

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.
North Haverhill, NH 03774
Tuesday, March 29, 2011

PRESENT: Commissioners Michael Cryans, Omer C. Ahern Jr. and Raymond Burton,
and Executive Director Clough and Secretary Martino.

OTHERS: H. Brown

Karen Clough, Richard Thompson and Donna Wallis from the Employee Council arrived

HRD Simpson arrived to listen to the requests of the Employee Council.

9:06 AM Commissioner Cryans opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance led by
Richard Thompson.

Commissioner Burton said that he had invited John R. Griffin Jr. to the meeting as he had
some suggestions as to what the old Jail building could be used for. He asked that
Commissioner Cryans as Chair, allow Mr. Griffin to bring forth his suggestions.

Commissioner Cryans said that they would begin with the Employee Council as they
were scheduled on the agenda and then they would fit Mr. Griffin in briefly.

A written request was provided by the Employee Council which R. Thompson
reviewed and included:

- A 2% cost of living increase
- Reestablish the merit increase that was frozen last year
- Eliminate the perfect attendance bonus and change longevity from \$95 to \$100
like that of the Union
- Increase the amount of earned time accrued by employees in the 16-20 year
bracket adding 3 additional days per five years. This would apply for each five
year increment beyond 15 years with the understanding that the balance could not
exceed the 300 hour maximum.
- Discuss employees being able to buy back earned time.

The request for a 2% COLA would amount to a \$124K increase which is just figured for
the Employee Council and not the Bargaining Unit or the Salaried Employees.

The Employee Council said they understood the economic climate and agree that a large
increase in the overall budget would be unacceptable. They asked that the
Commissioners look closely at other areas of the budget rather than compensation and
benefits when considering.

Commissioner Cryans asked if there were specific area that the Council thought could be

cut and R. Thompson said it was very difficult to give specifics without doing harm.

Commissioner Cryans asked about the priority of the requests and R. Thompson said the cola and the merit, were equal and at the top.

Commissioner Burton said this has not been a good year for increases anywhere and said the County may be seeing some costs passed down from the State because of changes in their budget which he thought would be passing soon. He said he wished he could do more recognizing the importance of employees, but it didn't look good. The budget will then go on to the Delegation who makes the final decisions.

Commissioner Ahern thanked the Council for their presentation and said he appreciates the work that employees do and noted that he came from a County background and has done a number of jobs at the County. He asked what positive economical signs the Employee Council was seeing.

D. Wallis said that her husband works at Blackmount Equipment and that more tractors are being sold and more mechanical work is being done. She said that she skis and has seen a lot of people doing the same and dining at the restaurants.

K. Clough asked where the Commissioners thought things were not improving and Commissioner Ahern replied that he sees people not working, the price of gas is high and bankruptcies are up. He believes that times are still tough. He said that he thinks the State budget may carry on through the summer and is less optimistic than Commissioner Burton about it.

Commissioner Ahern asked for specific ideas for cuts and said that he would be pleased to hear about them.

D. Wallis said the Farm is a losing proposition year after year and K. Clough said that it seems like an area that can be looked at more closely and suggested that perhaps an idea would be to keep the vegetable portion so that there would still be somewhere for inmates to work, but to eliminate the dairy operation.

Director Clough said that the County would only save about \$20K by closing the Farm because it makes a considerable amount of revenue. K. Clough asked if they thought \$20K was inconsequential and Director Clough said in a \$37M budget it is.

D. Wallis asked then if the \$124K increase in benefits was inconsequential and Director Clough said they have to think about all the employees. D. Wallis said the Employee Council was negotiating only for the Council members.

Commissioner Cryans interrupted and said that the requests had been made and things would be looked at.

Commissioner Cryans asked if there was anything else anyone wanted to note and D. Wallis said that she just wanted to stress that cuts due to layoffs removes money from the County budget but it still creates a burden on taxpayers.

K. Clough said that she would like to see the government of New Hampshire working properly instead of taking everything out on the taxpayer. She said that it would be good if they (State of NH) could step back and take responsibility to make government work.

The Employee Council exited.

Commissioner Cryans said that he could give Mr. Griffin about five minutes if he would like to speak. Mr. Griffin gave the Commissioner written pages of what he would like to see done with the old Jail which included:

- Using as a County pantry for food storage for needy citizens.
- Used to house a County civil patrol made up of volunteers and used for emergency aid, welfare and added law enforcement protection. Could store equipment there too.

There was some brief discussion and then Commissioner Cryans thanked Mr. Griffin for his time.

9:40 AM the Commissioners left to tour the Jail.

10:40 AM the Commissioners returned from the tour and resumed their meeting.

Information Technology Manager Brent Ruggles arrived to recommend which company to choose for the three RFPs he sent out a while back.

The comparative prices per company (2) were given to the Commissioners to review and noting price, ITM Ruggles recommend that Carousel Industries be awarded all three bids over Advizex.

Commissioner Burton moved to accept the bid from Carousel in the amount of \$178,754.65 (RFP 11-09), Network Consolidation for the campus, which was seconded by Commissioner Ahern.

DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Cryans asked what was in the budget for this project and ITM Ruggles said that he had \$159K and \$21K allocated from the Nursing Home.

ITM Ruggles reviewed what the benefits of this project would be and that this had been a recommendation of his shortly after being hired on by the County.

Commissioner Ahern asked if this would reduce paperwork and ITM Ruggles replied that it would. Commissioner Ahern said he sees this as a real need.

When the vote came down, all were in favor.

Commissioner Ahern moved to approve the bid from Carousel Industries in the amount of \$42,143.64 (RFP 11-11), Network hardware, software and installation at the new Jail, which was seconded by Commissioner Burton.

DISCUSSION:

Director Clough said that monies for RFP11-11 and 11-12 will be coming out of the Jail bond money as they are both for that project.

When the vote came down, all were in favor

Commissioner Ahern moved to accept the bid from Carousel Industries in the amount of \$60,593.84 (RFP 11-12) Network Hardware & Software for the new Jail, which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

Interstate Electric will be furnishing and installing the fiber optic cables at the Jail for a cost of \$6,200 which was not included in the above mentioned RFP's but is also a required part of the installation. ITM Ruggles asked the Commissioners to approve this cost which will also be included in the monies from the bond for the Jail.

Commissioner Ahern moved to approve the cost of \$6200 from Interstate Electric to install the fiber optics at the Jail, which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

County Attorney Lara Saffo arrived with a request for out of state travel for the County Attorney Investigator to go to Washington DC for a conference and expo. She said she would like him to attend this conference because it will provide a lot of information regarding technology and some of the problems that are faced today with the internet and social networks. She added that she thought it would be very helpful because both the Secret Service and the FBI will be there to answer questions.

Investigator Fortier has relatives in that area so there will be no cost for a hotel but there will be a cost for fuel and food which Atty. Saffo estimated would be about \$250 total for the trip. She said this is a one day conference which she expects will result in a lot of good information.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the out of state travel which was seconded by Commissioner Ahern.

DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Ahern asked if this could be done over the internet and Atty. Saffo said that this conference is not online and she also felt it was very important to be able to meet and speak with people firsthand.

Commissioner Ahern said he was disappointed that it was not online and said that even though there is money in the budget there are a number of financial difficulties and he feels it is necessary to look at every dollar.

Atty. Saffo said that she believes this is money well spent for what they will get in return and that the Office is conscious of cost and does do a lot of webinars now, as will Mental Health.

Commissioner Burton asked if Investigator Fortier will be bringing back information to the law enforcement community and Atty. Saffo said that all the information will be gathered together and then will be offered out to all the departments. Commissioner Burton requested that also go to the smaller departments as well.

Commissioner Ahern asked if the information can be received in lieu of attendance and Atty. Saffo said she is talking about picking the material up at the Expo itself and not talking about course material. She said the information she's hoping to see gathered will come from individual booths.

When the vote came down, Commissioners Cryans and Burton were in favor and Commissioner Ahern was opposed.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the budget minutes from March 17, 2011 which was seconded by Commissioner Cryans. Commissioners Burton and Cryans were in favor and Commissioner Ahern abstained.

Commissioner Cryans asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes of March 22nd and Commissioner Ahern said he would like to have an addendum to the minutes which stated that he was able to read a copy of the MOU between Whole Village and the United Way after the meeting was adjourned and asked that to be written at the end of the minutes after the meeting was adjourned.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the minutes as amended which was seconded by Commissioner Ahern. All were in favor.

The Commissioner signed the check registers.

Director Clough presented the Commissioners an application from the Sheriff's Dept. for a Highway Safety Project grant in the amount of \$3150 which is for a seatbelt enforcement campaign and is something that is applied for every year through the Department.

Commissioner Ahern moved to approve application of the grant which was seconded by Commissioner Burton.

DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Ahern asked where the money comes from and Commissioner Burton said it is federal money.

Commissioner Ahern asked if someone could get arrested from the way the money is used from this grant and Director Clough said that she didn't know that but assumed at the very least there could be tickets given out.

Commissioner Ahern said this is the live free or die State and it has a high number of voluntary compliance with seatbelts that it doesn't need government intervention. He said he doesn't feel that tickets should be given out but if this is just about education then that would be fine.

Commissioner Cryans said it would probably be fine to wait a week on this and get some questions answered. He also wanted to note that this is about children (everyone under 18 must wear a seatbelt in NH), and that the focus is on their safety.

No vote was taken.

Dick Ranaghan from Gorham Savings Bank in Maine arrived to open and go over the bids for the second bond on the Jail. Four bids were received as follows for the amount of \$15.5M:

Banc of America Merrill Lynch	4.051734
Morgan Stanley & Co. Inc.	4.308891
Robert W. Baird & Co., Inc.	4.316655
Fidelity Capital Markets	4.347285

Mr. Ranaghan said that though these are a little higher than the previous bond, they are still lower than originally predicted at 4.5
He recommended the Commissioners accept the bid from Banc of America for 4.051734

Commissioner Burton asked Director Clough how much money they go through in a month and she replied it was about \$1.5M which will likely increase now that the weather is better and more can be done. They will also be able to start purchasing items for inside the Jail as well.

Commissioner Cryans said that they were originally authorized by the Delegation to bond \$38M, but will only be bonding \$33M, a savings of \$5M and with lower interest rates than anticipated. He said the low interest rates will work out very well for the County. Mr. Ranaghan said that if after 10 years the rates happen to go lower they can refinance.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Ranaghan for all the work he has done to provide this information for the bonds. Mr. Ranaghan said that he applauded Director Clough and her staff and the Commissioners for the proper handling of the affairs of County which resulted in a good bond rate.

Commissioner Burton moved to accept the bid from Banc of America for 4.051734 on a \$15.5M bond for a 20 year period which was seconded by Commissioner Ahern. All were in favor.

Mr. Ranaghan said it was a pleasure to work with the County and Director Clough said that he would certainly be invited to the grand opening of the new Jail.

11:35 AM the Commissioners recessed for lunch
12:25 PM the Commissioners resumed their meeting.

Nursing Home Administrator Eileen Bolander and Human Resource Director Mike Simpson arrived.

12:28 PM – Commissioner Burton moved to enter into non-public session for the purposes of discussing the consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation according to RSA 91-A:3, II (e). Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote, Commissioner Cryans called the roll. Commissioner Ahern “yes”; Commissioner Burton “yes” Commissioner Cryans “yes”; Commissioner Cryans stated that a majority of the board voted yes and will go into non-public session.

2:08 PM - Commissioner Cryans declared the meeting back in public session.

Commissioner Ahern moved to seal the minutes of the non-public session which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

An educational assistance application was received from an employee at the County Attorney's Office and Director Clough said that all the money for this fiscal year has been allocated. She said the employee is aware of this and asked that if there is any money left at the end of the year that she is eligible for it.

Commissioner Burton moved to authorized approval of educational assistance funds for an employee at the County Attorney's Office, should there be any at the end of the fiscal year which was seconded by Commissioner Ahern. All were in favor.

Director Clough asked the Commissioners how they wanted to review the budget as Dept. Heads would like to be able to be there during the review of their Dept. She would like to be able to schedule times but that has become difficult to do as of late. Commissioner Cryans said he would get back with about that.

Director Clough informed the Commissioners that there were only four responses for the May 13th meeting and asked the Commissioners if they still wanted to go ahead with the meeting with that few people. Commissioner Cryans asked Commissioner Burton to contact the other Counties and see if he could find out if anyone else was interested in coming. Commissioner Burton said that J. Phinizey is still planning to attend.

2:20 PM being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk