



Delegation Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2015 at 6:00 pm

Chair Frank Tilton called the Belknap County Delegation meeting to order at 6:00 pm on the above date at 34 County Drive, Laconia, NH and recited the pledge of allegiance. The Chair asked the Clerk to call the roll.

In Attendance: Representatives Aldrich, Comtois, Dumais, Fields, Fisher, Flanders, Fraser, Gallagher, Howard, Hurt, Lebreche, Luther, Spanos, Sylvia, Tilton Vadney and Varney.

Absent: Representative Russell.

Minutes: Members were given the draft 03/02/15 minutes to review for a vote at their 03/16/15 meeting.

Letter to Governor: A copy of the joint letter dated 03/09/15 and signed by the Chair of the Delegation and the Chair of the Board of Commissioners that was sent to the Governor regarding Nursing Home funding was reviewed. The Governor is aware of the issues and this letter is stating the county's position.

Tax rate impact: Rep. Gallagher thanked Administration for the spreadsheet on the budget tax impact on the local tax rate. This gives the County Delegation a snap shot as to where they are with their working budget as well as the comparison of the amount to be raised by taxes in percentages of 1%, 2% and 3% for each community. Rep. Dumais echoed that this was good information and insight to have. Rep. Gallagher also pointed out that the 5.9% increase from last week's 2% target was due to the fact they voted to reduce the revenue numbers at the 03/02/15 meeting.

Belknap Economic Development Council: Henry Lipman, Randy Eifert, Sean Sullivan and Justin Slattery came before the Delegation (per their request) with an overview of what kind of work BEDC is involved in. They gave members a handout with statistics and explained how they got started approximately 23 years ago and then explained the fundamental basis of the Council. Each member gave an overview/explanation from the various angles of the business of BEDC and asked for the Delegations support in funding their agency. Delegation members then asked questions on the loans they provide, success stories, staff, etc. Chair Tilton encouraged Delegates to attend BEDC annual meeting on 03/19/15 to learn more about whom they are and what they do in the community's.

Budget expenditures: M/Gallagher to reduce debt service interest line 014700-59810 by \$45,000 making the new budgeted amount \$71,736. S/Hurt. Rep. Gallagher explained that when the bids

came in for the TAN's (tax anticipation notes), due to its competitiveness, there is excess money in that line that is not needed for interest payments. Unanimous. **Motion passes.**

Rep. Vadney stated that in his opinion, the county needs to start dwindling down funding the outside agencies over a period of time and set them on a path of independence. If they start now, this will set a precedence to start reducing a little at a time. M/Vadney to cut 1% across the board for all outside agencies. S/Hurt. Discussions ensued. Vadney then modified the motion to 5% across the board reduction. Rep. Hurt withdrew his second. S/Dumais. Rep. Fields made a motion to table this. Motion failed due to a lack of a second. Discussion ensued. M/Hurt to move the question. S/Dumais. Unanimous. Motion passes. Chair called for the vote. Roll call vote: 12 – Y, 5 – N. **Motion passes.** (5% reduction)

Rep. Sylvia made a motion to reduce Economic Development Council by another \$20,000 (in addition to the 5% (\$3750) that was just voted on). S/Dumais for discussion. Roll call vote: 4 – Y, 13 – N. **Motion fails.**

Budget revenues: Rep. Gallagher wanted to share some info with the Delegation regarding the concern over the Nursing Home and the money that the Governor approved as a reduction. Senator Forrester submitted a senate bill (SB8) to reinstate those monies the Governor removed relative to Nursing Home funding. The Senate heard in committee and recommends passage, the full Senate vote will be Thursday. They are confident it will pass the Senate and move to the House. House leadership also supports. As a result of this, Rep. Gallagher feels that the Delegation needs to revisit the reductions in revenue and reinstate those reductions as he believes that the Commissioners estimates are reasonable. He asked for the Delegations support. M/Gallagher to increase line 025100-34044 by \$370,000 and 025100-34046 by \$100,000. (Total of \$470,000 revenue increase) S/Spanos. Commissioner DeVoy says this keeps the tax rate inline and asks for the Delegations support. Roll call vote: 13 – Y, 4 – N. **Motion passes.** Chair Tilton said that not a lot of changes that are anticipated next week. He would like to have a vote and hear from the public next week on the working budget.

Positions in the County: Rep. Sylvia and Rep. Howard asked about vacant positions in the budget namely Human Resource Director and the Finance Director. Commissioner DeVoy stated that after the budget is passed, the Commissioners will reorganize for several months and promise that as people retire or move on, they will look into the position and how to best fill it (attrition) to make efficient decision all around in the best interest of the County. M/Comtois to reduce the operating budget of County Administration by \$100,000 (bottom line). S/Sylvia. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Taylor said that they need to put that money somewhere for the health insurance situation as the Commissioners need money for flexibility for negotiating with the unions and to please not tie the Commissioners hands on bargaining. The County has two quotes for Health Insurance to be opened soon. Roll call vote: 9 – Y, 8 – N. **Motion passes.**

Public input: Chair Tilton opened the meeting to public input at 7:50 pm. Ms. Barbara Howard of Alton, Ms. Paula Trombly or Meredith, Ms. Donna Heep of Belmont, Mr. John Moulton of Meredith, Mr. Rick Demark of Meredith, Mr. Dave Pollack of Laconia and Mr. Alan Beetle of

Gilford all spoke to items regarding the budget and voiced their comments/concerns. Public comment concluded at 8:09 pm.

Adjourn: M/Comtois, S/Howard to adjourn at 8:10 pm. Unanimous. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Gallagher". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "B".

Brian Gallagher, Clerk of the County Convention