

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Office of the Commissioners
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.
N. Haverhill, NH 03774
Tuesday March 31, 2009

PRESENT: Commissioners Michael Cryans, Martha Richards and Ray Burton, Executive Director Clough and Secretary Martino

OTHERS: H. Brown

Commissioner Cryans called the meeting to order at 9:06 AM

CAPITAL BUDGET:

Maintenance Supt. Oakes arrived to present his Capital budget which offered two different options.

Along with other needed improvements, Supt. Oakes put in for the reconstruction of the road across the street and for a sand storage structure saying that the state garage which has provided sand for the County over the years, has said that they will not provide any sand for the upkeep of the road across the street which goes to the new water tank. Supt. Oakes said that road must be kept plowed and sanded for access. The estimated cost for the structure is \$25K.

There was a discussion as to whether or not it would make financial sense to contract the sanding of that road out rather than constructing a shelter to keep sand for it. Supt. Oakes estimated the cost of maintenance to be about \$100 each time, which includes plowing. Commissioner Cryans said that if it were done 20 times over the season it would only amount to \$2000. Commissioner Cryans would like Supt. Oakes to think about the need to build a sand storage and to consider a contract.

Supt. Oakes discussed his request for road repair across the street and said that an estimate was gathered from Morrill Construction as a continuation of the work that they're already doing in the area of the water tank. The plan is to reroute the road behind the garden area and create one entrance in and out from route 10 eliminating the current potential danger that exists now. Supt. Oakes said that he expects the water tank project to come in under what was budgeted and will have \$140K left over which can be used for the road project.

Director Clough said that she supports this request and said that if they use this excess money then the cost won't have to go into next year's budget.

Commissioner Burton asked about permitting if the driveway area is changed and Supt. Oakes said that he would look into that. There was a discussion as to what material the road would consist of, which would be crushed rock.

Commissioner Burton felt that if there is extra money that can be used, he is in favor of it.

Supt. Oakes continued on with the budget saying that the need has come to put the new roof on the pig barn at a cost of \$140K. He had requested this in FY 2009 and it was removed. The roof is only getting worse.

Supt. Oakes second option budget removes the cost of the pig barn roof and the roadwork which would offer a savings of \$412,750 under last FY's budget.

Commissioner Cryans asked Director Clough her opinion and she said that she thinks that the road should be taken care of with the money they have and that she would like to give further consideration to the pig barn roof.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the road project as described by Supt. Oakes as using existing excess funds from the water tank project to rehabilitate a section of the existing road and to re-route the lower road that enters the field in order to provide safety for those entering and exiting. In addition there will be an amendment to the current contract with Morrill Construction to spend up to \$85K doing said project with the decision being to waive bid on the project which is allowed by New Hampshire state law at the discretion of the Board of Commissioners. Reason for waiving bid is that there will be a large savings which would have occurred by paying for additional mobilization of equipment and new bid plans. Work can also take place prior to the planting of the Farm's garden without waiving the bid the work would have to wait until next year. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Richards.

Discussion:

Commissioner Cryans recognized H. Brown who said that the project has to be put out to bid as it is over \$5K and that there is no emergency for waiving bid. He said that the leftover money from the water tank project should be returned in order to pay the bond. Director Clough said that money can't be used to reduce the amount of the bond. H. Brown said that he didn't see why it couldn't and Commissioner Cryans said because there is a bond schedule for payments.

H. Brown said that that project should still be put out to bid as there were others who originally bid on the project that may want another chance. Director Clough said there would be a significant cost savings to couple it with the existing job.

Commissioner Burton said that by state law the Board of Commissioners must vote unanimously to waive bid.

Supt. Oakes said that he will verify that there is an approved entrance in the proposed area and that the other entrance will be closed.

When the vote came down, all three Commissioners were in favor.

DRUG COURT:

DC Coordinator Bob Gasser presented his budget which is up \$39K from last year.

B. Gasser was nominated for Man of the Year for the National Drug Court.

There was a discussion about the difference between the needs of the females versus males. There are currently 14 participants in the DC program and they are looking to be able to place 25 in FY10, which is what they think they can handle. B. Gasser said that he thinks that the process to get people into the program takes too long.

B. Gasser has currently increased the hours of the clinical evaluator by three.

Commissioner Cryans asked B. Gasser to talk about the 501-C-3 funding and Gasser replied that the community support has been wonderful. The non-profit is called the Friends of Drug Court and they have raised over \$13K for the program and that people have been very generous in their donations. He said that money goes for different incentives such as a CCB membership which includes a mentoring partnership with the Lebanon PD.

B. Gasser said that they have established an AA program in the Grand Jury room in the Courthouse on Wednesdays from 9:00 – 10:00 AM which is run by Atty. Van Dorn.

A new form of urine testing was discussed as was the search for grant money.

Commissioner Cryans asked what kind of money the Drug Court saves the County and Mr. Gasser did not have exact figures for that.

Sarah Smith from UNH Cooperative Extension arrived at the request of Commissioner Richards, to discuss the status of the BERC grant which has been sent to Washington, for the biomass facility on the County complex. This was the only project requesting a grant from the state of New Hampshire. No word about the grant has been heard as of yet.

Commissioner Richards noted her appreciation for all the work that Smith had done for the project. Smith said that if the project doesn't fly it might be due to the fact that NH is considered a more wealthy state than some other states that applied. She said that right now recommendations for the grant have been made to the executive committee for approval in Washington.

Commissioner Richards said that she feels that the project should still be put into the budget at the \$4.8M cost and that they should continue on with the RFP process.

S. Smith said that there is a new grant available called the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) grant which is given to those who can prove a reduction in their carbon footprint. Smith suggested looking into that. She said that RGGI is an accumulation of a lot of money and it is supposed to be doled out every six months or so. Grafton County would have to come up with figures for reduction of greenhouse gasses with the operation of biomass. She suggested plucking away at the application in the mean time.

Commissioner Burton said that he would be speaking with J. Rudiman and would find out how this grant works.

Commissioner Cryans said that it would be helpful to see who have been recipients of the grant so far to see if the money is going out in small or large chunks. He said that it wouldn't help much if there was only a small bit of money.

There was a discussion about the RFP for the architects and Commissioner Richards said that she would like to pay BERC their requested amount of \$1500 to do the RFP. Director Clough said that she was worried about where that \$1500 would come from and then eventually funding the project. Commissioner Richards said that maybe they could put a contingency in the RFP that stated that if they didn't get funding that they couldn't do the project. Commissioner Cryans said that it was too early to do that. And Director Clough said that she didn't think a builder *would* do that.

Commissioner Cryans said that they can have all the best intentions in the world but it doesn't matter without having any money for funding. He said people are not going to go through a lot of work without having any money behind it. He said that he didn't see the County getting too involved with the project before knowing more information about funding.

S. Smith said that when the money hits, the County will know what to do. She said that the County is about as ready as can be. She suggested running the biomass project though some other companies because there are always new technologies coming out. She ended by saying that she was always glad to help out the County with anything anytime they should need it.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the minutes from March 24, 2009, which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. Additions were made. All were in favor.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the budget minutes from March 26, 2009, which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

The Commissioners signed the MS-5 revenue and expenditure report for the unincorporated town of Livermore.

Two bids for flame retardant curtains were presented by Director Clough from NHA Bolander for the Nursing Home which were required for compliance. Two bids were received:

LaJeunesse	\$ 6,125
The Deacons Bench	\$13,438

NHA Bolander recommended LaJeunesse.

Commissioner Richard moved to approve the award of the bid to LaJeunesse in the amount of \$6,125, which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

Director Clough gave an overview of an email that was received from Victor Lee from Creative Data Solutions, a company who presented a bid on an RFP request from Deeds, which basically stated that after speaking with G. Morris in Deeds, he thought that perhaps the information that the Board of Commissioners received via RD Sharp might have been confusing and the email went on to clarify the information.

Director Clough informed the Commissioners of the recent NACo Drug Prescription report which stated that the numbers were a bit down. Overall average savings was \$11.89 and the savings for the month of Feb was \$7,991. Total users are 288.

A cc'd letter was received from a law firm which referenced loan funding for the Gile project. Commissioner Cryans said that two of the buildings at the project have recently received a Gold LEED certification.

Director Clough said that the Sheriff has requested to be an applicant for funding from the Edward Bryne Memorial Justice Assistance grant which will then allow the money to be distributed to various towns for law enforcement. The County, being the applicant, will receive 10% of the grant money for administration fees. This should amount to about \$17K.

Director Clough informed the Commissioners of a letter that each of them received from Littleton Hospital who was under the impression that the County would be receiving and distributing money through stimulus funding. Director Clough doesn't think that is how this funding works but needs to investigate this a little further.

COMMISSIONER ISSUES:

Commissioner Burton recently attended the Lisbon Selectboard meeting and said there were no issues there.

Commissioner Burton attended a meeting at Horse Meadow Senior Center along with NHA Bolander and they are looking for \$50K in funding for a generator for the Center as they are designated as a Red Cross Shelter, but have no auxiliary power. He suggested perhaps Homeland Security money and is looking further into it.

Commissioner Richards has also been attending Selectboard meetings and recently got a question about why the County didn't have a capital reserve fund. She said that she has always been in favor of it and couldn't recall why the County didn't have one.

Commissioner Burton said that a capital reserve fund can be yanked away or used by the Delegation at their discretion.

Commissioner Richards said that she felt that \$100K should be put away.

Commissioner Cryans said that it's easier to go out and borrow money when needed and that he is not a strong proponent for it.

Director Clough said that for a number of years PSP money was dedicated to the NH account and it was going to be used for the bond. It turned out that the money couldn't be used for the bond and it was put into a capital reserve fund for equipment. That money has since been used up. She said that Dispatch puts a percentage of the Dispatch fee revenue into a capital reserve fund but that it is difficult to put money into a budget as it increases the burden on the taxpayers.

Commissioner Cryans said that he didn't see any legislator that cared much for it either. He said it becomes too onerous year after year.

Commissioner Richards said that in Rumney the town might want to take over the rest stop if it is to be closed and asked Commissioner Burton what he might know about that.

Commissioner Burton said that the Commissioner of Transportation can put out an RFP to see who might want to take over the rest stop and this might happen if there is no money in the budget for it.

Commissioner Burton wanted it noted that he did get a copy of George Brouder's letter from Littleton Hospital requesting funding, to Rep. Ward and understands that Director Clough will be looking into this further.

Commissioner Cryans said that he and Commissioner Burton toured Senator Matt Houde last Thursday and spent time at the Nursing Home, Courthouse, Attorney's Office, Sheriff's Dept and Dispatch. They later went to the Jail where he said Officer Mark Deem gave a phenomenal tour of the Jail which was very interactive. He said the tour gave the Senator a better understanding of the County and he was quite surprised at the modernization of the Dispatch Center. Overall the Senator spent 3 hours touring and was very attentive while here.

Commissioner Cryans said that Grafton County Senior Citizen's Council will hold their annual meeting on April 6th at 12:30 at the Senior Center in Lebanon. Willam Lang will be speaker.

Commissioner Cryans attended the UNH Advisory meeting last evening and they questioned the mood for UNH Cooperative Extension in the County. Commissioner Cryans said that speaking for Grafton County, they have support.

The third annual Lebanon Police Dept. recognition meeting will be held.

Director Clough and Supt. Libby went to Portland to meet with SMRT and went over some of the plans for the Jail redesign. There will be a Core Committee meeting here with SMRT on the 10th of April and then SMRT would like to come and speak with the Board of Commissioners regarding the new estimated costs etc. That meeting will be held on Thursday April 30th at 10:00 AM.

Director Clough gave the Commissioners some preliminary budget information and informed them that the actual budget was up only \$78K but would be lowered if the Commissioners level fund the Social Service budget. Director Clough said that the Department heads are to be commended for doing exactly as expected. There is however, a decrease in revenue which will still result in a 3.7% increase in taxes.

There is another area that can be massaged and that would depend on whether they make a switch in Health Insurance Companies.

This budget includes step increases but no COLA. Director Clough said that a question from the Dept. heads was whether or not the Commissioners would be asking to bring the budget in lower.

Commissioner Cryans said that he would be recommending level funding the Social Service budget and perhaps looking at a couple other possibilities but he said that the Dept. heads did what they were asked to do and did a great job.

Director Clough said that the Commissioner recommendations are due on the 16th and that the Employee Council requests are still out there.

The public hearing for the budget will be held on the 26th of May in the UNH Conference Room at 7:00 PM.

H. Brown commented that the door to the conference room should not ever be locked as it is a safety issue and there is an exit door leading out of the room.

12:32 PM ~ Being no further business the meeting was adjourned

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk