

County of Carroll
Delegation Meeting
Carroll County Administration Building
March 7, 2024

Meeting convened: 1:00 p.m.

Members Present: Lino Avellani, John MacDonald, Jonathan Smith, Michael Belcher, Richard Brown, Anita Burroughs (remote), Karel Crawford, David Paige (remote), Steve Woodcock, Brian Taylor, Tom Buco

Members Absent: Chris McAleer, Katy Peternel, Glenn Cordelli, Joseph Hamblen

Others Present: Executive Coordinator Mellisa Seamans, Commissioner Chuck McGee, Facilities Director Bob Murray, MVC Administrator Rich Leboeuf, Sheriff Domenic Richardi, County Attorney Keith Blair, CCHOC Superintendent Brian King, DPW Director Will DeWitte

Public Present

& Participating: Ed Comeau (GovernmentOversite.com), Dallas Emery Jr, Ann Hamilton of UNH Cooperative Extension, Eileen Leavitt of End 68 Hours of Hunger, Norman Cloutier of MWV Adult Day Center, Matthew Place of White Horse Recovery

Public Comment

D Emery Spoke against the recommended budget increase for End 68 Hours of Hunger

All votes taken during this meeting were done by roll call.

2025 Budget Review & Approval

Mountain View Community – Administrator Rich Leboeuf

- Main drivers for increases are inflationary costs, agency staffing, propane and electric
- Retention committee is active; new Agency Reduction committee also formed.
- The 2024 expense budget was over \$800,000 and revenue was \$2.9 million more than anticipated
- 2025 budget is more aggressive on revenue. Changed payer mix with increased Medicare, private pay and skilled. Doing a better job of capturing all costs
- Private pay rates are reviewed regularly. Changing rates requires 90-day notice.
- Chmn. Avellani requests the monthly report provided to the Commissioners also be provided to the Delegation

MOTION: **Approve the Mountain View Nursing Home expense budget of \$19,486,166.** Passed 10-1 with Rep. Burroughs opposed.

MOTION: **Approve Mountain View Community revenue at \$13,169,694** Passed 11-0

2025 Regional Appropriations – Subcommittee – Reps. MacDonald, Woodcock, Brown

Rep. MacDonald thanked the non-profits for the good work they do in the community. He would support adding \$25,000 to the jail budget to cover the cost of services provided by White Horse at the jail.

Superintendent King spoke to the value the jail receives from White Horse, including being the only transportation service to transport released inmates to substance abuse treatment facilities.

Rep. Woodcock explained that the Wolfeboro chapter of End 68 Hours of Hunger applied for funding. The subcommittee chose to recommend funding the three chapters in the County – MWV (\$3,000), Wolfeboro (\$3,000), and Wakefield (\$2,000).

Rep. Brown spoke to the reduced appropriation recommendation for White Horse Recovery. This year's budget includes a 55% increase in the IT budget which necessary to keep systems secure. This increase pushes us higher in our budget than we'd like to be. In general, over the last five years, the County has donated \$690,000 to White Horse. They provide an important service. Because of the long term investment, it is not appropriate for use to continue to fund it at that level. The jail uses their services at no charge to the jail. If they are providing a service, it should be funded by the jail budget.

M Plache of White Horse explained that if White Horse billed for the actual cost of services provided to the jail, the amount would be much higher. He also noted that he County received \$165,000 in opioid settlement funds in the past year and questioned how those were applied.

Rep. Paige asked about the funding for The Nick. Rep. MacDonald explained that this support is for a major project The Nick is undertaking this year and he doesn't expect they will seek funding next year.

MOTION: To approve the Regional Appropriations at \$530,500 by Rep. Smith, 2nd Rep. MacDonald. Passed 9-1 with Rep. Belcher opposed.

MOTION: Approve the subcommittees minutes of January 17 by Rep. Woodcock, 2nd Rep. MacDonald. Passed

IT Subcommittee – Reps. Belcher, Brown, Paige

Rep. Belcher The recommendation of the subcommittee is two full-time positions – IT Director and Help Desk Operator. Additional funding for contract work utilizing available federal funding. Full audit of the system once the transition is completed. Based on several meetings and many documents reviewed.

Comm'r McGee I thought the committee recommended three full-time positions. We need the three positions. I'm not sure everybody understands what we are doing. We are taking a 20-year-old system that was put together in components as it went along. Have to migrate decade's worth of information. Most municipalities are bringing IT in-house for better control. This is a system that has to run 24/7 365. The current contract expires in March 31, 2026. We will need the three employees going forward. If we find in the future we don't need this many, we won't have this many.

Rep. Belcher The County provided a survey of what other counties are staffing for IT.

Rep. Brown We want to make sure that the systems are coordinated with the State systems. County IT Director agreed that will be done.

Rep. Smith Have outside contractors been contacted to see if they could do the buildout?

Rep. Belcher We did not receive a specific recommendation or request on that

Comm'r McGee We reached out to two different contractors who chose not to participate.

Rep. Taylor The IT staff will be on call to cover. And the requested budget is \$112,000 less than originally proposed, correct?

Comm'r McGee In addition to holidays, vacations, there also needs to be overlap of training and responsibility in case someone leaves. Keep in mind that we may not renew the IT contract in 2026 so will have an additional \$9,000 per month to cover this budget

Chmn. Avellani Referred the budget back to the subcommittee

Reps. Burroughs and Paige left the Zoom at 2:00 p.m.

County Mandated Appropriations

MOTION: **To approve \$374,822 for County Mandated Appropriations** by Rep. Buco, 2nd Rep. Crawford. Passed 9-0

Treasurer

MOTION: **To approve Treasurer budget of \$12,909** by Rep. Smith, 2nd Rep. Brown. Passed 9-0

Human Resources HR Generalist Taylor Gunn

MOTION: **To approve the Human Resources budget of \$425,048** Passed 9-0

County Attorney/Victim Services

County Attorney Keith Blair

MOTION: **To approve the County Attorney budget at \$1,396,286** by Rep. Woodcock Passed 9-0

MOTION: **To approve the Victim Services budget at \$159,097** by Rep. Smith. Passed 9-0

There may be funding through State of NH this year to offset the cost of the Victim Services department

Registry of Deeds Register Karen Rines

Discussion about issues surrounding fraud on registering deeds. Would subscription fees to access the online records reduce the potential of fraud? Is there a way to remove a person's records, on request, from the online system? Register Rines agreed to bring more information to the Delegation.

MOTION: **To approve the Registry expense budget at \$578,225** by Rep. Smith, 2nd Rep. Woodcock. Passed 9-0

MOTION: **To approve Registry anticipated revenue at \$1,002,468** by Rep. Smith, 2nd Rep. MacDonald. Passed 9-0

MOTION: **To approve the principal payment for the Registry project at \$290,000** by Rep. Smith 2nd Rep. MacDonald. Passed 9-0

MOTION: **To approve the interest payment for the Registry project at \$129,275** by Rep. Smith, 2nd Rep. MacDonald. Passed 9-0

County Facilities Director Bob Murray

MOTION: **To approve the County Facilities budget at \$267,850.** Passed 9-0. Chmn. Avellani thanked Dir. Murray for all he does for the County

Sheriff's Department/Dispatch Center

Sheriff Domenic Richardi

Sheriff Richardi gave an overview of the 2025-2027 collective bargaining agreement that was approved by the executive committee.

- MOTION:** **Approve the Sheriff's expense budget at \$2,470,934** by Rep. Woodcock, 2nd Rep. Crawford. Passed 9-0
- MOTION:** **Approve Sheriff's Department anticipated revenue at \$370,500** Passed 9-0
- MOTION:** **Approve the Dispatch Center budget at \$1,211,169.** Passed 9-0
- MOTION:** **Approve the Sheriff's Department capital budget at \$70,000** by Rep. Smith, 2nd Rep. Woodcock. Passed 9-0
- MOTION:** **Approve a 3.4% on the base fee for service of writs** by Rep. Woodcock, 2nd Rep. Smith. Passed 9-0

House of Corrections

Superintendent Brian King

- Rep. Taylor Requested information about boarders
- Supt. King We have an agreement with Rockingham County to house their inmates for \$57.50 per day; Strafford \$60 per day; Women's State Prison \$58.50 per day. Currently 47 inmates including 18 from other facilities. Jail is built for 131 beds; staffing allows for 76 inmates; average daily population is mid-50s.
- Rep Crawford We are hearing a lot about ICE and New Hampshire taking some of their inmates. Are we contract with the feds to do that?
- Supt King We do have a federal marshal hold contract. There is also current legislation asking County jails to take federal holds for 48 hours, waiting ICE to pick them up. We don't want to do this. There is nothing that keeps us holding longer than that without contracts. The superintendents pushed back saying they will hold with agreements but not otherwise. There is a huge revenue in this but extensive requirements. This doesn't affect us much currently. Will be discussing with the commissioners at their next meeting
- Had discussion with PrimeCare regarding the catastrophic care (\$70,000) coverage in the current contract. Dental care, hospital, medication are paid out of this coverage. Average total catastrophic care has exceeded this cap in past two years. Proposes adding \$80,000 in the medical line to allow for \$150,000 total catastrophic care. When inmates arrive at the jail, whatever insurance they may have is suspended, leaving the County to pick up all medical costs, with some exceptions.
- The main increase in the budget is due to positions being incorrectly unfunded in prior years' budgets.
- MOTION:** **To increase the medical line to \$1,123,000** by Rep. Smith, 2nd Rep. Brown. Passed 9-0
- MOTION:** **To approve the Corrections budget at \$6,465,874** by Rep. Smith, 2nd Rep. Crawford. Passed 9-0
- Rep. MacDonald With the decreased appropriation for White Horse, will you still be able to provide the same services?
- Supt. King I hope they don't cut their services because of the cut in the budget. The main thing is transportation services. Inmates can be released to in-patient treatment and White Horse provides this transportation. Their service is vital to our operations. There are no inpatient treatment facilities in Carroll County so White Horse drives them hundreds of miles. Our programs staff at the jail put in a tremendous amount of work with inmates, it would be a shame to see all of that

work lost because they can't get to treatment. There a lot of personal recognizance release to treatment

Rep Smith

Once they leave jail, they are not our problem. They need to find a their own ride

MOTION: To approve anticipated revenue in the amount of \$151,000 by Rep. Smith, 2nd Rep. Crawford. Passed 9-0

Supt King Commissary fund was showing but it is actually against the law to include it in the budget

Chmn. Avellani Agreed. It should not be included in the general fund

Rep Woodcock Suggested the transportation costs could be paid out of this revolving fund

Bureau of Adult and Aging Services

MOTION: To approve \$5,644,049 for BAAS Passed 9-0

Department of Public Works

Director Will DeWitte

Chmn. Avellani The Committee conditionally approved the DPW budget with addition of third full-time position. We are now going to reverse that. I think the commissioners will come up with something for that department that is pretty good

Rep Woodcock I am concerned we are understaffed for a department that takes care of the entire complex with limited equipment and supplies. I think it is an error to cut this. The part-time and temporary help was combined into the third full-time position.

Dir DeWitte Gave an overview of the responsibilities of the DPW.

- Snow removal
- Lawn mowing
- Managing water system for complex plus 50 customers
- Managing wastewater treatment plant
- 70 acres of hayfields and forest management

MOTION: Approve the expense budget of \$366,721 by Rep. Smith, 2nd Rep. Belcher. Passed 8-1

Chmn. Avellani I think the commissioners will make changes to the department to alleviate the workload

Rep Woodcock Strongly objected to cutting the third requested employee from the budget. Did not short other department's requests; why cut staffing in the department responsible for the entire complex

Rep Smith Beneficial to the environment and wildlife if you do not cut the fields

Comm'r McGee Working with UNH; have not made a decision about haying in 2025

Rep MacDonald A lot of people rely on that hay so hopefully the commissioners make a decision soon

MOTION: Approve anticipated water department revenue at \$25,500 by Rep. Smith, 2nd Rep. Belcher. Passed 9-0

Comm'r McGee We will be revisiting the water department revenue and taking another look at the expense budget

Long Term Debt/Interest Expense

MOTION: Approve the \$554,426 Long Term Debt by Rep. Smith, 2nd Rep. Woodcock. Passed 9-0

MOTION: Approve MVC Bond Interest Expense of \$287,895 by Rep. Smith, 2nd Rep. Brown. Passed 9-0

MOTION: **Approve MVC Bond Principal of \$1,000,000** by Rep. Smith, 2nd Rep. Brown.
Passed 9-0

Delegation Investigative Committee

Chmn. Avellani Pursuant to 24:17 the Delegation has a right to form an investigative committee. I need a motion to approve that.

MOTION **So moved.** By Rep. Belcher, 2nd Rep. Woodcock.

Chmn. Avellani The reason for this is to look into the issues surrounding our CFO. It has been a request and we will fulfill it.

Rep. Buco notes that this item is not on the agenda.

Chmn. Avellani It is under "Other Business"

Rep. Woodcock: For this committee is there any idea of the duration?

Chmn. Avellani: Until the committee is satisfied. There will also be a supplement appropriation to the Delegation line, to the Convention, I will be working on that momentarily at our next meeting. Mr. Clerk call the roll.

Rep. MacDonald Calls the roll and the 9 members present vote in favor. [Lino Avellani, John MacDonald, Jonathan Smith, Michael Belcher, Richard Brown, Karel Crawford, Steve Woodcock, Brian Taylor, Tom Buco]

Chmn. Avellani Members of the committee will be representatives Smith, MacDonald, Woodcock, Paige and the Chair. We will get our chairman when we meet. I will call the meeting relatively quickly.

The Sheriff and County Attorney were called to the table.

Rep. Avellani In order to appear impartial and fair and to avoid conflicts of interest, I would usually ask for a member from each of your departments. However, I would ask that you go outside the county to find somebody that will assist us in our investigation. We will need an attorney and an investigator. Or somebody that can process. If your department feels comfortable doing it, we will probably need some services, if not, we might need an investigator. If your department's comfortable, I'm happy to work with you. If not, I'm happy to go of the county as well. I know it will be a conflict for you (Attorney Blair) so I would expect an outside.

Atty. Blair: I'll make some phone calls

Sheriff Richardi Agreed to assist

Approval of Meeting Minutes

MOTION **Approve the December 9 2024 meeting minutes** by Rep. Brown, 2nd Rep. Smith. Passed 9-0

Jail Roof Repair

MOTION **Approve funding from the former ARPA funds (\$700,000 to complete the jail roof repair** by Rep. Brown, 2nd Rep. Smith. Passed 9-0

The project went out to RFP in fall 2024. Three bids received and awarded to Melanson. Engineering firm Northridge Consulting Engineers is assisting.

Comm'r McGee In response to question from Rep. Woodcock, said the commissioners are not planning to renovate the entire Annex. However, some of the building may still be renovated using USDA funds.

Rep. Avellani You all received a proposed use of former ARPA funds list in your packet today. I am not combining these funds and appropriations in the general budget. We are sticking to the guidance received when we first received the funds. We will take the projects up one at a time as they come to us.

Meeting Recessed

Meeting Reconvened

Rep Avellani Change to the makeup of the investigative committee. Rep. Cordelli will be on the committee instead of Rep. Smith

Meeting Recessed

Minutes Approved _____

Rep. John MacDonald, Clerk