

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BUDGET MEETING

Administration Building  
3855 Dartmouth College Highway  
North Haverhill, NH  
June 8, 2020

PRESENT: Representatives Sykes, Ladd, Stringham, Campion, Hennessey, Abel, Maes, French and Diggs, Commissioner Lauer, Commissioner Piper, Commissioner Morris, County Administrator Libby and Admin. Assistant Norcross, Nursing Home Administrator Labore, Finance Manager Jurentkuff, UNH Extension – Donna Lee, Alternative Sentencing Director DePalo, Sheriff Stiegler, Director Andross

Rep. Sykes called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM

Rep. Sykes read the following statement:

GRAFTON COUNTY

RIGHT-TO-KNOW LAW MEETING CHECKLIST

As Chair of the Grafton County Delegation, due to COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, the Board is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is a physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to the meeting, at 3855 Dartmouth College Highway, No. Haverhill, NH. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, this is to confirm we are:

- a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional possibilities by video or other electronic means;
  - a. We are utilizing the Zoom platform for the electronic meeting. All members of the Committee have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through the Zoom platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in the meeting through dialing the following phone #1 646 558 8656 and using Meeting ID 811 8067 9645 with password: 040295, or by clicking the following website address:  
[www.co.grafton.nh.us](http://www.co.grafton.nh.us)
- b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing this meeting:
  - a. We previously gave notice to the public of how to access the meeting using Zoom and instructions are provided on the Grafton County website at:  
[www.co.grafton.nh.us](http://www.co.grafton.nh.us).
- c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access:

- a. If anybody has a problem, please call Julie Libby at (603) 496-7731 or email at: [jlibby@co.grafton.nh.us](mailto:jlibby@co.grafton.nh.us).
- d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting:
  - a. In the event that the public is unable to access the meeting, we will adjourn the meeting and have it rescheduled at that time.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by Roll Call vote.

Let's start the meeting by taking Roll Call attendance. When each member states their presence, also please state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law.

Rep. Stringham called the attendance roll call. Rep. Abel "here" and there is no one in the room with him during this meeting, Rep. Diggs "here" and there is no one in the room with her during this meeting, Rep. French "here" and she is at the physical meeting location at the County Complex, Rep. Hennessey "here" and her two (2) minor children are with her, Rep. Ladd "here" and there is no one in the room with him during this meeting, Rep. Maes "here" and he is at the physical meeting location at the County Complex, Rep. Stringham "here" and there is no one in the room with him during this meeting, Rep. Sykes "here" and there is no one in the room with him during this meeting. Nine (9) members were present and a quorum was declared.

#### **Nursing Home – Administrator Labore, Finance Manager Jurentkuff**

##### *Revenue*

NHA Labore stated that when they put together their revenue budget they always talk about what they are looking for, for an average daily census for the year. This year they are trying to be cautious due to the COVID-19 outbreak therefore they have lowered their census projection and set it at 120.

He stated that they have a projected Medicaid rate of \$198.51.

NHA Labore stated that they are not proposing any increases in private pay rates next year. For a private room they will be charging \$315/day and \$295 for a semi private room. They dropped the private pay census down to reflect where they are at this time.

Medicaid PSP – NHA Labore stated that this large increase accounts for what they agreed that Grafton County would pay for IDN funding. He stated that this offsets the IDN expense that they added into the Commissioners' budget.

Physician Billing - NHA Labore explained that their doctor will be retiring at the end of this month and they have taken her portion out of this line. He stated that there is a decrease of \$23,000. Right now there is coverage five (5) days a week between the nurse practitioner and



doctor. They have backed out the doctor's portion of that billing. He stated that he will further explain the staffing change in the expense budget.

Veterans – NHA Labore stated that they are still doing well with their Veteran contract and anticipate keeping this census and budgeting for two (2) residents.

NHA Labore stated that the Nursing Home has received \$706,000 so far from the CARES Act this fiscal year to help offset some of the expenses due to COVID-19. Everything indicates those payments will continue but he is not sure for how long.

#### *Expense*

NHA Labore stated that salary lines reflect a 2% cola as well as step increases if the employees are eligible.

#### NH Admin

Bed Tax expense – NHA Labore stated that they have budgeted a \$175,460 increase in this line item and explained that they are trying to better capture the actual tax expense that they get when they receive the large proshare payment in June and make it as close as possible.

Software Maint/Training – NHA Labore stated that they have budgeted \$13,500 for Competency & Annual Mandatory Education. He explained that he is hoping to implement an online Competency & Mandatory Education program for the staff. Historically this competency testing has been done by each individual department and the mandatory education is conducted by the Staff Development Director. They are hoping to accomplish the mandate to have a competency training program in place. This program will allow them to have, by department, a competency program designed to reflect what CMS' expectations are. It takes the gray area out and makes sure the competency assessment that CMS is expecting they do for their staff in each department is actually being met.

#### Dietary

Food Supplements – NHA Labore stated that there is a \$5,000 increase. He explained that they are trying to consolidate their supplement usage and move towards one (1) standard supplement. He noted that it is working really well for the residents but is costlier. This supplement has great nutritional value and is helping with reestablishing/maintaining weight. NHA Labore noted that they also have residents on a feeding pump and these costs are reflected in this line item.

#### Nursing

NHA Labore stated that they have removed the unit manager positions as they were unable to fill them.

NHA Labore stated that this budget also includes a market adjustment for RNs and LPNs. HR Director Clough conducted a market analysis to see where their wages are in comparison to others in the market. He stated that they have lost out on a few hires because they were able to get more money elsewhere. They are recommending an increase to make them more competitive in the recruiting process as well as maintaining the wage charts for their current staff.

Contract Nursing – NHA Labore stated that there is a large increase based on their six (6) month figures. This year they also ran into struggles around Christmas time having to bring in contract LNAs as well. They feel like between the market adjustment and the loan forgiveness program, the goal is to get that number down but right now they feel the increase is needed. Commissioner Piper stated that the Commissioners, through CA Libby, received new information about incentive programs regarding voluntary overtime so perhaps they can make a shift from contract nurses to the county employees. NHA Labore stated that that this may not be an enormous cost savings but it is something they are going to explore.

Education & Conference – NHA Labore noted that this large increase is in part due to the quarterly LNA training program that they now have in place. NHA Labore stated that they are also budgeting for their Staff Development/ Infection Preventionist Jamie Gadwah to attend the APIC Annual Conference (Association for Professionals in Infection Control). He stated that this is a national conference that they would like J. Gadwah to attend this year. She would get access to additional information for best practices in infection control. NHA Labore stated that this is emphasized every year and he can't stress enough the importance of this now with COVID -19. CMS is going to be spending a lot of time in their survey process looking at actions that facilities have taken to respond and prepare for the virus as well as the steps taken if a facility has had a positive case. They are tying CARES Act funding to these inspections. The state is sending surveyors to monitor infection control practices. He stated that he feels to be able to stay on top of best practices is very important.

Contract – Education – NHA Labore explained that he is proposing to end the program that was in place for education on the use of antipsychotic medications. He stated that their antipsychotic medication use percentage has dropped from 18%-22% down to 11%. He feels this course was successful. He stated that this is done with their current Medical Director and with the change in the Medical Director coming this year he feels that the program has been successful and they can now use that money elsewhere.

Travel Expense – NHA Labore noted that the \$1,200 increase is the lodging and airfare for J. Gadwah to attend the APIC Annual Conference.

#### Restorative Nursing

Rehab Supplies – NHA Labore noted that the \$11,700 increase is due to moving some of their capital expenses to this line item. This will help from a cost reporting standpoint.

#### Health Information Management



Wages – HIM Specialist – NHA Labore noted that this position is currently vacant. The person that was in this position was on medical leave and was unable to come back to work. This position was budgeted at 32 hours and was a hold over position that they needed to look at once it was vacant. He explained that in order to be in line with the Affordable Care Act they are requesting to increase this position to a 35-hour position.

Contract Physician – This line has been zeroed out due to Dr. Wilmont retiring. They are working on a contract with Ammonoosuc Health in Littleton to provide the coverage.

Capital Reserve – NHA Labore reviewed the capital reserve budget with the Committee and answered questions.

#### **UNH Cooperative Extension – County Office Administrator Donna Lee**

Salary – Support Staff – COA Lee noted that both County employees are at max on the wage chart.

Professional Staff – COA Lee stated that Mike Lunak's state dairy position is still a work in progress, it has not been filled as of yet due to Covid 19. There were two (2) candidates who interviewed. She noted that Geoff's Sewake's position has been filled.

COA Lee stated that they are not currently doing face to face programming. Some of their programming has been allowed to start moving again based on a six (6) phase program they have in place.

#### **Alternative Sentencing – Director DePalo**

##### *Revenue*

AS Director DePalo stated that they were just awarded a \$30,000 per year grant for the next two (2) years by the state for their juvenile program that will need to be added into her budget.

##### *Expenses*

AS Director DePalo stated that they had requested an additional part time position that was not funded. She stated that they have decreased many line items. All of their contracts have stayed the same. They decreased their supply line and she stated that she had increased her travel line based on this year's usage but due to Covid 19 they may not utilize that as much. She doesn't know what will happen in the future.

#### **Sheriff's Department/Dispatch – Sheriff Stiegler, Director of Communications Andross,**

##### *Revenue*

Sheriff Stiegler stated that he anticipates some changes due to changes put in place by the Governor during the pandemic. He stated that he thinks they will see a big wave when courts start to open up but feels it will go back to normal. He stated that he worked with CA Libby on private detail rates and made it more transparent as well as trying to make more money for the county and noted that it has been going well.

Dispatch Fees – Rep. Stringham asked about the decrease in fees. Sheriff Stiegler stated that out of the eight county dispatch centers Grafton County is the only one to charge for their services. He wanted to talk about the idea of possibly following the models of the other counties in New Hampshire. None of the Counties that provide services send bills to the towns that they provide services for within their own counties. They feel that they are going to start to see agencies leave to save money but sacrifice services. He stated that he feels that it is fair to assess the towns and agencies within the county that they provide services for and that they will still be charging the towns a capital or usage fee to recover the cost of the equipment. He stated that his original proposal was a larger decrease but the Commissioners had asked to meet in the middle and not reduce the revenue by as much.

#### *Expense*

Clerical – Director Andross stated that for six (6) years they have had an Office Assistant position that has been split between the Dispatch budget and Sheriff's Budget. This position has done more than they thought it would and they would like to move it completely to the Dispatch Budget. They have had the 24-hour Dispatch position in the budget for a couple of years that has not been filled. They had proposed that this position be moved to the Sheriff's budget for the Sheriff to hire clerical assistance but the Commissioners have removed that position from the budget.

#### *DOJ – OVW Grant*

Sheriff Stiegler stated that they were notified by the Attorney General's Office, because of the number of sexual assault complaints they have received in Grafton County over the past several years, asking if they would like to provide a specialized service, especially to the small towns without police departments. He stated that sexual assault investigations or domestic violence cases are very comprehensive investigations. He would not have applied for this grant if he didn't have the talent within his department to train or promote somebody into a position like this to help these agencies and the County Attorney's Office bring these cases to a definitive conclusion. This is 100% funded and no cost to the county. The AG's office will administer a large portion of the grant. He stated that it is not been approved yet but feels this will bring a much needed service to the county. If they do not receive the grant none of the monies in this budget will be spent. Rep. Sykes stated that he has previously had discussions with the Sheriff regarding the Sheriff's Department and cooperation with ICE enforcement activities. He stated that questions that have come up, specifically in the City of Lebanon, when you accept a Department of Justice grant there are concerns that it will cause your department to notify ICE of immigration related issues in their activities. Sheriff Stiegler stated that he has read the grant cover to cover many times and there is nothing in there that has anything to do with ICE. He

stated that he will call the AGs office to confirm and if there are any strings attached he wasn't aware of he will not accept the grant.

### *Dispatch Expense*

Director Andross stated that as the Sheriff mentioned earlier they used to fund the half of the Office Assistant position. This year they are moving that full position to the Dispatch budget and they have removed a 24-hour position so here essentially is no increase.

Health Insurance – Director Andross stated that they have had a long term full time employee retire who did not carry the county's health insurance. This increase is an estimate in filling that position.

Remote Storage Rental – Director Andross stated that they have operated a mobile communications unit for years. They just purchased a new truck and they have been fortunate to have been able to store it in a couple of fire stations and armories over the years but those are not available anymore for storage. They need something to store the vehicle and are currently looking into options.

### *Capital Outlay*

Cruisers – Sheriff Stiegler stated that he has been standard practice to replace three (3) cars a year and they are looking to do that again in FY21.

Watch Guard Replacement – Sheriff Stiegler stated that department utilizes the Watch Guard 4RE/Vista audio and video cruiser camera system. The current server can be best described as running on three (3) of its four (4) legs. This server is independent of other electronic records and stands alone as an electronic archiving system for all recordings produced through this process. This system is paramount for the preservation of recordings made during all prisoner transports, motor vehicle stops and the movement of mental health patients. The quote to replace the existing server is \$12,845.00. Several of the existing cruiser cameras are beyond the manufactures recommended years of usage by 2-3 years. He explained that they recently began to replace various parts for the older camera systems in use. He stated that by putting body cameras into replacement camera systems would create greater encapsulation of events they are involved in and protects people on both sides of the lens. The cost to replace three (3) existing cameras is \$25,160.00 and approximately \$995 is the cost of installation for both the server and cruiser cameras.

Office Furniture & Filing – Sheriff Stiegler explained that he is looking to update their used and repurposed office furniture for their Civil and Criminal Administrative Assistants. He stated that the current set up provides little sound proofing or proper ergonomic workspace. He stated that he is also looking for a more organized filing system than the four (4) drawer filing cabinets. He is proposing new bookshelf styling filing that would take up a fraction of the office space and allow room for future records that need to be archived in a paper format. He stated that the total cost for these improvements is \$11,004.00



Cruiser Safety Equipment – Sheriff Stiegler stated that they can transfer some equipment to the new vehicles but some equipment is old and in need of replacement.

Patrol Rifles – Sheriff Stiegler stated that he is requesting replacement/upgrade to their existing patrol rifles. He explained that they are hopeful to replace the upper assemblies with new ones rather than purchasing new rifles. He stated that current costs to replace a patrol rifle is roughly \$1,500-\$2,000 and to replace an upper assembly is \$1,125.00 therefore he is requesting \$5,625.00

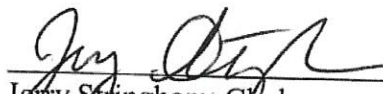
*Dispatch Capital Reserve*

Director Andross stated that there is a significant decrease in the FY21 capital reserve requests. He explained that these requests to not include any new infrastructure because they have been awarded two (2) Homeland Security grants in the amount of \$396,000 to replace the fire dispatch system and \$454,000 to replace the rest of their infrastructure replacement for their radio system and the Police Departments.

Delegation Meeting – CA Libby stated that they will advertise the Delegation meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> as a zoom meeting as long as the Governor doesn't take away the authority to hold the meetings via zoom.

11:46AM with no further business the meeting adjourned.

Sincerely,

  
Jerry Stringham, Clerk