

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BUDGET MEETING

Administration Building
UNH Coop Extension Conference Room
3855 Dartmouth College Highway
North Haverhill, NH
June 6th 2022

PRESENT: Representatives Sykes, Gordon, Abel, Murphy, Simon, Weston. Commissioner Ahern, Commissioner Piper, County Administrator Libby, Administrative Asst. Norcross

OTHERS PRESENT: Sheriff Stiegler, Maintenance Supt. Oakes, HR Director Clough, County Attorney Hornick

Rep. Sykes called the meeting to order at 8:05 AM and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Rep. Weston called the roll. Six (6) members were present and a quorum was declared.

Sheriff's Department – Sheriff Stiegler

Revenue

Sheriff's Dept. Fees - Sheriff Stiegler reported that they are seeing an uptick in civil paperwork, which explains the \$20,000 increase in revenue.

Court Bailiffs – Sheriff Stiegler stated that the Bailiffs have been given a COLA.

Contract Special Details – The department is seeing an increase in demand for staffing special events.

Expense

Deputies OT – Sheriff Stiegler stated that he is requesting additional overtime to help address the outstanding warrants rather than requesting a new position. He would like to have the resource to tell his staff there will be mandatory overtime.

Uniform Allowance – Sheriff Stiegler stated that he has a vacant position and it costs roughly \$3,500 to get uniforms for a new Deputy. He also anticipates one (1) or two (2) retirements that he will need to replace as well.

Sheriff Stiegler answered various questions from the Committee.

Maintenance Department – Superintendent Oakes

Wages & Benefits – Supt. Oakes explained that the increase in this line is based on hiring one new maintenance asst. He stated that there are projects his department is falling behind in due to being short staffed. He replaced his Assistant Superintendent a couple of years ago after a long

term employee retired, Supt. Oakes has not been able to train him because his assistant has been filling in due to being understaffed.

Rep. Gordon asked if Supt. Oakes has staff that can perform some of the items that they are spending money on for contracted services. Supt. Oakes explained that he has created licensed positions to try to absorb some of these contracted services.

Rep. Gordon stated that they have heard talk about the Courthouse needing to be replaced; he asked Supt. Oakes his thoughts on the subject. He stated that there are many issues throughout that building, noting that the elevator does not have any of the modern day safety features because it was grand fathered. Supt. Oakes explained that the county had an architectural engineering study done on the Courthouse and they substantiated what he has been telling the Commissioners for a few years. To look at the building, it looks ok but it has its issues. He discussed more of those issues with the Committee and answered questions.

Human Resources – Director Clough

HR Director Clough stated that she is requesting to hire a Recruitment and Retention Specialist that would support all the measures that they are utilizing to recruit and retain employees. She explained that if they could bring in this position, it would allow one (1) person to target this area. It will not solve the staffing issues here but it is a good tool to help start to try to address it. She has budgeted the position at \$57,948 as a starting rate of pay. She feels that this is an important step for her department to be able to take. Rep. Gordon asked what adding a new person would do to change the dynamic. HR Director Clough explained that it is about how much dedication are you putting into getting into the school systems and colleges and focusing on the communication you are putting out there. She stated that they are able to do this to a certain extent with the workload they have. She noted that this position would look at recruiting for someone who is not actively looking for a job as well.

Contracted Svc- This line is reduced by \$40,000 due to not having the wage study in the upcoming year.

Equipment Repair and Maint – HR Director Clough stated that she was able to zero this out as the LaserFiche Support Agreement is now included in the contract.

The HR Budget has a \$17,000 increase and HR Director Clough noted that 80% of her budget is allocated back to the nursing home.

UNH Extension – County Office Administrator Donna Lee

COA Lee stated that the telephone line has been removed because UNH has switched to Ring Central within the last few weeks.

COA Lee noted that UNH typically adjusts the Salary for Professional staff and the Extension Operations line by the CPI annually, but has decided not to include that increase this year.

Alternative Sentencing – Director DePalo, Nicole Mitchell

AS Director DePalo introduced Nicole Mitchell, who will be taking over her position starting June 16th. She stated that they have also hired a new Mental Health Court Case Manager in this current fiscal year because a couple of their mental health agencies reached out to the county and stated they are unable to maintain their contract due to staffing shortages. AS Director DePalo stated that they were able to hire on a Mental Health Court Case Manager who has taken over the workload from two (2) of the three (3) agencies. She explained that they have decided, because of numbers and lack of ability of the mental health agencies to meet the needs of their clients, to terminate the county's contract with the last agency that serves their Mental Health Court.

CA Libby explained to the Executive Committee that the Alternative Sentencing Department is now broken into two (2) different sections. This is due to the BDAS grant; they are tracking all of those expenses separately.

AS Director DePalo noted that, their only increases in the budget are staffing related and all other line items either remained the same or are decreasing.

Rep. Sykes asked AS Director DePalo to explain what happened with the Mental Health Agencies that the county is no longer contracting. AS Director DePalo explained that when they first started Mental Health Court they needed to bring on agencies that could support the county's services. The contract has always been written as 2.5 days per week for the severe and persistently mentally ill. She stated that the County has stopped seeing that 2.5 days being afforded to them but never decreased funding. When COVID hit, in Plymouth, they went from seven (7) clients per six (6) months to 2-3 client. AS Director DePalo stated she asked the mental health agency what they have been doing with the clients in terms of weekly case management, therapeutic services and the form she received had from September of last year through March, only serving three (3) clients and less than hour (1) per month on some of them. She stated that they had already met the third case manager through Lakes Region and through conversation felt that their case manager could manage another three (3) clients but it was not being fulfilled. She stated that the County has a satellite office in Plymouth, Littleton and Lebanon to meet the needs of their clients throughout the county.

AS Director DePalo noted that West Central Behavioral Health and Northern Human Services ceased their contracts as of October and December of last year because they were unable to meet the needs and did not feel it was appropriate for the clients to not receive the services they needed. She explained that she then reached out to all of their agencies stating that she understands there are staffing issues and afforded everyone the opportunity to discuss their contracts. At that time, Lakes Region Mental Health stated that they were able to fulfill the need but they are now seeing a decline in services. AS Director DePalo stated that an important thing to note is that while the county paid \$29,000 annually for case management services, Lakes Region is able to be reimbursed through insurance companies, they were also being paid out of the social services budget at the county.

Rep. Gordon asked in terms of Drug Court, is there a Judge at the Superior Court who handles those cases. AS Director DePalo explained, that Drug Court is run by North Country Health

Consortium and Judge MacLeod presides over those clients. Drug Court is no longer a program in Alternative Sentencing. She explained that in 2018 Grafton County decided to give up Drug Court. NCHC put in an RFP and is now running the Drug Court.

County Attorney's Office – Atty. Hornick

Rep. Gordon stated that he is still unsure of the status of Drug Court in Grafton County. His understanding was that it was a program funded through the Superior Court but he has gathered that the Superior Court is not committed to it and it is being operating by another program. Atty. Hornick stated that Judge Nadeau is still a key component to Drug Court. She stated that she believes most of the funding for Drug Court is federal funding and Alex Casale runs the program. CA Libby stated that the program is run by the Superior Court and they put it out to bid for a multiyear contract. She explained that the decision was made to turn Drug Court over to the state for many reasons. Drug Court was established in Grafton County in 2007 and was set up for Grafton County's needs and specific circumstances and as the State of New Hampshire became more involved and dictated how it was going to be run, it was counter too many of the things the County wanted to do. She noted that there were also personnel issues at the time and it made sense for Grafton County to not be involved in Drug Court any longer.

Revenue

Circuit Court Prosecution – Atty. Hornick explained that in the County Attorney's Office there are eight (8) Superior Court Prosecutors. They also have contracts with police department for two (2) Circuit Court Prosecutors. These contracts cover the costs for the two (2) prosecutors in full.

Roving Advocate – Atty. Hornick stated that they did not receive funding for next year. They have reapplied and are waiting to hear back.

Expenses

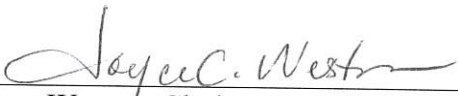
Investigative Services – Atty. Hornick stated that this is a position that was approved through ARPA. 25% of the costs for this position are being funded in the operating budget and the other 75% is funded through ARPA. She explained that they have been looking for an investigator for two (2) years and because they have ARPA funds for three (3) years, this would give them the opportunity to see if the person is a good fit. It is a three (3) year position but has the potential to be a permanent position.

Dues & Licenses – Atty. Hornick stated that they have done away with their online meeting software Lifesize because they now have Office 365 and are able to use Microsoft Teams for their virtual meetings.

CA Libby gave the Executive Committee members a spreadsheet outlining all of the ARPA projects that have been approved, completed and the remaining balance of APRA funds.

10:38 AM with no further business the meeting adjourned.

Sincerely,



Joyce Weston, Clerk