

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Budget Reviews

3855 Dartmouth College Hwy

North Haverhill, NH

Thursday, March 22, 2012

PRESENT: Commissioners Michael Cryans, Omer C. Ahern Jr. and Ray Burton, Executive Director Julie Clough, and Secretary Jeri Martino

OTHERS: Nick DeMayo

Commissioner Cryans called the Meeting to order at 9:05 AM.

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance

SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES:

Human Services Administrator Nancy Bishop and Social Service Consultant Cindy Swart arrived to go over the recommendations for Social Service funding. The theory behind funding this budget is to strengthen families, reduce recidivism and reduce early institutionalization.

HEALTH AGENCIES: C. Swart said all health agencies prevent the early institutionalization of seniors and they are primarily funded by Medicare.

MENTAL HEALTH AGENCIES: These agencies are driven by Medicaid. C. Swart said she is recommending a decrease for Friendship House as their services have decreased.

Commissioner Cryans noted for full disclosure that he sits on the Board of Tri-County Cap and that he is the Executive Director of Headrest and has been for eight years.

DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED: These agencies prevent institutionalization and help people to stay in their homes longer.

Commissioner Ahern said that every one of these organizations that is being brought forth today are supposed to be funded by the state and he feels they are shirking their responsibilities.

C. Swart said that none of the agencies are fully funded by the state.

Commissioner Cryans commented that there is no doubt that there has been a shifting of funding down to the towns and municipalities though.

Commissioner Ahern said he feels that it is unfair to take money from the taxpayers and give it to a non-profit organization. C. Swart said it makes fiscal sense for the County to fund programs that keep people out of the Nursing Home or Jail. She said that Grafton County has gone a step further in providing funds that helps to keep other agencies going as well.

Commissioner Cryans said he feels it is the right thing to do and is the best use of taxpayer money. He said he feels the legislature dropped the ball in the last budget and abdicated their duties. He said he feels it would be irresponsible for the County to dodge theirs.

C. Swart explained how she meets with the Boards of the agencies and reviews their audits.

The remaining agencies were reviewed, which included: Senior Citizens Council, Children & Youth, and Women.

C. Swart said that she recommended no funding for NC Transit, (which is a Tri-County Cap affiliate) because she did not think it was a good use of taxpayer money.

Mr. DeMayo thought that the County should be finding a way to write grants on behalf of the agencies in order to secure them funding. Commissioner Cryans questioned how that would be funding and suggested that it is sometimes easy to make suggestions but there are often more costs to what's involved than first considered. C. Swart said that the agencies themselves seek out as much grant money as possible.

MAINTENANCE: Superintendent Jim Oakes presented his budget to the Commissioners which now contain the maintenance allocations for every budget except the Nursing Home. The budget has increased approximately \$408K which is mostly attributed to the new Correctional Facility coming online. Supt. Oakes said that if the old Jail remains online after it is vacated, the cost to keep it operational will be about \$52K. If the sprinklers and fire suppression can be taken out of commission then the cost can be considerably reduced, but that will depend on the decision of the Fire Marshall.

Supt. Oakes said that there is a cost of \$750K in operations to run the new Jail which is still less than the cost to operate the Nursing Home, which is \$943K.

CAPITAL OUTLAY:

Supt. Oakes has put in the cost to repair, point and seal the Administration building, which has been put off for a number of years and may not have seen any repair since being built in the 1930's. There is \$65K put aside for this from the previous year but another \$140K may be needed. The final figure won't be known until there is a bid. Commissioner Burton said it is time to do this project before bricks start falling out of the building.

Both the Nursing Home and the Registry of Deeds have projects in their own capital budgets. There was a discussion about some renovations at the County Attorney's office in the Courthouse in order to make more space available for staff. Supt. Oakes felt there was a less expensive way to do this than what the County Attorney had requested but suggested the Commissioners hear from her in regard to what plans she had. A total reconstruction in the conference area would require asbestos abatement.

Mr. DeMayo expressed his opinion regarding the County trying its best to keep the expenses down because there are already increases to town and school budgets and it is difficult for a taxpayer.

11: 25 AM the Commissioners recessed for lunch.

12: 05 PM the Commissioners resumed their meeting.

FARM: Farm Manager Kimball presented his budget and estimated his milk prices for FY13 at \$18. He plans to reduce the herd but will again add chickens as he feels that the eggs are good sellers at the Farmstand and the Jail will use them as well.

FM Kimball has requested \$30K in the Capital Outlay for a new Farm vehicle, though he said if he could find a good used one it would cost a lot less. He said he needs a new truck to be able to transport inmates to the fields but other than that he doesn't put a lot of miles on a vehicle. The vehicle he plans to replace is a 2003 with approximately 55K miles on it.

The Commissioners signed a letter to be sent to a retiree in regard to a change in health insurance benefits for spouses.

12:45 PM With no further business the meeting adjourned.

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk