

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' BUDGET MEETING
3855 Dartmouth College Highway
North Haverhill, NH 03774
April 18th, 2019

PRESENT: Commissioners Lauer, Piper and Morris, County Administrator Libby and Administrative Assistant Norcross

OTHERS PRESENT: Director of Communications Andross

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

Budget Discussion:

Commissioner Piper stated that she would like to prioritize a high COLA, fund one (1) of Supt. Oakes and NHA Labore's high priorities and keep the tax increase as close to last year's increase as possible. Commissioner Morris agreed.

Commissioner Lauer asked when the nursing home bond will be paid off. She stated that if they are looking to renovate the courthouse in the near future she would like to have one (1) bond paid off before they take out a new one. CA Libby stated that September 2022 the nursing home bond will be paid off.

Building Automation System – CA Libby stated that she feels that is something that needs to be done. The impact on taxes is \$20,000 as the other \$50,000 for the project is in the Nursing Home capital reserve. She also noted that \$65,000 is left over from the sewage project. She stated that they could use those left over funds to purchase the Supt. Oakes' new plow truck in this fiscal year and take that item off of his capital list. The Commissioners agreed to have Supt. Oakes send the truck out to bid and see how much of the \$65,000 is left to use on other capital expenses.

Nursing Home

Commissioner Piper stated that NHA Labore has put the Unit Managers first on his priority list. Her goal would be to fund one of the top priorities; many of the others do not need to be funded. CA Libby stated that the Executive Committee has been very strong about thinking outside the box to think of things to help the staffing issues at the Nursing Home. They are willing to spend the money and the LNA Tier Program is a good way to give the LNA's an incentive. Commissioner Lauer stated that this is a very important program. Commissioner Piper stated that the LNA Tier Program is something that is very justifiable. She stated that she feels it either needs to be one or the other, the Tier Program or the Unit Managers. Commissioner Morris stated that she feels they should approve the top two (2) priorities being the Unit Manager and the LNA Tier Program. CA Libby stated that the Commissioners also need to look at the Loan Forgiveness program as they have already committed to that program and have approved it in this fiscal year.

The Commissioners agreed to fund those three (3) items on NHA Labore's prioritized list.

Capital Reserve

CA Libby stated that the Nursing Home capital reserve account will be contingent upon Delegation approval of the \$181,000 transfer of funds from the proshare payment. If that transfer is made then the contribution to the account this year will only need to be \$50,000 and that would fund all of NHA Labore's items on his revised list and leave a balance of \$75,000 at the end of FY 2020.

Sheriff's Department & Dispatch

Dispatch Capital Reserve – CA Libby stated that Director Andross has a total request of \$206,800 in capital reserve expenses. He has requested a \$100,000 contribution this year as the last few years the amount that is normally contributed has been decreased. The Commissioners asked if Director Andross is available to answer a few questions about his communications infrastructure.

The Commissioners want to know if the request for new holsters is necessary or if the new firearms he has purchased can be fitted into their current holsters. CA Libby stated that she would email Sheriff Stiegler and ask him.

Director Andross arrived to answer questions regarding his Capital Reserve. He stated that they have had a line item for the Communications Infrastructure for a few years and they have been using the funds up until last year to replace the mountain top and base station equipment. It is all 1997-2000 vintage. At the end of 2018 every piece of equipment went to end of life. If something were to happen to a piece of equipment now they may or may not be able to find aftermarket parts and it is a part of their system that they do not like to mess with because it is critical infrastructure. The State Police are doing a \$4 million - \$5 million upgrade to their equipment. Their console system is now seven (7) years old and needs an upgrade to be compatible with the state police when they are done with their upgrade. They have thirteen (13) more infrastructure radios that need to be replaced as well. He stated that he would like to accomplish a console update and maybe another base station if they can with the available funds to be able to stay up to date with the state police. Commissioner Lauer asked Director Andross about the condition of his truck used to haul the communications trailer. He stated that this is something they have been planning and knowing they will need to purchase for a couple of years. He stated that is past end of life and he does not feel that it will pass inspection this year as last year they had to put a lot of money into it to get it to pass inspection.

Next the Commissioners discussed the Sheriff's Department requests. Commissioner Morris stated that Sheriff Stiegler is very polished in his appearance. He is trying to accomplish something and this uniform allowance means something to him. Commissioner Lauer stated that we do send Maintenance uniforms out to be cleaned every week. Commissioner Piper stated that she feels they should level fund the uniform allowance. She appreciates Sheriff Stiegler's polished appearance but doesn't believe the tax payers should fund a uniform allowance for the entire department. She's also concerned about setting precedents. The Commissioners further discussed the item and Commissioner Lauer stated that she cannot support the dry cleaning. The Commissioners all agreed.

Education & Conference – CA Libby stated that the biggest expense is the LEEDA Training. She noted that this training is three (3) classes per Deputy for a total of 27 classes and it is \$2,085 per

Deputy. The CPR & Narcan Training is \$625.00 total. She stated that Sheriff Stiegler is looking to send a Deputy to Texas for the WatchGuard training and there is also a \$1,000 online course budgeted. Commissioner Lauer would like to reduce this line item \$6,000 to \$10,000 and he can use those funds and prioritize what he feels is most important. The Commissioners and CA Libby discussed Sheriff Stiegler's request at a previous meeting to transfer funds within his budget in this current fiscal year to cover some of the costs associated with the LEEDA training as well as purchase firearms that were originally budgeted for in his FY2020 budget. Commissioner Piper and Commissioner Morris stated that they did not understand what Sheriff Stiegler had proposed at that meeting to transfer funds to purchase items in this fiscal year that would increase the budget for next year. Commissioner Piper stated that at that time she had not thoroughly gone through his budget to understand what the total financial impact of these purchases would be.

Capital

Plate Carriers – Commissioner Piper understands it's a safety issue but she does not want to spend \$14,000. Commissioner Lauer stated that she has spent some time researching plate carriers and they might be able to reduce it to \$12,000 but they are right in line with costs. She stated that she does not want to lose a deputy because of an inadequate vest. Commissioner Morris stated that their safety is more important than money and we are ultimately overseeing that department. Commissioner Piper stated that she is elected to represent the tax payers and be a steward of tax payer money. She asked if they can compromise and buy a few plate carriers this year and the rest in another fiscal year. Commissioner Morris stated that she trusts the professional's judgement that each Deputy needs a vest. Commissioner Lauer stated that she is under the impression that they will wear these every day to work. She is more concerned about why they haven't already had these. Commissioner Lauer and Commissioner Morris were both in favor of leaving the \$14,000 in the budget to purchase ten (10) plate carriers for each Deputy. Commissioner Piper was not in favor.

Farm

The Commissioners removed the \$10,100 for the sand saver mats for the Heifer Barn.

Commissioner's Office

Consultant Line – The Commissioners reduced this line to \$5,000. They removed the Strategic Planning Consultant and reduced the Social Services Consultant to \$5,000 as they do not feel a full in depth analysis of each agency needs to be done every year.

Travel Expense – The Commissioners removed \$2,000 for the NACO Conference as Commissioner Piper will be the Vice-President of the NHAC and her expenses will be paid for by the NHAC.

Social Services – The Commissioners removed the \$5,000 for the FIRRM program out of Bridge House.

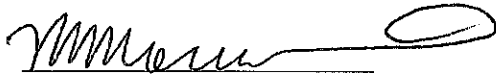
CA Libby stated that with a 3% COLA and all of the changes made the Commissioners have made they are at a 7.03% increase in the amount to be raised by taxes. She stated that if the Commissioners give a 2.5% COLA they would be at a 6.60%. Commissioner Piper asked if they can do a 2.5% COLA. Commissioner Lauer and Commissioner Morris agreed.

CA Libby requested that the Commissioners make a motion on the budget at their meeting on Tuesday and give her time to review all the changes and confirm all of these numbers.

The Commissioners discussed the Public Hearing for their proposed budget and set a date of May 20th at 6pm.

11:34 PM With no further business the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'M. Morris', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Marcia Morris,
Clerk