

Sullivan County NH

Type of meeting: Board of Commissioners Special Meeting with Dept Heads/Elected Officials to Review FY 08 Expense Reduction Recommendations

Date/Time: Wednesday, November 14, 2007, 4 PM

Place: Newport – Remington Woodhull County Complex, 14 Main Street, 1st Floor Commissioners Conference Room

Attendees: Commissioners Ethel Jarvis - *Chair*, Bennie Nelson – *Vice Chair* and Jeffrey Barrette - *Clerk*, Ed Gil de Rubio – *County Manager*, Dodi Violette – *Accounts Payable*, Sherrie Curtis – *Human Services Coordinator*, Greg Chanis – *Facilities & Operations*, Cynthia Sweeney – *County Treasurer*, Lori Keefe – *DOC Secretary*, Jan Heighes – *Conservation District Manager*, Ross Cunningham – *DOC Superintendent*, Captain Denis O’Sullivan – *Sheriff’s Office Deputy*, Peter Farrand – *Human Resource Director*, Sharron King – *Registrar of Deeds*, Janice Bryk – *Payroll Clerk*, Marc Hathaway – *County Attorney* and Sharon Johnson-Callum (minute taker).

Public Attendees: Aaron Aldridge – *Eagle Times Staff Reporter*, Bill Roach – *Sunapee Town Select Board Chair*, State Delegates Larry Converse, Suzanne Gottling and Peter Franklin.

4:13 Commissioner Barrette moved that the deficit of 2.2, as audited by Melanson Heath & Associates be added to expense side of next years 08 /09 budget for purpose to cleaning up this years audit and balancing the books. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

Commissioner Jarvis requested an appointment to be set with Melanson Heath & Associates in Newport in order to get their obligations done and complete the County’s [FY 07] Annual Report.

The Chair noted they would begin FY 08 Budget Reviews by each department, starting with Human Services.

Human Services (HS) Department, Fund 10 Object 490

HS Coordinator, Sherrie Curtis, reviewed the current surplus of \$71,000. Sullivan County has received bills of \$166,000 to date. She expressed concerns about the cap, of \$104,417, and noted the 10 counties have maintained the cap set for HCBC and Provider payments was exceeded and the issue is pending in litigation. Mr. Gil de Rubio confirmed this issue is going to the Supreme Court.

4:18 Peter Franklin arrived.

Commissioner Barrette questioned HS General Maintenance and Repair line, where upgrades were listed. He asked if upgrades occurred yet and if they were necessary. Ms. Curtis confirmed the upgrades are in progress and must happen for the adult side. She noted the state might share the expense and pay 75%. Ms. Curtis noted \$3,000 is for upgrades this year only and the County will need to budget for upgrades in FY 09. Commissioner Jarvis asked how many positions were budgeted. Ms. Curtis confirmed one FTE and one shared with Facilities & Operations (F&O), who does filing. She noted that person works mainly for Facilities & Operations. Ms. Bryk confirmed the position is booked ½ to HS and ½ to F&O. Ms. Chanis reminded the Board when they reviewed the FY 08 budget together it was discussed that the person would be shared 50/50 between HS and F&O, that Ms. Curtis would need to speak to the reduced hours in HS, but that when the person reduced her hours in HS, and when a position was cut [in SCHC Administration] F&O took on the processing of all the buildings purchase orders. It was noted their intent with the FY 09 budget would be place the position in the appropriate line(s). Ms. Curtis confirmed she did attend the conference. She confirmed she had \$418.60 in the Expense Account and there is still mileage to be deducted through that line. Ms. Sweeney pointed out the State is liable for State mandates and should be responsible for updating the HS computer. Ms. Gil de Rubio concurred and noted they were taking that State to court on these and other issues. No action was taken by the Board to cut expenses in HS.

Commissioner Barrette suggested the Chair ask Dept Heads what they have for ideas vs. indicating what the Board feels they should cut. The Board concurred. The Board confirmed Department Heads were free to leave the room after each of their review.

County Treasurer Department, Fund 10 Object 401

County Treasurer, Cynthia Sweeney confirmed she did not attend the conference and recommended they cut the NHAC conference budget. She pointed out there was no specific travel line and has submitted vouchers for two months worth of travel, approximately \$1,400, which is coming out of the Expense Account. The Expense Account balance is at \$853 and she anticipates using the full amount. Ms. Sweeney noted it was unfair all other Elected Officials are paid for travel, but that her department did not have that line, which is why they are using the Expense line. Commissioner Jarvis suggested a transfer of travel expense funds be made from the Commissioners line to the County Treasurer line. No comments or action was taken to this suggestion. No action was taken by the Board to cut any expenses in the County Treasurer Department.

4:31 Both Ms. Curtis and Sweeney left the room.

Auditors Department, Fund 10 Object 402

Ms. Violette confirmed all was used from that department. It was noted the audit budget was budgeted between Registrar, Nursing Home [cost report] and 10.402.

County Managers Office, Fund 10 Object 403

The Board noted their intention was to review this department tomorrow, but Mr. Gil de Rubio noted he had brought to the table his recommendations. Mr. Gil de Rubio noted his lines are being hit with vehicle maintenance items -- new tires are needed. He recommended \$3,000 be removed from the Salary Line 10001, \$70 from the Dues/License Line 13037 and leave \$500 to increase the gas line 16069 - to accommodate for the increase fuel cost - and add \$500 to the 19082 General Maintenance and Repairs line for further vehicle maintenance and repairs. Commissioner Jarvis questioned why the Office Supply line was over expensed. Mr. Gil de Rubio briefed them on toner cartridge purchases for his printer.

4:38 Commissioner Barrette moved to accept the recommendations of the County Manager [to reduce salary line of 10001 by \$3,000 and \$70 from line 13037, to add \$500 to line 19082 and \$500 to line 16069; showing a overall reduction of expenses of the County Manager of \$2,070]. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

Payroll Office, Fund 10 Object 405

Payroll Clerk, Janice Bryk, briefed them on her budget. She noted \$1,000 could be reduced from the Telephone line 16068. She noted they could reduce 11017 Education & Training line by \$150. She noted they could reduce her General Maintenance & Repair line to \$250, but noted her "p" was not working on her type writing. Commissioner Barrette recommended they leave the General Maintenance & Repair fund untouched in case she needed a new type writer.

4:41 Representative Suzanne Gottling arrived.

4:41 Commissioner Barrette moved to accept the recommendations of the Janice Bryk [reducing the overall Payroll Office budget by \$1,150]. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

Conservation District Office, Fund 10 Object 406

Conservation District Manager, Janice Heighes, briefed the Board on her budget. She noted the Postage line, 13038, could be reduced from \$700 to \$600, by \$100. She noted she was tied now into the County lines and it would be okay to reduce the Telephone line, 16068, from \$800 to \$600, a reduction of \$200. Total reductions would be \$300.

4:43 Commissioner Barrette moved to accept the recommendations of the Conservation District Manager [reducing the 10.406 budget by \$300]. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

4:44 *Ms. Heighes left the room.*

Commissioner Jarvis asked if the Emergency Reserve fund had been used. Mr. Gil de Rubio confirmed it had not been touched and required Delegation approval to do so.

County Attorney Office, Fund 10 Object 410

County Attorney, Marc Hathaway, noted line 14046 – Extradition reflected a budget amount of \$15,000 and, based on current trends, they would come in under budget and could cut \$5,000 from that line; however, if the trend changes he noted he'd return for the funds. He discussed the Expert Witness line and the need to have funds available in case an issue arises. They have currently not expended too much on investigations, but would not recommend cutting from the line. Commissioner Barrette asked if any equipment purchases could be delayed. Mr. Hathaway confirmed they finalized the purchase for a hand recording and Dragon Fire program, a purchase put off previously, but with this purchase they will enhance the efficiency of office. He noted the PO was pending in the Commissioners Office but urged them not to stop the process as the efficiencies captured with the new program will off set the expense. Commissioner Jarvis asked about the Connor & Connor (C&C) contract vs. contract for Mr. Bodeur. Mr. Hathaway noted C&C supplies the majority of monitors, software, a continuing contract that includes cost and upgrades to computer system and servicing, while Mr. Bodeur provides services not covered by C&C, such as the interfacing of the computers within their offices and the Commissioners Office. Mr. Hathaway briefed them on the scanning of documents and that paper files are still required. He spoke regarding storage of files and using floor space in their offices for storage. He reminded the Board there were significant reductions made by combined efforts during budget time from Commissioners, him and EFC. He noted present circumstances project a \$5,000 surplus, but that amount could represents two transports from somewhere far away.

4:54 Commissioner Barrette moved to accept the County Attorney's recommendation [to cut \$5,000 from the County Attorney's Office budget]. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

At this point Commissioner Nelson expressed his appreciation to Department Heads/Elected Officials for their participation in today's meeting, especially since he said they met with them at least three – four times already to review their budgets.

Victim Witness Program, Fund 10 Object 411

Victim Witness Program Director, Cynthia Vezina, noted they could reduce the Education & Training line 11017 by \$400, but she needed to leave at least \$200 in the line. She noted the State paid for her to attend training, but that the County pays it first, to later receive reimbursement. She noted the training she attended was very beneficial, but she does not need to attend another in this fiscal year.

4:58 Commissioner Barrette moved to accept the recommendations of Cindy Vezina [to reduce the Victim Witness budget by \$400]. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

4:59 Ms. Vezina left the room.

Sheriff's Office, Fund 10 Object 440 [Sheriff Michael Prozzo was unavailable].

Captain Denis O'Sullivan distributed a two page memo dated November 9, 2007 from Sheriff Prozzo Jr., addressed to the Board, that reflected the following recommended reductions: Line 10007 ET Buyback – reduce by \$1,934 as they have less personnel, Line 11016 Dental Insurance reduce by \$1,060 as they are replacing one FTE with a PTE with no benefits, Line 11012 Health Insurance – reduce by \$19,350 due to the prior noted FTE to PTE change, Line 11013 Retirement – reduce by \$2,000 due to the prior noted FTE to PTE change, with total reductions being \$24,344. However, his memo noted they are seeing a deficit in the gasoline line 19082 of approximately \$6,000 due to the increase in gas prices and in line 19084 Vehicle Repair and Maintenance of approximately \$3,000 due to the aging fleet that includes tire purchases and repairs. Capt. O'Sullivan reviewed the current FTE status. He confirmed there was no salary reduction. He noted Don Coon's position was not filled and will hold off again. With the anticipated surplus and deficit, the recommended cut would be \$15,344.

5:03 Commissioner Nelson moved to accept the recommendation of Sheriff Prozzo of the reduction in the amount of \$15,344. Commissioner Barrette seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

Medical Referee, Fund 10 Object 450

County Attorney, Marc Hathaway, briefed the Board on the budget, noting all cuts have been removed in contemplation of the new legislation, and numbers they have are right on. There was no formal motion to reduce any expenses from this department.

Fund 10 Objects 460 & 497, Fund 30 Objects 555 & 700, and Fund 40 Objects 560 and 570

Mr. Greg Chanis, Facilities & Operations Director, noted he did not come to the meeting with line by line reductions, but had created a spreadsheet by building complexes: Unity Complex, Sullivan County Health Care and Newport. He distributed a copy of the spreadsheet. He briefed them on the second page of the spreadsheet, columns reflecting current surplus as of yesterday - of approximately \$264,000 (this spreadsheet included the following funds and objects: 10.460, 10.497, 30.550, 30.555, 30.700, 40.560 and 40.570). He is confident they can come in under 5%. He pointed out the "big ticket" items are in Housekeeping, several unfilled positions that were filled two weeks ago. Commissioner Barrette asked about fuel impact. Mr. Chanis noted they have not started to buy fuel for the SCHC. The group discussed the percentage reduction. Mr. Chanis confirmed they could cut 5%, an overall cut of \$125,000. Mr. Chanis confirmed he'd return tomorrow with specific line reductions based on the \$125,000.

- 5:11 Commissioner Barrette moved to accept the recommendations of Greg to reduce his operational cost by 5%, details to be delivered tomorrow, of a total reduction of \$125,000. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.**

Capital Budget Fund 42 Objects 497, 550 and 700

Mr. Chanis referred all to the first page of the spreadsheet distributed, which was broken down by Unity Complex, Sullivan County Health Care and Newport. He briefed them on the FY 08 budget, his recommended budget with cuts, and his recommendation to cut expenses by \$302,000. He briefed the group on the engineering portion contracted for air conditioning. Commissioner Jarvis wants to see landscaping upgrades cut. Mr. Chanis confirmed \$2,000 was expended on the design work, already. Commissioner Barrette asked if the big stuff could be done for under \$15,000. Mr. Chanis indicated a large portion was for large tree purchases. Mr. Chanis briefed them on the electrical panel upgrades; items already contracted and water well upgrade expenditures. Commissioner Jarvis stated Fund 40 is disappearing and that auditors want Fund 42 eliminated. Commissioner Barrette noted discussions regarding the elimination of the fund were premature and not appropriate for today's review. Commissioner Barrette noted filling the beds at the nursing home is what they are working on and considers landscaping part of that. Mr. Chanis noted design work is in progress and \$23,000 was unexpended. Commissioner Nelson discussed reductions to the landscaping. They agreed they could reduce it by \$10,000. FY 08 budget was \$615,500 and proposed new budget would be \$312,000.

- 5:19 Commissioner Nelson moved to reduce the landscaping line by \$10,000 [line 42.700.21096]. Commissioner Barrette seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. Commissioner Jarvis voted against the motion. The motion passed with the majority vote, as Commissioner Nelson and Barrette were in favor.**

Mr. Chanis confirmed the original plan for air conditioning upgrades was to put the project out to bid in January, begin construction in early April and complete the project in June. Commissioner Nelson noted he would like to move ahead on the air conditioning project. Commissioner Jarvis concurred. Mr. Chanis agrees 100%. Commissioner Barrette asked if there was any mechanism to reserve \$50,000.

5:25 Commissioner Barrette moved to accept the Facilities Director's recommendation on the Capital budget [reduction of \$302,000], along with the prior voted amendment. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

At this point, Ms. Violette asked of the Board where they were going with the changes they were making. Commissioner Barrette feels if they are doing transfers they need to go before the Delegation. Ms. Violette noted in a similar expense-cutting project, they created a "frozen fund" account line within each department, transferring the reduction out of one line to the "frozen fund". She noted when this occurred, Department Heads were not allowed to touch the funds in those lines. There was no formal decision made. The group noted they would need to discuss this further.

Commissioner Nelson noted Seth Wilner would arrive later in the meeting and suggested they skip the UNH Cooperative Extension Department.

Department of Corrections, Fund 10 Object 600

Superintendent Ross Cunningham noted he had also reviewed the DOC budget as a whole, arriving with a percentage as a reduction. He's positive they are heading on track to make \$105,000. They already placed \$90,000 in revenue and anticipates coming out on a positive side. He explained budgetary steps. He discussed how they keep track inmate totals, constantly adjusting to be more cost effective to make sure managing inmates accordingly and getting the best "bang for the buck". He noted they have 32 in pretrial, which is a cost savings program. He noted they pulled Officers out from attending the December Academy; they did so not only to cut expenses to attend, but if they have officers attend, with their current staffing, they'd need to pay overtime. Commissioner Jarvis interjected that she wanted to see funds subtracted from the Salary line and placed in Contract Services. Supt. Cunningham noted their budget is based on personnel and does not recommend cutting staff. He noted it was okay to reduce 4%, \$115,259. The Board expressed their wish to make sure Officers are certified and would like to place \$2,900 back into the budget. Supt. Cunningham discussed again the scheduling conflict. He noted the \$2,900 would not cover overtime. He also noted, when he sends CO's to training, he'd prefer to send them in teams of two to make the training a productive experience. Commissioner Barrette and Supt. Cunningham reviewed the cost of overtime and concurred it would be approximately \$10,000.

5:36 Commissioner Barrette moved to accept the Superintendent's recommendations, with specifics to follow by end of week to the amount to cut totaling \$105,000, and increase of revenue by \$15,000. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

Commissioner Jarvis asked about the status of Interest Notes. Ms. Violette confirmed nothing had been spent. It was noted this would not be paid off until after December 27th

Delegation Department, Fund 10 Object 980

The Board reviewed the department. Ms. Violette confirmed Delegates did not attend the NHAC 2007 conference. She noted year to date expenses were \$2,036.82, which included the first quarter expense checks to the Delegates, recently processed. Commissioner Jarvis pointed out there was no bill received for something, but did not finish the comment nor say what the bill was. The group concurred on cutting the NHAC conference costs.

5:40 Commissioner Barrette moved to subtract \$2,310.00 from the Delegation line [10.980.17076]. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

Registry of Deeds, Fund 22 Object 420

The Registrar of Deeds, Sharron King, noted she reviewed her budget but did not touch the employee or benefit lines as they were "tight to the wire on those". Ms. King noted funds from the "redaction" of \$5,000 could be reduced – since this law was placed; only one person has come forth to remove personal information from their files. If other redaction requests are submitted, she noted they would absorb the cost. She noted document adjustments could be reduced. The total cut to 12029 could be \$10,000. She noted line 13037 – dues/licenses original level funded could be reduced by \$250. She noted 13036 – office supplies could be reduced by \$1,000. She noted 19082 – general maintenance and repair could be reduced by \$600. She noted 16068 - telephone line could be reduced by \$500. She recapped the total reduction would be \$12,350. Ms. King discussed revenue budgeted, as well as current and anticipated trend. After a brief discussion on calculations, they decided revenues did not warrant adjusting.

5:52 Commissioner Barrette moved to accept the recommendation of the Registrar [of \$12,350 expense reductions to 22.420]. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

5:52 Ms. King left the room.

Commissioner Jarvis noted two of the Commissioners would need to leave soon.

Human Resources Office, Fund 30 Object 520

Human Resource Director, Peter Farrand, noted they have a two-person department. He noted the Employee Appreciation Line 12026 which included the holiday gift cards for employees of \$6,000 would be eliminated. He noted the Education & Training lines require flexibility. He discussed the litigation line and is reluctant to reduce as unsure with arbitrations. Commissioner Jarvis and Barrette indicated they are not prepared to give up the employee appreciation line. Mr. Farrand confirmed he's on budget with advertising. He noted with Contract Services they pay for drug tests, which they have seen a cost increase towards. He confirmed tuition assistance fluctuates. Commissioner Jarvis noted this was limited to 15 employees and HR was absorbing the cost for all departments. Ms. Violette noted the line was limited to 10 employees. Commissioner Jarvis asked about the Office Supplies line. Mr. Farrand is unable to reduce that further.

6:00 *Seth Wilner arrived.*

6:01 Commissioner Barrette moved to accept Peter Farrand's recommendation of no cuts. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

Ethel Jarvis left the room at 6:02.

UNH Cooperative Extension Budget, Fund 10 Object 475

Seth Wilner noted he reviewed their budget with staff yesterday but was unable to find more places to cut. He briefed the Board on the previous FY 08 budget discussions and cuts made at that point. He noted the only line he might have a surplus in was Office Supply, but after discussions Commissioner Barrette recommend they not cut from that due to rising fuel costs. Mr. Wilner confirmed \$900 was to pay for the 4-H programs using the Claremont School. He noted he had discussed this with his staff, but no other place appropriate or available to hold the events in. Mr. Chanis confirmed to Mr. Wilner the County did not pre-buy fuel. Mr. Wilner noted he had no place to cut further funds.

6:09 Commissioner Barrette moved to accept Seth Wilner's recommendations of no cuts to the UNH Cooperation Extension budget. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

6:09 *Mr. Wilner left the room.*

Commissioners Office, Fund 10 Object 400

Ms. Violette noted she had come up with recommendations, but had not run these by the County Manager or the Board. She recommended cutting the following:

- 1017 Education and Training by \$500 – as she chose not to attend the Unifund. She noted she does need GAAP training. Commissioner Barrette noted he did not want to cut funds from that line.

- ❑ 11018 Expense Account by \$250 – She recommend meeting attendees bring their own bag lunches and refreshments were unnecessary.
- ❑ 13036 Office Supplies by \$500 – She by using e-mail and scanning and if officials would come prepared to meetings, they could cut down on copy costs. She noted they could also make pads if paper out of scrap paper.
- ❑ 16068 Telephone Line by \$600 – She noted they budgeted \$300 per month and average has been \$250.
- ❑ 17073 Misc.County Expense by \$150 – She noted this covered flowers and cards.

The group discussed the \$5,000 budgeted in 15050 and that they could reduce that by \$1,000 as NHAC promised to help out by coming up with \$5,000 for the 2008 conference.

6:15 Commissioner Nelson moved to accept recommendations, with total reductions of \$2,850. Commissioner Barrette seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

Commissioner Barrette noted for public sake, they had positively impacted the FY 08 budget by \$583,174.

Commissioner Nelson noted they had not discussed County Grant Agencies [Fund 10 Object 861] and suggested they run cuts to that department by the Executive Finance Committee. Ms. Johnson-Callum noted for clarification that the grant agencies Mr. Nelson spoke of were ones funded by County taxpayers. No decision was made.

Public Participation

Representative Converse suggested they look at health insurance cost and equalizing the amount for all employees that people pay.

6:20 Commissioner Barrette moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion there was no further discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously. Commissioner Jarvis was not present for the vote.

Respectfully submitted,



*Jeffrey Barrette, Clerk
Board of Commissioners*

JB/s.j-c.

DATE SIGNED: 12/18/07