

**“DRAFT”**

**Carroll County Delegation Minutes**

**September 22, 2009 9:00 A.M.**

**County Administration Building**

**Present:** Reps. Ahlgren, Bridgham, Bucu, Fleck, Knox, McConkey, Patten, Roberts, Scala, Stevens, Umberger, Wiley; Commissioners Sorensen, Solomon and Albee present; (Absent: Reps. Butler and Chandler).

Carroll County Delegation meeting called to order by Chair Rep. Patten at 9:10 a.m.

The agenda for today’s meeting is to approve previous Delegation Minutes; review budget goals of the Delegation; discuss meetings for Delegation Sub-Committees; and Incentive Funds project.

Chair Rep. Patten led the Delegation; Commissioners and public in a pledge of allegiance to the flag.

***Chair Rep. Patten opened the floor for fifteen (15) minutes of public input.***

**Henry Babson:** Requested information relating to the “legalities” of the Capital Reserve Fund – and who is allowed to spend those monies that the Cooperative Extension placed in the Capital Reserve Fund? Chair Rep. Patten advised Mr. Babson that the Commissioners must receive permission from the Delegation members to spend those funds. Commissioner Sorensen advised that when the Cooperative Extension gives back the money to the County – it goes into a general fund to offset taxes for next year – unless the Delegation decides to put it into the Capital Reserve Fund – (which the Delegation has done for the past two (2) years). According to Commissioner Sorensen, the money was “ear-marked” to review the possibility of using the old nursing home building for office space for Cooperative Extension. Mr. Babson wanted to know if the Delegation had released any monies to for this purpose and how much money was actually released. Chair Rep. Patten stated that a Motion was passed to release \$ 15,000.00 for this purpose – at a previous Delegation Meeting. Rep. Patten further advised that the money was released to specifically look at the “core” of the old nursing home building to determine if it was appropriate for the use of the Cooperative Extension; but there were various issues the Extension needed to address, such as wiring, etc. If the total \$15,000.00 is not spent for this study – then Chair Rep. Patten further advised that the Extension could request any remaining monies could go back to the Capital Reserve – but that would be a decision made by the Commissioners as to whether they can do that

or not. Commissioner Sorensen stated that a portion of the \$15,000.00 has been already spent on initial studies of the “core” section for the use of the old nursing home building by Cooperative Extension. Commissioner Sorensen advised that the funds “ear-marked” in the Capital Reserve are for the exclusive use of Cooperative Extension and the Delegation are the only one’s that can move that money. Commissioner Albee clarified that it is “virtually impossible” to work at re-designing the center of the existing building that only the “Cooperative Extension” portion of the building design is looked at. The whole piece has to be looked at as “one” in order to see the feasibility of windows, insulation, wiring, etc. Chair Rep. Patten stated that Cooperative Extension should not be paying for the kitchen and laundry portion of the study. Commissioner Sorensen advised that \$29,000. is going to get used in that building whether it goes for the cost of the roof or the Extension’s portion – whether it be for re-wiring or windows in dining room that the Extension may use as a conference room. Commissioner Sorensen further advised that in his estimation it could cost around \$300,000. to renovate the whole building. Rep. Buco was of the understanding that the Delegation authorized the Commissioners to take a portion of the Capital Reserve Funds to pay for the “initial survey” – and to get some specifics from the Extension Building Committee as to what they actually needed for office space. Rep. Umberger stated that in her opinion - the entire cost of the feasibility of the use of the old nursing home for another purpose should not be borne by the Extension. If the Extension is going to use 40% of the building – then the extension should pay 40% of the cost. If the jail is going to use 30% - then the 30% should come from them. Rep. Umberger further stated she expected that to happen. She did not expect the Extension to pay for the entire study. Mr. Babson stated that as Chairman of the Building Committee – he certainly has some obligation to pay – but that the amount should be “pro-rated” on the building somehow. He further stated that the Extension should not be funding the entire study of the existing nursing home building. Chair Rep. Patten stated that for the Extension to be able to have a place that is “feasible” it is going to cost more than \$29,000. Mr. Babson agreed that it will substantially be a lot more than that. Chair Rep. Patten further stated that she would like be able to have an accounting so that everyone understands that it is going to cost far more than \$29,000 to do the feasibility study. Rep. Bridgham stated that it was his understanding that the Cooperative Extension put aside this money in the hope they would have adequate building space. Rep. Patten stated that the monies from Cooperative Extension in the Capital Reserve will be used for a “feasibility study” of the old nursing home building.

**Daymond Steer/Carroll County Independent:** Mr. Steer asked about a “rule change” going to the “JLCAR” – and what does JLCAR do? Chair Rep. Patten stated that as the Departments change their rules – JLCAR looks at all rule changes and statutory authority for the Departments to change the way the rules are set. They also look to see if the rules are in the interest of the public. There will be public hearings on rule making hearings that will be held at the Dept. of Health and Human Services. Rep. Patten further stated that she has

not seen the changes to date. "JLCAR" is the overseer of "rule changes". Delegation members can approve or reject to those changes or stop the changes by a resolution to the whole general court. Commissioner Sorensen advised that the proposed change is to add "religion" to that Committee – so that any faith can become a member.

**Nate Giarnese/Conway Daily Sun:** Asked about Incentive Funds issues. Chair Rep. Patten advised that she was not all that familiar with the Incentive Funds nor had she spoken with anyone on the Incentive Funds Committee. She stated that she would need to look at the rule change before she advised further on this.

***Chair Rep. Patten closed the floor for public input.***

**MOTION:** Rep. Umberger made a motion to approve the Delegation minutes from the May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009 and July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009 meetings, seconded by Rep. Bridgham. A vote was taken, all in favor. **Motion Carries.**

Chair Rep. Patten advised that the main reason for the meeting today was to discuss the Sub-Committees and their work relating to the proposed Budget. Rep. Chandler was not present but Chair Rep. Patten advised that he hoped to see zero percent (0%) increase or just an inflation increase.

Rep. Umberger stated that she was aware of the upcoming labor agreement contract(s) negotiations. It was her opinion that the Delegation could not look at labor negotiations without looking at the remainder of the budget – because that would "in fact" drive the budget up. She felt that the budget should be looked at in a total perspective. She expects to have some sort of overall increase in health insurance costs. Commissioner Albee hoped to keep the budget as close to zero as possible. Chair Rep. Patten stated that if the Commissioners have a goal to be able to bring the budget to a zero or cost of inflation rate – then the Sub-Committees will understand and know what is going on. But if the Commissioners come in with a 17% increase – don't be surprised if the Delegation "pulls apart" the proposed budget. Chair Rep. Patten wants to have a balance of "give and take" so that the Commissioners understand where the Delegation is coming from. Chair Rep. Patten further stated that she hopes that as a county family – the Delegation and Commissioners must keep in mind that the upcoming nursing home expenses – will result in more "giving" than "taking" – so that the nursing home all of us want and the County wants - will not be as huge a "drag" as it would be if our budget goes up 15%, 20% or 25%. Rep. Bridgham was concerned about the health insurance cost increase. Rep. Bridgham further stated he would like to see a "goal" for a 1% inflation increase (plus cost of living) to the budget based on the population increase in Carroll County of 1% for 2007-2008. Rep. Fleck would like to strive for 0% growth. Rep. Ahlgren stated that if we start out with a budget at a 0% - 1% increase – time will not be wasted looking for extensive budget cuts. Rep. Wiley felt that it is not "inconceivable" that the budget could be cut to 3%. Rep. Stevens asked

the Delegation if they would be willing to “accept” the reduction in service provided by each of the County Departments as budget cuts are made – but he firmly believed that cuts can be made. Commissioner Albee advised that the Delegation is never “fore-warned” of what is coming up relating to Departments’ needs to replace equipment; staffing shortage issues, etc. Rep. Bucu stated that he felt it would be helpful if the Sub-Committees could review the various proposed Department budgets. Commissioner Sorensen felt that consideration should be given to finding \$300,000 out of the present budget for the nursing home. Commissioner Sorensen also asked the Delegation what their thoughts were on the Sheriff’s union that has already been passed for this year. He also asked the Delegation about putting in approximately \$300,000 to “offset” the budget – and where that will come out of? Commissioner Sorensen also stated that the Chairmen of the Subcommittees come in with “strong” recommendations to the Delegation regarding the budget. Chair Rep. Patten advised that the nursing home proposed budget was at \$23,800,000 minus \$300,000 for a start of \$23,500,000.

Chair Rep. Patten asked the Delegation and Commissioners if the DEAS Retirement debt and the Sheriff’s contract could be taken off the table and to provide the amount that will be taken to the Sub-committee Members. Rep. Fleck agreed that “some” things should be taken off the table – but strive throughout the budgeting process to find “off setting” savings.

Chair Rep. Patten moved the discussion to the Subcommittees and the “timing” of what is currently happening. The Commissioners will have a schedule of when the various subcommittees propose to meet with the Commission for discussions. Chair Rep. Patten would like to devote the first two (2) weeks of November to meet with the Sub-committee chairs to discuss the proposed budget. The CON Board is going to be looking at the application and perhaps voting on whether the application will be approved or not on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October. If the application is approved, by meeting on November 9<sup>th</sup>, there is adequate time to put the wheels in place to have a public meeting for the Commissioners going out to bond. Chair Rep. Patten asked the Commission to let the Delegation know “ahead of time” when the Subcommittees will be meeting with the Commissioners. Rep. Stevens suggested that the Chairs of the Subcommittees meet with County Department heads after the Commissioners have met with them.

Chair Rep. Patten moved the discussion to the Incentive Funds Program and if any of the Delegation members would be interested. Rep. Patten further stated that she would like to find out what the Delegation members’ role is before asking anyone to participate. She explained that the Incentive Funds is the amount of monies the Delegation gets to put out to local providers for alternative juvenile programs (Diversion Funds). Rep. Knox and Wiley were interested.

**MOTION:** Rep. Stevens made a Motion to go into Convention,

seconded by Rep. Knox. ***A vote was taken. All in favor. Motion Carries.***

## **IN CONVENTION**

**MOTION:** Rep. Stevens moved to ratify the minutes for the Delegation Meetings on May 18<sup>th</sup> and July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009, as approved in Executive Session, seconded by Rep. Stevens. ***All in favor. Motion Carries.***

**MOTION:** Rep. Stevens made a Motion to come out of Convention; seconded by Rep. Knox. A vote was taken. ***All in favor. Motion Carries.***

## **OUT OF CONVENTION**

Commissioner Sorensen advised the Delegation that he went before the CON Board on Thursday morning to try and get the hearing in Carroll County. He was not successful. The CON Board felt that if everyone comes in for a request for their approval – they would have to go to their county, or some other building. The CON voted unanimously. The hearing is scheduled at the Merrimack Nursing Home on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. Commissioner Sorensen further stated that he asked the Chairman whether the decision will be made on the 15<sup>th</sup> or not. The Chairman stated that “sometimes they make it on that day – other times they will hold it over.” Commissioner Sorensen hopes that the decision will be made on October 15<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Albee advised the Delegation that an application in the amount of \$200,100 for a Federal Energy Grant will be completed by the end of this week .

Commissioner Sorensen further advised that the Commissioners have made an effort to attend various town meetings to explain the proposed nursing home project. To date, Commissioner Sorensen advised that 14 out of the 18 towns had been visited. Some of the meetings were with Selectmen, other times with various groups.

### ***Chair Rep. Patten asked if there was any public input?***

There was a brief discussion by the Delegation members regarding allowing press members to speak during public input. It was advised that press members may present questions to the Delegation after the meeting(s) are adjourned.

### ***There was no request for public input.***

**MOTION:** Rep. Umberger moves to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Rep. Knox. A vote was taken. ***All in favor. Motion Carries.***

*A.M.*

*Meeting adjourned at 10:55*