

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Budget Reviews

Board of Commissioners' Office

North Haverhill, NH

Thursday, April 17, 2008

PRESENT: Commissioners' Michael Cryans and Ray Burton, Financial Coordinator
Susan Cunningham, and Secretary Jeri Martino.

ABSENT: Commissioner Richards and Executive Director Clough

Commissioner Cryans called the Meeting to order at 9:05 AM.

Forester Nory Parr arrived for the opening of the Timber Cut bids.

Foreco – Matt Cadreau	\$23,964
Jamison Logging	\$22,702
No. Timber Inc.	\$23,098.50
Baylies - Aaron Packard	\$22,306.25
Scanlan – Terry Williams	\$23,995
Daniel Keniston	\$23,959
Rock Bunnell	\$17,372.50
Russell Riendeau	\$17,243
Joe Locke	\$21,687
Errol Peters	\$18,438
Clifton Taylor	\$16,259.40
Randy Cassidy	\$25,710.60
Chris Crowe	\$20,441
Garland Lumber	\$21,295.50
Robin Royston	\$28,680.60

Forester Parr took the bids to look them over and will bring back a recommendation to the Commissioners.

Social Service Consultant Cindy Swart and HSA Bishop arrived to go over the Social Service budget

SOCIAL SERVICES

It was noted that ACORN, Voices Against Violence and the Franconia Children's Center were all allowed to submit their requests after the deadline, by permission of the Commissioners.

Some items required more discussion than others.

HEALTH

C. Swart said that ACORN has no executive director at the present and that this has to have been the worst proposal she has ever seen as it is totally unrealistic. She met with their board and explained how a proposal should be done. They would like to do an outreach program but none of the ground work has been done. She said they have absolutely no idea what they're doing and absolutely does not recommend funding them.

VNA has a new executive director and now call themselves a medical agency. They have a huge overhead which is a big trapping.

Pemibaker has moved to another area and NANA has a new executive director.

MENTAL HEALTH

According to C. Swart, mental health services in NH are seriously broken. Friendship House and Genesis have new executive directors, as does West Central which she says is in tatters. They've stopped serving people with private insurance. Suggested full funding only if they serve those people again.

DEVELOPMENTAL SEVICES

Pathways has had a merger and seem to have gotten together after this hard merge.

SENIOR SERVICES

Grafton County Senior Citizen Council Daycare is struggling and her suggestion is that the program should end. Transportation is always an issue. A proposal from the state is to put all the money in one pot and then have regional brokers figure out how to dispatch but it's a very complicated system.

Commissioner Burton said he wasn't in favor of that as there are too many obstacles.

Grafton County Area Council on the Aging is an inactive group so far and they were asking for money to pay for lunches and possible transportation. GCSCC was horrified at the proposals and will not be the fiscal agent for an advocacy group. C. Swart recommended zero funding.

CHILD YOUTH SERVICES

CADY is a restorative justice program and so far it has served only 6 youths in the first year and only one from the Plymouth area. She said there are serious problems with the program and their entire financial plan was to be County funded. She would only recommend funding them for \$5000 not \$30,000

WOMEN

C. Swart recommended 3% increase from the FY08 funding

OTHER

C. Swart suggested only funding No.Country Transit \$5000 due to the analysis and consideration that most of the people who use this service are in Coos County.

Commissioner Burton asked what happens to the unexpended balance on the Social Service budget and HSA Bishop said that most are drawn down during the third quarter and there are only a couple of agencies who have not requested their money.

Commissioner Burton asked how much is anticipated for incentive funds and HSA Bishop said about \$230K

Commissioner Burton asked how many kids are kept out of the jail because of child youth services, which couldn't actually be answered.

Commissioner Burton said that restorative justice works well in Vermont and he questioned why it didn't work well here in NH.

EMPLOYEE COUNCIL

Donna Wallis, Sabra Carroll and Steve Whitney arrived. Commissioner Cryans said that the COLA is a huge issue for the Board and across the County raises are non existent to up to 2%.

D. Wallis said that she heard that VT is freezing their executive branch pay and that the Employee Council represents those who are paid under \$60K

S. Whitney said that he wanted the Commissioners to be aware that bonus pay for some has caused some issues.

There was a brief discussion by S. Whitney regarding the perfect attendance bonus.

D. Wallis said that the 2.5% for lower paid employees might end up being about forty cents more an hour, then reminded the Commissioners about those employees who are maxed out. She said 2.5% is a lot more for those at the top of the pay scale and then if you add in their bonuses that were just given to the upper echelon, it's a huge amount. She said that the cost of items is the same whether you're on the top of the scale or the bottom.

S. Carroll said that a flat across the board increase as opposed to a percentage would save a lot of money this year and that the Employee Council hasn't asked for much this year.

Commissioner Cryans said that if they gave the employees a 4.3% COLA on top of a 3% step increase, you're looking at a 7.3% raise.

D. Wallis said that the Employee Council only asks for the unclassified people. Commissioner Cryans said that they have to look at the group as a whole.

D. Wallis said there are some people who are very upset about the fact that bonuses were given to those who are higher ups and it's causing a morale problem, so there is a perception that those lower on the scale are being taken for granted. She said she did not mean to be disrespectful and hope they didn't see it that way.

Commissioner Burton said that if the budget is presented with out an increase the Employee Council could go to the delegation and present their case. Times are not good he said and that's the way it is all over. He said that he wished he could support an employee raise over 2.5% but he can't and still keep the lights on and the complex operating.

The Employee Council said they will have to meet on this offer and Commissioner Cryans said that they stand on the 2.5% increase as the right thing to do and he doesn't want to have to resort to staff reduction or things like that but that this is the right thing to do.

Forester Parr returned with his recommendation for the Timber cut saying that the actual dollars that the County will receive can be either what the sawmill give or a lump sum. There was a discussion about how the bid amount is determined and how much money can be expected. Forester Parr will represent the County during the cut. Commissioner Burton asked how long the cut can be put off if needed as there is a legal issue pending and Forester Parr said that the contracts could be modified and if postponed could be re-negotiated but the prices could change and the project may have to be put out to bid again after a couple of weeks of waiting.

There are no other projected wood cuts and that is due to the fact that the market is just not that good right now.

Forester Parr is planning on retiring on the 30th of May but will still work part-time and will help to keep the County in shape and manage the wood sale. T. Buob is also retiring but he doesn't know how long he will continue on.

It was noted that no trucking could take place on May 15th because of Conservation Day.

Commissioner Burton moved that the bid to cut standing timber on the County property be awarded to high bidder, Robin Royston in the amount of \$28,680.60, which was seconded by Commissioner Cryans. All were in favor.

Forester Parr will handle the details from here.

Being no further business the meeting adjourned at 11:40 AM

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk