

## Belknap County Commissioners Budget Meeting with Department Heads

August 24, 2015 @3pm

Attendance: Commissioner DeVoy, Taylor and Burchell, Debra Shackett, Judy McGrath, Melissa Countway Guldrandsen, Dustin Muzzey, Keith Gray, Mathew Logue, Brian Loanes, Tiffany Seal, Craig Wiggin

Commissioner DeVoy informed the department heads to expect a lean year with one exception being the corrections department. He wants to slowly build the department for the new community corrections model. He would like the nursing home to do a RFP for food vendors. He stated if you ask for increases have a good argument.

Commissioner Taylor stated to pay close attention to revenue. He would like to try to avoid transfers and suggested comparing the past couple years budgets.

Commissioner Burchell stated he would like to look into replacing part-time staff with full-time. Mathew Logue stated he wouldn't say part-time won't work and would like to hire as many part-time staff as he can. Commissioner DeVoy stated if using part-time staff look at the overtime budget. Mathew Logue asked if all wages lines could be combined to one wage account. Commissioner DeVoy asked what the auditors would think of that. Debra Shackett stated it does not matter to the auditors how we have our chart of accounts. She asked if it needed to be separated for the cost report. Commissioner Taylor asked if the part-time and full-time could be combined and keep an accounting of individual records. Craig Wiggin stated the Delegation wants it broken down.

Commissioner DeVoy stated he would like Dustin Muzzey to shop around for dumpster, electricity and natural gas services. He asked if there is any anticipated increase in the sewer bill. Dustin Muzzey stated he had already shopped for electricity and natural gas and it will go to the Commissioners at their next meeting. He stated he was not aware of any increases in the sewer.

Debra Shackett asked if they should budget for step increases. Commissioner DeVoy stated to ask for it. He stated his position is to have a large contingency for wage increases. There was some discussion on how the towns handle their budgets. Commissioner Burchell stated if there is not going to be a step increase there should be a cost of living. Melissa Countway Guldrandsen stated if we pay employees better than it will decrease employees leaving and the cost to the county to train new employees. Debra Shackett stated employees need to know the Commissioners support wage increases. Commissioner DeVoy stated we need to follow the

Teamsters model. Craig Wiggin stated employees realize they have to give to get something. Meaning give in the health insurance to get a raise. Commissioner Burchell asked what about less than 3% raise, instead 1.5% step and 1.5% cost of living. Debra Shackett stated the union negotiations affect the budget. Commissioner DeVoy stated to go with Teamsters contract. Commissioner Taylor stated a \$1 in wages cost the county \$1.26 and \$1 in benefits cost \$1 to the county. Commissioner DeVoy stated to calculate the budget same as Teamsters increases 3% and 1.4%.

Brian Loanes asked if he should budget for the recovery court. Commissioner DeVoy stated they will need to discuss the relationship between the jail and restorative justice at a later date. Melissa Countway Guldrandsen stated probation does bail supervision for them one time per month. She stated if the county had a more robust program more people wouldn't have to be in jail for pretrial confinement. Commissioner DeVoy stated the jail will budget for the increase in Horizons services. Brian Loanes stated bail supervision will work for his department. There was discussion about the lack of treatment options in our area.

Commissioner DeVoy stated the Commissioners are working for the employees. Craig Wiggin stated he sensed the Executive Committee was getting the issue with part-time staff. He stated it is better to invest in employees than to lose them. Debra Shackett asked about the health insurance. Craig Wiggin stated it is disruptive and stressful to change insurance and suggested it wait until next year. Commissioner DeVoy stated the difference between the two plans is \$180,000.00 savings. He stated Interlocal Trust will credit employees with the deductibles they have already paid if they have receipts. He stated they would provide staff to educate employees on their plan. Commissioner DeVoy stated before they vote on the plan they need to see how Interlocal Trust came up with the savings. Debra Shackett stated she came up with \$41,000.00 in savings through the end of the year.