

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' BUDGET MEETING

3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.

North Haverhill, NH 03774

March 23rd, 2017

PRESENT: Commissioners Lauer, Ahern and Piper, County Administrator Libby and Admin Assistant S. Norcross.

OTHERS PRESENT: Maintenance Supt. Jim Oakes, Nursing Home Administrator Craig Labore, Finance Manager Dawn Jurentkuff

Commissioner Lauer called the meeting to order at 9:00AM and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Superintendent Oakes stated that he received a proposal from a surveyor of \$3,000 to do all of the items they had previously discussed on Tuesday. County Administrator Libby stated that there is \$2,000 in the Commissioners' Office budget that they will not be using and between her and Supt. Oakes budget they can find the other \$1,000. Supt. Oakes stated that he is going to talk to the Town of Haverhill about helping out with some of the costs as well because this is a combined project. The Commissioners concurred that they wanted Supt. Oakes to continue with this approach.

Maintenance – Superintendent Jim Oakes

Supt. Oakes listed the following rate increases for FY18:

Water – 10% increase

Propane Rates – 5% increase

Off Road Diesel – 9.5% increase

Commissioner Ahern expressed concerns regarding the costs of repairs for the DoC HVAC systems and not knowing what the costs of repairs will be down the road. He asked Supt. Oakes if he has an employee who is licensed in HVAC. Supt. Oakes stated that he does not and that has been a problem because people with HVAC licenses have an opportunity to make a lot more money working for a HVAC contractor or on their own. He hasn't been able to attract someone with a HVAC license with the salary the county offers.

Salary Line – Supt. Oakes stated that he has two (2) employees that are eligible for merit increases but he would like to budget for a double step. One (1) employee is working towards his master plumber and if he receives it Supt. Oakes stated that he would like to give him the double step increase. This would total an extra \$972.00 in his budget. He stated that the second employee has done a fantastic job and would like to reward him. This extra step increase would cost \$249.00.

Contracted Services – Supt. Oakes stated that he has had an issue for many years with one of the items in this line. He explained to the Commissioners that they pay a fire protection fee which

amounts to \$7,927.92 a year. Woodsville Water and Light says that this is to provide water at the hydrants at a serviceable flow and pressure to fight fires and because it is not metered they will not get charged for whatever water is used in case of a fire. Supt. Oakes stated that when they had their fire at the barn in 2006 the hydrants did not meet that requirement. The firetrucks sucked the hydrants dry because the water flow was extremely poor. They had to go down into town to get water. After that they had a study done by a Fire Engineer, part of that was measuring all the pressures of the hydrants and their best hydrant flowed at 630 gallons per minute at 20psi and most trucks are pumping at 2000 gallons a minute at 20psi. This resulted in the construction of the water tank across the road. Woodsville Water and Light does not maintain the county's hydrants. They are getting nothing for this yearly cost. After further discussion the Commissioner discussed writing a letter to Woodsville Water and Light regarding this fee.

Contracted Services – Admin Building – Supt. Oakes stated that there is an increase of \$3,838 and the largest portion of that increase is to replace 115 sprinkler heads that are fifty (50) years old in the attic per National Fire Protection Agency 25.

Woodsville Water and Light – Commissioner Ahern asked about having to go with Woodsville Water and Light for electricity and if the county could go elsewhere they may be saving money. Supt. Oakes stated that they very well could save money by going elsewhere but they are statutorily required to use Woodsville Water and Light is a Municipal Electric company governed by NH State Statues and that is something that the Legislature would need to address.

Care of Grounds – Supt. Oakes stated that he can reduce this line item by \$2,000 for asphalt sealants if capital outlay request for paving at courthouse is approved.

Commissioner Piper asked about the possibility of Supt. Oakes hiring an employee with an HVAC license rather than constantly paying for these HVAC repairs. The Commissioners followed up Commissioner Piper's inquiry by asking what a competitive salary would be for someone with this license. They asked Supt. Oakes to look into the salaries and compare the extra cost to have someone with that license to what they are spending on HVAC repairs.

Capital Outlay

Superintendent Oakes reviewed the list of projects with the Commissioners. The total list for capital outlay requests from the Maintenance department is \$266,100. He explained that if the request for asphalt paving was denied the he would need at least \$5,000 for repairs.

Nursing Home – Administrator Labore and Finance Manager Dawn Jurentkuff

Revenue

NHA Labore stated that he is basing numbers with a census of 129.

VA Contract Line – NHA Labore stated that he has decreased this census to one (1) based off this year's numbers.

Medicare Part A – There is a \$200,000 increase based on this year’s numbers. The nursing home has had a good Medicare A census.

NHA Labore stated that there is a 3% increase in projected revenue for FY18.

Expense

NH Admin

NHA Labore stated that he is proposing to move the Administrative Billing Specialist from Grade 3 to Grade 4. This totals a \$498 increase to that position by upgrading it. He handed out a document listing his justifications for upgrading this position.

NHA Labore explained that they have done some consolidating with line items and have put all equipment leases into one (1) line.

Software Maintenance/Training – NHA Labore stated of that part of the Point Click Care contract is a onetime payment of \$3,100 to move forward with an electronic medication administration and electronic treatment administration program. This is a part of the new electronic health record that was implemented last year. It is the next step in the progression of moving towards having a fully convertible electronic health record. Commissioner Lauer asked what the various software that they have listed is and what it is used for. NHA Labore and FM Dawn Jurentkuff discussed the various programs with the Commissioners and answered questions.

Dietary

NHA Labore noted that the Commissioners will see decreases in overall wages due to a more extensive analysis of FTEs and actual hours worked.

Nursing

NHA Labore explained that as of right now the leadership in the Nursing Department is comprised of the Director of Nursing, Assistant Director of Nursing, two (2) unit managers and a Staff Development Director. They have been trying to hire a 3rd unit manager for a while and have had no luck. They had a new Director of Nursing come in December, a promotion from another position, and they have discussed where they are at and seeing what needs to be done. They have decided to move away from the unit manager idea and are thinking of addressing some of the major areas that they need within the department itself. They have shifted full time employees (FTEs) around so they are not asking for any new FTE’s, they are shifting around the responsibilities of the positions. They are looking to transition one (1) of their unit managers into the Assistant Director of Nursing position. The entry that is shown on the Assistant Director of Nursing line is the shift of one (1) of the Unit Managers. He noted that in the Nursing Admin Wages line the Commissioners will see a WOCN/Staff Development Assistant. He noted that this is the other Unit Manager FTE that is being shifted into another position.

NHA Labore stated that as a part of all this shifting around of FTE's they would like to hire a new position in the Director of Clinical Compliance. It was noted that this is not a new FTE, it is part of the shifting of FTE's that they have done. He handed out a job description and the justifications to the Commissioners. What they have seen as they have looked in the Nursing Department is a real opportunity to streamline processes within their Minimum Data Set Department. There is a group of nurses that compile quarterly assessments and it is very important to have accurate information. They are seeing an opportunity to improve the accuracy in that department and in doing so that is what this Director of Clinical Compliance would be doing. They would be overseeing the process in the MDS Department and ensuring that they have the greater accuracy within the assessments. He went on to further discuss other functions of the job and answered questions from the Commissioners.

Director of Nursing – NHA Labore stated that he would like give a double step increase to this employee and has budgeted for that.

Contracted Nursing – There is a large increase based on this year's usage.

Loan Forgiveness – NHA Labore stated that they budgeted for one (1) nurse that is currently in the program and the potential for a second.

Travel Expense – NHA Labore stated that they renegotiated a contract with the nurse staffing agency that was charging housing and are no longer paying for that so there is a decrease in this line.

Restorative Nursing

Rehab Supplies - NHA Labore explained that this accounts for an increased need to have different types of parts for wheel chairs and update on pressure relieving cushions.

Therapeutic Recreation

NHA Labore stated that the Director and Volunteer Coordinator positions were both reclassified through the wage study.

Commissioner Ahern asked if the volunteers were true volunteers or if there is a stipend/ travel reimbursement. NHA Labore stated that there is no reimbursement, it is all volunteer work.

Plant Operations

NHA Labore stated that these are the expenses that are required to keep the nursing home up and running.

Minor Equipment Repairs – This is a reflection on the CMS plan to move forward with Quality Assurance & Process Improvement.

Pharmacy & Physician

This budget is made up of the costs associated with prescriptions for residents in the Med A census.

Contract Services

Therapy & Rehab – Medicare A – There is an increase due to the Med A census that the nursing home currently has.

Therapy & Rehab – Medicare B – This number is based on the acuity of the residents.

Contract Physician – NHA Labore stated that he is requesting \$5,000 increase. He stated that this contracted physician did not receive increase last year. He is looking at about three (3) more years before she retires and they need to work on increasing that line item over the next couple of years to make that position attractive to potential hires when she retires.

NHA Labore stated that the overall expense budget is \$16,676,271.00 or an increase of 4.21% over last year. He noted that 42% of that increase is due to health insurance increase.

Capital Reserve

CA Libby explained that this is its own bank account reserved for equipment purchases for the nursing home. As of right now at the end of this fiscal year there should be roughly \$106,000-\$113,000 in that account. She explained that in order to fulfill this whole list that has been requested by NHA Labore they would need to contribute \$100,000 to that account from this year. Typically the county takes proshare money that is more than expected and puts it into that account.

NHA Labore stated that the purchase of the beds is the largest item on the capital reserve request but it is the 4th and final year of their bed replacement plan.

Commissioner Ahern asked NHA Labore to break down his wants versus his needs in his whole budget.

CA Libby stated that as of right now with all the budgets as presented they are at a roughly 5.3% increase in the amount to be raised by taxes.

Commissioner Ahern stated that he wanted to note that FM Manager said he was going to look into a dump wagon and he did not.

11:16 AM With no further business the meeting was adjourned

Wendy A. Piper, Clerk