

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BUDGET REVIEW

Administration Building  
3855 Dartmouth College Highway  
North Haverhill, NH  
Monday June 6, 2011

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

OTHERS: A. Farina, R. Clough, Sheriff Dutille, E. Bolander, B. Patanovich, T. Andross along with Dept. Heads who were presenting their budgets.

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

Rep. Ladd moved to approve the minutes from May 23, 2011 which was seconded by Rep. Sova. All were in favor.

Rep. White moved to approve the minutes from May 27, 2011 which was seconded by Rep. Brosseau. All were in favor.

Rep. Bulis stated that auditors Melanson & Heath had submitted a bid proposal for the financial audit of the County and had sent a letter to the Executive Committee, via Rep. Bulis, that stated that since they had been contracted by the Executive Committee to conduct the Performance Audit on the County, they would only agree, if chosen, to do the financial audit if the Executive Committee approved. Rep. Bulis asked if anyone had any problem with that and there were no objections.

Director Clough went over a list of changes that could be made to the budget in order to reduce it. Maintenance allocations were reduced. Seven positions for the new Correctional Facility were eliminated which included all the programs and two Correctional Officers. Plant operation at the Facility was reduced as the amount of time the facility would be open was reduced.

News from NHA Bolander indicated that the Medicaid reimbursement rate was going up \$5.23 as of July 1<sup>st</sup> which would mean an additional \$194,713 in revenue.

Register of Deeds Monahan said she was not comfortable with the increase in her revenue and wanted to reduce it by \$25K. She also removed a \$25K request for a copier from the surcharge account.

With these reductions and other minor ones, the amount to be raised by taxes was 9.34%. The new revenue from the Nursing Home was \$9,961,475.

**COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE** ~ Attorney Lara Saffo reviewed her budget for the Committee. She said that most of increases in her budget come from salaries. She stated

that the office really needed another attorney due to the high caseloads but she is aware of the fiscal constraints. Under the County Attorney's budget is the VAWA grant, Victim Witness and Mental Health.

There is a request for an increase in Investigative Services from 15 to 20 hours.

9:35 AM Rep. Townsend arrived.

There was a discussion about the part-time investigator and the need for the increase in hours.

There was a discussion about the possibility of reducing the Medical Referee budget, which the County Attorney also oversees and Atty. Saffo said that it would be risky to reduce that amount.

**CA REVENUES** were discussed which included the VAWA grant, a grant for Victim Witness which pays for partial salary and travel, and Mental Health Court which is also a grant and pays for a part-time coordinator. The County has provided matching items for this grant but no cash value.

**DRUG COURT** ~ Coordinator Bob Gasser was on hand to discuss his budget. He said that DC is in its fourth year of operation and so far there have been 50 people who have participated in the program. 17 have graduated, 14 have gone to State prison and 2 have gone through the program but not graduated. 17 are currently in the program.

B. Gasser said that the Contracted Services line was eliminated which would have provided money for someone to evaluate the program, which has not been done since its inception. He said that he hopes to be able to find private money or grant money to do this.

There was a discussion about treatment services.

**REGISTRY OF DEEDS** ~ Registry of Deeds Kelley Monahan presented the Deeds budget. RD Monahan asked the Committee to consider the needs of the building in regards to maintenance and water seepage and noted that she was requesting a fire suppression system for the archive area of the Registry. She also noted that that restoration of older documents has been halted and that she would be looking for grants to continue that work.

There was a discussion about the surcharge account and how it is specifically supposed to be used.

Rep. Bulis asked if all the staff are still needed now since Deeds is now online. RD Monahan said that the online service does not necessarily affect the amount of documents that are processed even though it precludes people from actually having to come to the Deeds office.

**DEEDS REVENUE** ~ RD Monahan requested that the revenue total be reduced by \$25K as she did not feel comfortable with the amount of \$975K.

**CAPITAL OUTLAY** ~ Items will come out of the surcharge account.

There was a discussion about the fire suppression system. RD Monahan said she is charged with taking care of the documents and feels this is important in order to protect them. She said this is a no water, environmentally friendly system. Rep. White said he would like to see the local fire officials review this. RD Monahan said there will be permits required. Rep. Ladd asked about water coming from the floor above, to which there was no solid plan for.

10:45 AM The committee took a recess.

10:56 AM The meeting resumed.

It was decided that the Committee would meet on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June to review the budget further and again on the 21<sup>st</sup> of June if necessary. The full Delegation Vote would be scheduled for the 27<sup>th</sup> of June.

**HUMAN RESOURCES** ~ Director Michael Simpson presented his budget and gave the Committee a handout which showed areas of change in the HR budget.

Rep. Bulis asked about the Outside Council line and HRD Simpson said that he uses a law firm for guidance on various labor law issues. Rep. White said that the Outside Council line was managed very well at \$3000.

There was a discussion about postage and how it is handled County wide. As of last year, the HR Dept. started sharing the postage machine with the Commissioners Office as opposed to purchasing stamps. Rep. Aguiar said he would like to see the way postage is handled throughout the County, reviewed. Rep. Ladd said it would have to be cost efficient.

IT Manager Ruggles said that the addition of a mail server has eliminated a lot of paperwork.

Rep. Sova said he would hope the issue of postage would be looked at through the performance audit.

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY** ~ Manager Brent Ruggles went through his budget and explained what the IT Dept. does on the campus. He said there are currently 340 users. Rep. Ladd asked if all computer purchases go through the IT Dept. and ITM Ruggles said they don't, but he would like that to change. There was a discussion about the standardization of equipment. Rep. Townsend asked about using open source software and ITM Ruggles said he has incorporated it in many areas of the complex.

**CAPITAL OUTLAY** ~ The largest expense in the IT Capital Outlay is the integration of the fiber optics which will tie the complex together, including the new Jail.

Rep. Townsend asked about fire suppression for the IT equipment and ITM Ruggles said that was a weak area at present and needs to be reviewed.

**UNH COOPERATIVE EXTENSION** ~ Educator and Office Supervisor Deb Maes presented the UNHCE budget and explained the number of staff and their duties.

Rep. Almy asked about the possible reduction in educators since there is going to be a cut through UNH. D. Maes said that the University system is planning to cut \$2M and everyone is looking at various possibilities. Rep. Almy asked if people would be lost at Grafton County and D. Maes said she was not sure and that they were looking at reorganization.

Rep. Townsend asked if 4-H was a privately supported program or done specifically through UNHCE and D. Maes replied that it was more a publically supported program done though UNH.

There were questions about the Travel line and D. Maes said there are times when travel becomes more necessary than at other times and referenced the time the Agricultural Educator needed to travel to Farms throughout the County when the tomato blight hit. She said travel depends on the needs of the public.

**REVENUE** (\$8000) for UNHCE comes from UNH for clerical and the Dairy specialist.

11:50 AM Rep. Ladd and Commissioner Burton were excused

**COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE** ~ Director Clough reviewed the items in the Commissioners budget. Rep. Bulis said that the dues to the NHAC are expensive. NHA Bolander, who is the NHAC President, said the dues primarily go to pay the lobbyist for the Counties. Rep. Almy said she never sees a lobbyist and Rep. White echoed that sentiment and said she is not a familiar face. NHA Bolander said she is at the State House every day.

Rep. Aguiar asked about the Commissioners reduced salary. Director Clough said that Commissioner Ahern requested to be paid 10% less than was voted on as a personal decision.

**CONTINGENCY** ~ All items have been reduced.

12:10 PM The Committee recessed for lunch

12:48 PM The meeting resumed.

Rep. Bulis instructed the Committee that if they wanted to make recommendations they can do so.

Director Clough resumed with the items for which there was no other representation.

**GRAFTON COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL** ~ Executive Director Mark Scarano had spoken with Chairman Bulis about funding and said that he would reduce his request by \$10K.

There was a discussion as to whether or not the GCEDC is really within the domain of the County or whether they should be funded by their host community. Rep. Almy said there is really is no host community for this and they go where there is a need. She said they started out requesting a grant for \$25K and she didn't know if they could continue without the help of County funds. Rep. Townsend said that sometimes they can get other grants but they can't be used for operating expenses.

Commissioner Cryans said they have played a crucial role in the DRTC in Lebanon and worked in Lisbon with furniture maker DCI to keep them afloat. He said personally, he feels it is money well spent.

Rep. Townsend moved to approve the budget for GCEDC in the amount of \$40K which was seconded by Rep. Brosseau. All were in favor.

**CONSERVATION DISTRICT** ~ Grafton County funds the Administrative position with the Conservation District. This person works primarily in Orford and one day a week at the County complex. Rep. Bulis asked what it is they do. Commissioner Ahern said they work with landowners to preserve natural resources. There were further questions as no one quite understood their function. Director Clough read the information from their website and Sec. Martino provided the Chairman with their annual report and other materials that were presented to the Commissioner when GCCD presented their budget. It was then clear that everyone actually knew what agency they were at that point. GCCD is also statutorily mandated for all Counties.

### **REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS**

Director Clough said that these lines are for dues to these agencies. Rep. Bulis said he doesn't feel that these fit the County mandate and should be supported by their towns. Rep. White asked Director Clough if the County interacts with these agencies and she replied that they do. Rep. Gionet said that Lincoln had stopped using them and is now using them again, but he has little support for them.

Rep. White moved to approve the Regional Planning Commission budget which was seconded by Rep. Townsend. Reps. Brosseau, Gionet, Sova and Bulis were opposed. Reps. Aguiar, Almy, Townsend and White were in favor. Motion fails as there is no majority.

Commissioner Cryans said that NC RC&D supported the County with a \$4500 grant for the biomass project and that was more than enough to pay the dues. He said they have helped the County.

There was further discussion and talk about funding some but not all of the three agencies. Rep. White said it didn't make sense to fund two and not all three. Rep. Gionet said he felt it was just supporting one more layer of government. Rep. Bulis said they will look at this again when Rep. Ladd returns.

**WAGES & BENEFITS** ~ This budget funds the health reimbursement account for everyone except the Nursing Home, Educational Assistance and Retiree Health Insurance for everyone except the Nursing Home. In regard to the HRA, Rep. Almy asked if there was actuarial information as to how much money would be left over from the account from the previous year according to usage. Director Clough said there was no actuarial information but rather information from other Counties who provide the same benefits to their employees and from the insurance company itself.

Rep. Ladd and Commissioner Burton returned.

Rep. Bulis asked what the utilization has been with the Educational Assistance and Director Clough said there has been very good usage of the account. She said this year all the money has been obligated.

**T.A.N INTEREST** ~ lowered due to low interest rates. The other side of that is the low interest rate when investing.

Rep. Sova moved to approve the TANS Interest which was seconded by Rep. Townsend. Reps. Bulis, Aguiar, Gionet, Almy, Brosseau, Townsend, Sova and Ladd were in favor. Rep. White was opposed.

#### **BONDED DEBT**

Rep. Townsend moved to approve the bonded debt which was seconded by Rep. Brosseau. All were in favor.

**UNALLOCATED INSURANCE** ~ Director Clough explained that this was unemployment insurance. She said more of this money has been spent this year than any time in the past. There is also an escrow account of \$30K for unemployment insurance.

**DELEGATION EXPENSES** ~ Director Clough explained that the Delegation has exceeded their budget of \$10K for last year by over \$2000 and the discussion was whether or not to increase this line for FY12.

Rep. White moved to increase the Delegation expense line to \$15K which was seconded by Rep. Aguiar.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

Rep. White said although it doesn't seem right raise one's own salary; it only seems logical since the Delegation can't seem to operate within the given amount. Director Clough said it was over expended last year but in fiscal year 2009 only \$8K was spent.

When the vote was taken Reps. Sova, Ladd and Almy were opposed and Reps. Townsend, White, Bulis, Aguiar, Brosseau and Gionet were in favor. Motion passes.

Rep. Bulis asked the committee to go back to the budget for Regional Planning since Rep. Ladd has returned.

Rep. Townsend moved to fund the Regional Planning budget as proposed which was seconded by Rep. White.

**DISCUSSION:**

Rep. Ladd said that North Country Council has provided the town of Haverhill with a lot of good information and have protested loudly against the Northern Pass. He said that the towns needed NCC's support.

When the vote was taken, Reps. Gionet and Sova opposed. Reps. Bulis, White, Townsend, Almy, Ladd, Aguiar and Brosseau were in favor. Motion passes.

Director Clough reviewed the revenues.

**HUMAN SERVICES** ~ Administrator Nancy Bishop reviewed her budget. She explained how the State and County share certain expenses on nursing care and home and community based care. HSA Bishop made some reduction to her budget including no stipend and the reduced benefits from that, plus a reduction in her Intermediate Nursing Care line that is a result of changes in HB 2 regarding MQIP monies. This amounted to a total reduction of \$183,739. She said that although she does not believe that the County will reach the amount of the cap placed by the State, there may be some delayed billings and did not recommend any further reductions just in case.

Rep. Sova moved to approve the HS budget in the amount of \$7,309,986 which was seconded by Rep. Brosseau. All were in favor.

**REVENUES:**

HSA Bishop said that revenues are from recoveries from liens that were placed on properties of people who were in the Medicaid system. The County then receives a percentage of money that is recouped. She said that line has been increased by \$55K.

**SOCIAL SERVICES** ~ Rep. Bulis directed the Committee to the SS budget and said that the explanations for the agencies were in the back of the budget. He began with the first agency and prefaced it by saying he didn't know why Ammonoosuc Health Care and Family Planning should be relevant to the County. Rep. Sova said he has a problem with asking people through their taxes to donate to an organization. Rep. Almy said that she said that she pays taxes to a lot of things that she doesn't want to and they are for the common good, not just personal good. She said however that she does not understand paying for children if the original intent of Social Service funding by the County is to keep people out of the Jail and the Nursing Home.

HSA Bishop clarified that by saying that children services were added when the County was responsible for juveniles and the County is no longer responsible for children; the State is.

Rep. Bulis said when the budget goes off into tangents that are not part of the mandate, then he has an issue with that. He said he didn't see what some things had to do with County government.

Rep. White said he would be inclined to want to know where the rest of the money for their operating budget comes from.

Rep. Ladd said that maybe the point is to save money in the beginning stages of live rather than when they are in Jail.

Rep. Bulis still had an issue with what Family planning had to do with County government.

Rep. Gionet moved to remove \$30K funding from Ammonoosuc Family Support which was seconded by Rep. Sova.

### DISCUSSION

Rep. Ladd said he would rather have a broad discussion and then come back and look at specific items.

Rep. Bulis said he didn't think family planning is a government mandate. He said he's not questioning the service, just the aptness of funding.

Rep. Almy said she would like to see the County out of the business of things that are not mandated but she wasn't comfortable with taking a large portion of an agency's budget away with only a few weeks left to make this decision.

Rep. White said he tended to agree with Rep. Ladd and that money should be spent in the beginning years of life. He said there should be a philosophical discussion as to what to do.

Rep. Sova said there is no empirical evidence that if the County fosters these particular organizations that it's going to make a difference.

Rep. Aguiar said he would like to see a more comprehensive analysis on these agencies and perhaps eliminate some, but in a more structured way.

Rep. White said he didn't see a data driven decision as to the funding of the agencies.

Rep. Gionet said he didn't think the purpose of government is to fund daycare.

Rep. Ladd said there will be some downshifting to the towns if the County eliminates funding.

Rep. Bulis said he can understand funding the services that legitimately eliminate the potential to enter either the Jail or the Nursing Home.

Rep. Almy said subsidized daycare is something the State should be doing, as they took over the juvenile services. Rep. Townsend said he agrees that children services are not what the County should be funding but it doesn't seem responsible to stop services because the State is not taking over.

Rep. Gionet said that he doesn't have any problem with the mother staying home with children rather than having others watch their children. He said when the mother left the home you saw the country go down the tube. He said it's not going to get better until they get back there.



Rep. Bulis gave some options as to what various routes they could take with this budget. He took a straw poll and seven were in favor of cuts while two did not want to see any cuts.

Rep. Sova withdrew his motion and Rep. Gionet removed his second.

There was discussion about the Senior Service agencies.

Rep. Sova moved to cut Senior Services to zero. There was no second.

2:55 PM Rep. Brosseau was excused.

Rep. Aguiar said he would like to see the Committee go about the SS budget in a thoughtful way and said he could consider an overall percentage cut.

Rep. Gionet then moved to cut \$1.5M from the overall budget and then hand it over to the full Delegation for a vote, which was seconded by Rep. Sova.

Rep. Bulis said the Committee owes it to the Administration to have them review that first.

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

Rep. White said it would be nice to have the person who made the recommendations for the Social Service budget here today. Rep. Bulis said this is where they are at right now.

Rep. Bulis moved to reduce the entire Social Service budget by 15%.  
There was no second to the motion.

Rep. Ladd said he was reluctant to cut some programs but would be in favor of cutting others, though he doesn't really have enough information for either.

Rep. Bulis moved to approve the Social Service budget as presented, which was seconded by Rep. Aguiar.

#### DISCUSSION:

Rep. White said he agreed with Rep. Ladd and would really like to know what certain agencies do. Rep. Bulis said he was looking for a direction to go.

Rep. Aguiar withdrew his second to the aforementioned motion and Rep. Bulis withdrew the motion.

There was a discussion about hearing from Supt. Libby about the figures he presented and concern about the reduction of certain programs in the new Jail.

Rep. White moved to restore \$41,817 to Corrections line 6100-002 along with all the appropriate changes in benefits that go along with that

DISCUSSION:

Director Clough said that in order to restore the programs, the Correctional Officers would also need to be restored. She said you can't do one without the other. She stated that Officers would be needed to supervise people while they were attending programs.

Rep. Bulis asked what else people would like to discuss regarding the DoC.

Rep. White said he doesn't buy the fact that it is impossible to restore just the program without adding an officer. He said there is always someone available to help and added that he doesn't want to take a step backward from the services that are being provided today. Rep. Ladd supported that.

Director Clough said that if the Committee has questions then Supt. Libby needed to be here to answer them because she didn't know the details of how he came to various decisions.

It was noted that there was no second to this motion by Rep. White.

Rep. Bulis asked if the Committee wanted to just add the money back into the budget and let Supt. Libby sort it all out. Rep. White said he didn't want to do that and wanted to see it put into specific areas. Rep. Sova suggested that the motion be restated to reinstate the program.

Rep. White restated his motion to restore the three program personnel that were removed, back into the Corrections budget, along with the benefits that go with them, which was seconded by Rep. Townsend.

Rep. Bulis asked if they were going to discuss any more in the Corrections budget. Rep. Ladd said if the Committee doesn't get to speak with Supt. Libby then he will want to accept the amount of reductions made by the Supt. but put the programs and benefits back in.

There were other questions that were being asked and Rep. Aguiar suggested that the motion be withdrawn until they can speak with Supt. Libby.

Rep. Townsend withdrew his motion providing they were able to speak with Supt. Libby.

Rep. Aguiar asked the Commissioners how they arrived at the reductions they had put forth, in the first place.

Commissioner Cryans said that the last Commissioners meeting was very much like the Executive Committee's meetings in that they could not come to an agreement as to what

should be done. Director Clough had reviewed a number of things and brought those as proposed items to the Board. Many came from Corrections. Commissioner Cryans said he was concerned because he didn't want to see cuts to the programs.

Rep. Bulis commended Director Clough for the proposals she brought forth.

Rep. Aguiar wanted more clarifications as to how departments were asked to make cuts. Commissioner Cryans said he didn't ask anyone to make cuts. He said he felt the Board put forth a good budget and thought it was very difficult to consider cuts.

Commissioner Ahern said that on the day it was discussed at the Commissioners meeting, he didn't feel he had enough information to vote on a change. Neither Commissioner Cryans nor Commissioner Ahern had wanted to take a vote. Commissioner Burton was in favor of the recommendation by Director Clough. Director Clough clarified that these were not recommendations from her.

Rep. Gionet excused himself.

Rep. Almy passed out some information regarding how the Counties were positioned according to the population and their budget. Grafton County is listed as number three going from lowest budget to highest. She noted that even with the addition of the new jail, Grafton County would still be in 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

Rep. Almy said she still feels there should be a Correctional Facility with programs.

Commissioner Burton said he felt confident about the numbers that were brought forth by Director Clough and his main concern is for public safety. He said that the ball is now in the court of the Executive Committee and he cautioned them to be careful. He affirmed the importance of programs and that they will cut down on recidivism. He said he was ready to go along with the recommendations of the Executive Director.

It was reiterated that the next meeting would be scheduled for the 20<sup>th</sup> of June as well as the 21<sup>st</sup>. If the meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> is not needed, it will be cancelled. The full Delegation vote will be set for the 27<sup>th</sup> of June.

3:45 PM All were in favor of adjourning.

Respectfully submitted,

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Charles Sova, Clerk