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Hillsborough County Executive Committee Budget Review

Bouchard Building

Goffstown NH

May 24, 2007 10:30 AM

Present: Representatives D. Essex, M. Pilotte, L. Movsesian, P. Cote, M. Farley, P. Hinkle, S. Jasper, P. Manney, C. Rosenwald, R. Rowe, M. Reuschal, G. Shattuck, B. Shaw, A. Simon, S. Stepanek, J. Ulery, S. Vaillancourt. Also present: Rep. M. Mooney, Comm. Holden, Comm. Pappas, Sheriff Hardy, A. Durette, C. Beaulac, J. Dimick, R. Mercer, M. Rusch, G. Wenger.

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Subcommittee C Sheriff Office – Chairman Rep. Maureen Mooney

Chairman Essex stated that there was a glitch in the County's Financial software (Munis) and because of this the books for members of the Executive Committee have not been done, he noted that there are print outs of the budget and the salary sheets for the Sheriff's Office. He stated that the other departments will be forthcoming. Chairman Essex introduced Rep. Maureen Mooney noting that she is not a member of the Executive Committee but accepted the assignment to chair the Sheriff subcommittee as she has done in previous years.

Rep. Mooney proceeded with an overview of the Sheriff's budget noting that the subcommittee met on May 11, 2007, she added that there were 8 members of the subcommittee along with an additional member of the Executive Committee present who was not assigned to the Committee but it was very helpful to receive his input and thanked the members of the subcommittee for their hard work. Rep. Mooney stated that this budget has not increased by much noting that there is a 6 % increase over last years budget.

Chairman Essex intervened and stated that Ms. Rusch had a statement with regards to the Sheriff's budget. Ms. Rusch stated that the numbers that were received today are not the same numbers that were Board approved and budget requested, they are not the numbers that the Subcommittee originally had to work with, she noted there was a major software glitch and they were not able to go back and fix these numbers. She noted that it will have no effect on the column that is being worked on today. Chairman Essex stated that a suggestion was made to start with the total net change to the departmental budgets as we go along and this will make the committee more aware of where things are going.

Chairman Mooney stated that there is a request for three new positions and two of those positions were approved. A 1.4% COLA and a 2.55 % merit increase was approved for non-affiliated employees. Chairman Mooney briefly reviewed some of the changes to the budget. Rep. Vaillancourt stated that during the subcommittee review there was a lengthy discussion regarding how many positions were approved by the Board of Commissioners. Rep. Mooney stated that the Subcommittee approved two new positions. Brief discussion ensued regarding the accuracy of the budget and the salary and benefits line that was received today. Mr. Wenger assured members that the numbers are correct. Rep. Jasper had questions regarding the Health Insurance lines noting that there is an excess of money left over in these lines and he asked if we have budgeted too much for these lines. Mr. Wenger stated that the health insurance line which includes dental and eye care, is paid for 26 pay periods. In response to a question Ms. Rusch stated that Department Heads were requested to increase budgeted insurance numbers for F/Y 08 by 8% not on actual numbers. Rep. Jasper stated that the actual increase is 3.4%. Discussion ensued regarding Health Insurance. Rep. Jasper stated that it is important that the Health Insurance Lines get in line with the actual expenses. Mr. Wenger stated that the Board of Commissioners cut the original request down to 3.4% from 8%. He noted that it is difficult to estimate insurance because the actual numbers are not out until July 1 and open enrollment has ended. Chairman Essex suggested basing the percentage increase on actual expenditures from the previous year versus budgeted numbers. Mr. Wenger stated that this process would be time

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consuming and it would constantly change depending on the turnover in the Department. He went into detail regarding how the health insurance is figured.

Rep. Mooney stated that during the Subcommittee there was discussions regarding the increase in postage rates and noted that the rates increased after the Subcommittee met. After a brief discussion a motion by Rep. Stepanek, second by Rep. Pilotte to increase Line 7380, Postage to \$14,000. On a voice vote motion adopted.

Rep. Mooney stated that during the subcommittee there was lengthy discussion regarding the Extradition Expense. Chief Deputy Durette stated that this is a revolving account and bills are paid once they are approved by the County Attorney's Office and then submitted to the Board of Commissioners. He explained that this account needs up front money in order to send members of the Sheriff's Office out on extraditions. He also explained how bills take time to be paid because of the approval process. Chief Deputy Durette gave a brief history of the account. Mr. Wenger also agreed that extra money is needed in this account, noting that the three departments involved will be meeting to discuss extraditions. Chairman Essex noted that he understands that the County Attorney Extradition Line has already been reduced by \$10,000, which is the amount of the Extradition Line in the Sheriff's Budget. Chairman Essex stated that in response to this discussion members of the Executive Committee would like to know how this is handled by other Counties and could the County Administrator look into this issue for next years budget cycle.

Rep. Mooney stated that during the subcommittee cell phones that were originally requested were placed back in the budget, noting that pagers could be reduced and the phones would be more efficient. In response to a question Mr. Wenger stated that if the new telephone system is approved then there would be a reduction in Telephone Lines throughout the budget. Rep. Vaillancourt would like the Telephone Lines to be revisited once the New Telephone System is approved. Mr. Wenger stated that Departments have level funded their budgets and along with the \$400,000 that is budgeted, hopefully this would cover the first year of the new system. He also stated that next year at this time he is hoping that the budgets can be decreased in the Telephone Lines but it cannot be done at this time because we do not know what the actual costs are going to be.

Motion by Rep. Stepanek, second by Rep. Shaw to approve the Sheriff's Budget in the amount of \$3,116,000. On a voice vote motion adopted.

Rep. Mooney led a brief discussion and review of the other Sheriff's Office Departments, Superior Court Bailiffs, District Court Bailiffs, Part Time, and Sheriff's Detail. There were no changes made.

Subcommittee F – Board of Commissioners, Business Office, Human Resources, County Debt, Revenue, Computer Information Systems – Rep. Stepanek

Computer Information Systems (CIS) 4151

Chairman Essex stated that Rep. Stepanek is the Subcommittee Chairman of Subcommittee F and he will review the budgets for the various departments. Rep. Stepanek stated there was a request for an additional full time position, the Computer Department currently has two full-time and one part-time. The CIS department would change the part-time to a full-time position. The justification is that as the County grows the department is short handed and it is difficult to keep a part-time position and it is hard to find someone with the necessary skills to work part-time. Discussion ensued regarding the salary.

Rep. Stepanek reviewed the other lines in the budget noting there were minimum increases. He referred to Mr. Wenger to talk about the County wide Telephone System that is proposed in the F/Y 08 budget. Mr. Wenger stated that currently there are 11 different telephone systems with the County. The County is

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coming up on the last year of the lease with Verizon and the Centrix phone system and the County has been searching for a new phone system. There will be one system built around the Complex and the satellite offices. He got into the complex issue of the new telephone system noting that it will be voice over IP and the internet protocol will be used for telephone calls. He went into depth on how this system will work. Mr. Wenger stated that the new system would be more efficient and less costly in the end, the return on investment should be 3-5 years. He also stated that the individual departments telephone lines will go down and there will be an adjustment next year to these lines.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the archiving of files from the various departments.

Rep. Vaillancourt is opposed to this budget.

Board of Commissioners 4130

Rep. Stepanek stated that the Subcommittee reduced the Legal Expenses Line, 7200, noting it was reduced it to \$1.00 from \$5,000, noting the \$1.00 will keep the line open. The Subcommittee felt that there is currently money in the Delegation Budget for Attorney Kirby to use for all Legal Expenses, he noted there was a lengthy discussion regarding this item during the Subcommittee.

Rep. Shaw requested that the Line Item Recruitment and Retention, Line 7175 be explained. Mr. Wenger stated that this line item is used in various facilities for employees recruitment and retention. This is offset by revenue from the various vending machines throughout the County. For instance at the Nursing Home they have a recognition program, etc. The money in this account pays for the items in the various vending machines. This used to be known as Canteen Funds.

Rep. Stepanek stated that the Consulting Line consists of funds to pay for the Chief Negotiator for Hillsborough County. Mr. Wenger stated that this line item could be reduced because the County is one step closer to having one of the contracts settled and there are still ongoing negotiations with two of the large groups within Hillsborough County.

Motion by Rep. Pilotte, second by Rep. Rowe to reduce Line 7230, Consulting Expense by \$7,500, Rep. Stepanek stated that during the Subcommittee this line item was reduced by \$15,000. The end result of the motion today would be \$97,500. On a voice vote motion adopted, Rep. Vaillancourt voted no.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the Master Plan Committee noting that there is \$75,000 in the Consulting line for the hiring of consultants to do work with respect to the Master Plan. Mr. Wenger stated that the Board of Commissioners have come to a point where in order to go forward they need to hire consultants to help them get studies for things such as elevation, wetlands, survey and boundaries of the County Land. Rep. Jasper asked if there was a Representative from the Delegation on the Master Plan Committee. Chairman Essex stated that there is no one representing the Delegation on the Committee, noting that he attended the first meeting. Rep. Jasper stated that the Board of Commissioners are requesting a lot of money for this project and he thought there should be someone from the Executive Committee representing the members of the Delegation sitting on the Committee because the Delegation would have a role in this project according to the Statutes. Chairman Essex stated that the authority to put someone on the Master Plan Committee would be up to the Board of Commissioners. Rep. Jasper stated that it would be short sided if the Board of Commissioners did not have a representative on the Committee. He is suggesting that the money be put in Contingency because as members of the Executive Committee we would have no idea how this money is spent. The Executive Committee has a fiduciary responsibility to taxpayers and \$75,000 is a lot of money and a member of the Executive Committee should have a seat at the table. Rep. Manney agreed with Rep. Jasper and also added that the Town of Goffstown has done a lot of this work already. This could save the County time and money. Commissioner Holden stated that someone from the

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town of Goffstown does come to the meetings noting that the town has mapped the prime wetlands and the County does not have any prime wetlands and we are required as a first step to map every wetlands and then to identify where it is, etc. She also noted that there is a State Representative on the Committee, Rep. Peterson, from Peterborough. Rep. Stepanek proceeded to read the list of people on the Master Plan Committee:

Comm. Holden, Amherst, Rep. Andrew Peterson, Peterborough, Mike Castagna, Manchester, Paul LaFlamme, Nashua, Leon Calawa, Litchfield, Linda Kaiser, Amherst, F. Platt, Goffstown, Richard Sawyer, Bedford, Rep. Andy Renzullo, Hudson, Greg Wenger, County Administrator.

Rep. Manney requested copies of the minutes from the Master Plan Committee Meetings.

Motion by Rep. Pilotte, second by Rep. Jasper to request that the Board of Commissioners consider adding the Chairman of the Executive Committee or his designee to sit on the Master Plan Committee. On a voice vote motion adopted unanimously.

Motion by Rep. Simon, second by Rep. Jasper put the \$75,000 for the Master Plan Committee in Contingency 7199. On a voice vote motion adopted. Rowe, Pilotte, and Stepanek opposed to the motion.

Motion by Rep. Stepanek, second by Rep. Jasper to approve the new bottom line for the Board of Commissioners budget in the amount of \$14,2559. On a voice vote motion adopted.

Business Office 4150

Rep. Stepanek reviewed the budget and noted there were no major changes to this budget.

Manchester Courthouse 4196

Rep. Stepanek stated that this budget mainly remained the same except for Buildings, this money is requested to redo the space in the Superior Courthouse North for the County Attorney area. He stated that they are currently working in deplorable conditions and something needs to be done. Rep. Stepanek stated that the State has money in their budget to remove the asbestos in the building and when this is done the County will reconfigure and renovate office space for the County Attorney to move into. He noted there was a lengthy discussion regarding this subject at the Subcommittee level. Discussion ensued.

Motion by Rep. Simon, second by Rep. Jasper to move the \$720,000 from the Manchester Courthouse budget (4196) to the Contingency budget (4199), 7960, and to leave a \$1.00 in the Manchester Courthouse budget in order to keep the line item open. The motion is being made due to the uncertainty of the State budget at this time. On a voice vote motion adopted. Rep. Stepanek, Rowe, Shaw, Movsesian, Pilotte voted no.

Motion by Rep. Stepanek, second by Rep. Pilotte to amend the bottom line of Manchester Courthouse to \$56,014. On a voice vote motion adopted.

Contingency 4199

Motion by Rep. Stepanek, second by Rep. Simon to approve \$197,856 and place it in Contingency Line 4199, Salaries and Wages 7010 for the proposed Collective Bargaining Agreements that are being brought forward at the Hillsborough County Delegation Meeting. On a voice vote motion adopted.

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Rep. Stepanek, stated that the Subcommittee approved and placed \$680,000 into the Contingency Budget under Other Fees and Outside Services for the re-entry program that will be handled by the County Attorney On a voice vote motion adopted.

Motion by Rep. Stepanek, second by Rep. Jasper to increase the Contingency budget, Line 7960, Buildings by \$719,999 for the refurbishment of the County Attorney space in the Superior Courthouse North. There is also \$850,000 in this line for the 2nd floor of the Bouchard Building in anticipation of the Goffstown District Court moving in. On a voice vote motion adopted.

Rep. Stepanek stated that the Subcommittee put \$48,695 into Contingency, Line 7970, New Equipment for the new filing system to be installed in Hillsborough County Superior Courthouse North once the renovations are complete.

Motion by Rep. Stepanek, second by Rep. Simon to approve \$75,000 and place into Contingency, Line 7290 for the Master Plan, this money was originally in the Board of Commissioners Budget. On a voice vote motion adopted.

Motion by Rep. Stepanek, second by Rep. Simon to change the of the Contingency budget bottom line to \$2,871,550.

Health Insurance

Brief discussion regarding the Insurance Summary Report, these are the Insurances lines which are broken out throughout the budget. Rep. Jasper stated that the original budget figure was predicated on an increase that did not occur. This figure was decreased by 5.6 % and he noted that the increase number is still in question. He thinks that this could become a slush fund unless the County gets this number under control. He stated that it seems like if you look at the actuals today compared to what is budgeted there is an excess of funds which probably will revert back to surplus. Brief discussion ensued.

Human Resources

Rep. Stepanek stated that the Subcommittee reviewed the salary lines, noting that the Board of Commissioners approved an amount of \$121,858, which is quite a bit higher than what was requested and subsequently approved by the Subcommittee. He explained that the Board of Commissioners adjusted the salary of the two positions in the Human Resources Department based on what they thought was competitive. He stated that during the Subcommittee hearing there was a lengthy discussion regarding this issue and the Subcommittee finally agreed to give each individual in this department the same as other non-affiliated employees of the County which is 1.4% COLA and 2.55% and an additional 2%. He noted that this would give them a small increase put them into the mid-range. Brief discussion.

Chairman Essex stated that this meeting would recess until tomorrow at 9:00 AM.

Date _____

Rep. Lori Movsesian, Clerk
Hillsborough County Executive Committee