

**“DRAFT”**

**Carroll County Delegation Meeting**

**Minutes**

**September 20, 2010**

**Delegation Members Present:** Betsey Patten, Stanley Stevens, Chris Ahlgren, Karen Umberger, Mark McConkey, Susan Wiley, David Knox, Tom Buco, Joseph Fleck.

**Others Present:** Commissioner Sorensen, Commissioner Albee, Commissioner Solomon, David Babson, Maureen Spencer, Henry Spencer, Joe Kowalski, Daymond Steer, Anne Ainton, Ken Fifield, Chris Connelly, Will DeWitte, Asha Kenney.

Meeting called to order at 9:04 a.m. by Rep. Betsey Patten, Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public**

1. Chief Kenneth Fifield: Speaks regarding concerns about the new policy regarding the booking process.

2. Rep. Patten: I think that one of the things that you are going to want to do is change the procedure that may enhance the procedure. You may have to have Jason Johnson bring that in during the budget process to see if that is going to entail any more issues. I don't know anything about the booking procedures.

3. Fifield: We met with the Commissioners regarding a change in booking policy in which the jail would stop doing bookings for the police department. We are not asking the jail to do anything that they haven't done for the last number of years. We were responding to a policy that was decided upon. They were shifting some burden to the local police departments to book their own prisoners. There were concerns as many departments have one officer on the road at night and if they have an officer at the jail to bring them through the booking process until the person is released, that puts the town at a disadvantage as another officer would have to cover.

4. Rep. Patten: What I would like to do is discuss how our subcommittees are going to be working. I think the issues needs to be put into a subcommittee so that the subcommittee can hear both sides at the same time and be able to determine the reasoning for the policy change. You may want write something regarding positions of the police chiefs based on the policy that is happening at the jail. You can send that to us. Right now, we are here to be able to figure out what guidelines to be able to give to the Commissioners for the budgets. I appreciate the issue.

5. Com. Sorensen: This is something that the Commissioners had discussed and we drafted a policy which we decided would not go into effect after the first of the year. There are no other counties that are doing what we are doing now. It was a draft policy, it wasn't put into effect and we decided to wait until after the first of the year, we were going to look into more and discuss further.

6. Rep. Umberger: I will give Chief Fifield my email address to send the details to me

and then I will distribute that information.

7. David Babson: Thanks the Delegation members that came in today. Since the new nursing home project, I have been asking what is going to happen to the old nursing home and whether or not the Cooperative Extension could have space there. It's been decided that it will go into the old nursing home. I ask about this every week at the Commissioner's meeting and nothing has been done yet. There are concerns about the rent that the Cooperative Extension is paying now and it will be going up. I would like planning to be done for this so that we are prepared to move by the end of our lease.

8. Rep. Patten: We will get an answer before your lease is up in October of 2012.

### **Regular Session**

1. Rep. Patten: We have a copy of the second quarter budget. We can review page by page if needed. I know that you did not get a copy ahead of time and what we need to do is figure out a procedure so that we can get a copy of the budget ahead of time so that you have time to look at it. If you look at the last page, it looks like that in June, we were at 42% of the overall budget.

2. Rep. Umberger: I thought we agreed at our last meeting that we were going to receive a copy via email ahead of time for review.

3. Rep. Patten: Regarding the email, I am not sure if we have the ability to do that or not. I think that by the time we get into full swing, we are going to have to have to get a copy beforehand.

4. Com. Sorensen: We will make sure that you have the proposed budget ahead of time.

5. Rep. Patten: Does anyone have any questions about the expenditures.

6. Com. Sorensen: I would like to bring attention to the Delegation members that there probably will be a couple of line items that are overspent. In some cases, it shows up on another page as a revenue. The other item is with the jail, I think you will find that we will be overspent on medication for the inmates and that is something that we have no control over.

7. Rep. Buco: Page 1, the jail income is way below quarterly estimates. Is that something that is permanent. Will it be made up by the end of the year?

8. Com. Albee: It is my understanding that it won't be made up. It could be that it hasn't been reported in this quarter.

9. Rep. Sorensen: I do know that we are not using as many bracelets as predicted.

10. Rep. Stevens: My understanding of the bracelets is that is in the budget also as an expense, so I don't know that it effects the budget at all, it should offset itself.

11. Rep. Patten: This is on page 9, line 058, electronic monitoring. Overall, we are at 42% for the expenditures and the budget that we have coming in is at 52% as of June 30<sup>th</sup>.

12. Rep. Fleck: I have a question about the enterprise fund, page 3, item 026 for speech therapy skilled. What are the series of explanation points signify?

13. Com. Albee: This is something that the computer generates.

14. Rep. Patten: So with the budget at 52% of revenues coming in overall, I think that it was just about on mark. We will have more reporting when we meet again. We are required by statute to have another meeting between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of December. We will schedule an organization meeting for the 13<sup>th</sup> of December at 9:00. The Commissioners will present the budget and we will have organization of who is going to be Chair and Vice Chair and Clerk for the year.

Last year we talked about what the Delegation felt was a good feel for us about the budget guidelines that we wanted to give to the Commissioners. Two years ago, the Commissioners came in with anywhere from a 12% to 17% increase and that sent us into shock and that also sent us into committees and into a confrontational mode with our Commissioners. We decided at that point, we decided that we wanted to come in to discussion with the Commissioners what the Delegation was thinking of in the idea of the budget prior to the time that you had your department heads come in and talk to you, so that perhaps what we could do is not be so acrimonious and all of us have an easier time and the public not being so confused. I am very pleased that we had a better budget process last year. We still had issues and it doesn't mean that won't still have issues, but at least our ideas are on the table. I would like to have the Delegation speak now to the Commissioners about our budget.

15. Rep. Umberger: Since the inflation rate for this year is basically under 1%, what I would like to see for the budget is an increase of no greater than the inflation rate excluding the health care increases. The reason that I say excluding healthcare increases is because as you read and listen about what's going on with the healthcare increases, they are talking anywhere from 8% to 12%. I am just not sure that the county budget can absorb that kind of an increase within a 1-2% overall. I would personally like to see the healthcare excluded from whatever percentage we might want to set.

16. Rep. Fleck: To follow up on that, I understand the rationale for not including the healthcare increase, but at some point we are going to have to bite the bullet and how do we make up for that? I guess what I am saying is that everything should be at the CPI and somehow we have to tighten up anyway we can. At some point, we are going to have to confront those costs and how do we do it? Do we just assume that if there is a 12% increase in healthcare costs, we simply go out to the voters, then they will want to make cuts somewhere else. At this point, I am not ready to say that I would exclude the healthcare costs from any overall budgetary limitations.

17. Rep. Ahlgren: I would like to concur with Rep. Fleck. I know that from at least the chair where I sit and I believe that Rep. Chandler would concur with me if he were here, that we have been urging the Commissioners to seek out cost savings in the matter of medical insurance through health saving plans or higher deductibles and we haven't really seen as much action in that category as the two of us would like to have seen. We believe that there is more savings that could be found in that area and it's certainly something that they should be looking at when negotiating the upcoming contracts. We have to look at the ability to save on everything.

18. Rep. Patten: I know that the Commissioners were looking at the healthcare structure.

19. Com. Albee: We addressed the healthcare issue and negotiations last year. It's not as easy as just telling them what to do. The insurance historically has actually cost less. I think we need to take a look at it obviously and I think there are some areas on our budget that we can find some savings with some revenue increases and I think there is a lot we can do without getting wrapped around the axle of the health insurance issues. Next year, I think we will have a very clear picture of the impact of whatever federal programs pass and whatever reform issues have come down and what our actual exposure is. I don't think it is going to be as great of an increase this year.

20. Rep. Patten: I do know that in this process, you do get all the ideas of what will happen and you can continue to work on them.

21. Rep. Knox: I think you should exclude the healthcare at this point. If each area aims for the 1%, I think it will need to be looked at it as that's the way it's going to be looked at when we are done.

22. Rep. Patten: My thought is that we have approved a new nursing home and we did have some cost savings because it came in at a very good rate. I know that the cost of the nursing home and the bond that we went for, that is going to add up into our budget, so that is an already known savings. I would like to know what is that percentage of how the nursing home is going to effect the overall budget.

23. Com. Albee: At some point and time, we are going to have to enter into a discussion about how we deal with the money saved and received on that project. We are nowhere near getting close to invading the \$1.2 million contingency part of the budget; there is a few hundred thousand dollars in current savings of materials, there is a \$556,000 coupon that we got with the bond, so I am pretty confident that we are going to be around \$2 million at the end of the day. With that said, last week we met with the fire chief who said, after 2 years of looking at the design, now we need to change something. So it's hard to put the number down as cast in stone today, but by next April, we should be close to knowing exactly where we stand. I think we need to have the discussion of how we treat that cash at 3.38% and how we treat some of the things that we put into maintenance and equipment in the operating budget which I would like to talk about creating capital budgets, so if we have to do some work on the old nursing home for the Cooperative Extension or the jail. There are certain things that we need to think about doing over there just from the security standpoint. Should we put that in the operating budget; probably not because it's a one time expense. We should start looking at capital expense budgets as opposed to just the operating budget. But, we do have some cash in the form of nursing home savings that would mitigate the possible impact of the budget this year. Also, the energy audit that you received a copy of shows some things that we can do with this building with a 2 ½ year payback at which point we will be saving money every year. These are things that we should be looking at doing.

24. Com. Sorensen: Rehabbing the old nursing home is going to be a one time expense for the Cooperative Extension or whatever else we do with it and should not be in the operating budget.

25. Rep. Patten: I have to realistically say that if we say to you that we don't want a 1%

increase, unless we decide that the nursing home is not part of the operating, we may decide that and that would be like taking out the healthcare cost. If it's going to be 8% on the total effect of the budget, then can we realistically tell the Commissioners to keep it at 1% because we have already gotten an 8% increase in the overall budget because of what we already have approved and what we are now building. I don't know how we want to deal with it, but we have to realize that the nursing home input is going to effect how the overall rate of the 1% or CPI or whether we go to the inflation rate because of what we have already approved. I want the members to know that we have more than just the nursing home costs to be able to think about and be able to see what we can do to make sure our tax rate and constituents are not paying more than they have to pay. I want to thank the county employees and the Commissioners for the jobs they do in all of their work; every part of the county is important.

## **County Apportionment for 2011**

1. Rep. Patten: There is a copy of the County Apportionment in your folder that gives you what is happening for each town and what they are going to have to pay. The percentages are shown and the amount of money that will be going to the \$13 million. This is what we had to raise for the this year's budget. Comparisons are shown from 2008, 2009 and 2010.

## **Commissioners Report**

1. Com. Albee: House of Corrections Report provided for review. This was done by John Alese who was a superintendent of corrections in Colorado. He did this survey. Recommendations of most importance is updating the cameras and monitoring system (page 11, #4). The cameras are not wide angled enough. A perimeter fence is recommended which should have been there to begin with. Mr. Alese saw that as a significant issue. #22 - we are working on the meals program. There is a significant amount of waste that seems to be generated. #16 - We have already had a meeting with our superintendent about arming our correctional officers when we do transports. He did a wonderful presentation, training regimen and use of force training. That is already happening. #3 -They suggested that we do a staffing analysis and this will be done. #6 - Perimeter security. #7 - Meshes over the yards for security. We are getting a price on that. #19-#22 - These are policy issues. Jason Johnson will address these issues. #25 - Capitol expense. This has been talked about in the past regarding video arraignment and video visitation.

2. Rep. Patten: We will all review this report and we can decide on what we need to do.

3. Com. Sorensen: Energy report is provided to all Delegation members for review. This was done by the State and they looked at all of our buildings to see where we could have savings. In this building, the heat and air conditioning has been running at the same time. The lighting needs to be updated to more efficient lighting. Those two items are the most important. Next is the controls on the roof and panels. They are estimating \$120,000 with a payback in 3.8 years, a 32% savings. The jail and the farm buildings; there is not so much of a savings there, there is a little, but the cost outweighs the savings. It looks like we should focus on this building and reduce the energy costs. We would have \$27,000 savings a year with just this building.

4. Rep. McConkey: In looking at pages 16 and 17, when talking about the wood pellet boiler and the grant for the new building and whether or not we should double our effort; and looking at biomass heating was consideration of a large central woodchip plant which would serve the jail and the administration. However, the county is not comfortable with operating

such a plant. I would like the Commissioners to take a broader look at that subject. It's my understanding that once you get to a certain size in BTU production and the biomass heating may be a more beneficial cost. I know there is somewhat more in operating costs, but I wouldn't want to limit your thinking only to pellets as there are only a number of providers to provide that. I would like to work on that effort.

5. Com. Albee: We didn't dismiss that idea. It was part of our discussions when talking about alternate heating sources in the beginning. The dynamic of it was and still remains that while the fuel cost of the chips, the capital cost is dramatically higher. This was discussed in at the building committee meetings. Our architects and engineers were very strongly in favor of a chip plant, but at the end of the day didn't feel that we should go for that additional cost at the Delegation level. With that said, we are putting pipe in the ground for transporting heat right now. I think that discussion might go forward at a later date.

6. Com. Sorensen: I think one of the problems with chips was the large capacity for storage. The moisture content of chips is variable, the species of wood that goes into the chips is variable and the size of the chips is variable. It's a big concern whereby you get the pellets and will come very close to the border, so we will be helping industry.

7. Rep. McConkey: I just want to bring up a point with speaking to the Ossipee Selectmen a few weeks ago and sharing with them the cost savings as was promised and during the bidding process and moving forward, the Ossipee Selectmen wanted to make sure that any cost savings that would be reflected in the lower cost in the bonding and it was their hope that money wouldn't be spent on other things. Secondly, you had mentioned that the fire chief, locally, after reviewing the plans for 2 years, had made some changes with an additional cost to us and I would just ask that the Commissioners stay strong on that way with the input that's being brought in.

8. Com. Sorensen: We have to come up with a plan of evacuation and moving of people. The fire marshal was here with the chief. The fire marshal stated that this was caught early in the game and the plans can still be changed if needed. We may be ok, but we still have to come up with a plan that the chief will sign off on.

### **Report of NH Medicaid Members by Town and Eligibility Group**

1. Rep. Patten: Copies are provided to all members for review. These were given to us from the Commissioners from the Department of Health and Human Services.

2. Com. Sorensen: Speaks in regard to renovations of the old nursing home. The Cooperative Extension wanting to be located in that building. Money is going to be needed for architects and planning, so at some point, this will need to be brought to the Delegation for review.

3. Rep. Patten: We are doing more planning for the future in this Delegation than has ever been done before. I think we will take that into consideration and decide whether we will need a Capital improvement program here in the County don't we don't spike all the time or whether we put money aside for the processes as they happen.

### **Public Input**

None.

MOTION: Rep. Stevens moves to adjourn at 11:02 a.m. Motion seconded by Rep. Knox.  
Motion carries.