Coös County Delegation
Annual Meeting of the 2025 Proposed Budgets
March 24, 2025 @ 10:00 a.m.
Coös County Nursing Home - Berlin, NH

Present: Representatives Arnold Davis, Chair; Mike Ouellet, Vice Chair; Lori Korzen, Clerk; Sean Durkin; Seth King; Peter Morency; and James Tierney. Also, Present: Commissioners Thomas Brady, Raymond Gorman, and Robert Théberge; County Administrator Mark Brady; Director of Finance Carrie Klebe; Superintendent Ben Champagne; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Nursing Home Administrator Louise Belanger; HR Coordinator Morgan DeBlois; Sheriff Keith Roberge; Coös County Attorney John McCormick; County Treasurer Sue Collins; Heidi Barker & Will Hastings, UNH Cooperative Extension; Captain Adrian Reyes; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris; representatives of the various outside agencies.

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. Representative Durkin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The roll was called by the Clerk, Representative Korzen. There were seven members present. Representatives Murphy and Valerino were excused.

Review & Approval of the Minutes of the December 11, 2024, Organizational Meeting and the December 13, 2024, meeting and public hearing: A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Durkin to approve the Minutes of the December 11, 2024, Organizational Meeting and the December 13, 2024, meeting and public hearing. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Other Business:

- Zoning Board of Adjustment Board Member Reappointments/three-year term: Scott DeBlois and Roland Théberge. A motion was made by Representative Morency, seconded by Representative Durkin approve the reappointments Scott DeBlois and Roland Théberge as members to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

- Zoning Board of Adjustment Appointment: Bob Gargano from alternate to member/one year term; and Keith Roberge as an alternate/three-year term. A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Durkin approve the appointments of Bob Gargano as a member, one year term and Keith Roberge as alternate, three-year term to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

- Review & Approval of the Financial Statements of Coös County and of the Unincorporated Places for the period ended December 31, 2024. A motion was made by Representative Durkin, seconded by Representative Tierney to approve Financial Statements of Coös County and of the Unincorporated Places for the period ended December 31, 2024. The motion was approved by roll call 7-0.

Pending Approval

- Approval of the SEA/Coös County Collective Bargaining Agreement: County Administrator Mark Brady reported that this was a three-year agreement. The agreement included cost of living increases of 3% - 2% - 2% over the next three years. A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Morency to approve the 2025-2027 SEA/Coös County Collective Bargaining Agreement. The motion was approved by roll call 7-0.

- Approval to sell county property in Stewartstown: County Administrator Brady showed a copy of the tax map that showed an outline of the land owned by the county around Back Pond Road. Lot 2 has 374 acres, and the request is to sell 10 acres. Representative King inquired if any members of the public had voiced concern. County Administrator Brady replied that the county had not received any. A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Korzen to authorize the sale of 10 acres of county property as presented. The motion was approved by roll call 7-0.

Opening Remarks: County Administrator Mark Brady noted that the most substantive change to the budget from the proposed budget at the December Public Hearing was accounting for a 2.1% cost shifting by the state to the counties for the Home & Community Based Care (HCBC) line item. He said this was the number in Governor Ayotte's budget and was better than the 6%+ that the NH Department of Health and Human Services had proposed in their budget of October 2024. The Administrator mentioned that there was talk in Concord of the State reformulating Rooms and Meals tax revenues to keep more for the state and les for municipalities. He asked the Delegation to be vigilant on this to protect our share.

The Administrator said that adjustments that were made were either (1) funded by other monies and not county tax, or (2) where it was county tax, corresponding offsets (savings) were found to keep the county tax consistent with the December proposal of $17,690,402. He reminded the Delegation that that represents an increase of 2.54% to the county tax year-over-year and is less than the rate of inflation.

There was an increase to the Sheriff's Appropriations and Revenue due to additional grant funding.

Representative Ouellet and Chairman Davis spoke of carbon sequestration and the work that has been accomplished to date. Representative Ouellet said that the county may be forced to pursue more legal services to make sure the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters easement is correctly enforced and the timber tax loophole incentivizing carbon harvesting of forests over traditional cutting is closed as set forth in HB123.

The County Administrator proposed adding $100,000 to legal services; and $100,000 to professional services. Representative Davis agreed and thought it was the prudent course of action. Finance Director Klebe summarized and said that would increase the county tax amount by $200,000 to $17,890,402, which was an additional increase of 1.16%.

2025 Appropriations & Revenue Budget: Finance Director Carrie Klebe reviewed some of the changes previously mentioned to the Delegation:

Pending Approval

- HCBC (a 2.1% increase) of $348,000.
- 53rd payroll costs of $22,143.
- Additional payout to a DOC employee of $77,000.
- Collective Bargaining Agreement/DOC /3% COLA costing $24,843.
- Funding CEDC by an additional $15,000.
- Economic Development position will not be funded as an employee thereby saving $27,000.
- The county will pay the Conservation District $50,000 thereby saving $17,000 savings from December and $37,866 from 2024.
- $223,000 of the surplus was used to offset some of the changes.
- Generated an additional $200,000 in savings in WSNH Wages & Benefits.
- Berlin Nursing Home increased revenues due to rate increase by $159,220.
- Increase interest on TAN $22,500.
- Increased Opioid Reserve Revenue $25,000.

the additional changes:

• Deputy Northern Border Salary	$ 20,000
• Deputy Northern Shield Grant Salary	300,000
• Grant Equipment	28,535
• Professional Services	100,000
• Outside Legal Services	100,000
• Sheriff - Grants Revenue	348,535

2025 Unincorporated Places Budget: Finance Director Carrie Klebe noted that increases were made to the fire services line item in Pinkham's Grant and to the tuition and transportation line items in Millsfield and Wentworth Location.

The Budget Resolutions were read by the Director of Finance:

RESOLUTION #1

Be it resolved by the Coös County Delegation duly convened on this twenty fourth day of March 2025, that the sums hereinafter detailed in this resolution are hereby appropriated and the total amount for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2025, shall be $49,297,879 for the County budget not including the Unincorporated Places. A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Durkin to approve Resolution #1. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

RESOLUTION #2

Be it resolved by the Coös County Delegation that the sum of $26,684,395 is hereby adopted as the estimated income from sources indicated for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2025. A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Durkin to approve Resolution #2. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

RESOLUTION #3

Be it further resolved that the total appropriation being in excess of the total estimated income in the amount of $17,890,402. The Treasurer shall issue her warrant to the Towns

Pending Approval

and City in the County for this amount. A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Morency to approve Resolution #3. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

RESOLUTION #4

Be it resolved that $4,723,082 of the operating surplus for the year 2024 be appropriated in the 2025 Budget for the purpose of reducing taxes for 2025. A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Durkin to approve Resolution #4. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

RESOLUTION #5

Be it resolved by the Coös County Delegation duly convened on this twenty fourth day of March 2025, that to comply with Department of Revenue Administration instruction, the Delegation separately approves total appropriations of $1,232,023 and revenues of $1,232,023 for the Coös County Unincorporated Places for calendar year 2025. The Unincorporated Places Budgets for 2025 are adopted separately from the Coös County Budget.

Atkinson & Gilmanton Academy Grant	$ 28,112
Bean's Grant	2,000
Bean's Purchase	24,308
Cambridge	108,191
Chandler's Purchase	3,391
Crawford's Purchase	7,910
Cutt's Grant	2,000
Dix Grant	25,122
Dixville	133,255
Erving's Grant	1,309
Green's Grant	93,865
Hadley's Purchase	0
Kilkenny	170
Low & Burbank Grant	12,352
Martin's Location	22,966
Millsfield	200,538
Odell	36,442
Pinkham's Grant	96,474
Sargent's Purchase	39,497
Second College Grant	27,807
Success	135,664
Thompson & Meserve's Purchase	70,836
Wentworth Location	159,814
Total	$1,232,023

A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Durkin to approve Resolution #5. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

Pending Approval

RESOLUTION #6

Be it resolved that $41,631.97 of the 2024 Budget Surplus Balance be reserved and added to the following accounts for interest earned in 2024:

Interest on Sick Trust 1 – 2024	$10,366.12	Balance	$204,353.44
Interest on Sick Leave Trust County/Berlin	$6,081.81	Balance	$119,894.58
Interest on Facility Fund 2024	$22,194.06	Balance	$437,525.37
Interest on Vehicle Reserve Fund 2024	$2,989.98	Balance	$58,943.13

A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Morency to approve Resolution #6. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

RESOLUTION #7

Be it resolved that $100,904.00 of the 2024 Budget Surplus Balance be reserved to the Opioid Abatement Fund Reserve and of the Opioid Abatement Fund Reserve, $25,000 be moved to the 2025 Budgeted Revenues. Balance after reserves & transfers will be $76,619.24. A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Morency to approve Resolution #7. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

RESOLUTION #8

Be it resolved that $50,000 of the 2024 Budget Surplus Balance be reserved to the account for the 2025 53rd Payroll Fund and the total balance of $250,000 will be moved to the 2025 Budgeted Revenues. Balance after transfers will be $0. A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Morency to approve Resolution #8. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

RESOLUTION #9

Be it resolved that $106,760 of the Reserve for Software be moved to the 2025 Budgeted Revenues. Balance for Reserve for Software after transfer will be $0. A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Morency to approve Resolution #9. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

RESOLUTION #10

Be it resolved that $200,000 of the 2024 Surplus Balance be moved to the Reserves for Bad Debt for the Berlin Nursing Home. Balance of the Reserve for Bad Debt-CCNH will be $200,000 after transfer. A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Morency to approve Resolution #10. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

RESOLUTION #11

Be it resolved that $15,056.76 of the 2024 Budget Surplus Balance be encumbered to the accounts: WSNH: Renovation & Equipment for the Dryer. Balance after transfer will be $15,056.76. A motion was made by Representative Tierney, seconded by Representative Morency to approve Resolution #11. The motion passed by roll call vote 7-0.

Commissioner Brady asked for a point of order. He questioned on whether the increases to the Sheriff's Budget, Professional and Legal Services line items required a motion from the

Pending Approval

Delegation to approve the increases to the proposed budget. County Treasurer agreed with Commissioner Brady. However, members of the Delegation agreed with the Director of Finance and County Administrator that the changes were included in Resolution #1.

Any Other Business: Representative Morency provided an update on the status of the NH Task Force. Representative Korzen also provided an update her committee.

The next Quarterly Delegation meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 21, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. at the North Country Resource Center.

A motion was made by Representative Korzen, seconded by Representative King to adjourn the meeting at 11:24 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Lori Korzen, Clerk

Pending Approval