

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Budget Reviews

3855 Dartmouth College Hwy

North Haverhill, NH

Thursday, March 15, 2012

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

OTHERS: Nick DeMayo

Commissioner Cryans called the Meeting to order at 9:05 AM.

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance

COUNTY ATTORNEY: Lara Saffo & Office Mgr. Alison Farina

The Attorney's Office is requesting one additional attorney, a full time clerical person (which will be shared with Victim Witness) and a part time file clerk. Total cost for the three positions plus benefits is around \$115K. Atty. Saffo said that cases are increasing and feels there is a need for more help.

There will also be an additional cost for office supplies because of the added personnel.

MENTAL HEALTH COURT:

The MHC has been operating on a grant but that money will be running out. Atty. Saffo thought there may be around \$70K left and is requesting \$40K for that budget in order to keep the program running. Members of Halls of Hope (Donna Stamper and Rosemary Affeldt) which operates through the Lebanon Court, and ASSERT (Shawna Delworth) which operates out of the Littleton Court, were present, as well as Mental Health Coordinator Shelley Golden. There was a discussion as to how the program operates and Commissioner Ahern asked if the city of Lebanon or the towns of Littleton or Haverhill offer any financial support for the program. Atty. Saffo said they have not but there is some support from the United Way.

Mr. DeMayo stated that he had hoped that the Commissioners and the Dept. Heads were be cognizant of the fact that school taxes and town taxes are increasing and that the County needs to think about that as well as their own needs. Atty. Saffo said she can appreciate that viewpoint but it would be irresponsible of her not to ask for more help.

The representatives from Halls of Hope and ASSERT presented the Commissioners with signatures of support for the Mental Health Court program.

COMMISSIONERS OFFICE & MISC: Director Clough

The position of Financial Director was added to the Commissioners budget as recommended by the performance audit and by the direction of the Board of Commissioners. Director Clough said most of the increased costs come from this new position.

Director Clough presented a request to increase the position of Payroll Coordinator from a grade 4 to grade 5 and stated that she had provided market data to support the request.

Commissioner Burton asked about a central purchasing agent as recommended by the auditors and Director Clough said that there is just not enough time to analyze this to see if it is a viable idea. She said it could be considered for FY14 but management would have to review it to see if it would be something that would work better than the way the County is doing things now. Commissioner Burton said he has been hearing that people don't really want it anyway.

There was some discussion about the Financial Director position.

Commissioner Ahern and Commissioner Cryans noted their appreciation for the thoroughness of the presentation as there was plenty of back up documentation for everything.

Director Clough said that she thought that the proposal for health costs will be either the same or possibly below what the County currently pays, which was good news.

There was a discussion prompted by Mr. DeMayo which centered around the County getting their budget on a calendar year so that they could work with the towns regarding costs. Commissioner Cryans said this is easier said than done and a transition to that would take quite some time.

Director Clough went over all the Miscellaneous accounts and noted that the largest increase in the budget was the four bonds that are being paid. She said that the \$884K increase is coming from picking up the principal payment on the second Jail bond and the two interest payments on the second Jail bond. She said next year there will be a decrease, however, if the County votes on the biomass plan then the FY13 budget would have to include a bond interest payment.

Commissioner Ahern asked Director Clough if she would provide the Board with a breakdown of all the new positions that have been put in the budget and she said she would.

TREASURER: Carol Elliott

This budget is fairly flat except for an increase in bank fees. In revenue, the interest amount has decreased because the rates are so low.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: IT Manager Brent Ruggles

IT is requesting a full time help desk position noting the recommendation from the performance audit and the need for another person due to the increase in computers and networks on the campus.

A new line item was added for contractual services which would be for support on the new fiber optic lines.

ITM Ruggles reviewed his capital budget which includes purchases for all the equipment for all the departments.

The Commissioners signed letters to be sent to retirees in regard to a change in health insurance benefits for spouses.

1:05 PM With no further business the meeting adjourned.

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk