

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' BUDGET MEETING

3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.

North Haverhill, NH 03774

April 20, 2017

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Employee Council – Tony Stiles & Mark Deem, Human Services Administrator Bishop.

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

Employee Council – Chairman Tony Stiles and Co-Chair Mark Deem

T. Stiles stated that this year the Employee Council is only requesting their yearly COLA. He noted that many of their requests have been taken care of over the last couple of years and the employee council is very happy with that.

He handed out the following letter with their requests and reasoning for that request.

The Employee Council members are requesting the following COLA. This amount came from the feedback of the members and the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

The Employee Council is requesting a 3.5% COLA increase.

The following is how we came up with this percentage. The current Consumer Price Index for New England is 2.6% and with the medical insurance increase of 15.74% we as a group feel that a 3.5% COLA would maybe offset the large increase in our health insurance and not be such a big hit on the employees.

County Administrator Libby handed out a spreadsheet with the breakdown of what various COLAs will cost the county. She also discussed various health insurance options with T. Stiles and M. Deem and stated that the Commissioners are looking into different plans within New Hampshire Interlocal Trust to cut down on the health insurance increases.

T. Stiles asked about committing to a two (2) year COLA as it would save some time in the budget process every other year. CA Libby noted that making a two (2) year commitment on a COLA would be difficult as they have to have the budget approved by the Delegation on an annual basis. Commissioner Lauer stated that she does not believe the Delegation would commit to a two (2) year expense.

Commissioner Ahern stated that his concern is that he has many retired constituents in his district who are not receiving increases and he will be looking very closely at the budget.

The Commissioners thanked T. Stiles and M. Deem for coming in and they would discuss their request and respond back to them soon.

CA Libby handed out a spreadsheet that breaks down the main large increases in the FY18 budget.

CA Libby handed out a revised Nursing Home Capital Reserve budget. They have split the last year of the bed replacement and will finish the last twenty (20) beds in the FY19 budget. The new bottom line of the capital reserve budget is \$101,479.87. She recommended putting \$50,000 into the capital reserve this year so they will have the money for the bed replacements in FY19. CA Libby pointed out a few errors in the County Attorney and Alternative Sentencing budgets regarding salaries and

She also handed out a list of the other nine (9) county attorney offices and the number of attorneys and support staff each of their offices has.

*9:34 AM - Commissioner Piper moved to enter into non-public session for the purposes of discussing the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee according to RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote, Commissioner Lauer called the roll. Commissioner Lauer “yes”; Commissioner Ahern “yes”; Commissioner Piper “yes” Commissioner Lauer stated that a majority of the board voted “yes” and would now go into non-public session.

*11:00 AM Commissioner Lauer declared the meeting back in public session.

Commissioner Ahern moved to permanently seal the minutes from the just completed non-public session that they could affect the reputation of someone other than those of the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Piper seconded the motion

Social Services

It was stated that an issue the Commissioners have is that they have funded the adult program at West Central Behavioral Health for 25 years. Human Services Administrator Bishop brought to the Commissioners attention that they are asking for funding for the youth program for FY18 not the adult which is what has been funded in the past. Commissioner Piper stated that she called and spoke with them and it cannot be underestimated in what they do for the county. This is a big piece of money for them to lose. HSA Bishop questioned whether this should be funded or not because it is a children’s program. She suggested that the Commissioners can decide, but she recommended not funding the youth program because she is worried about the precedent that sets. There is an option for West Central to resubmit their application for the adult program funding. Commissioner Piper noted it is stated in the social services report that the county supports programs to preserve families and that she has a hard time understanding why in dealing with the opioid crisis and depression in youth, this does not preserve families as that is also a goal of funding social services. She stated that it would create less of an issue if they can resubmit their application for adult program funding. Commissioner Ahern stated that one (1) of

the things that he was talking about with some selectmen is that these groups also come to the towns for money. He stated that they are paying for a lot of overhead administrative costs which is not necessary. Commissioner Lauer noted that they need to look at these independently and not what other people are doing. Commissioner Piper stated that she needs to know what to tell her contact from West Central. Commissioner Lauer stated to have them quickly resubmit the application for adult funding. Commissioner Ahern asked what precedent they are setting by allowing an agency to resubmit an application after they were due. He noted that he wants a new established policy for Social Service funding for next year.

The Commissioners agreed to allow a onetime exception to have West Central Behavioral Health to resubmit their application for adult funding.

New Positions:

Case Manager – Restorative Justice/Adult Diversion – Alternative Sentencing

Commissioner Lauer stated that the Alternative Sentencing Department is handling the work load right now. She does not feel that they need to fund that new position this year. CA Libby noted that it seems that with all the staff that they have over there she feels they can get by without this new position.

Assistant County Attorney & Legal Assistant – County Attorney’s Office

Commissioner Lauer stated that the justification for the two (2) new positions in the Attorney’s Office were the case load, the complexity of the case load and Felonies First. Commissioner Ahern stated that based upon what he sees each month from the County Attorney and the presentation from Chief Nadeau; he is not inclined to approve the two (2) new positions. The office has expanded significantly and he does not know if that is in their best interest. Commissioner Lauer stated that based on her conversation with County Attorney Saffo she will support the request for the two (2) new positions.

Clerical – Register of Deeds

Commissioner Lauer asked Register of Deeds Monahan, who was present at the meeting, what would happen if they were to delay her request for a new position a few months. RD Monahan stated that she would be losing the summer training months when they are the busiest with on the job training for this new position.

CA Libby stated that they are currently at a 5.65% in the amount to be raised by taxes and an increase of \$1,354,000.00

The Commissioners stated that they will plan to meet next Thursday the 27th to further discuss the budget.

12:01 PM With no further business the meeting adjourned

Wendy A. Piper, Clerk