

**Sullivan County, New Hampshire  
ANNUAL CONVENTION  
FY 07 Proposed County Budget  
Minutes of June 19, 2006**

**DELEGATION MEMBERS PRESENT:** Representative John R. Cloutier, Chairman; Representative Brenda Ferland, Representative Charlotte Houde-Quimby, Representative Harry Gale, Representative Joe Osgood, Representative Stephen Prichard, Representative Larry Converse, Vice Chairman; Representative Arthur Jillette Jr., Clerk; Representative Beverly T. Rodeschin, Representative Chris Irish, Representative Tom Donovan, Representative Peter Franklin, Representative James Phinizy\*.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Ed Gil de Rubio, County Manager; Donald S. Clarke, Chairman Board of Commissioners; Ben C. Nelson, Vice Chairman, Board of Commissioners; Ethel Jarvis, Clerk, Board of Commissioners; Heidi Smith, S.C.H.C. Director of Nursing; Sherrie Curtis, Human Services Coordinator; Sam Clough, Newport Enrichment Team Executive Director; Sheriff Michael Prozzo, County Attorney Marc Hathaway, Greg Chanis, Facilities & Operations Director; Janice Heighes, Conservation District Manager; Courtney Marshall, S.C.H.C. Administrator; Sharron King, Registrar of Registry of Deeds; Dodi Violette, Accounts Clerk I; Sharon Johnson-Callum, Commissioners Office Administrative Assistant; Peter Farrand, Human Resource Director; Mark Pitkin, County Treasurer; Seth Wilner, County Cooperative Extension Co-Office Manager; Scott Hagar, D.O.C. Superintendent; Lori Blake, D.O.C. Secretary; Kevin Cooney, CEO of Community Alliance of Human Services; Gordon Flint Sr., Newport Resident; David Corriveau, Valley News staff reporter; Helen Charpentier, Sunapee Resident; Josh Adams, Eagle Times staff reporter

**CALL TO ORDER:** Representative Cloutier opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Commissioner Jarvis.

**MINUTES:** *Representative Prichard moved, seconded by Representative Houde-Quimby, to accept the minutes of the June 1, 2006 meeting. The motion passed by a voice vote.*

**REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:** Commissioner Donald S. Clarke, Chairman Board of Commissioners came forward to give the report. Commissioner Clarke thanked all who put the time and effort into preparing the budget. He pointed out the pictures on the wall in the Ahern Building, which represent each Town in the County. He said a wonderful job was done on the pictures.

**REPORT FROM COUNTY MANAGER:** County Manager Gil de Rubio expressed his gratitude to the Department Heads and the entire staff of Sullivan County for all the time they put into the budget. He said that the proposed Union agreement is a one-year extension of the current contract, which will close at the end June. He said very little was

changed. He said the one-year would give them time to come up with some plan for the health care cost issues.

\*Representative Phinizy joined the meeting at 9:13 a.m.

County Manager Gil de Rubio discussed minor changes to the agreement, which he said were mostly housekeeping issues. He thanked the union members and AFSME for their work. There was general discussion on a one-year contract as opposed to a three-year contract. County Manager Gil de Rubio said that this was ratified by the Union last week 75 to 10 in favor.

*Representative Phinizy moved, seconded by Representative Prichard to adopt the Union contract for the County and the employees as printed for July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007.* Representative Franklin asked why there were blank pages in the contract he received and said that the index did not match the page numbers. County Manager Gil De Rubio said there were some software problems, but there is nothing left out or missing. Representative Franklin said that the vote is for only what is printed and nothing will be added to it. *The motion passed by voice vote.*

**REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Representative Ferland came forward to give the report. *Representative Ferland, seconded by Representative Irish, moved to accept the County Budget for a total of \$27,035,550.00, of which \$9,283,721.00 is to be raised by the taxes.*

Representative Ferland gave a background of the County Departments and asked for the support of the Delegation. She asked that questions from the Delegation come after each department rather than at the end of the presentation. Representative Ferland started on page 8 and discussed the changes in the proposed budget.

There was general discussion on the use of county vehicles.

There was general discussion on Incentives and the changes in the programs they decided to make.

There was general discussion on the increases in the County Attorney's office. County Attorney Hathaway gave a breakdown of the expenses in his office. Representative Rodeschin said that she would like to get more information from him about the backlog in the Superior Court. County Manager Gil De Rubio said he ran cable so they could do more video arraignments to help cut down on the traveling expenses but the State is not working with them. He felt it would be beneficial for both Representative Rodeschin and Representative Franklin to call the Superior Court Administration to get their help.

Sheriff Prozzo said that many grants are gone now and are going to Homeland Security and that taxpayers now have to pay the expenses.

There was general discussion on the \$25,000.00 funded for Cooperative Extension. Mr. Wilner gave a history of the funding for the Forester.

Representative Phinizy asked County Manager Gil de Rubio for an explanation on the percentage of pay increases. County Manager Gil de Rubio explained that the 3% is an average and evaluations are taken into consideration.

There was general discussion on the new vehicles for the Department of Corrections. Scott Hagar, Superintendent of Corrections, explained how their vehicles are used. He said they try to share resources whenever they can with Sheriff's Office. There was general discussion on the prison population, equipment, and general supplies.

Representative Prichard said he was very impressed with the nonprofit services and said that the money for County Grants is very well spent.

Representative Franklin asked for clarification on the transfers of funds and how taxpayers would know what was part of the budget. County Manager said that they would appear in the county reports and auditors reports and that anything in Fund 10 is paid by property tax.

There was some discussion on the Contract Services for the Register of Deeds. Ms. Sharron King, Registrar of Deeds clarified that contract services in not what she buys equipment with. She said it is to pay for the leasing of the equipment so that she can do indexing and provide information for public use.

The Delegation took a break at 11:12 a.m. and reconvened at 11:21 a.m.

Chairman Cloutier announced that the Delegation has been invited to the Capital Center of Performing Arts. He said that John Scranton and his daughter are doing a film there on June 22, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. Please see Representative Cloutier for more information. Commissioner Clarke asked that it be emailed to everyone.

Representative Ferland gave a brief synopsis of the projects they would like to do for Capital Improvements. She highlighted some improvements that have already been done in the nursing home.

Representative Ferland concluded her report. Representative Rodeschin thanked her for a thorough job going over the budget.

Representative Ferland corrected the Registry of Deeds. She said that the expense budget bottom line would be restored by \$50,000.00, which will be \$394,678.00. This will reflect the money for the Connor and Connor contract.

***Representative Ferland moved, seconded by Representative Osgood, to restore the \$50,000.00 to the expense side of the Registry of Deeds budget. A roll call vote was as follows:***

**YES:** *Irish, Gale, Osgood, Rodeschin, Prichard, Phinizy, Ferland, Franklin, Converse, Donovan, Jillette, Cloutier, Houde-Quimby*

**NO:**

*The motion passed unanimously.*

*Representative Phinizy moved, seconded by Representative Osgood, to change the transfer out to \$75,322.00 from Fund 22 into Fund 10 Revenue. The motion passed by voice vote.*

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Chairman Cloutier opened up the meeting to the public for comments on the Proposed FY 07 Budget.

Mr. Seth Wilner, Sullivan County resident/Cooperative Extension Co-Office Manager, came forward with two changes for consideration. He requested that the postage for \$800.00 and the travel for \$310.00 that was removed be reinstated into the Cooperative Extension budget. There was general discussion on the expense of postage and travel.

There being no one else from the public who wished to speak, Chairman Cloutier closed the public hearing.

*Representative Rodeschin moved, seconded by Representative Houde-Quimby, to increase the Cooperative Extension budget by \$1,110.00 to reinstate the postage for \$800.00 and travel for \$310.00, making the bottom line \$220,768.00. There was hand vote of 10 yes, and 3 no. The motion passed.*

Chairman Cloutier recessed the meeting for lunch at 12:20 p.m. until 1:00 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 1:04 p.m.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

*Representative Ferland moved to amend the original motion, seconded by Representative Irish, to \$27,036,660.00 with \$9,283,721.00 to be raised from taxes.*

The floor was opened for further amendment.

Representative Gale clarified that the amended budget amount included the \$1,110.00 for the Cooperative Extension and sufficient funding for consulting at the nursing home.

*Representative Ferland moved, seconded by Representative Rodeschin, to call the question. A roll call vote was as follows:*

**YES:** *Irish, Gale, Osgood, Rodeschin, Prichard, and Ferland.*

**NO:** *Phinizy, Franklin, Converse, Donovan, Houde-Quimby, Jillette, Cloutier. 6 Yes, 7 No. The vote failed.*

*A roll call vote to pass the amended budget was as follows:*

***YES: Irish, Gale, Osgood, Rodeschin, Prichard, and Ferland***

***NO: Phinizy, Franklin, Converse, Donovan, Houde-Quimby, Jillette, Cloutier.***

***The motion fails Yes 6, No 7.***

Chairman Cloutier said the budget was open for further amendment.

***Representative Donovan moved, seconded by Representative Converse, to move the Genesis contract from Fund 40 to the Commissioner's Budget.***

Representative Irish asked for legal clarification that this motion could be done under the guidelines of a budget. County Manager Gil de Rubio said the auditors would not accept it done that way. There was general discussion as to whose budget the Genesis Contract belonged in. County Attorney Hathaway said in his professional judgment the motion is not appropriate.

***Representative Donovan withdrew his motion.***

***Representative Donovan moved, seconded by Representative Franklin, to reduce the consulting contract with Genesis by \$250,000.00 from Fund 40.***

Representative Donovan felt that Genesis should be transitioned out over the next six months because the nursing home no longer needs them. Representative Ferland pointed out that the Finance Committee already cut \$200,000.00 out of the Genesis contract. She said that they would leave in 60 days if their contract were cut.

Representative Irish spoke in opposition of cutting the Genesis contract and pointed out that there is no backup plan if Genesis left.

Representative Gale spoke in opposition of eliminating Genesis and that this decision should be left up to the County Manager.

Representative Osgood spoke in opposition of eliminating Genesis.

Representative Franklin spoke in favor of eliminating Genesis stating that it is very expensive and seems to be for an indefinite period. He said they have done their job as consultants and we have people in the nursing home now who are capable of this.

Representative Prichard said they need to determine where the Delegates authority and responsibility begin and end and where the Commissioner's begin and end.

Representative Ferland clarified that the only money in the Budget for Genesis is \$225,000.00 and that would be the only amount cut from the budget if Genesis were eliminated.

***Representative Osgood called the question, seconded by Representative Rodeschin. A hand vote showed 6-7 failed.***

Chairman Cloutier called a five-minute recess at 2:38 p.m.

The Delegation reconvened at 2:46 p.m.

Commissioner Clarke said that this conversation is inappropriate at this time. He suggested having the conversation next January and keep Genesis on as is.

Representative Irish asked County Attorney Hathaway if they had the legal authority to start dictating contract specifications and enforcing terminations of contracts. County Attorney Hathaway said as a rule, no. He said the Convention has the authority to appropriate funds. He said the Convention does not have the authority as to who the vendors would be and he cited a 1975 case dealing with the same situation. He said the issue should not be if Genesis remains but how much money is necessary for the Commissioners to manage the county.

Representative Irish said that taking this money away, the Delegation would be intentionally taking money away that would allow the County to do their job.

***Representative Phinizy moved, seconded by Representative Converse, to amend Representatives Donovan's motion to cut the Contract Services consultant fee to \$112,000.00.***

Representative Phinizy spoke to the motion indicating that reduction of the consulting fees to \$112,000 would not have an adverse effect on the management of the County nursing home. This assumption is based on the fact that the Manager and other senior staff member were covered in other parts of the budget. The nine-month extension will allow the Commissioners more than ample time to conduct a search and hire a nursing home manager. This assumption is based upon discussions with the County Manager.

Representative Gale suggested approving the budget as proposed and take the word of the Commissioners and the County Manager to come up with an exit plan.

There was general discussion on the possibility of losing revenue by putting stress on the nursing home.

***Representative Rodeschin moved, seconded by Representative Irish, to call the question. The motion passed by a voice vote.***

***Representative Phinizy moved, seconded by Representative Converse, to amend Representative Donovan's motion to appropriate \$112,000.00 in line item 40.500.12029 for consulting fees. This would reduce the consulting fees by \$88,000.00 to \$112,000.00***

***Representative Donovan and Representative Franklin withdrew their amendment.***

The Delegates took a recess at 3:38 p.m.

The Delegates reconvened at 3:42 p.m.

Representative Ferland said that the Contract Service bottom line is \$500,682.00 is the amount being voted on.

**YES: Phinizy, Franklin, Converse, Donovan, Jillette, Cloutier, Houde-Quimby.**  
**NO: Irish, Gale, Osgood, Rodeschin, Prichard, and Ferland.**  
**The Motion passes 7-6.**

**Representative Ferland moved, seconded by Representative Irish, to pass a budget of \$26,948,660.00 with the original amount to be raised by taxes to be \$9,283,721.00. A roll call vote was as follows:**

**YES: Phinizy, Converse, Donovan, Jillette, Cloutier, Houde-Quimby, Franklin.**  
**NO: Irish, Gale, Osgood, Rodeschin, Prichard, and Ferland.**  
**The motion passed 7-6. The budget is adopted.**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Representative Rodeschin moved, seconded by Representative Gale, to authorize the County Commissioners to apply for, receive, and expend federal and state grants which become available during the course of the year, and also to 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. The motion passed by a voice vote.**

**Representative Rodeschin moved, seconded by Representative Houde-Quimby, to require the County Commissioners to obtain written authority of the Executive Finance Committee before transferring monies from one fund to another fund or any appropriation or part thereof under RSA 24:15. Representative Rodeschin said that the motion is based on the language written on the Agenda and not on the motion hand out because there is a minor difference in the two. The motion passed with a voice vote.**

**Representative Phinizy moved, seconded by Representative Prichard, to approve the mileage rate increase recommendation from .40 to .44 cents per mile effective July 1, 2006. The motion passed 12-1 by voice vote. Representative Converse was opposed.**

**On a motion by Representative Rodeschin, seconded by Representative Gale, the Delegation adjourned the meeting at 4:52 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,



Arthur Jillette Jr., Clerk  
Sullivan County Delegation