

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Budget Reviews

Board of Commissioners' Office

North Haverhill, NH

Thursday, March 18, 2010

PRESENT: Commissioners Michael Cryans, Martha Richards and Ray Burton, Financial Coordinator Susan Cunningham, Executive Director Julie Clough and Secretary Jeri Martino.

Commissioner Cryans called the Meeting to order at 9:04 AM.

NURSING HOME

Nursing Home Administrator Eileen Bolander, Financial Officer Bryan Patanovich and intern, Hailey Wetherbee arrived to go over the budget.

B. Patanovich began by saying that with the past cut to the Medicaid rate, the budget begins with a \$650K deficit. Commissioner Cryans said he thought the loss was \$540K, which B. Patanovich then agreed with. Adjustments made to making up that amount include an increase in the private pay, which is in line with other nursing homes, and adding in \$300K from pro-share money. A new Medicaid rate will be released in June. In preparing the fiscal year 2011 budget the Nursing Home has used the current rate to be on the safe side. There was a long discussion about the Medicaid rate and its overall effects.

Commissioner Burton requested that any changes on the revenue side regarding the Medicaid rates be forwarded to the Board so that accurate amounts can be given to the Delegation prior to the vote.

There was a discussion about the difficulties of collecting monies from both families and the State for payments.

Commissioner Richards asked if there was a place to voice complaints and NHA Bolander said that this is a problem that is countrywide. Commissioner Richards said she feels that there ought to be someone to hear the complaints and the issues. NHA Bolander said that there is a huge amount of time spent chasing claims.

Money has been added into the budget for survey fines in the event that a fine is imposed. Commissioner Burton asked where the fine money goes and NHA Bolander said that it goes to the State to be held in a fund, which becomes federal money, and is supposed to be used for education and helping nursing homes in various ways. There is currently around \$700K in it. She said however, the fund is very difficult to access and she has put in requests before. It is called the Civil Money Penalty Fund.

Commissioner Burton asked that a copy of the law regarding this fund be presented to the Board regarding how the fund can be used.

B. Patanovich said that there are no new positions in the Nursing Home and that the Dietary staff hours have been reduced because of the reduction in meals being prepared for the Jail.

There was discussion as to whether or not eggs could be used from the Farm once FM Kimball's hens start laying and H. Wetherbee said that the NH could not use them unless there were pasteurized, according to regulations.

Commissioner Burton said that if the County is going to produce eggs he would like to see them used and questioned whether or not they could get a waiver. NHA Bolander said these are federal regulations and asked if the Commissioners really thought a waiver would be a good idea given the possibility that someone might become sick from eating unpasteurized eggs.

Commissioner Richards asked NHA Bolander to check with Pete & Gerry's organic eggs to see if they could get some kind of better deal ordering eggs from them.

Getting back to the budget, revenues are down 1.24% and expenses up 2.06%

Commissioner Cryans asked how NHA Bolander would grade the Nursing Home as compared to other homes saying that he always hears very positive compliments. NHA Bolander said that prior to last year and the reduction of the budget, the NH was 5 star, and has since become 4 star.

Commissioner Richards asked what the stars meant and H. Wetherbee said you could go to Medicare.gov and get a star rating for all nursing homes.

There was a discussion about the possibilities of other nursing homes closing and where those people would be placed.

ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

Attorney Lara Saffo and Office Administrator Alison Farina arrived to present the budget.

Statistics were presented that showed case increases and scheduled Court appearances from 2002 – 2009. There was much discussion about various programs and what was going on in the way of services, cases, etc.

In discussing the budget, there were some slight changes.

The position of Office Administrator has been sent to the wage consultant via the HR Department to see about an upgrade from grade 5 to grade 6. Monies are currently budgeted for grade 6.

\$2000 has been put into the capital outlay for a scan/document contract. This would be for a 48 month lease.

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE

Director Clough presented her budget to the Commissioners saying that most of the increases were general salary and benefit.

Allocations to the Nursing Home decreased approximately \$10K due to the new calculations. Audit service has increased because of GASB 45.

Commissioner's travel line has decreased and so has office supplies based on current yearly figures.

Commissioners travel line has been increased in the event that one or more Commissioners want to attend conferences and Education and Training for staff has been slightly increased.

Overall the gross budget increase is 3.78% or 6.61% if you factor in the change in NH allocations.

Director Clough then reviewed the Miscellaneous account which aside from the Bonded Debt which was increased in anticipation of two possible Jail bond interest payments and Tax Anticipation which was reduced by \$10K, remained fairly static.

No revenue projections have been calculated yet but Director Clough said that with the budgets that have been presented so far, less the Jail, Farm, Drug Court and Social Services, the budget is over \$500K on the expense side.

Register of Deeds Bill Sharp who presented his budget last Thursday returned to request to alter his presentation to request an additional \$8K from the surcharge account to purchase a scanner.

Commissioner Richards asked RD Sharp if the same number of personnel were needed to run the office since there has been a decline in work and he said that there was a discussion with the staff and he said he didn't feel the Department could be properly covered with less people.

11:15 AM Meeting adjourned

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk