

Grafton County Delegation Vote on FY14 Budget
Grafton County ~ UNH Conference Room
North Haverhill, NH
Monday June 24, 2013

PRESENT: Representatives Aguiar, Almy, Bailey, Benn, Bradley, Brown, Cooney, Ford, Friedrich, Gionet, Harding, Higgins, Ladd, Lauer, Lovett, Massimilla, Mulholland, Nordgren, Pastor-Bodmer, Piper, Smith, Sykes, Townsend and White. Commissioners Cryans, Burton and Richards, Treasurer Parker and Executive Director Julie Clough

EXCUSED: Representatives Doolan, Reilly and Shackett.

OTHERS: See attached list

10:02 AM ~ Rep. White called the meeting to order and Rep. Aguiar (Clerk) called the roll. 24 members were present when the roll was called and a quorum was declared. The meeting then began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Representative White stated that the purpose of this meeting was to deliberate and vote on the proposed FY 14 operating budget. He stated that he will introduce the overall budget as the Executive Committee has prepared it.

Rep. White stated that the Commissioners proposed budget came to the Executive Committee several weeks ago and they have met over the past few weeks with Dept heads and deliberated. It is down some from the Commissioners proposed budget some of that is due to revenue increases. The Executive Committee's vote was six (6) in favor and one (1) opposed.

Rep Harding asked about the Drug Court Case Manager being zeroed out. Rep. White explained that this is a grant that expires this year. The Drug Court Case Manager position is being included in the Drug Court budget.

Rep Bernie Benn asked how the reduction in the plant operation was achieved. Supt. Oakes explained the biomass plant will take over majority of our heating during FY 14 which has allowed the County to budget a large reduction in fuel oil costs. He went on to explain that the other savings is in the electric rates from WW&L that we will pay in FY 14. WW&L has a new contract with their supplier and the savings has been passed on to the customers.

Rep. Bailey asked about geothermal system he said some of his constituents have inquired if the system is working. Supt. Oakes stated that there is a common misunderstanding in the public that it does not work. The system does work, Supt. Oakes went on to explain some on going issues that the County has been dealing with in regards to the system, but reiterated that the system works it just doesn't work as well as it should

and the issues are being addressed. He said another misconception is that the biomass plant was built because geothermal doesn't work. That is not true.

Rep White stated that the Executive Committee is happy with the updates they are receiving and how it is being handled. He also said that the Committee is very happy with the Maintenance budget.

Representative Bailey followed-up asking if the fix is costing the taxpayers additional monies. Supt. Oakes said it depends on the issue. Some issues are under warranty and if some need additional equipment to work that we would have had to purchase then we are paying for that equipment.

Representative White asked Director Clough to review the increases in the revenue, the new positions that are included in the budget and the changes in the bonded debt.

Director Clough explained that when the budget was prepared the Nursing Home's Medicaid reimbursement rate was \$152.11 and the Nursing Home anticipated a 2% decrease in the rate, we have since received our rates and the July 01st rate is \$155.38, so the Medicaid revenue line has been adjusted to reflect that.

Director Clough went on to explain that there is approximately \$850K left over in bond funds from the original Jail construction bonds. She stated that those funds have to be used to make bond payments at this point. \$250K will be used in fiscal year 2014 and a schedule has been developed to spend down the rest over the next several years.

Director Clough then reviewed with the Delegation the new positions included in the budget and the positions that have increases in hours.

Representative Benn asked about revenue from the County Attorney's Office. Director Clough explained that the Mental Health Court grant expired this year and there will be no revenue this year from that.

Representative Almy inquired about the Administrative Assistant position in for the Juvenile Justice program. CA Saffo explained what that position would do. It is budgeted at only \$8K so it will be very part time.

Representative Almy inquired about the Bed Tax revenue and the Pro-Share revenues. Director Clough explained that we did budget a decrease in the Bed Tax revenue and we are not anticipating a decrease in pro-share funds.

Representative Brown asked if we are where we anticipated with the inmate population at the jail and what is the justification for the new correctional officer position. Director Clough explained that the population is around what they anticipated. She also explained that the justification for the new position is that the requested staffing for the new facility was not budgeted for at the opening of the facility. After a year of operation it is evident

that more Correctional staffing is needed in the facility. Representative White added that the Executive Committee had met with Supt. Libby and Rep. White felt that Supt. Libby was being conservative in his request and felt that there may be future requests for more staffing. It was also stated that the number of staff does not correlate to the number of inmates as we need the same amount of staff for 110 inmates vs. 150 inmates.

Representative Harding reminded everyone that the jail also has supervisory authority for the Drug Court as well.

Commissioner Richards stated that she keeps reminding Supt. Libby that she wants to see more programmatic things going on at the facility, and Supt. Libby continues to remind the Commissioners that he can not do that until he has the proper security staff.

Rep. Almy stated that she is concerned that we do not have enough staff. Director Clough stated that back in January, Supt. Libby asked the Commissioners to reclassify the program staff that was budgeted for in the fiscal year 2013 budget to two (2) Correctional Officers and one (1) Administrative staff.

Rep. Ladd stated that the Executive Committee was looking at the whole practice from pre-trial diversion all the way to incarceration. He stated that we are trying to put our money where we have a better payback in society. Programs are being done in the facility. The jail does many things to be proud of. He said that the moves that they are looking to make will be very positive and Grafton County will be a place that others look to.

Rep Ladd moved to appropriate \$37,953,466 for Fiscal Year 2014 of which \$21,075,456 is to be raised by taxes. Rep. Mulholland.

Discussion

Rep Ladd stated that the Commissioners proposed budget had an overall increase of 2.05% now it is a 1.7% increase. The increase in the amount to be raised by taxes was 2.62% and now it is 1.2%. He stated that within the budget there are some significant program changes that will benefit the County. Juvenile Diversion is a tremendous change that will pay dividends and change how we spend money at the County Level.

Rep. Gionet stated that he does not feel that Social Services programs are the responsibility of the County. He stated that they are not fair and equitable to the taxpayers. He stated that he would like to see the budget reduced by another \$500K.

With no further discussion a roll call vote was taken by Clerk Aguiar. Reps. Aguiar, Almy, Bailey, Benn, Bradley, Brown, Cooney, Ford, Friedrich, Harding, Higgins, Ladd, Lauer, Lovett, Massimilla, Mulholland, Nordgren, Pastor-Bodmer, Piper, Smith, Sykes, Townsend and White were in favor and Rep Gionet was opposed. Motion passes 23 to 1

Rep Aguiar moved to authorize Tax Anticipation Loans in the amount of up to \$5,000,000. Rep Smith seconded the motion.

Discussion

Rep Aguiar stated that this allows the Treasurer to borrow funds for cash flow (to pay the bills) for the balance of the year until tax money is received. Rep Almy asked how much was borrowed last year. Director Clough stated \$3.3M. Rep White reminded everyone that it would be a line of credit.

With no further discussion a roll call vote was taken by Clerk Aguiar. Reps. Aguiar, Almy, Bailey, Benn, Bradley, Brown, Cooney, Ford, Friedrich, Gionet, Harding, Higgins, Ladd, Lauer, Lovett, Massimilla, Mulholland, Nordgren, Pastor-Bodmer, Piper, Smith, Sykes, Townsend and White were in favor. Motion passes 24 to 0.

Rep Gionet moved to expend \$11,623 from the Register of Deeds Surcharge Account for equipment in the Registry. Rep. Aguiar seconded the motion.

With no further discussion a roll call vote was taken by Clerk Aguiar. Reps. Aguiar, Almy, Bailey, Benn, Bradley, Brown, Cooney, Ford, Friedrich, Gionet, Harding, Higgins, Ladd, Lauer, Lovett, Massimilla, Mulholland, Nordgren, Pastor-Bodmer, Piper, Smith, Sykes, Townsend and White were in favor. Motion passes 24 to 0.

Rep Sykes moved to contribute \$59,497 from the Dispatch Fees for fiscal year 2014 to the Dispatch Capital Reserve Fund. Rep. Gionet seconded the motion.

Discussion

Rep. White stated that the Dispatch center collects fees from the users and the Delegation votes annually on how much to appropriate to the Capital Reserve fund from those fees, the money is then used for equipment and upgrades to Dispatch. The year the contribution is 10% of the user fees.

With no further discussion a roll call vote was taken by Clerk Aguiar. Reps. Aguiar, Almy, Bailey, Benn, Bradley, Brown, Cooney, Ford, Friedrich, Gionet, Harding, Higgins, Ladd, Lauer, Lovett, Massimilla, Mulholland, Nordgren, Pastor-Bodmer, Piper, Smith, Sykes, Townsend and White were in favor. Motion passes 24 to 0.

Rep Ford moved to expend \$278,200 from the Dispatch Capital Reserve account for equipment for the Dispatch Center. Rep. Lauer seconded the motion.

Discussion

Rep White explained what the expenditures were for.

With no further discussion a roll call vote was taken by Clerk Aguiar. Reps. Aguiar, Almy, Bailey, Benn, Bradley, Brown, Cooney, Ford, Friedrich, Gionet, Harding, Higgins, Ladd, Lauer, Lovett, Massimilla, Mulholland, Nordgren, Pastor-Bodmer, Piper, Smith, Sykes, Townsend and White were in favor. Motion passes 24 to 0.

Rep Almy moved to expend \$65,500 from the Nursing Home Capital Reserve account for equipment for the Nursing Home. Rep. Aguiar seconded the motion.

Discussion

Rep. White explained the expenditures that were requested to come out of the NH Capital Reserve Account.

One of the items is to change the swing of a couple of bathroom doors in the corridor. Rep Brown asked if the doors were on a punch list. NHA Labore stated he was not sure but this is a problem that they have recently identified and would like to correct it. Rep. Benn asked if there a problem with handicap access if you change the swing. Supt. Oakes stated that there is not.

With no further discussion a roll call vote was taken by Clerk Aguiar. Reps. Aguiar, Almy, Bailey, Benn, Bradley, Cooney, Ford, Friedrich, Gionet, Harding, Higgins, Ladd, Lauer, Lovett, Massimilla, Mulholland, Nordgren, Pastor-Bodmer, Piper, Smith, Sykes, Townsend and White were in favor. Representative Brown was opposed. Motion passes 23 to 1.

Rep. Bradley moved to contribute \$100,000 to the Nursing Home Capital Reserve account from the Medicaid Pro-Share funds. Rep. Lovett seconded the motion.

With no further discussion a roll call vote was taken by Clerk Aguiar. Reps. Aguiar, Almy, Bailey, Benn, Bradley, Brown, Cooney, Ford, Friedrich, Gionet, Harding, Higgins, Ladd, Lauer, Lovett, Massimilla, Mulholland, Nordgren, Pastor-Bodmer, Piper, Smith, Sykes, Townsend and White were in favor. Motion passes 24 to 0.

Rep Ladd moved to adopt the following policy regarding the acceptance of grants: The Delegation authorizes the County Commissioners to apply for, accept and expend federal and/or state grants. The Commissioners will obtain Executive Committee approval prior to accepting a grant in which the grantor requires an amount of match funding or services from the County in order to make up the full cost of the project. "Match funding" refers to the amount of non-grantor funding or services required to make up the full costs during the term of the project. The Commissioners will provide a report quarterly to the Executive Committee that details all grants applied for and/or awarded and amount expended to date. Rep. Gionet seconded the motion.

Discussion

Rep Ladd stated that this policy is similar to the one in the by-laws; it adds a sentence before and after.

With no further discussion a roll call vote was taken by Clerk Aguiar. Reps. Aguiar, Almy, Bailey, Benn, Bradley, Brown, Cooney, Ford, Friedrich, Gionet, Harding, Higgins, Ladd, Lauer, Lovett, Massimilla, Mulholland, Nordgren, Pastor-Bodmer, Piper, Smith, Sykes, Townsend and White were in favor. Motion passes 24 to 0.

Rep. Ladd moves that the Executive Committee Chairman be directed by the County Delegation to appoint a committee to review and make any necessary Bylaw recommendations to the Grafton County Delegation and to also address RSA 24:15 as it applies to expenditure of funds beyond department appropriation prior to Grafton County Commissioners obtaining written transfer authority.

RSA 24:15 “no County Commissioner or elected or appointed county officer, shall pay or agree to pay or to incur any liability for the payment of any sum of money for which the county convention has mad no appropriation or in excess of any appropriation so made.” Rep. Gionet seconded the motion.

Discussion

Representative Ladd stated that certain departments run out of money during the course of the year. One being the farm, which he stated a transfer of \$90K was just approved for. He stated that the transfer approval comes after the fact. Rep Ladd feels that the process needs to be looked at to see if it can be improved.

Rep White stated that there are two (2) parts of the motion. All changes to the bylaws will be brought back to the full Delegation for approval.

With no further discussion a roll call vote was taken by Clerk Aguiar. Reps. Aguiar, Almy, Bailey, Benn, Bradley, Brown, Cooney, Ford, Friedrich, Gionet, Harding, Higgins, Ladd, Lauer, Lovett, Massimilla, Mulholland, Nordgren, Pastor-Bodmer, Piper, Smith, Sykes, Townsend and White were in favor. Motion passes 24 to 0.

Rep White moved that compensation of mileage as outlined in the bylaws will be given to this subcommittee. Rep. Ford seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Chairman White appoints Representatives Ladd, Aguiar and Lauer to this subcommittee.

Commissioner Cryans thanked the Executive Committee for the work that they put in on the budget. Chairman White also thanked the Commissioners.

Chair White stated that he would like to acknowledge about the budget and the Grafton County operation as a whole, how outstanding both the leadership and the employees are. Director Clough, her staff, all the department heads, elected officials and all the employees really work hard to make this entire operation seem seamless everyday. Without their dedication to what it is they do we would not have the operation that we have today. We have an operation that people look to. We are doing a really good job and it is people make that happen. On behalf of the entire Delegation, Chair White would like to thank Director Clough, the department heads, the elected officials and all the employees for making this place go every single day.

Rep Harding moves that Chairman White's statements be put into a formal letter and it be given to every County employee. Representative Paster-Bodmer seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Rep Gionet stated that Rep White did an outstanding job as Chairman.

Rep Lovett stated that August 28th at 3PM will mark the 50th anniversary of the "I have a dream speech" by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Part of his remarks stated that "from the hilltops of NH let freedom ring." The NH Council of Churches and the Council on Humanities want to start a campaign to have bell ringing in NH at that time on August 28th. Many people want to be part of that. Representative Lovett just wanted the Delegation to be aware of this campaign.

Representative Aguiar moved to adjourn at 11:25 AM and Ladd seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Representative Jim Aguiar, Clerk