

PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED FY23 BUDGET
Administration Building
North Haverhill, NH 03774
May 25th, 2022

PRESENT: see attached sign in sheet

Commissioner Piper opened the public hearing at 6:00PM.

Commissioner Piper stated that it has been a very challenging year and thanked the Department Heads for their hard work, ideas, leadership and open and honest communication. She stated that it is a pleasure to work with everyone.

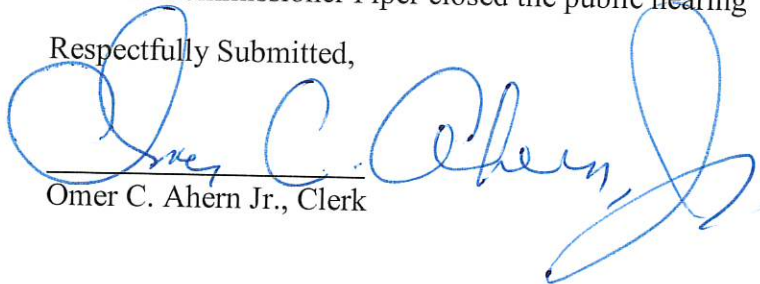
She then presented the attached PowerPoint.

Holly French from Lakes Region Community Services thanked the Commissioners for their continued support. She stated that the grant the county provides helps pay caregivers to transport individuals that would otherwise have no means of transportation.

Commissioner Ahern noted that the ARPA funds are not going to continue long term. The Commissioners do not want folks to think that the funding is ongoing. They are trying to make the best use of that money under the circumstances.

6:15PM Commissioner Piper closed the public hearing

Respectfully Submitted,



Omer C. Ahern Jr., Clerk



Proposed FY23 Budget Public Hearing May 25 2022

Sign In Sheet ~ PLEASE PRINT

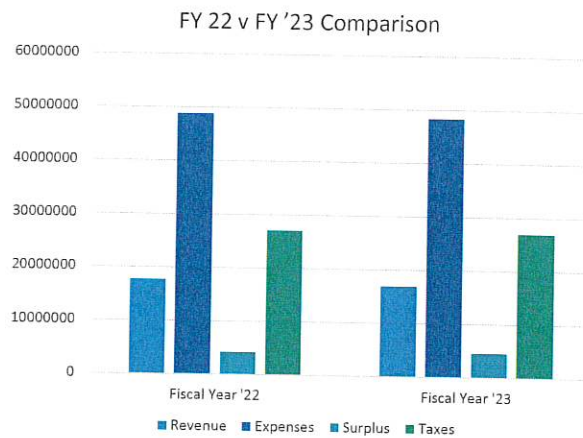
1	Kathleen Vasconcelos	31
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6	Heather Bayant	36
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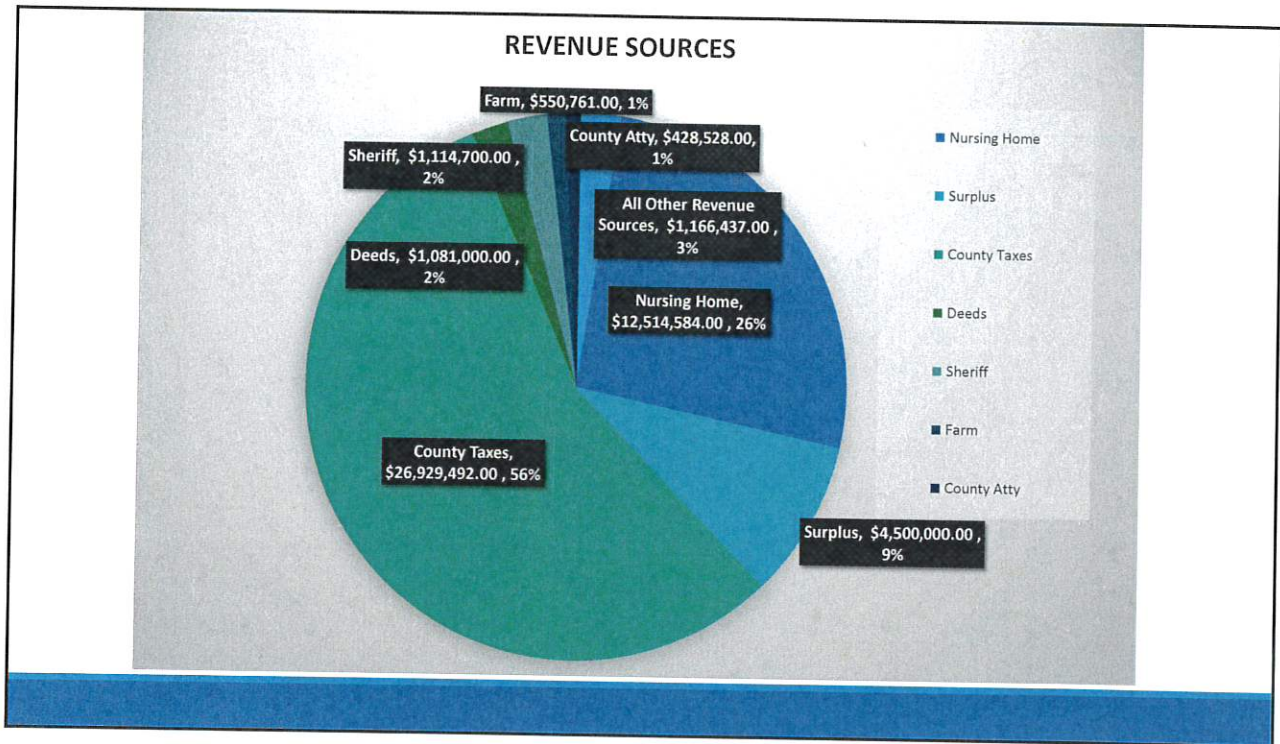
GRAFTON COUNTY

FISCAL YEAR 2023 COMMISSIONERS' PROPOSED BUDGET

Fiscal Year '23 Budget Summary

- Revenue decreased 4.49%
- Increased Surplus Used by 9.22%
- Expenses decreased .93%
- County Taxes decreased .16%





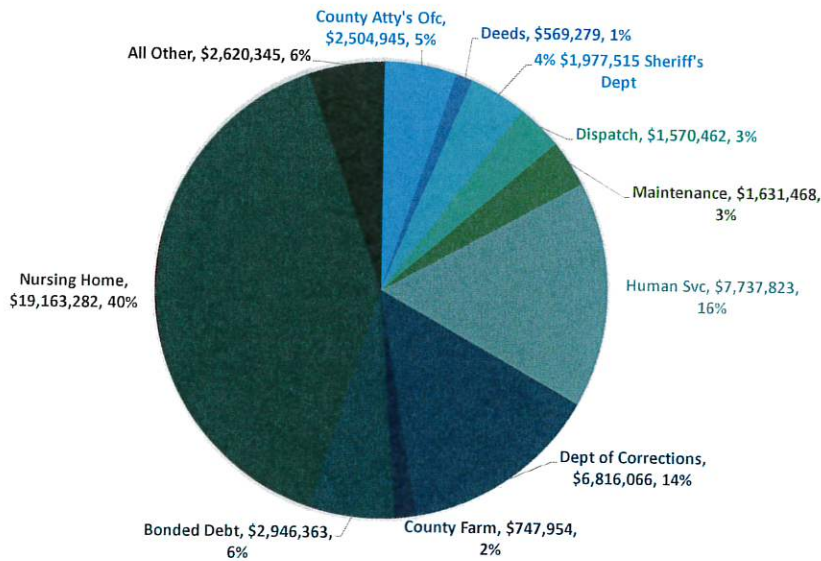
Revenue Highlights

- Revenue is down 4.49%
 - The decrease in the revenue is being driven by the Nursing Home. The reduction is due to reduced census capabilities; this was initially caused by the impacts of COVID but is now continuing to be driven by staffing issues. There are currently large vacancies in the nursing department and many vacancies in other departments throughout the facility.
 - The average daily census at the nursing home through April, 2022 is 101, well below the budgeted 114. The revenue is based on a census of 100. The overall decrease in the nursing home revenue is \$806,653. The Nursing Home is a 135 bed facility
 - Other departments budgeting decreases in revenue are:
 - **County Attorney's Office** – Revenue in the County Attorney's office is primarily received from grant funding. During FY '22 one of the federal grants ended. This revenue was a 100% wash for an expense. The expense budget has also been reduced by the same amount. The total reduction in revenue is \$92,390.

Revenue Highlights (continued)

- Other departments budgeting decreases in revenue are:
 - Register of Deeds** – The Deeds Department has seen tremendous volume during the past two (2) years and generated record amounts of revenue. Recognizing this during last year's budget preparation, Register Monahan increased budgeted revenues for FY '22. Those revenue projections will be exceeded by the end of this fiscal year. In preparation of the FY '23 budget, Register Monahan is anticipating that the real estate market will slow down due to lower inventory and higher interest rates and as such has reduced revenue projections for FY '23 by \$136,500.
- There are a number of departments with increases in revenue projections:
 - The Sheriff's Department** shows an increase of \$90,500 – there are increases in Civil process fees with increased volume and an increase in Dispatch fee revenue.
 - The Farm** revenue is increasing \$ 118,197 – this is due primarily to the record high milk prices. There is an anticipated increase in milk revenue of \$111,197.
 - There are also increases in Interest Income, Rental Income, Federal Payment in Lieu of taxes and Abandoned Property revenue from the State of NH.
- To offset the decreases in revenue projections, the Commissioners evaluated the County's fund balance position which continues to be strong and within its recommended range. The decision was made to increase the amount of fund balance for this year due to the circumstances. There is an additional \$380,000 to be used to offset taxes.

EXPENSE BREAKDOWN



Expenditure Highlights

The overall decrease in the expense budget is .93% -

- Grafton County received \$17,459,302 in American Rescue Plan funding (ARPA.) The Final Rule from the U.S. Treasury allows for counties to use up to \$10 million as a standard allowance for revenue loss for the provision of general government services. Grafton has chosen to adopt this standard allowance. The general government services generally include any service traditionally provided by a government. Due to revenues for FY 2023 being down by \$792,135 and the extraordinary inflation and increase in fuel prices that we are currently experiencing, the Commissioners are recommending that \$1,903,472 in general government services spending for FY 2023 be taken from ARPA funding. Without this funding the FY 2023 budget would be \$50,188,974 and would show a 2.97% increase in expenditures and the amount to be raised by taxes would be \$28,832,964 with an increase of 6.90%.

Fiscal Year 2023 Operating Costs from ARPA

Proposed FY 2023 Budget		
FY 2023 Proposed Budget:	\$ 50,188,974.00	
Items to be funded from ARPA		
01-4135-290	\$ 369,032.00	IT Contracted Services
01-4135-970	\$ 105,600.00	New Computers - Lifecycle Replacement
01-4165-649;650;651	\$ 46,335.00	Fuel Increases
01-8600	\$ 549,655.00	Social Service Funding
01-8670-007	\$ 150,000.00	Earned Time Buyback
01-9200-980	\$ 112,350.00	Sheriff's Cruisers
01-9200-980	\$ 34,500.00	Sheriff Cruisers Safety Equipment
01-9210-090	\$ 5,000.00	Open Barn Day
02-5140-012	\$ 531,000.00	Increase in Contract Nursing Expense
Total Operating Expense from ARPA	\$ 1,903,472.00	
Total Budget	\$ 48,285,502.00	

Expenditure Highlights (Continued)

- WAGES: The Commissioners, working through Human Resources, contracted to have a comprehensive wage study done during fiscal year 2022.
- The overall report showed that the county was below market by nearly 3%. A new wage chart was designed and presented for implementation.
- The Commissioners voted to implement the new wage chart for fiscal year 2023. All employees will go onto the new chart at a step position that gives them a minimum of a \$.50/hour increase; all employees that do not go onto the chart at the maximum step will be eligible for a step increase during fiscal year 2023 at their anniversary date.
- The implementation of the new wage chart will reduce the number of employees at the maximum step by 85%.
- The cost of implementing this new wage chart is \$750,000. The Commissioners believe that this is a positive step in bringing all positions to market level and it increases the starting pay for the positions which have seen the highest turnover rate and which the county is having the hardest time recruiting for.

Staffing is extremely challenging and the Commissioners, along with Human Resources and the Department Heads, have been working hard to identify ways to recruit and retain employees. The above changes and the excellent benefit package that the county offers are ways in which we hope to be competitive and be able to not only attract new employees but retain the valuable employees that we currently have.

Expenditure Highlights (Continued)

New Positions: The Fiscal Year 2023 budget includes three (3) new full-time positions.

- Human Resources – Recruitment and Retention Specialist - This position will be dedicated to these efforts. The Commissioners believe that giving HR funding for a dedicated position will hopefully enable the county to tackle one of its greatest current challenges.
- Maintenance – Maintenance Assistant – Currently there is only one (1) full-time Maintenance Assistant and the workload far exceeds one person's ability; thus there are Skilled Maintenance Assistants that must assist with these jobs in order to get them done. The additional hire would alleviate those issues.
- Dispatch – Dispatcher – The County has added additional communities to provide services to. This has increased Dispatch revenue, but it has also added the need for an additional position.

Expenditure Highlights (Continued)

- The county is statutorily required to contribute to the Long Term Care and Choices for Independence Medicaid programs. The Statute established a cap that the counties contribute. That cap by statute will increase by 2%. In addition to the increase in the overall cap, the percentage of those costs that Grafton County pays has also increased. Those increases equate to an increase of \$340,671.
- Bonded Debt has decreased by \$94,225 due to debt being retired.
- There are several areas of the budget that show reduced or eliminated expenses in the operating budget and that is due to the fact that those expenses are being requested to pay for with American Rescue Plan funding.

The Executive Committee of the Delegation – will meet on 6/3; 6/6; 6/10 and 6/13 to deliberate and make their final recommendations and the full Delegation will meet on June 24, 2022 at 9:00 AM to vote on the FY 2023 Grafton County Budget. For more information regarding these meetings please visit: www.co.grafton.nh.us.



We would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank our elected officials, department heads and all of our employees for all of their hard work during the past year. It has continued to be a very challenging environment. All have continued to provide outstanding services to the citizens of Grafton County. You have all done an amazing job!

Grafton County is dedicated to maintaining a high level of professionalism, safety and care throughout all departments while continuing to be conscious of our obligations to provide services and to be respectful of the impact on taxpayers.



Thank you for attending!