

**SULLIVAN COUNTY, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
ANNUAL COUNTY CONVENTION  
Minutes of June 30, 2011  
243 North Main Street, Newport, NH 03773**

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**REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:** Thomas Howard, Vice Chairman; John Cloutier, Paul LaCasse, Charlene Lovett, Spec Bowers, Thomas Laware, Joe Osgood, Steven Smith, Steve Cunningham, Andy Schmidt, Raymond Gagnon.

**REPRESENTATIVES ABSENT:** Beverly Rodeschin, Benjamin Lefebvre.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Commissioner Bennie Nelson\*, Commissioner Jeffrey Barrette, Commissioner John Callum, Greg Chanis, County Administrator; Ted Purdy, Administrator of Sullivan County Health Care; Ross Cunningham, Superintendent of Department of Corrections; Sherry Curtis, Human Services Director; John Cressy, County Facilities Director; Seth Wilner, UNH Cooperative Extension.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Howard called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**MINUTES:** On a motion by Representative Osgood, seconded by Representative LaCasse, *the Delegation voted unanimously to accept the minutes of June 1, 2011.*

On a motion by Representative Osgood, seconded by Representative Lovett, *the Executive Finance Committee voted unanimously to accept the EFC minutes of June 6, 2011.*

\*Commissioner Nelson joined the meeting at 10:03 a.m.

**PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2012 BUDGET REVIEW:** Mr. Chanis gave a brief overview of budget worksheets that were distributed at the beginning of the meeting (copies attached) after introductions of County staff that were present. Mr. Chanis continued by thanking everyone for all the effort that went into the development of FY 2012 budget. Mr. Chanis explained the process of compiling the budget. He stated that the EFC's proposed budget was for \$29,137,145.00 or a tax increase of 4.47%. Representative Bowers commended the Department Heads, County Commissioners, and County Manager for their work on FY 2012 budget.

A motion was made by Representative Osgood and seconded by Representative Bowers to accept the recommendations of the Executive Finance Committee and approve the Sullivan County Fiscal Year 2012 Budget with \$29,137,145.00 of both Revenue and Expense, with the amount to be raised in taxes of \$13,905,995.

Chairman Howard opened the discussion to Commissioner Nelson for any comments prior to a vote on this motion. Commissioner Nelson stated that after all the work that was done on budget, they felt this was one they could live with. Representative Cunningham then submitted a proposed amendment (copy attached) to the EFC's recommended budget of \$29,137,145.00. He stated that he was reluctant to submit this amendment because of all the hard work done on the budget but was concerned that the details outlined in his proposal may have been overlooked.

A motion was made by Representative Bowers and seconded by Representative Osgood for the purposes of discussion, to separate Representative Cunningham's proposed amendment into two sections: the first half of the amendment would end after paragraph 10 "And, further, in the spirit of these guidelines, the County Delegation recommends that all grants meet these criteria for the Fiscal year 2013 Budget"; the second half of the amendment to begin with "For the Fiscal Year 2012 Budget, as an intermediate step to that end, sets the grants as follows:...". Chairman Howard read into the record the entire amendment as proposed by Representative Cunningham.

On a motion by Representative Bowers, seconded by Representative Osgood, *the Delegation voted to separate Representative Cunningham's proposed amendment to the Executive Finance Committee's Proposed FY 2012 Budget into two sections as described above. The motion carried.*

A motion was made by Representative Bowers and seconded by Representative LaCasse to bring the subject to the floor for debate on the "policy" or first half of the amendment offered by Representative Cunningham.

Representative Bowers expressed his concern for approving this policy after a town or city in Sullivan County may have already voted against funding one of these specific agencies. He stated he was in favor of the motion to separate. Representative Cunningham pointed out that his amendment is just a recommendation. Representative Cloutier said he would like to hear the Commissioners thoughts on this recommended policy. Representative Gagnon said he felt some of the language in the proposed amendment was misleading or offensive. He said because of some of the language and that some of the town's do not get to vote on specific funding for organizations, he could not vote on this part of the amendment. Representative Schmidt added that having an agency have countywide service does not make sense and it was an unwise policy. Representative Lovett stated that she thought all of this discussion was good but also reinforced the need to establish or recommend criteria for issuing grants. Representative Smith stated that the proposal was just a guideline and good to have to fallback on. He said he could vote for it as it was written. Representative Bowers felt that this proposed new policy was being announced at a good time so that when the town's and cities voted for their next budget, they will be aware that this is in place. Chairman Howard agreed. Representative Schmidt expressed his concern for the statement that an agency must have been started in the recent two years. He said there could be an agency that has more than two years of success and could greatly benefit from these grants. Representative LaCasse said that many cities and towns independently give to these specific organizations and did not feel they would want to give twice. Representative Lovett felt that there was a lot of confusion in this discussion as to whether they were changing the policy or just making recommendations. Representative Osgood stated that there is always a discussion on grants and it is always unclear on how grants are given. He said that prior to a commissioner's meeting there should be another meeting to put everyone on the same page. He said because it is the first time this has been put into a motion, it would be a good idea to pass this motion so they have a reference point.

*A motion was made by Representative Gagnon and seconded by Representative Cloutier to table this discussion until such time as a full discussion can be had. The motion did not pass.*

Representative Laware said he felt the entire motion needed to be revised and wondered if this was the place and time to do it. Representative Cloutier expressed his concern for the language in paragraph #4.

After some discussion, *a motion was made by Representative Cunningham and seconded by Representative Cloutier to add "and/or City Council meeting" after... "at Town Meeting,". The motion passed with Representative Gagnon opposed.*

There was general discussion on getting input from the public.

*A motion was made by Representative Osgood and seconded by Representative Cloutier to allow the public to speak on this issue; a roll call vote was taken with the following results: Representative Bowers, no; Representative Cloutier, yes; Representative Cunningham, no; Representative Gagnon, yes; Representative LaCasse, yes; Representative Laware, yes; Representative Lovett, yes; Representative Osgood, no; Representative Schmidt, yes; Representative Smith, yes; Chairman Howard, no. The motion passed 7-4.*

Mr. Rod Went, from Plainfield, NH, said he was present to support Community Alliance Transportation. He said he wanted to point out to the Delegation that the amount of the grant was 9/10 of 1% and that was a very small portion of the overall county budget. He stated that he strongly opposed the first portion of the proposed amendment to the budget.

Ms. Susan Grant, Charlestown, NH, encouraged the Delegation to discuss the first portion of the amendment and look at the criteria. She stated that it was unclear how they would handle an agency requesting a grant if they did not have a track record.

There being no further comments from the public, Chairman Howard moved the question as to the motion of separating the amendment: *a roll call vote was taken to accept the first half of the proposed policy with the following results: Representative Bowers, yes; Representative Cloutier, no; Representative Cunningham, yes; Representative Gagnon, no; Representative LaCasse, yes; Representative Laware, no; Representative Lovett, no; Representative Osgood, yes; Representative Schmidt, no; Representative Smith, no; Chairman Howard, yes. The motion failed 5-6.*

A motion was made by Representative Cunningham and seconded by Representative Osgood, to accept the modification to the EFC's budget in the amounts of the grants on the second half of the proposed amendment.

Chairman Howard opened the discussion prior to voting on this item. Representative Cunningham explained that the amounts on his amendment reflect 50% of the amount of the grants that were recommended by the Commissioners. There was general discussion about specifying what an agency would receive from a grant. Representative Laware stated that they put a lot of hours into what the agencies could receive and came up with the figures three times. Representative Schmidt said that the recommended cuts on this proposal is a very small amount yet it falls on the most disadvantaged people. He added that when voting for the Commissioners, they are accepting their professional integrity and due diligence in arriving at the budget figures they have recommended.

*On a motion by Representative Bowers, seconded by Representative Cunningham, the Delegation voted unanimously to call the question.*

*A roll call vote was taken with the following results on funding the ten agencies as proposed in the amendment: Representative Bowers, yes; Representative Cloutier, no; Representative Cunningham, yes; Representative Gagnon, no; Representative LaCasse, yes; Representative Laware, no; Representative Lovett, no; Representative Osgood, yes; Representative Schmidt, no; Representative Smith, no; Chairman Howard, yes. The motion failed 5-6.*

Chairman Howard opened the discussion for public comment.

Ms. Ethel Jarvis stated that these agencies save lives and are priceless.

Mrs. Barbara Brill, Executive Director of Community Alliance, explained how the programs in her agency operate. She explained how transportation might not be provided in a community if, after doing a study, it is found to be impractical. Mrs. Brill stated that their volunteer program provides rides for hundreds of people for thousands of miles for non-emergent care. She said that if they're local funding is cut, that same amount would also be cut from federal funding. Mrs. Brill said the service her agency provides saves the county millions.

Mr. Thomas Donovan said that cutting these funds takes away from a small group of disadvantaged people. Mr. Donovan encouraged everyone to go out and look at the agencies that are requesting grants to see the work they do for the county. He added that public transportation is critical for the community. Mr. Donovan urged the Delegation to provide maximum funding.

Ms. Susan Grant, Charlestown Congregational Church, stated that the lack of public transportation is the biggest challenge for their town. She said she was grateful that the grant cuts did not go further. She gave examples of how her parishioners use the Community Alliance Transportation Services, stating that none of them could afford taxi service even if it was available. Ms. Grant urged the Delegation to vote on the higher grant amounts, stating that they would only save .62 a year if they didn't and it would jeopardize the well being of the citizens.

There were no others from the public who wished to make comments.

*On a motion by Representative Gagnon and seconded by Representative Schmidt, a roll call vote was taken to restore the \$7,500.00 reduced by the EFC to the Claremont Soup Kitchen as recommended by the Commissioners, with the following results: Representative Bowers, no; Representative Cloutier, yes; Representative Cunningham, no; Representative Gagnon, yes; Representative LaCasse, no; Representative Laware, no; Representative Lovett, no; Representative Osgood, no; Representative Schmidt, yes; Representative Smith, no; Chairman Howard, no. The motion failed 3-8.*

*A motion was made by Representative Osgood and seconded by Representative Bowers, to accept the Executive Finance Committee's recommendation for the Fiscal Year 2012 Budget of Twenty Nine Million, One Hundred Thirty Seven Thousand, One Hundred Forty Five Dollars (\$29,137,145.00) of both Revenue and Expenses with the amount to be raised in taxes of Thirteen Million, Nine Hundred Five Thousand, Nine Hundred Ninety Five Dollars (\$13,905,995.00). A roll call vote was taken with the following results: Representative Bowers, yes; Representative Cloutier, yes; Representative Cunningham, yes; Representative Gagnon, no; Representative LaCasse, yes; Representative Laware, yes; Representative Lovett, yes; Representative Osgood, yes; Representative Schmidt, yes; Representative Smith, yes; Chairman Howard, yes. The motion passed 10-1.*

**OTHER BUSINESS:** *On a motion by Representative Osgood, seconded by Representative LaCasse, the Delegation voted unanimously to authorize the Sullivan County Commissioners to apply for, receive and expend federal and state grants which become available during the course of the Fiscal Year 2012, and also accept and expend money from any other governmental unit or private source to be used for purposes for which the county may legally appropriate money.*

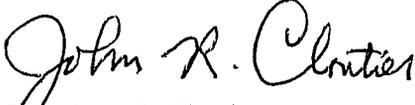
**Minute Approval Meeting Schedule:** After some discussion, the Delegation set the next meeting to approve the County Convention Minutes for **Tuesday, July 19, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. at the County Complex in Newport, NH.**

Chairman Howard said at that meeting they would have open public discussion on any other County business.

Representative Cloutier expressed his sadness for the recent loss of a Sullivan County leader Gordon Flint. He asked that everyone remember Mr. Flint's efforts and hoped his family would find comfort by the great legacy he left. The Delegation had a moment of silence in honor of Gordon Flint.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Chairman Howard adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Rep. John R. Cloutier  
Clerk

JD/Recording Secretary