

# County deficit rising \$8,000 daily

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Staff Writer

In the shadow of a \$2.2 million deficit for fiscal 2006-2007, Sullivan County continues to hemorrhage taxpayer dollars at a rate of more than \$8,000 per day, according to Sullivan County Manager Ed Gil de Rubio.

"We are working to get our revenues up

and stabilized," Gil de Rubio said during a county commissioner's meeting Tuesday. "We're trying to eliminate agency nursing. That's the big thing."

Director of nursing Rebecca Trudelle said she is working to reduce the number of agency nurses needed to cover empty shifts while maintaining quality of care.

"This week we cancelled 22 agency shifts," Trudelle said.

During the first two months of the current fiscal year, Gil de Rubio said the nursing home is running a deficit of \$508,560.

"That represents the amount billed against the amount budgeted," Gil de Rubio said.

County accountant Jeff Graham predicts the county will fall short \$800,000 during the current fiscal year and recommended that the commission collect the

\$2.2 million from an increase in taxes and then use long-range financing for the projected deficit.

"Controlling what is happening here is the biggest issue," Graham said.

The commission did not make a decision about how it would pay last year's deficit, but if Graham's proposal is approved, tax-

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payers should expect to see an increase on the May tax bill.

"Any decision that is made will not be in effect until next year," commissioner Jeff Barrette said. Barrette asked if issuing a bond for the deficit was an option and commissioner Ben Nelson said no.

"A bond is not an option because there are no current capital projects to back it up," Nelson said.

Nelson said the situation in the county has changed since the since the deficit numbers were generated.

"We have brought management back in house," Nelson said. "We are starting to see the fruits of those changes. We've taken some steps to curtail costs, but revenues are off."

Gil de Rubio agreed. "Expenses did not kill us last year," Gil de Rubio said. "It was a lack of revenue and encumbrances."

The Sullivan County Executive Finance Committee is scheduled to meet on Nov. 20 to discuss last year's deficit and Barrette said the commission will have a recommendation by that time.

Gil de Rubio also made a

*Below is the current share of county tax from each town and the possible increase in taxes under a proposal from Sullivan County Accountant Jeff Graham to pay off last year's budget deficit.*

	2007 taxes per DRA*	Additional \$2.5 million**
Acworth	\$213,406	\$51,451
Charlestown	\$614,883	\$148,245
Claremont	\$1,834,765	\$442,352
Cornish	\$437,405	\$105,456
Croydon	\$205,605	\$49,570
Goshen	\$171,130	\$41,258
Grantham	\$1,152,264	\$277,804
Langdon	\$137,292	\$33,100
Lempster	\$243,210	\$58,637
Newport	\$1,007,455	\$242,892
Plainfield	\$594,649	\$143,367
Springfield	\$425,811	\$102,661
Sunapee	\$2,490,077	\$600,344
Unity	\$295,111	\$71,150
Washington	\$546,317	\$131,713

\*New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration

\*\*Jeff Graham provided the cost breakdown for an additional \$2.5 million in tax dollars, but his proposal to the commission only requested an additional \$2.2 million.

request on behalf of an unnamed elected official to increase the lunch reimbursement for county employees and elected officials from \$10 to \$15 that was rejected

by the commission.

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