

Claremont + Villager

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Huge dent made in county budget deficit

See chart on page A12

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NEWPORT — The Sullivan County balance sheet blossomed a big step closer to the positive side during the 2009 fiscal year ending June 30, according to its annual audit report.

"This far exceeded all of our expectations," said County Administrator Greg Chanis at a meeting of the Sullivan County Commissioners Sept. 3. "This is great news. We expect to have a positive general fund balance at this time next year."

The deficit was reduced by

\$2,254,917 during the 2009 fiscal year. Heading into the fiscal year that began July 1, the deficit was \$715,613.

Looking back, the county enjoyed a general fund surplus of \$364,264 at the conclusion of the 2006 fiscal year. Things with the budget numbers then went south in 2007, primarily because of an over projection of occupancy at Sullivan County Health Care in Unity.

When then 2007 fiscal year concluded, the deficit had jumped to \$3,248,227. On July 1,

see **DEFICIT**, page A12

Page 1 of 2

Deficit

(continued from Page A1)

2008, it was up even more at \$3,906,123.

Key revenue elements that drove the general fund deficit down to \$715,713 included a budgeted surplus in tax dollars to fund the nursing home deficit in the amount of \$1 million, \$673,886 in federal stimulus money, \$863,911 from other revenue sources in excess of the budget and \$207,260 for expenditures less than budgeted.

The 2009-10 county budget also includes a second \$1 million budgeted surplus from taxes.

Should the county budget end the current fiscal year in the black, most of the extra \$1 million in tax money appropriated in each of the past two years will remain in the budget to cover the first year of principal and interest payments for the upgrades now being made at the House of Corrections and the construction of the new County Correctional Center.

At the same meeting, the breakdown of the county tax among the 15 municipalities was announced.

Six Sullivan County communities will see their county tax bills go down this year compared to 2008 while the other nine will be facing increases.

Sunapee remained the highest taxed community in the county, paying 23.6533 percent or \$3,064,560 of the overall assessment. That amount was down \$150,496 from 2008.

Claremont, at 17.5692 percent, was up \$49,120 or 2.2 percent at \$2,276,298. Grantham had the third highest charge at 10.9240 percent. Its bill was \$1,415,335, up \$8,755 or .6 percent.

Newport also experienced a small increase of \$7,586 or .6 percent. Newport's share of the overall county tax is 9.9574 percent or \$1,290,092.

By level funding its 2009-10 budget, the amount supported by taxes totaled \$12,956,180 or \$31 less than 2008-09.

**Sullivan County
TAX CHART**

2009	% Proportion to County Tax	\$ Apportionment of county budget
SULLIVAN COUNTY		
ACWORTH	2.0821%	269,757
CHARLESTOWN	5.8202%	754,075
CLAREMONT	17.5692%	2,276,298
CORNISH	3.9794%	515,581
CROYDON	1.8823%	243,875
GOSHEN	1.6446%	213,075
GRANTHAM	10.9240%	1,415,335
LANGDON	1.3699%	177,493
LEMPSTER	2.5039%	324,406
NEWPORT	9.9574%	1,290,092
PLAINFIELD	5.9436%	770,062
SPRINGFIELD	4.1987%	543,993
SUNAPEE	23.6533%	3,064,560
UNITY	2.9369%	380,508
WASHINGTON	5.5346%	717,071
TOTALS	100.0000%	\$12,956,180
2008	% Proportion to County Tax	\$ Apportionment of county budget
ACWORTH	2.2140%	286,856
CHARLESTOWN	6.0735%	786,899
CLAREMONT	17.1900%	2,227,178
CORNISH	3.9001%	505,309
CROYDON	2.0516%	265,814
GOSHEN	1.8156%	235,234
GRANTHAM	10.8564%	1,406,580
LANGDON	1.2889%	166,992
LEMPSTER	2.2931%	297,102
NEWPORT	9.8988%	1,282,506
PLAINFIELD	5.4272%	703,155
SPRINGFIELD	4.2184%	546,549
SUNAPEE	24.8148%	3,215,056
UNITY	2.7754%	359,589
WASHINGTON	5.1820%	671,392
TOTALS	100.0000%	12,956,211