

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BUDGET REVIEW

Administration Building
3855 Dartmouth College Highway
North Haverhill, NH
Monday June 20, 2011

PRESENT: Representatives Bulis, Aguiar, Gionet, Almy, White, Brosseau, Townsend, Sova and Ladd, Commissioners Cryans, Burton (late) and Ahern, Executive Director Clough and Secretary Martino.

OTHERS: Sheriff Dutile, T. Andross, M. Simpson, N. Bishop, D. Maes, L. Saffo, P. Gilbert and H. Brown

Rep. Bulis called the meeting to order at 9:08 AM. Director Clough led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Rep. Bulis stated that this would normally be their regular monthly meeting day so they would be taking care of some of those essentials and asked Director Clough to begin with her reports.

Director Clough said that the Committee members should have received their reports in the mail which would include the new report that Rep. Almy had requested. She reviewed the reports beginning with the Monthly Variance Report.

Revenues: similar to last month. The Nursing Home was a little below revenue. She said they were expecting a Proshare payment by the end of the year and a Bed Tax and Bed Tax Supplemental payment which should leave the County on or above revenue for the fiscal year.

Expenses: Mental Health Court is a 100% offset and the Farm is over expended. There was an interest payment made on the first of June for the Jail bond and it will straighten itself out.

Director Clough then went over the Prorated Report and undesignated fund balance which is \$4.4M.

The Committee also received a report of over expended lines as of May 31st.

Rep. Sova moved to accept the report of the Executive Director which was seconded by Rep. Aguiar. All were in favor.

Commissioner Cryans was asked to report on the Commissioners meeting with Woodsville Water & Light. He said that the best first step was the opening of the lines of communication. Hydrant fees were discussed, which B. Fagnant said was part of their tariff.

Commissioner Ahern said that he asked WW&L if they wanted Grafton County as a customer and it appeared that they did but they stressed that the lines of communication needed to be kept open.

Other items discussed at the meeting included the water tank, what happened during engineering and building of the tank, two pipe system vs. a single pipe system and the opening and closing of the valve. Commissioner Cryans said there was no great conclusion from the meeting. It was suggested that Supt. Oakes and the WW&L treatment Supervisor work together to come to some kind of agreement.

Rep. Bulis, who also attended the meeting, said that electrical rates are expected to increase 10% every year. He said that at least a dialog has been opened

Rep. Gionet asked about the liability of the elevation of the tank and Commissioner Cryans said there really was no determination of liability. Commissioner Ahern said they did discuss the planning and engineering phases and there was discussion as to how they should proceed from here.

Rep. Bulis said that WW&L was not interested in taking over the tank. Commissioner Cryans said things weren't resolved but this is a process and they will meet again in September, so at least they're communicating.

Rep. Almy asked when they will get to a long term solution saying that all the County is doing is paying them more money. Rep. Bulis said the long term solution is the goal.

Rep. White asked if they can start negotiating a turn valve price. Director Clough said they were not interested in discussing that.

Rep. Sova asked if WW&L is aware of what the financial loss to WW&L would be if they were to lose the County as a customer and both Commissioner Ahern and Cryans said they were aware.

9:30 AM Rep. Bulis declared that the meeting would now become about the budget.

Rep. Gionet moved to approve the minutes from June 6, 2011 which was seconded by Rep. Almy. All were in favor.

Rep. Bulis asked to let the record show that the minutes were well done.

Rep. Brosseau moved to reduce the budget \$1,089,834 which was seconded by Rep. Ladd.

DISCUSSION:

Rep. Brosseau passed out a sheet which outlined the amount of money he moved to reduce the budget by and an itemized list of how that would be done. *(see attached)

The list was gone over and Rep. Bulis reviewed briefly the reasons how decisions were made to make the reductions.

Rep. Almy asked that they go over the list slowly and asked where all that information came from, particularly in regard to Corrections because she wanted to know where exactly the cuts come from.

Rep. Bulis said the intent is not to stop the Jail but to slow down the process.

Rep. Brosseau said he didn't understand where Supt. Libby gets his numbers and what he needed and motioned to move the question.

Rep. Almy said if he moves the questions then she would vote against it and she would be sure that there would be a partisan fight.

Rep. Brosseau withdrew the motion.

Rep. White said that there is some mystery to the numbers requested for the Jail and is disappointed because Supt. Libby has not been back to speak to the group. He said that he felt the numbers given by Executive Director Clough were prudent but the ones he's received today are not. He said he feels this is all a bit premature.

Rep. Gionet said he can understand Rep. White but felt the Committee needed to come up with some conclusions and he feels these are reasonable. He said he feels they've worked very hard to get to this point.

Rep. Almy said a long time ago when they were building the Nursing Home there were cuts made that ending up costing the County more in the long run. She said they have an obligation to understand what they're doing. She said that she wanted to understand how Corrections will be readjusted and wanted to hear from Supt. Libby.

Rep. Sova said budgeting is a planning process and by looking at the report the County is under expended which is half of the needed amount, he hoped that management will be able to move the million dollar difference between last year around and live within the budget. Director Clough said that at the end of the fiscal year the money is not appropriated for the County to spend so none of that made sense to her.

There was further discussion both in opposition and in defense of the motion for reductions.

Rep. Almy stated they needed to be able to open a Jail safely and questioned if that could be done with staff reductions. She said that what will exist is a holding center with dangerous people, who have nothing to do and not enough people to run the facility. Rep. Bulis said that when they spoke with Supt. Libby he didn't seem willing to make any changes.

Rep. Bulis said they should have a better idea of what the costs will be in about six months.

Rep. Aguiar said there needs to be segregation of inmates so that you don't end up with dangerous people in with innocent ones. He said bad things can happen and that this facility is a different entity than the existing Jail.

Rep. Brosseau said they're locked in a cell.

Director Clough reviewed how the segregated areas work, particularly those that house the worst offenders. She said that for the Committee to say things don't make sense to them have not done their homework. She said that if they make these reductions now they will be setting themselves up for a huge, huge budget increase next year because the positions they're cutting are going to need to added at that point. She said this information for reductions came completely out of the blue today and has not been the conversation that they had been having.

Rep. Ladd said that this did not come out of the blue and discussed the fact that he had spoken before about the taxpayers in Haverhill who are hurting. He said that he is hearing from his constituents who say they can not sustain this type of impact. He said he feels that they need to dig down into this budget and find out what the actual cost of an inmate is. He said he will not support a budget with 11 new Correctional Officers in it.

Rep. Almy found it interesting that the Committee was willing to let the slowness of communication with WW&L go and not willing to listen to Supt. Libby because he was hard-line when he came in the first time.

Rep. Townsend said he didn't think it would be right to make decisions when the Supt. was not here to answer questions.

Rep. Ladd said he felt the motion on the floor was appropriate.

Rep. Bulis said there has been a lot of focus on the Jail and on what will happen there if they don't do certain things. He said if the Administration is asked to step up they will. He said there were no other layoffs being addressed except for the one in Deeds, and that's because of technology.

Rep. Almy said she is not willing to accept the reductions as shown and if the Delegation is deadlocked then the Commissioners budget will pass.

10:15 AM Commissioner Burton arrived.

Discussion continued.

Rep. White said there were some things that they didn't understand the ramifications of and they should not support. He said he doesn't want to guess when it comes to those things.

Commissioner Cryans said he didn't think that Supt. Libby was hard-lined but called it passion. He said the Committee doesn't recognize that there has already been a \$5M savings due to lower cost in building the facility, which has been stumbled over. Commissioner Cryans said all the consultants from the Corrections field that have been used for Jail have said that there needs to be a certain amount of staff and they need to be properly trained. He said he has always prided the Board of Commissioners for presenting a good budget and feels this is a good budget. He said they were still able to come back with cuts as requested. He said that people were told up front what the costs of the new Jail would be and he has never run away from that information.

Rep. Ladd said that there was a concern about the operation and management when voting for the new Jail in the beginning and that's what needs to be considered.

Rep. Bulis said that even with the cuts the budget is \$2.6M over last year.

Rep. Brosseau said he's been involved with many budgets over the years and a lot of them are already padded.

Rep. Brosseau motioned to move the question which was seconded by Rep. Gionet. 4 Reps. (Gionet, Bulis, Brosseau, and Sova) were in favor and 5 Reps. (White, Townsend, Almy, Aguiar and Ladd) were opposed. Motion fails.

Rep. Aguiar moved to amend the motion and to reinstate the program personnel and two staff members in Corrections, which was seconded by Rep. Townsend.

DISCUSSION:

Rep. Ladd asked what the status is of the program personnel and Director Clough said they are regular hourly employees of Grafton County. They are slated to start March of 2012 for three months. Rep. Ladd asked to know what the total costs of salary and benefits would be.

Rep. Ladd moved to divide the amendment and separate the program personnel from the staff which was seconded by Rep. Brosseau.

DISCUSSION:

Rep. Aguiar said it was suggested by Supt. Libby that you have to have staff to supervise the inmates when either escorting them to counseling or when they're at counseling.

Director Clough provided the answer for Rep. Ladd regarding total salary and benefits cost which she said was \$49,654. She questioned where the \$140,111 that was listed on the reduction sheet came from. She said that amount does not translate into two positions at the Jail.

The vote was taken to divide the question. 2 Reps. (Brosseau and Ladd) were in favor. 7 Reps. (White, Townsend, Almy, Sova, Gionet and Aguiar) were opposed. Motion failed.

The discussion then turned to Rep. Aguiar's amendment to the original motion, which was to add back \$49,654 and \$140,111(\$189,765) into the list of reductions leaving the total amount to be reduced to \$900,069.

Rep. Brosseau asked the Chairman for a caucus.

10:49 AM Recess was taken to caucus. Republicans went to the front conference room while Democrats went to a closed room off the main conference room.

11:05 AM Chairman Bulis called the meeting back in order.

The vote was taken on Rep. Aguiar's amendment. All were in favor.

Director Clough pointed out that in regards to the Computer Line item on the Deeds list; the \$9000 is needed in order to pay the software contract to Connor & Connor. She explained that if that were removed as proposed then there would be no money for that. She said the money could come out of the surcharge account if that's what the Committee wanted.

Rep. Almy said she would like to see Rep. Brosseau's motion amended as much as possible before going to the full budget.

There was more discussion.

Rep. Sova moved to remove \$9000 (line 4120-970) from the reduction list and add that amount to line 9200-987 in the Deeds surcharge, leaving the total balance reduction at \$891,069 which was seconded by Rep. White. All were in favor.

Rep. White moved to change the reductions regarding Social Services from \$88K to \$44K and to add 50% of the money back to the agencies.

DISCUSSION:

Rep. White said that this change would allow the agencies to receive at least half of their money for a six month period and allow them to get their finances in order. He said that he feels this would be only fair.

Rep. Brosseau said it's not a matter of fair; it's a matter of finance.

Rep. Almy said that it may have an affect on families who use these services of childcare in order to hold down jobs. She said however, it would send a clear message.

Rep. Gionet questioned whether or not this should be a County or a local obligation.

Rep. Aguiar stated that this is a debate they need to have but would probably need to be done at a different time.

Rep. Bulis said that if daycare should be provided, then it should be provided for all, but it is not a mandate.

Rep. White said this motion would be a way of providing a transition to non-profits but with a front loaded amount of money, which will be helpful. He said that he didn't think that telling these agencies, who are expecting this funding, that a few weeks before the fiscal year they will not be funded.

Rep. Ladd said there has been some health cuts for services right here at the County and feels that the towns should be providing this help.

Commissioner Cryans said he thought it was a bad idea to cut funding for these groups at this point of time. Commissioner Burton said that between Lisbon and Littleton there are probably 1000 people who depend on child care. Rep. Bulis, reading from the budget, said that Kindercenter in Littleton serves 20 children and Lisbon serves 20.

There was some further discussion.

When the vote was taken, 4 Reps. (Aguiar, Almy, Townsend and White) were in favor and 5 Reps. (Gionet, Bulis, Brosseau, Ladd and Sova) were opposed. Motion fails.

Director Clough said that she didn't know where the Committee has come up with the idea that a person should be cut from Deeds. She questioned what information the Committee might have received in order to make this decision, particularly after hearing from the Register that the position was warranted. She questioned why they couldn't wait for the performance audit to look at the situation if there was a concern.

Rep. White moved to restore the \$40K in line 4120-001 which was seconded by Rep. Townsend.

DISCUSSION:

Rep. White said the Register of Deeds made it clear that there was no decrease in the amount of work that was being done in Deeds and he didn't know if this was a good idea. Rep. Bulis said that technology has increased in that office and property sales have been down. He said he feels this cut is appropriate.

Rep. Almy said this felt wrong and defended the need for the position. She agreed with Rep. White and said the Register of Deeds said she needed all the people in that department and didn't understand why this cut is being considered.

Rep. Brosseau motioned to move the question which was seconded by Rep. Gionet. 5 Reps (Brosseau, Ladd, Gionet, Sova and Bulis) were in favor and 4 Reps. (White, Almy, Townsend and Aguiar) were opposed. Motion passes

Rep. Almy stated that if this kind of conduct continues then she will leave the room and will oppose everything. She said she was not finished debating and was quite willing to talk. She said that she did not feel this was normal, polite or civil.

Rep. Bulis said they have been open and willing to compromise but they want to move forward.

Although the question was called Rep. Townsend asked if he may make a comment which the Chair allowed. Rep. Townsend said that there has been a slowdown in the sale of properties in the last three months but it does appear to be increasing.

When the vote was taken, 4 Reps (White, Aguiar, Townsend and Almy) were in favor and 5 Reps (Brosseau, Ladd, Gionet, Sova and Bulis) were opposed. Motion fails.

Rep. Ladd said that he feels they need to arrive at a budget that has allowed everyone to speak.

Rep. Ladd moved to reinstate \$44K to the Social Services area and to have that same amount removed from Corrections line 6100-003 which was seconded by Rep. Brosseau.

DISCUSSION:

Rep. Ladd questioned whether there needed to be so much money spent in Corrections.

Rep. Aguiar asked just to be clear, that this was the same money in Corrections that the Committee had just voted to put back in the budget a moment ago and Rep. Ladd replied it was. Rep. Aguiar asked how that would be distributed and Rep. Ladd suggested that it be done in accordance with the motion that Rep. White suggested.

Rep. Ladd said that taking the money out of Corrections will give everyone a year to look at the true needs of the Jail. Rep. Almy said everyone will still need to be trained and she reiterated that the County is responsible for inmates and not children as they relate to the Social Services.

Rep. White said he would reluctantly support this because he can see that this could work. Rep. Aguiar said he too would reluctantly support it.

When the vote was taken, all were in favor.

Rep. Sova asked about the appropriation transfers and whether the Executive Committee has the authority to transfer money if needed in the event that anything they've decided today might cause an issue. Director Clough said they can if the money is available.

Rep. Almy asked why so much money has to be spent on video cameras for the Sheriff's cruisers. Rep. White said that they are a highly specialized piece of equipment and seems like a valuable tool to protect both prisoners and the County.

DISCUSSION:

Rep. Bulis asked if there was any more discussion or amendments to Rep. Brosseau's motion. Seeing none, the Chair then asked for a motion to end debate.

Rep. Sova moved to end debate on the motion which was seconded by Rep. Brosseau. 6 Reps. (Bulis, Almy, Ladd, Sova, Brosseau, and Gionet) were in favor and 3 Reps. (White, Aguiar and Townsend) were opposed. Motion passes.

Rep. Sova (Clerk) took a roll call vote on the motion as amended, adjustments and decreases as discussed at this meeting in the amount of \$891,069 as reviewed and recommended.

6 Reps. (Almy, Bulis, Gionet, Ladd, Bulis, and Sova) were in favor and 3 Reps. Aguiar, Townsend and White) were opposed. Rep. Brosseau's amended motion passes.

REVENUES:

Director Clough reviewed the revenues. There was a discussion as to whether or not a specific number had to be used in revenues since there was really no control over the amounts received. Rep. Almy said these numbers are what the State uses to determine the property taxes so they do need to be as close as possible.

Rep. Almy moved to adopt the revenue changes in the document given to the Committee by Director Clough with the exception of the increase of \$9000 and decrease of \$29,500 in the Deeds budget which was seconded by Rep. Sova. All were in favor.

Rep. Almy asked for a caucus.

12:23 PM Recess was granted for caucus. Republicans went to the front conference room while Democrats went to a closed room off the main conference room.

12:35 PM Chairman Bulis called the meeting back in order.

Rep. Sova moved to recommend to the full Delegation, the Grafton County fiscal year 2012 budget in the amount of \$35,894,624, which was seconded by Rep. Gionet.

DISCUSSION:

Rep. Almy said that she will vote for this despite the fact that there are pieces of it she doesn't like. She said she will support this at the Delegation meeting as long as everyone else does.

The Clerk took a roll call vote which showed all members were in favor. Motion passes.

Rep. Bulis said that it has been an honor and a privilege to serve with everyone.

Rep. Aguiar stated that this is the full Committee's budget and that everyone should be prepared to support this at the meeting with the Delegation.

Rep. Ladd asked that the Committee also review the by-laws which will also be presented for a full Delegation vote.

Rep. Sova said he would also like to see a vote by the Delegation on the opposition to the Northern Pass.

Director Clough will have other items that will require votes as well.

12:40 PM All were in favor of adjourning.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Sova, Clerk