

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONER BUDGET MEETING  
3855 Dartmouth College Highway  
North Haverhill, NH 03774  
March 5, 2020

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

OTHERS PRESENT: HR Director Clough, Sheriff Stiegler, Detective Combs, Director of Communications Andross, Office Assistant Paronto, Treasurer Hill, Donna Lee – UNH Extension. Conservation District – Pam Gilbert, Gary Peters, Denis Ward, Rick Walling

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

### **Human Resources – Director Clough**

**HR Staff** – HR Director Clough stated that the wages have been reduced due to a change in staff.

**Education and Conference** – HR Director Clough explained that she has been researching Human Resources Information systems. At the County they don't have any specific HR software. They only have a piece meal system with Infinite Visions. This year she focused more heavily on the systems as a software system like this will improve their processes, become more organized and efficient. She stated that reports that would normally take hours would take minutes. Kronos offers a single employee record that they can build between Payroll, HR, and the Nursing Home. Within this there is a \$10,000 training fee which is in their proposal that they have divided between the Commissioners' and HR budgets. It will require a lot of training and time to transfer information. The training is the most important to be able to utilize the software to its fullest. This will also better the employee experience from applicant coming in through the life cycle of the employee. There is an employee portal online, they can pull up pay stubs on the portal, request time off, fill out paperwork, and view their punches. She noted that it has a FMLA tracking component as well. Once the system is up and running it will create a large time savings for the HR Department and Payroll. There are many pieces that will help automate their processes. She stated that Belknap, Rockingham, Hillsborough all use different pieces of this software and are very happy with it. IT Manager Ruggles will be presenting the bulk of the costs within the IT budget.

**Contract Services** – HR Director Clough stated that they need to have a wage system audit done. The last was done in 2016 and it is best practice to have one done every 3-5 years. Their current wage consultant has retired; they will have to go with a different company. She stated that they want to make sure the County remains competitive with its wages. Commissioner Piper stated that in 2016 this wage audit didn't change anything in the way they are able to attract nurses. HR Director Clough stated that the RN wages are going to need to change regardless of what this study is but it also is important to focus on the rest of the County as well.

Commissioner Piper stated that she is just concerned with outcomes and asked if employees have left due to low wages.

**Dues License Subscription** – HR Director Clough stated that there is decrease this year. This line item fluctuates each year based on when memberships are due.

**Sheriff's Department/Dispatch – Sheriff Stiegler, Director of Communications Andross, Office Assistant Paronto**

*Dispatch Revenue*

Dispatch Fees – Director Andross stated that recently it has been highlighted to them that they have Police Chiefs making choices based on saving money and not the services they are receiving. They lost Woodstock to Lincoln Dispatch; they have people trying to save pennies possibility at the expense of losing 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. He stated that he feels that it is fair to assess the towns and agencies within the county that they provide services for. He stated that they will still be charging the towns a capital or usage fee to recover the cost of the equipment. Commissioner Piper stated that this is understandable because these towns already pay taxes but she doesn't want to see county taxes raised as a result of this change. Director Andross stated that they will be looking more in depth into the impact that this will have on the budget.

*Dispatch 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 are proposing that this position be moved to the Sheriff's budget for the Sheriff to hire clerical assistance.

**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. They have looked into garage options but Supt. Oakes has expressed concerns about building a garage when they are in discussions of extensive work to the courthouse in the next few years. He stated that because of that he is looking into rental storage space for their vehicle and has budgeted \$15,000 for this.

*Sheriff's Department Revenue*

Forest Patrol – Sheriff Stiegler stated that they have included all services details as one (1) line item and zeroed this line out.

*Sheriff's Department Expense*

**Contracted Special Duty** – There is an \$80,000 revenue offset as this function of the Sheriff's Department generates revenue. This has been a \$0.00 budget line with \$0.00 in revenue in the past, now they will reflect both the revenue and expense.

**Special Deputies** - \$60,000 of this expense is offset by the Drug Task Force grant reflected in revenue. This is a change from how the grant was accounted for in the past.

**Forensic Investigations** – Sheriff Stiegler stated that a large portion of this line is the renewal of the Gray Key license at \$15,000. \$12,000 has been budgeted for training at the Federal Law Enforcement Center in Brunswick, GA that provides over \$10,000 in needed equipment to provide even more enhanced capabilities to their existing digital forensic unit.

**New Equipment** – Sheriff Stiegler stated that they are requesting a \$3,000 increase in this line. He explained that they recently learned that their Tasers issued to Court Security are outdated and no longer backed through Axon-Taser. They have researched and received a quote of \$2,142.00 for a five (5) year lease that enables them to acquire seven (7) new Tasers that will bring these systems into compliance and best practice training standards. There is also a request for approximately \$4,500 for duty and qualification ammunition for their rifles, shotguns and pistols. They will also be looking to purchase four (4) ballistic helmets to complete their goal of providing each full time deputy with heavy ballistic armor.

#### *Capital Outlay*

**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.

**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 position is still a work in progress. There were two (2) candidates who interviewed. The candidates had another round of interviews. She noted that Geoff's Sewake's position has been filled.

Commissioner Lauer stated that she is grateful to have Cooperative Extension housed at the County Complex as they are a valuable resource to have.

**Treasurer – Karen Liot Hill**

Treasurer Hill reviewed her budget with the Commissioners stating that there were no major changes to her budget and has an overall decrease of \$1,000.

**Conservation District – Pam Gilbert, Gary Peters, Rick Walling, Dennis Ward**

The County supports the Administrative Assistant position for the Conservation District. The increase in this budget is directly related to that position, mostly associated with the increase in the County's health insurance premium.

Other materials were provided for the Commissioners review.

11:17 AM With no further business the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



Marcia Morris,  
Clerk