

PUBLIC HEARING ON COMMISSIONERS FY21 PROPOSED BUDGET
3855 Dartmouth College Highway
North Haverhill, NH 03774
June 1, 2020

PRESENT: See attached sheet

The meeting was held for the public at the Administration Building and we also held the meeting via Zoom for those who were more comfortable participating that way. Commissioner Lauer called the meeting to order at 6:01PM.

Commissioner Lauer introduced the Commissioners and stated that most Department Heads were participating via Zoom. She then reviewed the attached PowerPoint.

Also attached please see the letter submitted by the Town of Enfield.

Alex from the Journal Opinion stated that with the increase in the surplus for FY '21 he asked would the expectation be that the surplus would be lowered next year. Commissioner Lauer stated that we evaluate the surplus on a year-to-year basis and if we were able to keep the surplus at the higher rate we would but that wouldn't be known until next year.

Several of the Social Service agencies that were present thanked the Commissioners for supporting their programs and stated that the funding from the County is vital to their programs. Commissioner Lauer thanked each of the agencies for the work that they do.

Commissioner Lauer thanked all of the Department Heads for their hard work in preparing their budgets and noted that a lot of tough decisions were made throughout this process. She stated that they are doing their best to balance the needs of the county, the employees and the tax payers. She stated that the Executive Committee will now take over the budget and review it through the month of June. The Delegation will then vote on the final budget on June 22nd.

6:25 PM with no further business the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



Marcia Morris,
Clerk

Grafton County Commissioner Public Hearing on FY 21 Budget
Attendance

Participants via Zoom

Tom Elliott
Kelley Monahan
Bethany Isenberg
Kristy Letendre
Cameron Ford
S Wright
Karen Clough
Craig Labore
Kathleen Vasconcelos
Tom Andross
Marcie Hornick
(603) 723 0988
Donna Lee
Holly French
Dylan Oliver
Amy
A Morgan
Courtney Hoppe
Alex – Journal Opinion
Ann Nichols
LC Byrne
Pam
Sampson Fontaine
Michelle Kersey
Michael Redmond
Hope Duncan
Brenda Gagne

Participants in Person

Linda Lauer
Wendy Piper
Marcia Morris
Julie Libby
Jeff Stiegler
Brent Ruggles
Jim Oakes

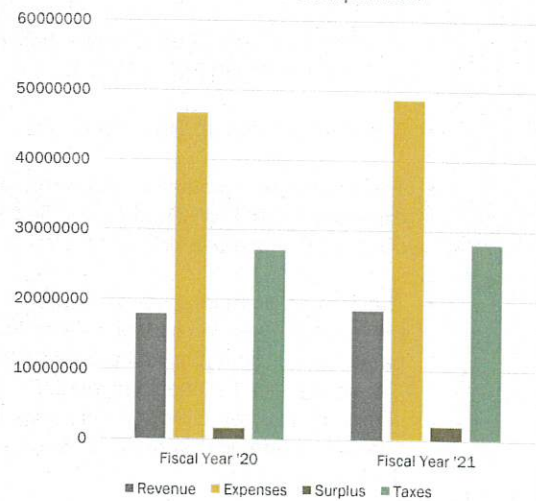
GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' PROPOSED FY 2021 BUDGET

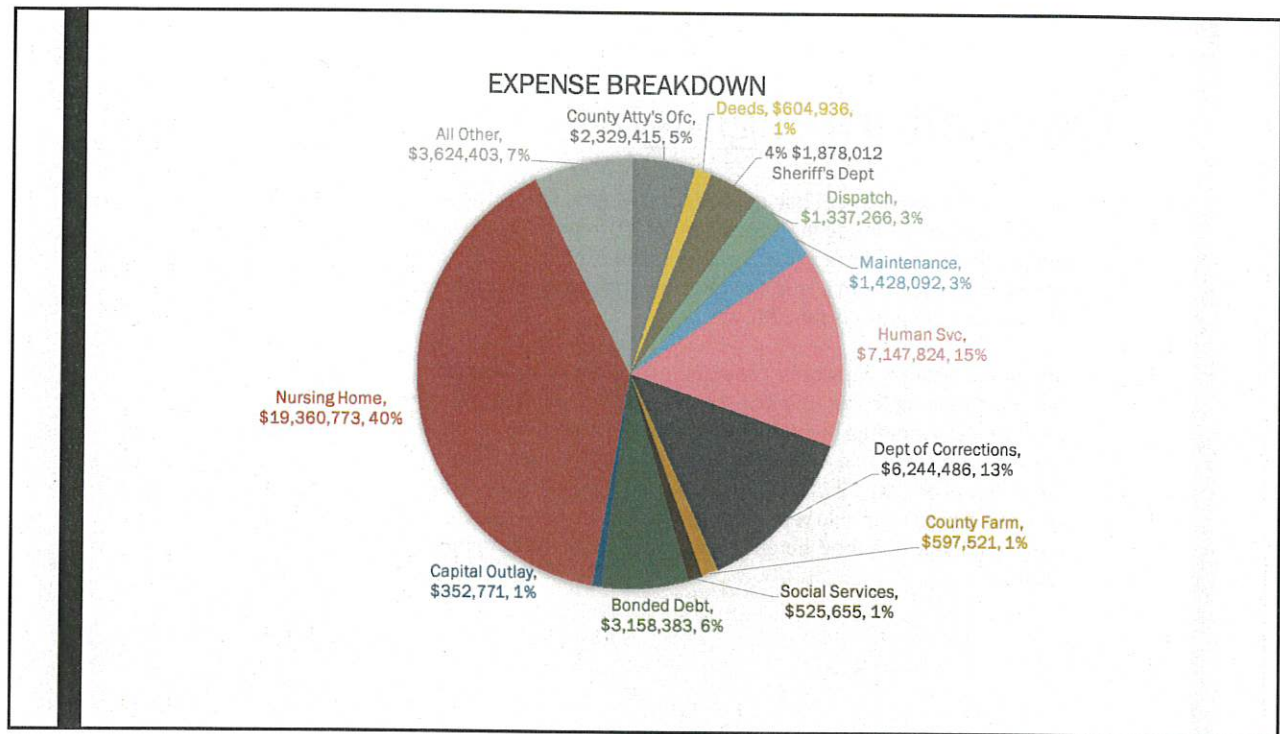
Public Hearing June 01, 2020

Fiscal Year '21 Budget Summary

- ☐ Revenue increased 3.56%
- ☐ Increased Surplus Used by 25%
- ☐ Expenses increased 4.24%
- ☐ County Taxes increase 3.47%

FY 20 v FY '21 Comparison





Expenditure Highlights

- There is a 2.0% cost-of-living adjustment included for all employees.
- The budget includes step increases. All employees are eligible for a step increase at their anniversary date depending on the outcome of their annual evaluation, except for those employees who are already at the maximum step. This is part of the CBA with the unionized employees.
- Health Insurance costs rose .8% increasing the budget \$109,776
- Total Salary and Benefit increases are \$788,894
 - *Included with the total Salary & Benefit increases are two (2) additional positions ~ \$107,847*
 - Finance Director - Effective 1/1/2021
 - Records Clerk, Deeds - This position will be a six (6) month overlap to replace a retiring employee - the overlap will allow for training. In December when the current employee retires - the Deeds Department will have the same number of employees that is has in FY '20.

Coronavirus Financial Information

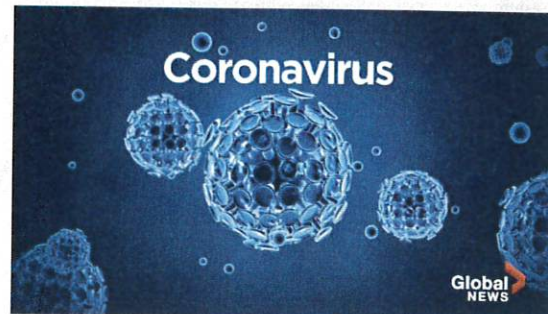
The Nursing Home has received \$319,091.48 directly from the CARES Act. This has helped with a reduced census in the current fiscal year.

Grafton County is eligible and will be applying for FEMA funds to help offset expenses that have been incurred directly due to the pandemic.

In addition, the State of NH through the Governor's Office for Emergency Relief and Recovery has awarded Grafton County up to \$537,653 in funding to also be reimbursed for expenses.

Neither of the above sources allows for recoupment of lost revenues.

We continue to monitor what is available to us to address our needs during this tough time.



The Executive Committee of the Delegation – will meet on 6/5; 6/8; 6/12 and 6/16 to deliberate and make their final recommendations and the full Delegation will meet on June 22, 2020 at 9:00 AM to vote of the FY 2021 Grafton County Budget. For more information regarding these meetings please visit: www.co.grafton.nh.us.





Town of Enfield

Office of the Town Manager
23 Main Street, P.O. Box 373
Enfield, New Hampshire 03748
VOICE/TDD 603-632-5026 * FAX 603-632-5182
EMAIL: raylesworth@enfield.nh.us

May 29, 2020

Grafton County Commissioners
3855 Dartmouth College Highway, Box 1
North Haverhill, NH 03774

RE: Grafton County 2021 Proposed Budget

Commissioners Lauer, Morris and Piper:

I am writing on behalf of the Enfield Board of Selectmen in regards to the recently released proposed 2021 budget for Grafton County. Since the Board of Selectmen's next meeting (Monday, June 1) coincides with the public hearing the Grafton County Commissioners have scheduled regarding the proposed 2021 budget, we wish to have this letter submitted into the record and convey our concerns.

As you know, communities across Grafton County, the State of New Hampshire, and nationally have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in a number of ways, including financially. For its part, local officials in the Town of Enfield have been working diligently over the last two months to reconstruct the Town's 2020 budget (we are on a calendar year budget cycle, and the Budget Committee formally approved the 2020 budget during the first week of February) and ultimately adjust appropriations so that the budget is effectively level-funded with the 2019 budget and so the municipal portion of the tax rate remains stable from one year to the next. This will likely mean that employees will work through 2020 without a previously planned pay increase and a number of worthwhile projects will have to be deferred in the interest of financial restraint. Enfield is of course not alone in making such sacrifices. With that said, we are surprised and concerned to see that the proposed Grafton County 2021 budget proposes an overall increase of more than 4% and an estimated increase in the County portion of the property tax rate by approximately 3.24%.

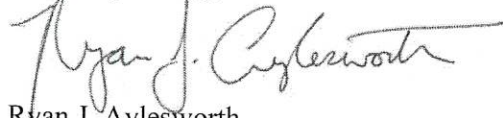
We appreciate the need to strike the right balance between meeting the operating and capital needs of departments to ensure that high quality services continue to be provided to residents, while at the same time ensuring that any associated increases in taxes or fees are constrained in order to ease the financial impact on residents (particularly those on limited or fixed incomes). The financial implications of the COVID-19 situation are providing additional strain at the present time. We feel strongly that the County needs to be more fiscally pragmatic and demonstrate a willingness to defer certain actions that are presently funded in the proposed 2021 budget.

In writing this letter, we are not suggesting that the County Commissioners' proposed 2021 budget was developed with anything less than the interests of county residents at heart. We do not question that the County's leadership and administration exercises sound stewardship of tax dollars and will continue using the resources it acquires to carry out important objectives. Nonetheless, just as the Town of Enfield and many other municipalities have had to confront difficult tradeoffs in recent months and defer or curtail many important hires, projects, programs, and services in the interest of mitigating the financial impact of COVID-19, we hope that the County will do the same.

Thank you for taking these concerns into consideration as the County's 2021 budget deliberations proceed in the coming weeks. We recognize and appreciate the many valuable functions that the County provides our communities and residents, and certainly wish to see the County continue to receive the budget and resources necessary to meet its diverse mission.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Ryan J. Aylesworth". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Ryan J. Aylesworth
Town Manager