

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' BUDGET MEETING

3855 Dartmouth College Highway

North Haverhill, NH 03774

March 29, 2018

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Nursing Home Administrator Labore, Finance Director Jurentkuff and Human Services Administrator Bishop

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

Nursing Home – Administrator Labore & Finance Manager Jurentkuff

Revenue

NHA Labore stated that they are projecting a 129 average daily census.

He stated that they are requesting a rate increase of \$10 a day to \$305 a day for a private pay single room. He noted that they are behind the trend with nursing home rates.

They are projecting to keep their current Medicaid rate based on the monies coming into the county come July 1st.

They have decreased their Veterans census as they had not received the response they had hoped for. They are not budgeting for any.

NHA Labore stated they are trying to remain consistent with what they have budgeted for in FY18 noting that they are requesting to increase the resident's cable rate .50 cents a day to \$9.00 per day to help offset the increase they received from the cable provider.

He stated that the Nursing Home is looking at a \$57,000 increase in revenue for FY19.

Expense

Dietary

NHA Labore noted that many of these expenses are based on the resident population. There are not many changes to this budget.

Commissioner Ahern stated that he would like to see more produce from the Farm used in the Nursing Home.

Nursing

Wage – Nursing Admin – NHA Labore stated that this increase is from the House Supervisors being reclassified into this line item from the RN Direct Care.

Clinical Operations Coordinator – NHA Labore explained that the Director of Nursing and Assistant Director of Nursing are spending a majority of their time following-up on paper related

issues which is taking away from their ability to build the nursing team and lead the department. CMS states that the recent regulatory changes, which are being phased in over three (3) years, will “cost the average ninety (90) bed nursing home approximately \$60,000 per year to maintain on going compliance”. The Clinical Coordinator will hold responsibility for following up questions from Department meetings; assist in implementation of Department initiatives; facilitate communication between floors and assist in the orientation process. Commissioner Ahern asked what they will do if this position is not approved. NHA Labore stated that without this position they will continue to do what they are doing but will not be able to build that stable foundation to allow them to grow.

Contract Nursing Services – NHA Labore explained that this increase is offset by a decrease in the RN salary lines as they are not using the amount of RN’s but are seeing an increase of the contract services.

Contract Education – NHA Labore stated that there is a continued regulatory focus on the reduction of psychotropic medications. Percentages above the national average, determined by CMS, will be met with decreased reimbursement and negative ratings on quality measures, as posted on the Medicare.gov Nursing Home Compare website. Grafton County Nursing Home’s percentage is currently above the average. Dr. Sandeep Sobti, who also serves as their Medical Director, is recognized throughout the state by the state survey teams and Quality Improvement Organizations, as a leader in the effort to reduce psychotropic medications. He conducts trainings for state survey teams. This would be for one (1) full day per month for resident consultation and education of non-pharmacological interventions for nursing staff. He stated that this will be a one (1) year contract with the option of a thirty (30) day notice to back out if it is not working. Commissioner Piper asked if NHA Labore thought that this expense would reduce any possibility of decreased reimbursement in the long run. NHA Labore replied that he thought it would.

Restorative Nursing

NHA Labore stated that he is looking to have a .5FTE increase in Restorative Aids. He stated that the caseload is high. They are averaging 37-39 residents with 98-100 components (programs). The residents are moved to restorative nursing programs upon the completion of a Medicare Part A or Part B program. Restorative programs are designed to help maintain functional gains which resident made while on a Part A or Part B rehabilitation stint. Residents may also be brought onto a restorative program after being identified as having a need during functional rounds. The Director is spending time treating residents and not performing primary responsibilities.

Therapeutic Recreation

Education and Conference – NHA Labore stated that there is a continued regulatory focus on enhanced activity programing for Dementia residents. National conferences such as the one they are requesting to send their Activities Director to in FY19 allow for networking and sharing of ideas.

Housekeeping

NHA Labore stated that they are requesting a .75FTE increase in housekeeping. He stated that the Assistant Environmental Services Director is spending the majority of her time working in a staff position and not performing Supervisory responsibilities. He explained that there is a continued regulatory focus on infection control/sanitary environment. This includes staff competencies and trainings.

Pharmacy & Physician

Med A Rx – NHA Labore stated that the decrease is due to the projected census.

Oxygen – He noted that this is also based on their census and what they are using.

Contract Services

Contract Physicians – NHA Labore stated that he has two (2) years left with Dr. Wilmot. He stated that in this current fiscal year they increased that line item \$5,000 and are requesting another \$5,000 in FY19. He explained that they have received a good deal with Dr. Wilmot and stated that when the time comes to replace this position, the salary is not appealing to bring in another physician therefore he is aiming to get that line item up to \$75,000 over the course of three (3) years.

Commissioner Piper expressed concerns regarding the beautician and the county paying for the residents' haircuts. She understands the Administrator wanting to provide this service, but wonders if the beautician should be at tax payers expense.

Social Services

Cable TV Service – This increase is due to the increase on satellite TV. He noted that they increased the resident's amount that they pay for TV to help offset this increase.

NHA Labore stated that there is an overall projected budget increase of 7.2% increase noting that 49% of the increase is due to health insurance.

Capital Outlay

NHA Labore discussed the various capital outlay requests with the Commissioners.

The Commissioners asked NHA Labore to prioritize his budget. Commissioner Ahern stated that he has some problems with the Nursing Home budget. Commissioner Piper asked NHA Labore to separate his wants and needs.

Human Services/Social Services – Administrator Bishop

Revenue

Recoveries – HSA Bishop stated that she increased this line item based on averages over the last five (5) years.

Expenses

HSA Bishop stated that for FY18 her calculations were off and she over budgeted for the CAP therefore this year there is a decrease. She won't have actual CAP numbers until late June.

Social Services

The Commissioners discussed the Social Services requests for funding for FY19. They went through the list of funding requests and noted any increases, decreases or new requests for funding for the various agencies.

The Commissioners each spoke to the agencies in their districts and why they have requested funding. They discussed whether they feel some of the increases should be funded or leave the agencies at level funding from last year.

The Commissioners all agreed that there are philosophical discussions regarding the social service funding that they need to have during their deliberations.

CA Libby gave the Commissioners spreadsheets that breakdown all the increases and decreases throughout the budget as it has been presented so far. She stated the amount to be raised by taxes is up 8.98%. She stated that the total budget is up \$2,422,121.00 which is a 5.63% increase over last year's spending budget. She went on to give the Commissioners an update on the health insurance. She stated that they have received two (2) separate options at this point. If they went with Harvard Pilgrim Direct they would see a 21.77% increase in their overall health insurance costs and would be able to reduce the budget by \$449,150.04. The next option when they received the Health Trust revisit rates was a 17.78% increase and they would be able to reduce the budget \$580,478.00. She went on to discuss various costs associated with both health insurance plans and the differences throughout the two (2). She stated that the total increase in health insurance costs if the county were to go with Health Trust would be \$598,541.00 and if they were to switch to Harvard Pilgrim Direct it would be \$732,868.96. She noted that they are still waiting to hear from New Hampshire Interlocal Trust with final rates.

CA Libby stated that if the Commissioners gave her an idea of where they would like the tax increase to be at she can then get the Commissioners the amount that would need to be cut from the budget. After some discussion there was no consensus by the Commissioners as to where they would like to be with the budget. The Commissioners discussed their plans for their deliberations and how they would like to structure their meetings. Commissioner Ahern stated that he believes there should be no new hires this year in any departments. Commissioner Lauer stated that the Commissioners need to review their budgets especially the Alternative Sentencing and Nursing Home budgets and they will discuss them next week.

12:02 PM with no further business the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Wendy A. Piper,
Clerk