

County of Carroll
Delegation Executive Committee
Carroll County Annex
February 3, 2024

Meeting convened: 10:00 a.m.
Members Present: Chmn. Lino Avellani, Vice-Chmn. Glenn Cordelli, Clerk Mark McConkey, Tom Buco
Others Present: Executive Coordinator Mellisa Seamans, County Attorney Keith Blair, CCHOC Superintendent Sean Eldridge, Facilities Director Bob Murray, MVC Administrator Rich Leboeuf, CFO Bonnie Batchelder-Edson, IT Director Bobbi O'Rourke (remote), Commissioner Chuck McGee, Commissioner Bill Nelson, DPW Director Will DeWitte
Public Present: Ed Comeau (GovernmentOversite.com), Fred Cain, Dallas Emery Jr.
Roll Call
Pledge of Allegiance
All votes taken during this meeting were done by roll call.

2024 Budget Review and Approval

County Attorney

Chmn. Avellani: We were asked to fund a position previously for Felonies First. Where does that program stand?

Atty. Blair: Felonies First was repealed January 1, 2024. We intend to keep that position. There have been issues stemming from the pandemic with court backlog. We filed 348 cases in 2023 in superior court and do not have the ability to get through those in one year. There was no court plan in place when courts reopened on how to deal with the backlog. This position is critical to clear the backlog of cases and deal with new cases coming in. The repeal of Felonies First is not a straight repeal. It takes us back to the system that existed previously and keeps parts of Felonies First that the legislature liked. There will not be a reduction in work for the attorneys in the office.

I was hired as the Felonies First position to deal with the influx of new cases. Since 2017 it has been absorbed as part of the staff in the office. Felony cases will no longer initiate in the Superior Court, going back to first going to district court.

Chmn. Avellani: Do you see there will be a need to change staffing a year from now?

Atty. Blair: I am trying to get to a place where caseloads are more manageable for the attorneys in the office.

Rep. McConkey: How is our old Delegation room at Administration Building being used?

Atty. Blair: it has been converted to a meeting room and offices for victim services staff.

MOTION: **Approve the County Attorney budget at \$1,391,342.39** by Rep. Buco, 2nd Rep Cordelli.
Passed 4-0

Victim Services

Atty. Blair: Anticipate grant funding that offsets cost of staff will decrease slightly this year. Caseloads are split between felony-level superior court cases and district court domestic violence

cases. All have to do with victim contact. Trying to find other grants to help offset this budget.

MOTION: **To approve the Victim Services budget at \$166,995.80** by Rep. Cordelli, 2nd Rep. Buco. Passed 4-0

Corrections

Supt. Eldridge: Two main increases in the budget are full cost of case management now that grant funds have run out and increase in the cost of the PrimeCare medical services contract. Tried to cut other lines to make up for these increases while still maintain safe environment. Total overall increase is 5.4%

Administrative salaries line covers eight non-union positions. The salary line includes 30 full-time union positions.

Today's census is 47 inmates. Maximum is 127. Thirty-six are from Carroll County and 11 are holds from other counties/State of NH prison. Rockingham County pays \$55.50 per day; State of NH \$58; and Strafford County \$30. With Felonies First ending we expect a slight increase in number of inmates.

Jail roof has been leaking for better than 10 years. Roof patching was done three times in 2023. Building was built in 2004. A consultant will be preparing a report and cost estimate to repair the roof. The \$1.2 million is a ballpark quote given by a company that did some roof work at the jail previously. We won't know what interior damage the leaking has caused until the roof work is being done.

Rep. McConkey: Is regular and routine exterior maintenance being done? Looks like the building exterior is in pretty rough shape. Can I feel assured that there is a regular scheduled maintenance on, for example, the new sally port doors?

CFO: Commissioners agreed to pay a consultant to give a firm price and then will pursue bonding versus lease. First year payment is included in this years' budget (\$149,684) as a placeholder.

MOTION: **Approve the Corrections budget at \$5,555,907.68 to include moving \$18,200 from Jail Capital (4901.097) to Jail Maintenance (4230.081)** by Rep McConkey, 2nd Rep. Cordelli. Passed 4-0.

MOTION: **Approve the Corrections revenue budget at \$216,000** by Rep. Cordelli, 2nd Rep. Buco. Passed 4-0

Mountain View Community

Admn. Leboeuf: Overall budget is up 5.25% with 14.8% attributable to salaries. Average census in 2023 is 100.87 (97% occupancy). Some counties not accepting new residents due to staffing issues. Current daily rates are \$216 Medicaid, \$410 Private Pay, and \$610 Medicare. Current census is 47 Medicaid, 47 private pay and eight Medicare. Vacant positions include 17 LNA and four nursing positions. Will begin direct marketing to licensed providers in the area. Salaries

are improved with the new contract so more competitive. The new nursing home was built right with all private rooms. Waiting list is being updated by social services department. Carroll County residents get right of first refusal. Director of Quality has been hired and will make sure staff has skills to care for the mix of residents. Suggest moving some funds from staffing budget into the agency staffing line. Chmn. Avellani prefers line transfers so the executive committee has the ability to ask questions through the year. If we take care of our employees, they take care of our residents. We are putting three people into the MNA program

Rep. Cordelli: Asked for one-page write up about vacancies, occupancy and comparison to other counties.

Comm'r McGee: Satisfied with the MVC contract negotiations. Should help us with retention.

MOTION: Approve Mountain View Community expense budget at \$18,025,260.88 by Rep. Cordelli, 2nd Rep. Buco. Passed 4-0.

MVC Revenue

Revenue collected through year-end is \$15,491,126.

MOTION: Approve Mountain View Community revenue budget at \$12,708,548.29 by Rep. Cordelli, 2nd Rep. Buco. Passed 4-0

MVC Capital

MOTION: Approve MVC Capital at \$139,200 by Rep. McConkey, 2nd Rep. Cordelli. Passed 4-0. This was reduced from the commissioner' proposed budget because the dietary equipment was purchased and the door project completed using 2023 funds.

Capital Expenditures

Jail Roof

\$70,000 proposed with \$20,000 for a consultant to move forward with getting a complete evaluation of the jail roof. Dir. Murray does not expect the roof will be completed this year. Rep. Brown has reached out to a consultant he has worked with in the past and offered to connect with Dir. Murray to share information.

Dir. Murray said it is a metal roof on top of a superstructure with no underlayment. The problem is where the roof meets the walls and valleys. Photographic evidence of gaps. A lot of penetrations on the roof. Roofers have not been able to zero in on the leaks. Shortcomings in the jail construction.

\$50,000 in the capital is for potential roof repairs. Rep. Brown noted he has extensive experience with these types of projects and will arrange to meet with Dir. Murray and the consultant. Comm'r McGee asked that the commissioners be kept in the loop and he would like to attend the meeting.

MOTION: Approve Jail Capital Expenditures budget at \$70,000 by Rep. Cordelli, 2nd Rep. McConkey. Passed 4-0

Rep. McConkey: Do you (Dir. Murray) feel you have enough staffing or is there a need of more consulting so you have someone to help you with oversight of long range planning. Asked that pictures of the water issues at the jail be provided to the Delegation.

Dir. Murray: That should have been a 50-year roof. Have enough time to oversee projects. The Siemens project made a huge difference by being able to replace major pieces of equipment.

Sewer System/Water System

Rep. McConkey: Trying to narrow down capacity concerns related to the Annex.

Dir. Murray: Potential for additional usage if minimal. With offices moving to the Annex it will lighten the load at the administration building. The only additional impact will be other users of the Annex outside of County staff.

Rep. McConkey: I am specifically thinking about the impact the commercial kitchen being operational will have on the system

Dir. DeWitte: Wastewater permit was up for renewal this year. NH DES toured our system, asked many questions, noted water and sewer systems throughout the state are not being staffed sufficiently. Found that at County, with DPW staff varied responsibilities, i.e., haying, water, grounds keeping, etc. that Carroll County should have three-full time DPW employees. Was able to fill in with per diems and part-time staff in the past but that is no longer working. Request \$2,600 additional (coupled with per diem and part-time salary amounts) in the 2024 budget to fund a full-time employee for six months.

In conversation with engineer believe there is enough water system capacity for the Annex. Wastewater license is 28,000 gallons per day, averaging 16,000 +/- . Majority of system was rebuilt in 2003.

Rep. McConkey: What activity takes up most of your time?

Dir. DeWitte: Plowing in the winter, takes 2.5 days to do all lawn mowing and trimming on the Complex, 160 hours on the tractor average per hay season plus delivery time, marketing, customer service. Water and sewer can get away with two staff. It is the snowplowing and lawn care that we need a third person for. No longer able to make hay deliveries as have done in the in the past

Chmn. Avellani: Instead of hiring another employee perhaps look at contracting some of the operations out.

Comm'r McGee: There is a meeting Monday with Siemens regarding the Annex project.

Rep. Buco: Urged the Commissioners to take the NH DES letter regarding additional staffing need seriously or, as pointed out in the letter, problems can develop.

Dir. DeWitte: Agreed he could forego hiring a third full-time staff member for a year

DPW Capital

Rep. McConkey: Sufficient equipment to conduct operations. The Delegation did not approve the last truck purchase but the Commissioners found the money to buy it. Time to start looking at contracting out services instead of adding more equipment

Chmn. Avellani: Have two new trucks, plenty of equipment to do the work here

Dir. DeWitte: Agreed to revisit requested \$30,000 used truck purchase next year

MOTION: **Reduce DPW capital expense budget to \$2,500** by Rep. McConkey, 2nd Rep. Cordelli. Passed 3-1 with Rep. Buco opposed.

Tower Road Repair

Work in progress to secure FEMA funding for repairs to the tower road damaged in July 2023 storm. Project estimate is \$32,000 with 75% anticipated funding from FEMA. Final application documents completed. Commissioners will review and approve moving forward with this project prior to the next Delegation meeting so any necessary funding can be added to the budget.

Commissioners

MOTION: **Approve the Commissioners budget at \$243,071.41** by Rep. McConkey, 2nd Rep. Cordelli. Passed 4-0

Treasurer

MOTION: **Approve Treasurer budget at \$11,291.16** by Rep. Cordelli, 2nd Rep. Bucu. Passed 4-0

Long Term Debt

MOTION: **Approve Long Term Debt budget at \$551,655** by Rep. Cordelli, 2nd Rep. McConkey. Passed 4-0

Interest Expense

MOTION: **Approve Interest Expense budget at \$489,721** by Rep. McConkey, 2nd Rep. Cordelli. Passed 4-0

Information Technology

MOTION: **Approve IT budget at 461,084.93** by Rep. Cordelli, 2nd Rep. McConkey. Passed 4-0

Rep. Cordelli: Request copy of county wide contracts and computer expense contracts lists

MOTION: **Approve IT Capital Expenditure budget at \$70,000** by Rep. Cordelli, 2nd Rep. McConkey. Passed 4-0

Capital Expenditures

MOTION: **Approve 4901 Capital Expenditures total at \$354,114** by Rep. McConkey, 2nd Rep. Cordelli. Passed 4-0

As previously voted:

- DPW \$2,500
- Sheriff/Dispatch \$72,414
- Jail \$70,000
- IT \$70,000
- MVC \$139,200

Non-Capital Reserve

MOTION: **Approve \$190,000 to be added to the non-capital reserve fund** by Rep. McConkey, 2nd Rep. Cordelli. Passed 4-0

This fund is used to cover the cost of accrued payouts to employees on termination and the cost of the sick leave bank.

Capital Reserve Fund

MOTION: **Approve \$150,000 to be added to the capital reserve fund** by Rep. McConkey, 2nd Rep. Bucu. Assed 4-0

Intent is to start adding up on annual basis to cover emergencies such as lightning strike and cover capital improvements such as roof replacement. Any expenditures from the reserve must be approved by the Delegation. Request to send capital improvement plan policy and parameters of this fund to the Delegation.

Comm'r McGee: We really don't have an independent professional evaluation of the County facilities. Things time out. Capital reserve is important.

Fund Balance

CFO: Due to additional ProShare revenue (\$1.9 million more than anticipated) and receipt of a significant amount of abandoned property (\$800,000) ... in dealing with abandoned property not straight forward. Apparently, the County had about 10 different addresses. Checks were sent to the County then undeliverable so held by State of NH abandoned property division. These were funds we would not have known about 2018-2022. All of the State agencies have been notified of the correct County mailing address going forward.

[For reference: New Hampshire State Treasury's Abandoned Property Division at www.findnhmoney.gov]

In calculating fund balance, I feel we are safe in using \$3.7 million of fund balance to offset expenses, leaving an undesignated fund balance of about 18% (\$7,213,000). The State of NH recommends holding 5-17% in fund balance.

Rep. McConkey: I understand there is a recommendation of how much fund balance we should retain. Are there uses that could be used for that money other than holding it? For example, needing matching funds for a grant?

Rep. Cordelli: Years ago I surveyed other communities about their fund balance. Prior auditor recommended two to three months on hand. If the undesignated fund balance is that high, I would look at using it for capital projects.

Rep. Bucu: Undesignated fund balance is not cash. It is an indication of economic standing – assets minus liabilities.

CFO: (In response to Rep. McConkey's question) about 50% is available cash.

Chmn. Avellani: Request balance of Siemens Energy Project bond. Would the Commissioners be interested in paying something off with some fund balance?

CFO: The tax-anticipation note for 2024 has not been finalized yet. The bond attorney is considering reducing the amount we can borrow.

Revenue

Rep. McConkey: Asked for update on Registry revenue trend at this point in 2024

MOTION: Approve \$25,500 Water Department anticipated revenue by Rep. Cordelli, 2nd Rep. Bucu. Passed 4-0

Rep. McConkey: How many customers receive free water? What are the delinquency rates? How are the rates calculated? When is the last time the rates were adjusted?

CFO: Meter readings are taken and bills sent by the finance office. Staff is good about tracking delinquencies, setting up payment arrangements. I believe the rates were changed last year.

MOTION: **Approve \$35,000 Opioid Settlement anticipated revenue** by Rep. Cordelli, 2nd Rep. Buco. Passed 4-0

MOTION: **Approve \$10,000 Interest Income anticipated revenue** by Rep. Cordelli, 2nd Rep. Buco. Passed 4-0

CFO: All accounts have been converted to interest bearing sweep accounts at the NH Investment Pool rate. Bank of New Hampshire is matching the Pool rate on a weekly basis. Agreed to bring a modified suggestion on anticipated interest income to the next Delegation meeting

Other

Chmn. Avellani: Thanked the executive committee for their work today

Funding Transfers

MOTION: **Approve funding transfer 2023-032** by Rep. Cordelli, 2nd Rep. Buco. Passed 4-0

MOTION: **Approve funding transfer 2023-033** by Rep. Cordelli, 2nd Rep. Buco. Passed 4-0

MOTION: **Approve funding transfer 2023-034** by Rep. McConkey, 2nd Rep. Cordelli. Passed 4-0

Chmn. Avellani reviewed and signed funding transfer 2023-035. No formal vote taken because the transfer amount is less than \$1,000.

Adjourned 2:16 p.m.

Approval Date: _____

Rep. Mark McConkey, Clerk