

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Budget Reviews

3855 Dartmouth College Hwy

North Haverhill, NH

Thursday, March 29, 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 9:04 AM.

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

NURSING HOME: Administrator Craig Labore and Finance Manager Bryan Patanovich

Revenue: Medicaid and Medicare projections are down while pro share and bed tax projections are up. There will be an increase to private pay and overall there is a 2.64% projected increase in revenues.

Requests were made for the Receptionist to move from grade 3 to grade 4 and the Bookkeeper and Purchasing Agent from grade 4 to grade 4E.

There was a request for \$88K for computer hardware/maintenance to replace the outdated PDA's with 12 computer kiosks which would be stationed in all four nursing areas. There is also consideration for a new type of PDA for dietary documentation.

NHA Labore said he would like to increase wages in order to have monthly staff meetings in an attempt at better communication and there was a recommended grade increase for Staff Coordinator and for the Assistant Activity Director.

Plant maintenance is down 7% overall.

There is a 1.31% increase in expenditures and a 2.64% increase in revenues.

Commissioner Burton asked if the County has recently gone through a wage survey and Director Clough responded by saying that there had not been a complete survey done but there has been some internal work by Human Resources and by the HR Affiliates of all the Counties.

Commissioner Ahern asked if there is any kind of regulation that HRA Labore thought was unnecessary and could be done away with and he replied that there is a reason for regulations and he didn't think that there was anything in the budget that could be changed.

Commissioner Cryans said that he was pleased that there is an expectation of revenues increasing \$85K over the increase in expenses and he said that he hopes that the level of service can be maintained.

There was a discussion about the contract nursing services and the fact that there hasn't been enough money to pay for that in the past. Director Clough asked if money should be put into that line. B. Patanovich explained how the salaries, scheduled time and FMLA are figured. The expectation is that there should be money "below that line" to cover the contracted nurses if needed.

Commissioner Ahern asked if NHA Labore was content with the current FMLA policy and he said he is not comfortable commenting on that right now. B. Patanovich thought it should be evaluated.

N. DeMayo said he feels that there is a difference between needs and wants and said that sometimes that wants can not be afforded.

He questioned whether or not the County gave preferential hiring to those from New Hampshire and Director Clough said the law states that can not be done. Mr. DeMayo said he felt people from New Hampshire should be hired before those from another state.

CORRECTIONS: Superintendent Glenn Libby

There are a number of different budgets under the general Corrections budget and Supt. Libby reviewed them as follows:

Residential Substance Abuse Treatment Grant There was a question as to whether or not this grant would be funded but Supt. Libby was optimistic about receiving this grant money and thought that it may even be increased. He said he should know that full amount in a couple of months.

Night Watchmen The budget is down \$2K

Revenue Up approximately \$10K

Corrections Overall there is a slight increase but there are no new positions at this time and Supt. Libby stated that he has been forewarned by the Chairman of the Delegation that there may be some cuts to personnel. Commissioner Cryans asked what a doable number of employees would be taking security into consideration. Supt. Libby said that after last year's cuts he made a commitment to go forward with the plan that the Delegation set for him. He said that he hoped that the subcommittee had learned something from all they've gone through but he doesn't expect any new people to be suggested.

Commissioner Cryans said there has been an amazing savings from the original numbers put forth. Supt. Libby said that the original cost of operation which was calculated in 2008 was about \$7.4M while the new estimated costs are around \$3M less than that. He said there have been millions saved on both the building and the operations and people should be pleased with that. He said he feels this project has been tremendously successful at the end of the day and that Grafton County employees will be safer doing their job.

Commissioner Cryans said he commends Supt. Libby and the rest of the team for all they've done.

In regard to the cost of electricity for the new Jail, Supt. Libby said that the legislature had and still has the potential of saving the taxpayers thousands of dollars by working to de-regulate Woodsville Water & Light and their hold on the taxpayers, but have neglected to do so.

Mr. DeMayo asked what should be done with the old Jail and Supt. Libby said that as a taxpayer himself, he would recommend tearing down, at least the old back portion. He said renovation of the front part may end up being way too costly for the people also.

Community Corrections Supt. Libby has put in for a grade increase for one of the staff but overall the budget has been reduced. Community Corrections will be moving to the new Jail once it's open.

The grand opening of the new Correctional Facility will be on May 6th beginning at 1:00 PM

The meeting was recessed for lunch.

The meeting was resumed.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS: Register of Deeds Kelley Monahan presented her budget which is up 6.5%. RD Monahan said that she wanted to be able to show the actual cost of operation so there were some items in the budget that had in the past gone into the surcharge account. In the surcharge account RD Monahan is requesting some computer hardware/software upgrade and a fire suppression system to protect the old records. There is no expected increase in revenue as it remains flat.

Director Clough informed the Commissioners that all the Department budgets have now been presented and that they are scheduled to make their decisions on these budgets on the 12th and 20th of April . Director Clough said it appears that the total increase in expenditures at this point is around 6% which would mean a 10% tax increase this includes using a \$3M surplus to reduce taxes.

Director Clough will have a final budget for the Commissioners to review on April 3rd. HR Director Simpson will be bringing forth information regarding the recommendations of the Benefits Committee.

1:00 PM With no further business the meeting adjourned.

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk