

County still without a budget

Hopes to have one by Friday

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Over the past week, the Sullivan County Executive Finance Committee has worked to finalize its proposed budget and hopes to have it completed before the county delega-

tion meets again on July 13. "We do not have a final total," EFC chairperson Brenda Ferland, I-Charlestown, said Friday afternoon. "The total cuts are right around \$100,000."

The Sullivan County Commission proposed a \$27.6 million budget during the county convention on June 30

that was defeated. The new fiscal year started July 1. The EFC did not have a budget proposal of its own and was given two weeks to work one out.

"We will absolutely have a budget by July 13," Ferland said.

The EFC has met for more than 20 hours during the past week to hammer out a budget proposal.

"Previous to that we put in a great deal of time," said EFC member Sue Gottling, D-

Sunapee. "We have to make very hard decisions and as of yet the groundwork hasn't been laid."

Ferland said the EFC cut the proposed budget in several areas including about \$50,000 in expenses from the general fund and an anticipated cut in capital expenses.

"We want to clarify the language with the capital expenses," Ferland said. "It's a language clarification on the new design for the jail."

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Ferland said the EFC has postponed the demolition of two barns at the county complex in Unity that will save taxpayers some money. She said some extra money was also added to demolish the wastewater treatment plant and rebuild overflow tanks.

"Our other concern is revenue projections," Ferland said. "It may be too high and we may need to cut that back. I would like to see the revenue numbers tightened."

Ferland also said the EFC has put a cap on all salary increases at 3 percent. She clarified that the cap is for nonunion employees and that

the EFC has no control over increases for union employees.

"In the budget it's put at 3 percent, but that's a working figure," Ferland said.

The EFC plans to meet at 8:30 a.m. on July 13 — just two hours before the scheduled start of the delegation meeting — to finalize its budget.

The county has been without a budget since July 1 and is running on an emergency resolution set to expire at the end of the month.

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