

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, August 04, 2021
County Hall
12 Court Street, Keene, NH 03431

Conference Call Information
Phone Call-in Number: +1 646 558 8656
Meeting ID: 409 748 8803
Pin #: 6031233

Present: Commissioners Jack Wozmak, Robert Englund, and Terry Clark
Staff: County Administrator Coates; Finance Director Trombly; and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard.
Guest(s): Attorney Adam Kossayda

At 8:35 AM, Commissioner Wozmak opened the meeting and conducted a roll-call with the Commissioners, and Wozmak, Englund, and Clark responding as "present."

At 8:35 AM, the Commissioners opened the floor for public comment and Department Head updates.

Master Agenda Item #902: Discuss and authorize the County Administrator to sign the DHHS Intergovernmental Transfer Agreement. S. Trombly

Trombly spoke to the IGA that shows the County match for Nursing Homes required for the new CMS rules. The monies going to the state are not from another federal source and are not from a grant or other unauthorized source as defined by CMS. The County portion is 1/12 and is about 7-8M

Commissioner Englund moved to approve and authorize the County Administrator to sign the Department of Health and Human Services Intergovernmental Transfer Agreement. Commissioners Clark seconded the motion, and upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Master Agenda Item #903: Review of 2nd Quarter Budget - S. Trombly discussed the budget status and spoke to the following document.

To: Cheshire County Executive Committee
From: Sheryl Trombly, Finance Director
Date: August 9, 2021
RE: 2nd quarter 2021 Budget Review

At the end of the 2nd quarter, revenues adjusted for the collection of taxes and timing for the receipt of other revenues have reached 50.27% of the General County budgeted revenues with the Nursing Home having achieved 47.03%. As revenues should be at 50%, this indicates that revenues are meeting expectations for the General County and running short for the Nursing Home. The totals combined are under by approximately \$217,000.

At the end of the 2nd quarter, expenses are under budget by approximately \$1,206,000 after adjusting for major items that have not been expended due to timing. Overall county expenses are at 47.596% spent and Maplewood having expended 48.32% of their appropriated budget. As you review the reports, the following areas may be of interest:

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Page 1 – Municipal Assessment is a 0.00% of the projected budget. This budget remains at zero until the Department of Revenue Administration provides the appropriation listing and the bills have been mailed. Taxes are due by December 17 for 2021.

Page 1 – Grant Reimbursement – Federal Grant Reimbursements as well as Non Federal Grant Reimbursements combined have achieved approximately 33% of budgeted revenues. These revenues are offset by expenses so any shortfall would have a direct impact on expenses coming under as well.

Page 2 – Sheriff Fees overall are at 48% realized as of the second quarter. Funds were allocated for the hiring of a deputy as long as funding became available to support the position. As there has not been any special funding to support a position this has not been filled, much of this shortfall will be covered by payroll expenses coming under as a result of the vacancy for this position.

Page 2 – Registry of Deeds Fees – This revenue line is already at 71.04% received as of June 30. Although there is a shortage of housing inventory there is a much higher volume and value of sales occurring. This revenue is projected to go over by nearly \$240,000 by years end.

Page 2 – Overall DOC revenues are running over having achieved 69.40% received. 2021 has been a good year with Federal Inmates revenues running over budget projections. The 2021 census is budgeted for 37 Federal Inmates. As of today the current census is at 56 with a YTD average of 49. This revenue could reach nearly \$500,000 over original budget projections.

Page 3 – Transportation and Assisted Living Revenue – As with Nursing Home Revenues, COVID continues to impact both of these revenue centers. With more and more physician appointments being done by telemedicine there has been a significant decrease in the need to transport residents to Dr.'s appointments. As for the Assisted Living Apartments, COVID has impacted their ability to keep the apartments full. The census is getting closer to full occupancy however the inability to have visitors or tours for most of 2021 caused for low admissions. The combined potential shortfall for these two programs is approximately \$100,000.

Page 3 – System of Care (Connected Families)– is at 44.62% received. This is the first full year for this program where the services are billable through Medicaid. Although the revenue is expected to fall somewhat short for 2021 the expenses associated with program are coming in much less than expected in comparison to the levels of revenue that is being generated.

Page 4 – Jaffrey District Court Lease – This budget line is at 4.40% of its projected revenues at the end of the second quarter but will attain 100% of its budgeted revenue. This revenue is the lease payment received by the State of NH that is directly tied to the annual bond payment for the Jaffrey District Court House. This is the final year of the bond for the Jaffrey Courthouse at which time the County will turn full ownership over to the State of NH as outlined in the 1998 Lease.

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Page 5- Transfer from Fund Balance is at 0.00%. This line item will remain at 0.00% throughout the year. No entry is made as the offset is an accounting function of an automated decline in fund balance based on actuals and the final amount needed from fund balance at year-end.

Page 5- Transfer from Special Revenue Fund is at 0.00%. This line item is for funds that associated with approved expenses. When expended, a transfer will be made to offset the applicable expense.

Page 5 – Transfer from Capital Reserve – This item is at 0.00%. This budget item specifically offsets certain capital reserve projects and as the projects are expended transfers will be made to offset the applicable expenses.

Expenses General County

Page 23 – Sheriff Dispatch – This department is at 47.76% remaining. The major impact is due to excess overtime being paid for additional work that has been necessary throughout COVID. This excess overtime is being reimbursed by FEMA and can be seen as an offset in the Sheriff's Miscellaneous Revenue line.

Page 28 – Human Services (Medicaid Expense) – This budget covers the County contribution towards the cost of County Residents living in Nursing Homes and Home and Community based Care and supported by Medicaid. The County is responsible for 100% of the nonfederal share. Although the % as of June 30 suggests that it is running slightly over budget, the County receives a one-time credit each July that will bring this within budget for the year.

Page 35 – System of Care Sustainability Budget – This budget is at 72.27% remaining. As mentioned in the revenue analysis this is the first full year for this program where a non- grant funding source became billable. As revenue projections are turning out to be much greater than expected combined with the lower expense levels, there will be a greater surplus for this program than expected.

Revenues – Maplewood Nursing Home

Page 39- Overall adjusted for timing as well as for budget amendments that will be presented, Maplewood Nursing Home has achieved 47.03% of the 2021 revenue projections. An original census of 125 was budgeted for 2021; however, the current census is at 103 with an average to date of 106. Although the lower census is tied to COVID -19 with admissions being very low, even as restrictions start to lift somewhat, the staffing levels are of great concern when considering higher census levels. Revenues will fall short for 2021 is expected to be covered by expenses coming under as well.

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Expenses – Maplewood Nursing Home

Page 41-57 – Maplewood Departments – Overall expenses for Maplewood are at 48.32% expended (adjusted for timing). This equates to expenses being under budget by approximately \$300,000.

As you review the nursing home departments, you will find that nearly all are well within or well under budgeted expenses.

On page 42 – Contingency – These expenses are tracking COVID expenses. A budget amendment will be requested that will offset these expenses. The source comes from funding that was received from the Cares Act funds in 2020, as well as reimbursement from the State of NH for ongoing COVID testing that has occurred.

The Administration budget on page 43 includes funding for the 5.5% Bed Tax paid on all Nursing Home revenues. This budget is currently 62.48% expended. This current overage is the excess bed tax paid on the higher Pro Share and COVID funding that has been received. This department will likely go slightly over budget but will be covered by other areas of the overall nursing home budget.

A review of the Registry of Deeds income lines that are expected to exceed the budgeted amount due to the very large upswing in real estate transactions this year was discussed. Also reviewed was the impact that COVID-19 has had on the nursing home transportation income, and the use of telemedicine and its impact on billing and expenses at the nursing home was covered.

An extended discussion of the ongoing shortage of medical personnel, including nursing staff at the Department of Corrections and the nursing home, began.

The expected revenue from the Connected Families of NH program was discussed, and it was learned that the program is running well and is generating a positive cash flow. An extended discussion of ARPA funding allocations started. The way the monies will be utilized by the County and the presentation next week to the Delegation was covered.

Coates then said that he had received an email from a person interested in buying a building lot from County property to build a house in Westmoreland. The Commissioners decided not to pursue the conversation as there are no plans for further subdivision.

Coates then related that a few delegation members contacted him to inquire about flood relief monies and other funding for municipalities' needs. He said that the funding issues for this type of relief are outside of the County's responsibilities and fall under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) who has been on-site in the County in the last week examining the damage throughout the area.

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Coates then reviewed a draft of the 2022 budget letter from the Commissioners to the senior staff in preparation for the completion of the 2022 budget was reviewed.

Coates was then recognized for the Weekly Operations Report.

Coates reminded the Commissioners that the Governor and the Executive Council were at Keene library for breakfast and at the Colonial Theater annex for a 10:00 AM meeting with Governor's Executive Council.

He then said that the Commissioners Cookout is planned for 11:30 AM next week, and it will be held in the National Grange Mutual (NGM) park adjunct to the 33 West Street building parking lot.

He also reminded everyone that the 2021 Delegation meeting to amend the 2021 budget would be next Monday, with photos starting at 5:00 and running until 7:00. The Executive Committee will meet at 6:00 PM and then the full Delegation meeting to begin at 7:00 PM.

Coates then distributed a draft of the American Recovery Planning Act (ARPA) funding requests document that has been prepared by staff. The Commissioners will review and provide feedback on the document.

Coates then said that the hospital has asked if the County is interested in working with them to help support community services programs that the hospital now supports exclusively. He outlined the possible use of some of the Integrated Delivery Network funds that could be used.

New Business: None

Old Business: None

Consent Agenda: Minutes of 07/28/2021 and Manifests for the week. Commissioner Englund moved the consent agenda and was seconded by Commissioner Clark. The motion passed with unanimous consent upon roll call vote.

General Discussion:

At 10:00 AM, Commissioner Clark moved to enter a non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted.

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Commissioner Englund seconded the motion, and upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

As a result of deliberations in a non-public session, no decision was made and no vote was taken.

At 10:14AM, the Commissioners voted unanimously to return to the public session.

At 12:10 PM, Commissioner Englund moved to enter a non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(d) Consideration of the acquisition, sale, or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community.

Commissioner Clark seconded the motion, and upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

As a result of deliberations in a non-public session, no decisions were made, and no vote was taken.

At 12:11: AM, the Commissioners voted unanimously to return to the public session.

At 12:12 PM, there being no further public business to conduct, Commissioner Clark moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Englund. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Minutes recorded by:
R. Bouchard, Assistant County Administrator

Reviewed and submitted by:
Terry Clark, Clerk