

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Administration Building
3855 Dartmouth College Highway
North Haverhill, NH
Monday October 17, 2011

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

EXCUSED: Representative White

OTHERS: County Attorney Lara Saffo, Human Services Administrator Nancy Bishop, Human Service Consultant Cindy Swart and Harold Brown (briefly)

Rep. Bulis called the meeting to order at 9:10 AM with the Pledge of Allegiance being led by County Attorney Lara Saffo.

Rep. Bulis began by saying that the performance audit draft would be ready by the first of November and will come to the Executive Committee, the Commissioners and the Department Heads to review and perhaps make amendments to and then it will be given to the Commissioners and Department Heads to address the bulleted items. He said that the goal from that point would be for the Executive Committee to put together an action plan for things that need to be done.

Attorney Saffo had asked to meet with the Committee to request a per diem rate be set for a contract Assistant County Attorney that she has in her office under RSA 733b. She said that she lost an Attorney who retired in September and has hired an Attorney who won't be on board until January leaving a three month period in between. Atty. Saffo said she has some money in her budget to be able to do this and would like to have this person for ten days at \$175 per day.

She stated that there has been an increase in crime and the number of cases has increased from 450 to 653. This person would be handling new cases.

Rep. Sova moved to approve the hiring of a contracted attorney for the amount of \$1750. for the period covering October through December which was seconded by Rep. Brosseau.

DISCUSSION:

Rep. Almy asked what kinds of cases are causing concern and Atty. Saffo said that there have been increases in both sexual assaults and burglaries.

Rep. Ladd said he feels that the County should be paying the proper rate for the appropriate work, suggesting that the amount of recommend pay was not enough. Rep.

Sova suggested that if it wasn't enough, Atty. Saffo could always come back and ask for more.

Rep. Gionet asked if this would be a permanent position and Atty. Saffo reiterated that it would be a contract position for ten days.

There was further discussion about the reason for the increase in crime and what element might be behind it. Atty. Saffo stated that it was 20 something year olds who are generally local and out of work "couch surfers". She said she would be glad to speak to the Delegation about crime at some point if that's what they would like.

Rep. Ladd moved to amend the motion to say that the contracted person should be paid in accordance with the first step on the pay scale which was seconded by Rep. Brosseau.

Rep. Almy said that perhaps Atty. Saffo could move something out of another line item to make sure she gets the full ten days she requested.

Rep. Bulis asked if there is money elsewhere to cover the work load that the office is experiencing and Commissioner Cryans said they haven't had that discussion at this point.

Rep. Ladd said that he was concerned that there are attorney's working extra hours who are not being compensated. Director Clough said that there are a number of people at the County who work extra hours they are not compensated for and didn't think that Rep. Ladd would want to go down that road.

Rep. Ladd said the he feels they should be supporting the Attorney's office particularly if the crime rate continues.

There was further discussion about how the rate for the contract attorney was set and what was stated in the RSA, which is a per diem rate.

Rep. Sova Withdrew his motion and Rep. Brosseau withdrew his second.

Rep. Sova moved to set the contract rate for the employee at \$198.88 per diem per RSA 733B as per the request of the County Attorney, which was seconded by Rep. Brosseau.

All were in favor.

Rep. Aguiar arrived.

Rep. Brosseau moved to approve the minutes from September 19, 2011 which was seconded by Rep. Almy. All were in favor.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Elliott informed the Committee that the tax money will be here in about two months and the paperwork is ready for borrowing when needed. Right now the County is expecting a Bed Tax payment of \$225K which will help until that time. There will be a line of credit extended at Woodsville Guaranty Savings Bank with an interest rate of .8%.

Rep. Townsend moved to accept the Treasurer's Report which was seconded by Rep. Sova. All were in favor.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORT

Commissioner Cryans presented the report from the Commissioners.

- Nursing Home Administrator Eileen Bolander will be retiring the 16th of December after 12 years with the County. Her term as NHACo President will end next week.
- Commissioner Burton will chair a committee brought together to study what to do with the old Jail and three students from the Rockefeller Center at Dartmouth will be doing research for the study. The meeting will be scheduled for November 1, 2011 at 12:00 PM
- The RFP/RFQ bid for engineering and design on a biomass plant was awarded to Banwell Company.
- There will be a Drug Court graduation on the 24th of October at 1:30.
- Commissioners Cryans and Ahern attended a GED graduation last week.
- Most of the exterior work has been completed on the new Jail and the project is on time and on budget.

Rep. Almy asked who will be taking over at the Nursing Home and Director Clough said that has not been determined yet and that a candidate search will take place.

Rep. Gionet asked if the Commissioners had made any decision about Dispatch and read a letter from the Town of Lincoln that was sent to Commissioner Burton which stated the Town's opposition to the changing of Dispatch fees.

Commissioner Cryans said there was a survey sent out but there haven't been any decisions made.

Commissioner Burton said he's not interested in changing what's already in play and would like to see the issue resolved. He said that he will make sure the letter from Lincoln is on the agenda for the Commissioners meeting tomorrow morning. Commissioner Ahern said he was aware of the letter but it had not come before the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Cryans stated that Hanover had sent a letter with a similar tone and that he had been asked to speak with their Selectboard regarding this issue.

Rep. Ladd said he would like to see a copy of the survey.

Rep. Bulis changed the topic and referenced the minutes from the Commissioners' meeting on the 20th of September which discussed removing perfect attendance from the employee benefits and unfreezing longevity. He asked where the cost for perfect attendance showed up in the budget. Director Clough replied that it was included in salary lines.

There was a discussion about perfect attendance and how it works. Director Clough said that if an employee qualifies for perfect attendance they receive 24 hours of either earned time or a payout. Rep. Bulis said that perfect attendance was never mentioned during the budget and Director Clough said there are a number of items that are included in the calculation of salary line items and not every item was discussed at that time.

There was further discussion about this.

Rep. Brosseau said he was totally opposed to this benefit and Rep. Bulis said he hasn't seen any documentation on this and has a problem with the fact that it is not shown anywhere in the budget.

Rep. Ladd said it was clearly something that been negotiated and didn't feel it should be touched. Rep. Aguiar said he has heard of perfect attendance awards though many of the other committee members had not.

Rep. Bulis said that in doing away with this, the Board of Commissioners is considering reinstating longevity for this year and he would hope the Commissioners do not violate the Delegations' desire to freeze longevity.

Director Clough said that according to the Delegation's own by-laws the Commissioners have the right and the authority to pay longevity if the money is there, which it is. Director Clough had a chart which showed that the cost to unfreeze and pay out the proper amount of longevity as is a benefit to the employees of Grafton County was actually lower than what is included in the fiscal year 2012 budget for longevity payments. Director Clough said she does not see that the Delegation has any authority to say that longevity can not be paid out if the money, which they voted on, was available. She added that she thought that the Delegation's decision to not pay non-bargaining unit employees longevity while paying Union employees at a higher rate, was penalizing those employees while at the same time, strengthening the Union. She said that this was creating a morale problem as well.

Rep. Brosseau said he was curious to know what kind of morale problem there would be suggesting that Grafton County employees already make enough money and that maybe if employees are unhappy they should look for another job in the private sector.

Rep. Sova said he thought this is a new argument and feels it is in the hands of the Commissioners as to whether or not they want to go against the wishes of the Delegation.

Rep. Ladd said if there is money available then the authority lies with the Commissioners and is an Administrative function. He said the Delegation only sets the budget amount.

Rep. Aguiar said he understood that longevity has been concluded and Director Clough said it had been for all new employees as of September, 2010.

Rep. Almy moved to accept the Commissioners Report which was seconded by Rep. Brosseau. All were in favor.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S FINANCIAL REPORT

Census in the Nursing Home is 132 and in the Jail the census is 99 with 21 in Drug Court and 9 out on electronic monitoring.

Director Clough reviewed the Variance Report saying they were a quarter of the way into the year.

The pro rated report was reviewed and there is a slight increase in revenue. The Farm is in the black due to steady milk prices, the Farmstand and the recent timber cut.

There is a total of approximately \$50K in over expended line items with \$47K of that in contract nursing services.

There was a discussion about the transferring of money between departments and whether or not the sub-departments in the Nursing Home were all considered for that purpose to be Nursing Home. Director Clough requested clarification on the by-laws regarding transfers. It was agreed that the Commissioners have the authority to transfer funds between line items within individual department budgets and up-to \$5K from other departments. Any department requiring a transfer to cover an overage of greater than \$5K would require written permission from the Executive Committee. Further clarification was that if individual departments in the Nursing Home were over expended in excess of \$5,000 then the County would have to ask permission from the Executive Committee to transfer money per the by-laws.

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

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Nothing to report

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Rep. Almy reported on her visit to the Cheshire County Jail along with Reps. Ladd and Smith.*(see attached report). All three delegates as well as Reps. White and Sova will be meeting with Supt. Libby on Friday to discuss what Grafton County is doing compared to Cheshire.

COMMENTS FROM THE DELEGATES

Rep. Ladd said he thought the Delegation should do something for NHA Bolander and Commissioner Burton said that it was very clear from the conference in Washington DC this year that NHA Bolander is well respected amongst the NH Delegates and their staff and she will be missed, particularly in Senator Shaheen and Senator Ayotte's office.

11:11 AM Recess

11:20 AM Meeting was called back to order by Chairman Bulis

Upon return, Human Service Administrator Nancy Bishop and HS Consultant Cindy Swart were seated at the table to answer questions about the components of social services in the budget. Rep. Bulis said that the Committee didn't know what agencies were proper for the County to fund and wanted the Commissioners to know what items the Delegation was interested in.

Commissioner Cryans said the County has relied on C. Swart to bring the information about the agencies to the Board over the years.

Rep. Bulis asked if the Commissioners give any guidelines or criteria about funding and Commissioner Cryans said that in the last few years the decision was that there would be no new agency applications and that the agencies should not expect more than level funding.

Rep. Bulis asked why then did some agencies ask for more money even though they were instructed not to. C. Swart said that she tells the agencies to ask for the money they need anyway.

Rep. Bulis asked C. Swart what her qualifications were and she said she has been doing this for 30 years and has her Masters in Social Work Administration. She spoke about various other things she has been involved with which has gained her further experience.

Questions were asked about how agencies were vetted and Rep. Ladd said he was interested in line item costs. C. Swart said she does dig into the reports of agencies but depending upon their size, their reports can vary greatly.

Rep. Townsend said he would be interested in exploring the "no new agency rule" in that there may be some newer agencies of value that could be added.

More questions and discussions were had which covered the vetting process.

Rep. Townsend asked if the County was being put at risk by supporting the religious efforts of an agency. C. Swart said she knew which agency Rep. Townsend was referring to and said that she had recommended no funding for this agency, but does not have the final say of who gets funded.

There were questions about how C. Swart gets to the needs of both the people and the agency that serves them. Rep. Bulis said that at budget time the Committee wrestled with question of what agencies are appropriate for the County to support. C. Swart said that early childhood programs have an affect on people as they grow and the child programs are the ones that are being severely cut in the State.

Rep. Sova asked if there was any empirical data as to the effectiveness of certain programs and C. Swart said that they generally rely on outside studies for this information and not information from the actual agencies.

There was a discussion as to whether or not there should be an open application for new agencies and the decision was that the first step should come from the Commissioners and then to the Delegation. C. Swart said the Commissioners have always been very thorough and thoughtful when assessing agencies to determine funding. Rep. Aguiar said it was probably too late to make any changes for next year since the deadline for sending out applications was coming up soon.

The next Executive Committee meeting will be on the 21st of November at 9:00 AM

Rep. Almy said she would like to see the starting wage for each grade for fiscal year 2001 and fiscal year 2010 for that meeting.

There was some discussion about the Committee coming up with some draft resolutions for the next budget and it was decided that they would wait to see what the performance audit report said before making any decisions.

12:20 PM Rep. Gionet moved to adjourn which was seconded by Rep. Sova. With no further business and all in favor, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Sova, Clerk

Three of the jail sub-committee made it down to Keene, Reps Ladd, Smith and Almy. We had a lengthy discussion with the county commissioners and the long-time jail superintendant, Richard Van Wickler, and then toured the jail with his Programs Director (also a correctional officer (CO)). I took some pictures, annotated and attached as a slide show (download a free copy of Adobe Reader <http://get.adobe.com/reader/?promoid=DINRS>) – it ends with their org chart, until you hit <esc> it will stay in view).

They began construction in 2007, after 13 years of debate over the site and then size and staffing and everything we went through; they opened in 4/10. Although their old jail was built in the 70's and upgraded in the '80's, it also was along the old pattern (lines of cells with the CO's watching remotely or marching past) and could not accommodate the number of staff that the correctional industry now thinks needed for safety, court constitutional requirements and program. They talk of it as quadrupling the size of the jail and only adding 70% to the staff. They have 230 beds, opened with 114 filled and are now at 205 (32 non-Cheshire).

Although they were supposed to open with 77 staff (62 of them COs) they opened with 70, all the loss being from COs, and have stayed at that (55 COs), due to pressures by the delegation. Superintendent Van Winkler talked in depth about the transition from the old traditional method to the direct supervision. It is very different and requires major readjustments that some staff cannot make. They did the early hiring we cut back on, specifically to retrain the current COs on the new method. The average loss during this transition in other facilities is 20-21%, and they lost 24%.

They contract out dietary (but use inmate help) and medical (2 PT MDs and 1 PA totaling 1FTE); a medical coordinator, mental health clinician, and 2 FT nurses are on regular staff.

Their education/prevention programs are run with only one staffer, because they are right next to the city of Keene and have over 100 volunteers – this proximity also gives them the 3 Keene Hospital/DHMC MDs and PA. (Grafton has no way to attract a quarter this number, because the jail is too remote from big population centers.)

They also have a FT "federal liaison officer", whose sole task is to make sure every inmate who is being paid for by outside contract (currently 24 federal pre-trial prisoners and 8 Rockingham County women) is accounted for, the contractees are happy and they get paid – almost \$750,000 this year and they think much more next year. They have bought a huge \$90,000 van to transport these prisoners, and rather than give it to the Sheriff's Office, they do it themselves and charge handsomely to the feds and Rockingham.

The supervisory, support and contract personnel are not there 24/7 and are therefore single individuals. Supervisory consists of the Superintendent, a Safety & Security director, Classification director (interview new inmates and decide which units they go to and how to treat them), Training director,

Programs director, mental health clinician, medical coordinator, maintenance director and case manager, with support from an administrative secretary, receptionist, maintenance assistant and two licensed practical nurses. The maintenance director is independent of the one at the main county complex, in another town, because of the technological sophistication of the jail and the distance. Contract staff are 6 dietary people (from Fitz-Vogt, which we have at the nursing home, but the Superintendent insisted on, and got, the right to do the final interviews and pick his choice out of six candidates for director), the 2 MDs and PA.

The strictly correctional one-shift staff are 5: the booking commander, federal liaison officer, assistants for classification and training, and someone in charge of the "inmate lab office".

The line correctional officers must be there 24/7, so most of them need to be multiplied not only by 3 shifts but also extra people to cover food, bathroom and rest breaks, fights and other emergencies, inmate trips to the hospital, vacation, sick and pregnancy leaves, etc – they gave us a standard formula that works out the "shift relief factor" at 1.65 times the 3 shifts, but applied it to their own history and came up with 1.61.

The jail operates with one CO assigned inside each of the 4 classification units. The women are in an innovative area that has a central sealed area for the maximum-security inmates, surrounded by minimum and medium cells at two levels. The men are in two normal areas such as we will have, with medium and minimum in the same pod at two levels (the doors on the medium cells are harder to destroy), and a separate unit for maximum, where each inmate only leaves the cell for one hour, alone, into the main pod for programs and recreation. Every pod has a common area with dining/game tables, a TV viewing area, an area where they can access their commissary accounts on-line and order toiletries, laundry soap, games and magazines and such, a recreation area partly open to the outdoor air, and video screens whence they can talk to their visitors who are in the lobby. They almost never leave their pods. Because there are so many volunteers, they do not have to take up staff transporting inmates to a central area for programs, only if they are sick.

There are also two "patrol officers" who go up and down the hallway checking their half of the jail, substituting COs for breaks, replacing them in emergency, and coalescing with senior staff rapidly to form a back-up unit for the internal CO whenever a fight breaks out. We were shown 4 videos from their archive (they preserve all video from something like 100 cameras) of emergencies of varying intensity and how much damage can be done in the first 15 seconds and how they handle them. There are two "control officers" who man the central control, which contains all the video screens, inner and outer door security, and central communications for a jail too massive for the walkie-talkies to work from one end to the other; one of them goes out to help with emergencies and substitutions for people absent on leave, watching someone at the hospital or whatever. They usually only have one person doing the booking, which can get very busy; when someone who seems violent is brought in, one of the floaters has to come out and assist. Finally, there is a shift commander in charge of every shift.

This adds up, for the 24/7 line staff, to $10 \times 3 \times 1.61 = 48$. In fact they have only 3 commanders but 7 bookers, or 50 total, plus the 5 day-time line positions, plus 15 non-line support and administrative staff and the superintendent. The "missing man" represented by the 7 people they're short seems to be (a) a CO that is supposed to be assigned strictly to the laundry/kitchen/administrative/delivery areas to oversee the inmates working there and thwart escape attempts (presumably replaced by broadening the scope of the patrollers) and (b) more in booking.

Overtime: the superintendent neither budgets for nor pays overtime, in emergencies they make do and hope. So far it has worked, though they have been dangerously low some nights.

Privatization note: they solicited a bid to contract out all their medical needs, and compared it with current costs and decided it would cost more to privatize them.

Medical note: they did not put cells in the medical area, because they do not want to keep their staff there 24/7, and want to force anyone that sick to be sent to the hospital. If a serious detox or other such problem comes in, without any charges other than needing detox, they send them off to the hospital without jail staff.