motion was approved by roll call vote 6-2 (Representatives Hatch and Moynihan)

Any Other Business:

Representative Fothergill stated that the State has recently appropriated funds for drug courts and the Indian Stream Health Center is looking into creating a program. He was led to believe that organizations could apply for grants.

Representative Hatch inquired if the Commissioners have obtained any information that grants are available from the State and if anyone has looked into the funding.

Commissioner Grenier replied that the Board has met with Commissioner George Maglaras to discuss possibilities. Representative Rideout added that the Delegation and Commissioners were invited to and visited the Grafton County Drug Court. A program is needed that will work for Co  s County. Commissioner Brady stated that Superintendent Hamelin has attended meetings. Superintendent Hamelin stated that he has provided five years of data and mental health is the greatest issue. Representative Fothergill asked if the Board would be interested in joining programs. Commissioner Brady stated that Board has not discussed the new grant funding.

Commissioner Samson thanked the Delegation for bringing up the drug court and for the approval of the cost items and wage increases.

Superintendent Hamelin also reported that he has been working with the staff at the Indian Stream Health Center discussing programs.

A motion was made by Representative Froburg, seconded by Representative Rideout to adjourn at 7:20 p.m. The motion was approved by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Yvonne Thomas, Clerk