

Delegation – Set Elected Officials Salaries
Administration Building
3855 Dartmouth College Highway
North Haverhill, NH
May 18, 2020

PRESENT: Rep. Abel, Rep. Almy, Rep. Campion, Rep. Diggs, Rep. Dontonville, Rep. Egan, Rep. Fellows, Rep. Ford, Rep. French, Rep. Gordon, Rep. Hennessey, Rep. Josephson, Rep. Ladd, Rep. Maes, Rep. Massimilla, Rep. Mulligan, Rep. Nordgren, Rep. Osborne, Rep. Ruprecht, Rep. Smith, Rep. Stringham, Rep. Sykes, Rep. Weston, Commissioner Lauer, Commissioner Piper, County Administrator Libby, Administrative Assistant Norcross, Sheriff Stiegler.

Rep. Sykes called the meeting to order at 9:10 and began with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Rep Egan.

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 no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to the meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. 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 882 4179 7233 with password: 214179, or by clicking the following website address:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88241797233?pwd=WIA4REdwN3dkTXVlZmFmVkZBcTlVQT09>
- 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.

- 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) 787-6941 or email at: 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 roll for attendance. Rep. Abel "here" and there is no one in the room with him during this meeting, Rep. Almy "here" and there is no one in the room with her during this meeting, Rep. Champion "here" and there is no one in the room with her during this meeting, Rep. Diggs "here" and there is no one in the room with her during this meeting, Rep. Dontonville "here" and there is no one in the room with him during this meeting, Rep. Egan "here" and there is no one in the room with him during this meeting,, Rep. Fellows "here" and there is no one in the room with her during this meeting, Rep. Ford "here" and there is no one in the room with her during this meeting Rep. French "here" and there is no one in the room with her during this meeting, Rep. Gordon "here" and there is no one in the room with him during this meeting, Rep. Hennessey "here" and her two (2) minor children are with her, Rep. Josephson "here" and there is no one in the room with him during this meeting, Rep. Ladd "here" and there is no one in the room with him during this meeting, Rep. Maes "here" and there is no one in the room with him during this meeting, Rep. Massimilla "here" and there is no one in the room with her during this meeting , Rep. Mulligan "here" and there is no one in the room with her during this meeting, Rep. Nordgren "here" and there is no one in the room with her during this meeting, Rep. Osborne "here" and there is no one in the room with him during this meeting, Rep. Ruprecht "here" and there is no one in the room with him during this meeting, Rep. Smith "here" and there is no one in the room with her during this meeting, 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, Rep. Weston "here" and there is no one in the room with her during this meeting. Twenty-three (23) members were present and a quorum was declared.

Rep. Sykes stated that the minutes from the January 27th Delegation meeting need to be approved.

MOTION: Rep. Almy moved to accept the minutes from January 27th 2020. Rep. Champion seconded the motion. Rep. Stringham called the roll. Rep. Abel "yes", Rep. Almy "yes", Rep. Champion "yes", Rep. Diggs "yes", Rep. Dontonville "yes", Rep. Egan "yes", Rep. Fellows "yes", Rep. Ford "yes", Rep. French "yes", Rep. Gordon "abstain",

Grafton County Delegation – Set Elected Officials Salaries

May 18, 2020

Page 2 of 5

Rep. Hennessey "yes", Rep. Josephson "yes", Rep. Ladd "yes", Rep. Maes "yes", Rep. Massimilla "yes", Rep. Mulligan "yes", Rep. Nordgren "yes", Rep. Osborne "yes", Rep. Ruprecht "yes", Rep. Smith "abstain", Rep. Stringham "yes", Rep. Sykes "yes", Rep. Weston "abstain". With the vote being twenty (20) in favor, none in opposition and three (3) abstained the motion passes.

Rep. Stringham stated that he thinks this is a tough time for them to offer pay raises to employees. They have upwards of 20% unemployment in the State of New Hampshire. He is sure they will be taking a close look at the budget in its entirety. He stated that in looking at the combined salaries of all officials, a 2% increase is roughly an additional \$5,000. When you total with benefits it is less than \$10,000 a year. He stated that he doesn't want to send a wrong message but doesn't think they need to draw the line at 0%. He asked if any of them come with benefits. CA Libby stated that there are three (3) full time elected officials; the Sheriff, Register of Deeds and County Attorney who are all eligible for health insurance and the NH Retirement System. They are eligible for all benefits that all regular employees have. The part time elected officials are not eligible for anything. Rep. Weston stated that she understands this is a rough time to increase the costs to the County at all but she thinks is good to remember inflation in the last ten (10) years is at 14%. They are not keeping up with that rate of inflation. Rep. Maes asked what the budgetary projections is for the bottom line of the budget. CA Libby stated that the Commissioners proposed budget has a 3.47% increase in the amount to be raised by taxes. Rep. Sykes stated that towns and counties are under pressure to pay attention to their budgets. Rep. Ladd stated that he is perplexed on how to go about this issue of salaries. He is quite concerned in talking with businesses in his community, that they have had to lay people off and their revenues are decreasing. He is concerned about giving public employees a raise when there are people who do not have jobs. He will vote not to raise any salaries. Sheriff Stiegler was present and stated that he is not looking for any increase in compensation. He recognizes it is a position that they are voting on and that someone else may eventually move into it but he is not advocating for any increase moving forward. Rep. Abel asked what the proposed county budget is and if they are allocating for raises of non-elected employees. CA Libby stated that there is a 2% COLA included in the proposed budget. Rep. Almy stated that she is concerned about the fact that Rep. Sykes had mentioned that towns and cities are going to have to send the full amount that was budgeted to the county and school districts. It is going to make a huge impact on the towns, specifically the ones where the county taxes are a bigger portion. She prefers not to raise salaries at this point. Rep. Ford stated that she agrees with everything that has been said. Rep. Smith asked CA Libby if the COLA was automatically included in the budget. CA Libby stated that it is not automatic, it was negotiated. It is a proposed increase that needs to be approved by the Delegation. Rep. Smith stated that she is very concerned about the fiscal situation in the state. She thanked the Sheriff for letting them know he is not expecting any kind of increase. Rep. Ladd stated that he is meeting this afternoon with other representatives and others on the education funding committee. They are making wonderful progress in that committee. They are working hard on coming up with an adequacy formula. He believes they won't have the revenues to do what they want to do. He stated that maybe they ought to put a pause on things and when the revenues get better they can revisit. Rep. Fellows stated that she is not willing to provide no raises at all, if the revenues for the state are coming in short that means there will be additional tax payers and they are the ones they need to pay for it. She thinks that a

1.5% at the beginning of each year is a good place to start. Rep. Stringham stated that he is supportive of what majority of other people have said. The proposed budget has an additional \$1 million to be raised by property taxes. When there are revenue shortfalls, the likelihood of property tax relief is going to be less than originally projected. Rep. Almy stated that she wants to make it really clear that if you are a town that sends 2/3s of the money you collect to the school district, your hit on your budget will be twice as high and when you add on the county portion to that your hit will be much higher. That leaves the town little money to keep vital services running. Rep. Gordon stated that there was recently an article in the NY Times about Bristol stating that the primary source revenue in Bristol is tourism and if there are no tourist attractions this summer that will be a large hit to that town. He stated that there is no way they can support raises as much as he believes they are justified. Rep. Dontonville thanked the Sheriff for his comments. Being a retired teacher dealing with property tax paying his salary, they have gone without raises to keep property taxes down. He stated that for the benefit of the community they are willing to forgo their step increases. He agrees with no raises.

MOTION: Rep. Almy moved to retain the level of salaries across the board that they have this term. Rep. Ladd seconded the motion. Rep. Stringham called the roll. Rep. Abel "yes", Rep. Almy "yes", Rep. Campion "yes", Rep. Diggs "yes", Rep. Dontonville "yes", Rep. Egan "yes", Rep. Fellows "no", Rep. Ford "yes", Rep. French "yes", Rep. Gordon "yes", Rep. Hennessey "yes", Rep. Josephson "yes", Rep. Ladd "yes", Rep. Maes "yes", Rep. Massimilla "yes", Rep. Mulligan "yes", Rep. Nordgren "yes", Rep. Osborne "yes", Rep. Ruprecht "yes", Rep. Smith "yes", Rep. Stringham "yes", Rep. Sykes "yes", Rep. Weston "yes".

Discussion: Rep. Fellows stated that by giving the full time elected officials increases except for the Sheriff because he has requested none, it would be two (2) employees and less than \$5,000.

With the vote being twenty-two (22) in favor and one (1) in opposition the motion passes.

Rep. Ladd asked about the Commissioner staggered elections and where that legislation is currently at. Rep. Josephson stated that this was being discussed in his committee and he will find out more information. Rep. Almy stated to talk to Senator Guida as he is in the best position to push this legislation a priority in the Senate.

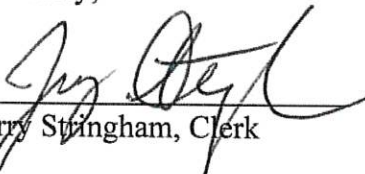
Delegation Vote on FY21 Budget – June 22nd.

Rep. Smith asked when the Executive Committee budget meetings will be. Rep. Sykes stated that they will be further discussing this in today's Executive Committee Meeting.

Rep. Sykes asked if there were any comments from the audience. There were no audience members present.

10:02 AM with no further business the meeting adjourned.

Sincerely,


Jerry Stringham, Clerk