

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE  
February 4, 2012**

A meeting of the Municipal Budget Committee was called to order at 9:00 AM in the Meeting Room at the Town Hall with the following members present: Chairman David Sordi, Doug Swett, Dick Klement, Betty Loynd, Bill Marvel, Ted Sares, Maureen Seavey, Ray Shakir, Greydon Turner, Mike DiGregorio, Brian Charles, Karen Umberger and Maury McKinney. Excused: Joe Mosca, John Edgerton, Kelly DeFeo and Danielle Santuccio. Also present: Crow Dickinson, Selectman.

Karen Umberger led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Sordi stated today we are having the Budget Committee hearings for the non-profit organizations that have submitted requests to the Committee. Chairman reminded members that the next Budget Committee Meeting was on Monday night at 6:30 PM. It will be the final hearing for the School. If anyone doesn't have the submittals from the non-profits, there were a couple of extra packets on the table. Chairman reminded members to try to minimize side conversations so that it is easier when trying to do the Minutes; if you do have a side conversation, turn the microphone away from you so that we don't pick it up or at least minimize the background noise. Chairman further stated to the presenters a request that they make sure that they introduce themselves so that we have it for the record.

Ted Sares asked for the week of the 13<sup>th</sup>, what's the schedule. Chairman Sordi stated the 15<sup>th</sup> is the Public Hearings and the 16<sup>th</sup> is the vote.

Doug Swett asked if the meeting on Monday night was at the Middle School and Chairman Sordi stated it was.

NORTH CONWAY COMMUNITY CENTER

Ryan Sommer, Executive Director, made the presentation to the Committee. Mr. Sommer stated he had been the Director for 7 years now and this was actually his seventh time presenting the Budget to the Committee. The North Conway Community Center every year strives to keep their request to the Town of Conway at the same amount and for the last 6 years they have at the \$75,000.00 amount request. North Conway Community Center provides recreational services to the citizens of Conway and are located up by Schouler Park, in front of the train station and the golf course. They have been operating since 1948 and have been at their current location since 1950.

Mr. Sommer further stated that when looking at their budget, it's a true bare bone budget. They don't spend more than they get by any means. If they do have an extra couple hundred dollars, it usually goes into next year's coffers; it helps provide scholarships for kids for programs and for things of that nature. They have actually fought very hard the last 3 years to keep their budget roughly with a zero percent increase and he thought they had done a very nice job. This year they are only at .88% and a lot of it is due to the increase of oil and that's really beginning

to affect their budget a little bit. The Community Center itself does a very nice job recreating kids. Every year their numbers have increased. His summer camp numbers have increased, his football numbers, all of their program participants have increased since he's been here. When he was first here, they had about 12,000 that walked through the North Conway Community Center for programs and this year they have about 16,500 so he thought they had done an excellent job to where they are and keeping their finances stable and where they should be.

Chairman Sordi stated the budget for 2011 was for \$185,845.00; did they have their actual spent for 2011 yet. Mr. Sommer stated he did not; he was waiting for that to come back.

Dick Klement stated you mention buses for your field trips; where do you get your buses from. Mr. Sommer stated they are School buses. Dick stated you're not a Town agency, when you look at the Rec Center in Center Conway for example that's a Town agency, do you have a Lease Agreement with the School. Mr. Sommer stated the agreement that they have is that they pay per mile for the buses and there is no Lease Agreement in the sense that he has signed a contract. He presents the field trips to the person who schedules the buses and if they have availability, all of their trips are on Friday so that they don't coincide with the Summer School Programs, but there is no Lease Agreement with the School Department.

Chairman Sordi thanked Mr. Sommer for coming in.

#### CARROLL COUNTY TRANSIT

Jack Rose, Chairman of the County Committee for Transportation and Beverly Raymond, Transportation Division Director, made the presentation to the Committee. Mr. Rose passed out a modified Budget from what was in the original packet.

Mr. Rose stated Carroll County Transportation has been operating bus service for what they call the door-to-door service, pick up and delivery on request from people who need the bus who are immobile and need to get from point A to point B and it's what they call the door-to-door service. They pick people up at their doors, take them to the hospital for instance and then make arrangements to pick them up at the hospital and take them back to their home. The fees for this are very nominal, about \$4.00. What they are looking for is they have gone to the 12 towns that they support requesting that they allow them \$3,000.00 to support this continuing the bus service.

Chairman Sordi asked if what was passed out is the Budget that is replacing the Budget that was submitted previously. Mr. Rose stated that was correct and that it had been reduced. Ted Sares stated the one he has has a lot of narrative and stuff and this is two pages; what replaces what. Mr. Rose stated it's the overall Budget page. Ted stated to forget it.

Mr. Rose stated as the members would see, they were looking for \$3,000.00 from each of the 12 towns that are supported by the on-demand, door-to-door service. They were asking for \$3,000.00 from each town, it's not

programmed by size of town and they have been providing this service to the various towns for the last 14 months. The largest recipient of this service has been the Town of Conway. Through the end of January, 3,423 rides so it is a service which is well liked, well used. You've seen the Blue Loons running around as they have coined the names of them, they have two sizes of buses: the on-demand bus is an 8 passenger plus two seats for handicap, wheelchair accessible and these buses run from all the way from Glen Junction all the way down through to Wolfeboro in a variety of trips. If you look at the cost per taxpayer in the Town of Conway, it's pretty minimal, like \$.30 and they were hoping to gain the Committee's support for an annual donation of \$3,000.00.

Chairman Sordi stated to clarify something, on the salary detail you show \$171,864.40 for total compensation, but your Budget you submitted only shows total expenses of \$111,641.00. Mr. Rose stated that's the Revenue and that's the Expenses, correct; they have revamped the Budget. One of the things they found out was that operating the bus early in the morning and late in the evening, there was an effective service so they have shortened the day and now they can modify their Budget and operate within this \$111,000.00. Chairman stated out of the positions you have listed, which ones were eliminated. Mr. Rose stated it's primarily because of the shortening of salaries and costs of operation on a shorter day.

Chairman Sordi stated to Beverly Raymond that they were showing \$171,864.40 for total compensation, but your revised Budget is showing \$111,000.00, so you eliminated \$60,000.00 out of your compensation and he was curious to know where. Did you eliminate positions or the time they are working. Ms. Raymond stated they were doing a couple of things; one this is a 32 week revised Budget; sorry, no it's not, her other program is. Yes, they did. What they did was they had an Assistant Manager that was down here and he resigned and they didn't fill his position. They found that they were able to do it between the Operations Manager at the office in Berlin and the help of the drivers. They are also able to take and split some of this out so that they are doing some public and some demand response. They were projecting to serve about 20,000 trips in this area and their projection didn't come out as 20,000 so when they revised it, you will see that they are looking at 5,500 trips that they will be doing. It does take time for a service to get started and when they started last year and they operated for 6 months they knew they really over projected the amount that they were serving. So the income from those trips comes from the Bureau of Elderly & Adult Services which is a DHHS Program and when they cut the trips down, they automatically cut the funding down. In order to be able to meet their needs, they had to cut their expenses.

Chairman Sordi stated he noticed last year they didn't request any money from the Town of Conway. What changed between last year and this year that you felt the need to request the money. Ms. Raymond stated they operate a lot in the Town of Conway. They were very surprised at how many trips and how much service they were providing in the Town of Conway, more than in any of their other towns.

Ted Sares stated when you did your initial business plan, did you factor in contributions from various towns. Ms. Raymond stated they did. Ted asked if they had presented requests to other towns. Ms. Raymond stated

yes, they have. Ted asked what has been the result. Ms. Raymond stated they have funded it. Ted asked if it was for the amount requested. Ms. Raymond stated \$3,000.00, yes. Ted stated then you're asking for \$3,000.00 from each town. Ms. Raymond stated yes. Ted asked what other towns. Ms. Raymond stated she hoped she could remember them all off the top of her head: Tamworth, Moultonboro, Ossipee. Mr. Rose stated Effingham, Freedom, Albany, Madison, Conway, Bartlett. Ted stated Conway is the largest user. Ms. Raymond stated it is. Ted stated he had an observation, when you say it has a minimal impact, he always views that as a Trojan Horse kind of thing. If there are 10 minimal impacts that get inside, then they are no longer minimal impacts when you add them up. There's no such thing as a minimal impact in his opinion and he didn't think that was a good argument to use. Twenty people could come in and say this will have a minimal impact on the taxes; add up to twenty, it's no longer minimal.

Bill Marvel stated you mentioned an Operations Manager or someone in Berlin. Ms. Raymond stated yes. Bill stated he didn't hear Berlin listed among the towns mentioned. Ms. Raymond stated because Berlin's not in Carroll County. Mr. Rose stated that's where Tri-County Cap's main office is in Berlin and they operate in all three counties: Grafton, Coos and Carroll County. They are interested only in the Carroll County leg of that transportation.

Bill Marvel stated you mentioned that you had cut hours of operation. Mr. Rose stated they modified the day, that's correct; they haven't done it yet. Bill stated so you are going to be serving people less. Ms. Raymond stated she couldn't really say that; she could say that they're going to minimize the number of hours that they are going to be operating. They may provide more service. This is what they are looking to do: after operating for 6 months and when you are running any kind of a business, especially with what she does for services, it gives you a general idea of who they are going to be serving, who needs to be educated on what they are serving, what are the operating hours that really work for people. Do people really get up, a senior, at 7:00 in the morning and get on the road and go to the doctor's office? No, they don't. What they did after operating for the 6 months, actually a year now, they took and looked at everything they did and then revised their plan so that they are better able to fit the needs of the community while also providing a more productive and efficient service. That's better usage of the funding they are getting.

Bill Marvel asked what hours are you operating. Ms. Raymond stated they are going to be operating 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM; now they are operating 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. They are going to break up their areas so that they are not all over Carroll County. Right now if they get a call in Moultonboro which their vehicles service Moultonboro, the Sandwich area, the Tamworth area, he's probably going to be traveling in that whole area and then probably will have to also shoot over to Ossipee for a trip for someone. Their priority trips are medical and nutrition. Bill stated he heard employment. Ms. Raymond stated employment too. Bill asked how is that going to help if you're only running 6 hours a day. Ms. Raymond stated they now have the other system up and running.

Bill Marvel asked what other system. Ms. Raymond stated their flex route system, that also covers your area too. There are two systems that they actually are operating together. When they came in to do this area for the County, they were looking at a very large area to cover for transportation for people. They found that utilizing two systems and she operates these same types of systems in all of Coos County and the northern part of Grafton County and what it does is one system compliments the other. The fixed route system runs north to south; it runs from Memorial Hospital all the way down to West Ossipee where it meets up with another vehicle that people can transfer to that leaves West Ossipee and goes down to Wolfeboro. There is also a third vehicle there that goes to Laconia. That system runs a route all day long so people within that area can take the system to get north and south or between the operating hours of 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM people can take their vehicle as another means and be dropped off at the different spots where these route buses pick up and be able to ride back and forth on them. Members can see how the two systems working together compliment each other to be able to bring people in from the out skirts.

Ms. Raymond further stated that when they are looking at some of the employment, she knows in the other areas many people either drive their own car to the bus stop and then park it, and they've had people that have offered for them to utilize their parking lots for people to park their cars and then ride the system. They've also had many people who ride their bikes to get to work and a lot of times they may go down to the public route system, put their bike on the vehicle and then hop aboard the bus to do the rest of the way or if inclement weather happens. It pretty much works together. They are also working on a volunteer driver program. They've been recruiting for that so if it is outside of those hours or outside areas that may be very, very rural, they'll be working with volunteer drivers to bring them in. They are already working with Carroll County R.S.V.P. They've been working with them for the last year to bring people here and there.

Mike DiGregorio stated he was curious of the relationship between these folks and Grafton County or up north. He sees the buses all the time with the same amount of branding on them, why is that. Ms. Raymond stated because that's the system that they operate; they operate that entire system. They started in Coos County with the same system that they are asking Conway to fund about 30 years ago. It was strictly for seniors, 60 and older. Since then the country and the State have said that they want to see better utilization of vehicles that are funded by the State and Federal Government out there. Since that time, they have offered the public transportation also for any one. All of their vehicles are blue and that's kind of their branding because there are other funded vehicles out there that are operating. Gibson Center is one for example that operates vehicles similar to theirs. What they ran into was that people not knowing which vehicle was coming to get them and they were getting calls from different individuals saying "your vehicle passed right by me" and in essence it wasn't their vehicle or if a driver ran a stop light or something, they got the call saying "your driver just ran a stop light" and they were no where in the area. They thought it would be much easier for them if they changed the color of their vehicles and say the blue bus will be over to pick you up at about 2:00 PM if that's what they schedule.

Mike DiGregorio stated when this program was started a few years ago, it was his recollection that a lot of it was Federal money, probably a fair amount of State money, and their price structure for the clients, if he remembers correctly, even with the projections that they had, their price structure wouldn't even cover one driver and one bus for one year. Why is that? Why is it so cheap? If you are saving somebody the time and effort to buy their own vehicle, to pay for their own vehicle, their insurance and all of that stuff, why wouldn't your price structure be something that, instead of basically giving it away free, you're reducing their costs, their overall costs because they don't have to buy a car, insurance and all of that, but you're really giving it away free. He was curious of how at the end of that Federal money you plan on staying alive. Ms. Raymond stated for one thing the Federal money that they receive for this program, the programs that they operate, they really are dedicated to people not having to pay a huge fare to be able to ride their system.

Mike DiGregorio stated huge fare, how about some fare; a couple of bucks to go to Wolfeboro. Ms. Raymond stated they do and that's one of the reasons they work so hard to get people on board to make it more productive to be able to fill the buses because if they are operating for one person then yes, it is extremely expensive but if they can offer it to more people, one of the biggest challenges that they have is marketing it and educating people. People in rural areas are not used to transportation services. Some of them rode in taxicabs; many people can't really afford taxicabs. Because they are subsidized by Federal and State monies and then local towns usually help and the Counties help. In both of her other areas they help her systems then that's what helps them to keep going and they run as efficiently as possible. She has 5 programs that she operates; those programs split all of their hours; she doesn't work 40 hours for just this system; her hours are divided up among all of those systems and so isn't her other staff's. The only people that are really funded directly by this system are their drivers and all of their drivers are Carroll County residents.

Mike DiGregorio stated he didn't doubt that they are doing everything they can to be efficient, what he is questioning is that even if their smaller bus was full, it picked up a bunch of people in North Conway and took them to Wolfeboro, the fare that they paid in North Conway wouldn't even cover the cost of the bus and the driver to get to Wolfeboro. It's so cheap that it doesn't even cover the cost and that's more his question, why would you put your pricing structure in a place that it can't even sustain itself; it's always going to have to rely on State and Federal money. Ms. Raymond stated that every system that she knows of that operates in the State of New Hampshire, if they are Federally and State funded, do rely on that. They are subsidized systems to be able to offer those rates. One of the reasons that they are looking at serving those specific areas on certain days is exactly for that. To be able to do it so that they aren't taking a trip from here with one person and going down there, but they are going to keep the vehicles in a generalized area and serve that one area one day. When they made their changes to this, they put North Conway for being served for 5 days and they also serve longer hours and around the hours of some of the other services that are provided for the seniors that live within the area.

Doug Swett asked what were these people doing before you arrived on the scene. Ms. Raymond stated she thought many were not going shopping, many were not probably going to their medical appointments, some have had family living next door or had their kids living with them or a neighbor was able to take them. She knows that up in the north country area of Coos, many of those people, their family left because of the economic situation that we are in. They had to go and find jobs elsewhere which left them with really no other way to get around. She thought maybe some were paying taxis to provide the service. Jack Rose stated they were using taxis which is very expensive. He had a lady tell him from West Side Road that in order to get to the Hospital and back before the Blue Loon buses were available, she was paying \$20.00 round trip. Doug stated he suspected that they would be coming back for more and more money because Federal and State funds are drying up rapidly. Ms. Raymond stated that at this point she really didn't know; they always hope that there is going to be money there for this type of service.

Dick Klement stated you've given us a new piece of paper which we haven't had time to look at in detail, but in your old submittal on page 3 you have total salaries and compensation of \$171,864.00. In the new piece of paper, he totaled up from the two different areas and your total salaries and compensation benefits are \$75,000.00 if he got that correct. Essentially, you've cut out \$100,000.00 in expenses and balanced your Budget looking at this; what did you not do this past year and how did you not run a \$100,000.00 deficit. Ms. Raymond stated we did it. Dick asked how can you explain this then. Ms. Raymond stated they didn't run a \$100,000.00 deficit this past year. They did run a deficit which they overspent in the Department of Health & Human Services and have made arrangements to be able to handle that through their organization. Her goal with the reduction and a reduction that large is to not let that happen again.

Chairman Sordi stated you said this was a 32 week Budget and Ms. Raymond stated yes. Chairman stated so it's 60% of what ultimately would be there. It's still going to be a big reduction in salary.

Dick Klement asked what was a 32 week Budget in ten words or less. Ms. Raymond stated a revision of a full year. Dick stated this makes sense. Ms. Raymond stated it's revised to reflect from where they were at the time the Budget was revised to implement the changes on this system until the end of their fiscal year, June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Ray Shakir stated you've said your hours are 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM; is that a regularly scheduled route or is that a will call. Ms. Raymond stated it's a will call in this system. Ray stated in other words if you don't have people, you don't go out. Ms. Raymond stated correct. Ray asked if they try to, on that will call basis, conglomerate several calls together so they only go out once. Ms. Raymond stated they do; they ask people to call 24 hours in advance; they have scheduling software that they put that into called Route Match and it helps them to provide the most economical way to provide the service by putting people that are going in the same direction on the same bus.

Ray Shakir asked if they ever thought of melding their dispatch service with a private company. In other words, instead of having your own dispatch maybe going into contract with a taxi service so that they can kind of, and he was sure since they were in private business that they may have ways of doing things more efficiently, and perhaps it would be less expensive for you in order to incorporate private car service in your dispatching itinerary, if you know what he is saying. Ms. Raymond stated she never thought of it. They do look at coordinating services, she does work with other agencies where if they have trips that need to be done and they are in an area that they serve, they'll talk to each other to see if they are able to book rides together for people that they have also.

Ms. Raymond stated she never thought of outsourcing their dispatching; they're really set up, they have the radios, all of their vehicles have the radios. Ray Shakir stated that was probably an area that they could save if they didn't have to use the radios or anything and they went into a private partnership plus there is also a possibility in vein of that private situation where you can possibly use their vehicles instead of a bus if there's only a couple of people and then enter into some kind of contractual relationship. Ms. Raymond stated they were working on that. Actually the State Coordinating Council on Transportation is looking at that very heavily because they want to be able to work with private providers to provide the service. As far as the contracting out dispatch, she guessed she would have to look at what they had for dispatch systems and then look at what they have. They have a lot of money invested in their systems. Mr. Rose stated they also have a central dispatch that takes care of three counties at the same time. One dispatch office is handling bus systems in 3 counties. Ray stated that's fine and there's no reason why private people can't expand to more than one county. Mr. Rose stated he was just saying it's already set up and in operation and been in operation for many years and it's very effective in handling these 3 counties.

Ms. Raymond stated the biggest thing for her and it is something that she would definitely look at, the biggest obstacle that she would see is that the dispatch software that they are currently operating would be utilized because they have a lot of money invested in that and it does a lot of work for them. It saves her staff and everybody so much time. It produces their reports, they've got special reporting that they need to do because they are Federal and State funded so they utilize that software and it produces all of their reports for them as well as scheduling their people. She's open if it means looking at something that's going to save them some money then she is open to either approaching or else having someone advance it to her and talk about it.

Dick Klement asked how many bus services exist in this area at this point in time. Ms. Raymond stated most of them are specialized services that she is aware of. She only knows of the Health & Human Services end of it and the ones that get funded by the State because she's a trainer for drivers. There is Gibson Center, you have Northern Human Services and there may be some nursing homes that have buses. Dick asked if they were operating the same system that he read in the paper where we have this new system coming on-line or are you the same as that. Dot Seibel's been associated with this. Ms. Raymond stated if the new system is the Blue

Loon System as that's referred to, then that's their system. Mr. Rose stated they have two separate systems that they are operating in this area. Dick stated and you're only asking for money for one of them. Both Mr. Rose and Ms. Raymond stated yes.

Maury McKinney asked how many drivers did they currently have. Ms. Raymond stated in this area they have about a dozen. Maury stated you had talked about a campaign for volunteer drivers; what about training and licensing for those drivers. Ms. Raymond stated that was part of their expenses. All of their drivers are trained; they need to be trained as is all of the volunteer drivers. All of them because they drive Federally and State funded vehicles and need to be trained in passenger assistance, emergency evacuation and defensive driving when they are hired and every 3 years. All of their drivers are pre-employment tested; they run a very strict drug and alcohol system.

Maury McKinney stated his last question had to do with occupancy and this new system as it evolves. It sounds like you have a dispatch software to track this; currently do the two systems, do you think they conflict occupancy rates and what are the occupancy rates. Ms. Raymond stated they are at the point that they opened up a system 6 years ago; it's a route that travels between Whitefield, Lancaster and Littleton and they went from a 16 passenger vehicle, they were maximum and these are very rural areas, they just received 24 passengers with 4 wheelchairs and they are getting close to maxing those vehicles too. They are moving people. A lot of it is to work and medical appointments, but they are moving people and in this area she thought that once people were educated, as she tells everybody people don't in areas that never had public transportation don't feel real comfortable about that, they have to learn about it. They offer free transportation to them to be able to get on and try it, especially the elderly or maybe the parents of youth because they are very, very hesitant to let their kids ride on public transportation and it's important that she feels she needs to mention that the community transportation system that they provide is for the communities. It's for people that are within Carroll County and need to use that. Most of the drivers begin to know the people, they ride on a regular basis, they transport groups like little football teams. She knows that over in their Lancaster/Whitefield area they did that on a regular basis because the parents couldn't take the kids to the event so they were able to participate in that activity and drivers get to know the kids and if they spot somebody on the bus that's different, not from the area, might be a little suspicious they take that extra time to make sure that things are okay when those kids get off the bus and she thought that meant a lot.

Maury McKinney stated the reduction in hours that you've currently put into place, was that to maximize occupancy or was that just to make it more efficient. Ms. Raymond stated it is for both; it's for occupancy and to make it more efficient and as they move along they always do make adjustments to their routes and to their services pending their financial capabilities and depending on what the need is.

Karen Umberger stated just to clear up a point, the transit people are going to the individual towns to provide the one-on-one service, whatever that's called, and they are coming to the County to request the dollars for the flex service. That's the route from Conway to Wolfeboro to

Laconia, that's how they're requesting the dollars to support the two systems, one from the Town and the other from the County. Ms. Raymond stated they're both under separate funding; the one from the towns is funded with the Department of Health & Human Services funds, the one from the County is supported by Federal Transit Administration funds, primarily funded.

Mike DiGregorio stated ultimately if you are going to the County to ask for money and you're coming to us and asking for money, it's local tax dollars that are helping subsidize it. Mr. Rose stated two separate systems. Mike stated but the County charges us for whatever money they give out so we're still getting a tax bill for it. He guessed his final question was how do they respond to, as you say taxis are expensive and he understands that, but you're directly competing with a business with Federal and State dollars and now local dollars that these businesses have employees and they're paying taxes on whatever property and stuff they have. You ultimately could put them out of business and he was just curious of how do they respond to that when you've got government dollars competing with a private business that could put them out of business. Ms. Raymond stated the only response she could give for that was that many people, primarily a lot of the ones that they serve and the money and the reason it's a subsidized service is because the majority of the people that they serve are elderly and low income. They couldn't afford a taxi.

Mike DiGregorio stated his point when he was asking about pricing is that you've got it so cheap that you can't take care of yourself and you're competing with private businesses. If your pricing structure was at least a little bit more in the competitive world then yes people could get an idea on whether they wanted to go with you or not. Our tax dollars wouldn't be going to it, but then on the other side this private business wouldn't be going out of business because that's how he eventually sees it happening. Why would anybody take a taxi if they can get on your bus for \$1.00 and go to Wolfeboro, or \$2.00 to go to Wolfeboro or \$5.00 or whatever the heck it is. Ms. Raymond stated if you're using the demand response it's a lot more than that. Mr. Rose stated the taxis are running 7 days a week and running all hours of the night; they are not in competition with any of them. They are primarily geared for the senior who can't get to the Hospital or who can't get to shopping.

Mike DiGregorio asked why not limit it to the senior who can't get to the Hospital because right now it's open to anybody who doesn't want to pay for a taxi. Ms. Raymond stated there's a couple of reasons: 1) they are mandated by their funders to open it, if there are seats available, then let the public ride on it; 2) if the public is riding on it and they're paying a fare they're helping cover the cost of that so it makes it more financially efficient and much more productive and that's their goal to make that work. Like she said, it's primarily for low income; she's not saying they will always just charge \$2.00 and it isn't \$2.00 but she didn't know if she had her fares with her, but it does go up. Mike's point is well taken, but she has also heard the flip side since they've started their demand response service. When they first started it, they were looking at smaller areas, only now they are doing more of them. Without the flex route starting they ended up doing further distances and she was getting calls at her office saying "you're charging a lot more

than you said you were going to charge", "you said you'd charge \$2.00". She would tell them that they are going further distances and they do have to charge more. Redstone to Tamworth is a fare of \$9.00 to be able to go that far, but if you're staying local, say Redstone to Redstone it's \$3.00. If a senior rides and they're going from Redstone to Tamworth, they take \$1.00 off and seniors ride with a suggested donation because it is a funded program. If they can't afford to pay that to get to their medical appointment, they are not denied the service. They do receive some funding from the State and Federal Government to be able to cover that. Jack Rose stated they also pick up Medicaid recipients who don't pay anything. Ms. Raymond stated but they do bill Medicaid; they bill TNF for people that they take to work and they call them a lot to utilize the service. Mr. Rose stated there's a lot of Medicaid people in this area.

Ted Sares asked if any of the towns that they are requesting money from said "no", what would happen. Ms. Raymond stated they probably wouldn't be able to operate the system. They would have to cut it significantly. Ted stated you're dependent then on this funding so that what has happened here is a Federal Grant has put you in a position where you now must become dependent on taxpayer money, not that Federal Grants aren't, but now you must be dependent on taxpayer money to exist. Ms. Raymond stated not necessarily; if they had other means of raising those funds. At this present time, they are in the process of getting sponsorships for their vehicles; they have 4 wraps and she is working with a marketing company, 4 wraps on the rears of vehicles that will be working in this area purchased by a Hospital that will bring them in \$5,800.00 in 6 months. Part of those monies will be able to go back into their Budgets, but they are not there yet. Mr. Rose stated in defense also they have been operating in Conway because other towns have funded the system and the people need to get to Memorial Hospital; people in Conway get the benefit and the Town has paid nothing.

Ted Sares stated he understood all of that and he appreciated it, but he has to say to himself what happened before you existed? Life went on and the world spinned. Ms. Raymond stated she thought a lot of people that are in the rural areas just couldn't afford a vehicle and just couldn't get to where they needed to go. TNF didn't have anyone to call. Ted stated he got it. Mr. Rose stated the amount of monies they are getting from the towns is a small portion of their Budget and they have other sources that they are going to. Ted questioned other sources. Mr. Rose stated they are listed. Ms. Raymond stated she had mentioned the Federal funds, they are looking at the town and are asking for \$3,000.00 from each of those, they bring in a lot of program income which is and a lot of that is from fares or donations. They are looking at contacting Hospitals; they do a tremendous amount of trips to the Hospitals, they just received funding from the Hospital in the Town of Berlin because they do so many trips to them for the people in the Town or in the region. Littleton Regional Hospital contracts directly with them to provide transportation; they cover it all, free of charge, for their patients that go to their doctors affiliated with their hospital. They do Medicaid transportation; they do some long distance medical; they do some fundraising. They are looking at a sponsorship program. They also do contracted services so if the Town has a group of officials that come into the area and they want to tour part of the town, then they can

contract with them to be able to do that. Mr. Rose stated he wanted to add one more thing; the question was what other services are available. They just recently formed what is called a Regional Coordinating Council for transportation in the County and they are in the process of building a directory which will be available to everyone for all other services.

Dick Klement stated he hated to prolong this, but asked if they had paid for any of their vehicles or are they included in the taxpayer funded origination start up. Ms. Raymond stated Carroll County was fortunate it would have taken them a lot longer to get this system started, but the vehicles came in with the ARRA funds, American Reinvestment Act, that were out there. Dick stated stimulus money. Ms. Raymond stated they were from that. Dick stated so you got buses given to the program by taxpayer dollars for a one time gift. Ms. Raymond stated yes.

Dick Klement stated you say you're not even breaking even with the donations you're getting back and the fees you are charging. What are you going to do when you need to buy new buses. Ms. Raymond stated that's one of the reasons they're looking for sponsorships. Dick stated he assumed buses are between \$50,000.00 and \$75,000.00. Ms. Raymond stated they don't pay that though; they pay 10% or 20% depending on which funding silo. Dick stated but you're assuming that the Federal Government is going to continue to buy you free buses or heavily subsidized buses and you're going on this believing this is going to work for a long term. Ms. Raymond stated it's worked for 30 years in their other areas. She is not assuming that the Federal Government is going to be able to do this. She thought they needed to take it one step at a time; this is the first stepping stone. If she projected that far ahead, there's hundreds of things that could come up, she can't project that the Federal Government is even going to be around to be able to provide buses. She's not alone in this; the whole State of New Hampshire, the whole country has this type of service that they provide. They're in the same place she is.

Chairman Sordi thanks Ms. Raymond and Mr. Rose for coming in.

#### TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM

Paula Abraham, Community Contact Manager, made the presentation to the Committee. Ms. Abraham thanked the Board and the residents of the Town of Conway for all their past support. There are approximately 70 programs that are under the Tri-County CAP umbrella and you just heard from one of them. While all of their programs work closely together, each program is managed and funded independently of each other. Fuel Assistance is a Community Contact Program. Community Contact is the field services arm of Tri-County CAP. They assist the most vulnerable and less fortunate to help solve problems to help meet physical and financial needs of those who would otherwise have to seek help from the Town.

Ms. Abraham stated their funding request of \$13,000.00 which is level funded from past years is specifically to support the Fuel Assistance Program. The number of applications to date is very close with last year's numbers at this time; however, as you may already know, the funding is not. For example, total Grant for heating season 2010 through 2011 was \$6.7 Million. The total Grant for the 2011/2012 heating season was \$5.3 Million. It's a total of \$34 Million for all of New Hampshire to

date; last year was \$44 Million, the difference is \$1.3 Million and change less in funding. The State predicts that they will run out of Fuel Assistance money around the third week in February of this year. With the reduced funding, they will not be able to remain open all winter to assist all applicant households. This will result in a Waiting List, even if additional funds are granted for the Program. They have no idea if that will happen.

Ms. Abraham stated at this time, with less Program funding, translates into less administrative dollars. Local support from every town in Carroll County is even more critical for them to maintain their community presence in their local offices. Last year 1,317 residents of the Town of Conway received over \$505,000.00 in Fuel Assistance benefits. Other Program benefits include weatherization and electric assistance which adds up to over \$757,000.00 in benefits combined. They do not receive any funding from the County or State level. These local funds that are requested countywide are vital to the operation and administration of the Fuel Assistance Program. The funding for the Fuel Assistance Program does not adequately cover their operating expenses like electric, heat, rent which all programs have to pay. They operate Programs and provide services that have absolutely no funding support at all, such as the USDA Food Distribution to the Food Pantries in Carroll County, emergency assistance with donated funds, referrals and direct client assistance and counseling. They are very grateful for the support and look forward to the continued cooperation and partnership with the Town of Conway's residents, elected officials and staff.

Ray Shakir stated he appreciates what they do. With that said, wouldn't you say that as fuel costs rise due to absurd government policies that the demand for your service is also going to increase and burden the taxpayers even more. It's going to be a vicious cycle and wouldn't you say that if that money from the taxpayer was withheld, that would put pressure on the government to back off from their ridiculous policies and maybe institute policies so that nationally fuel costs would decline and therefore the requirement for your services would also decline. He knows that's kind of rhetorical, but nonetheless doesn't that make sense to you (Ms. Abraham). It's a vicious circle so that the more money we give you, the less pressure is put on the government to maintain reliable fuel costs that are kind of like civilized and it's not only for the home, but it's for gas and everything else that's associated with energy costs. Ms. Abraham agreed. Ray stated that basically what he was saying is that the more we give you, the less pressure is put on the government and it just goes on and on and on. Ms. Abraham stated they really have no control over the prices of fuel; that's the whole element in this whole scenario that Ray just outlined. They instruct their applicants that are frustrated when their fuel assistance money runs out to contact their local and State representatives, Congressional delegation. Janine Shaheen has also been a strong advocate. Ray stated Janine has been part of the problem.

Chairman Sordi stated let's not get into a political debate; let's try to focus on the Budget at hand.

Greydon Turner asked what the weatherization process included. Ms. Abraham stated in the weatherization process what happens is people that

apply for Fuel Assistance, it's basically the same application, weatherization uses the same income guidelines. When someone applies for Fuel Assistance, they ask during the intake process if they are interested in being on the Waiting List for weatherization and it includes buttoning up the windows, putting insulation in and all of those good things that they do. There is a box on the application that is checked "yes" if they are interested and they then get put on a list. Weatherization which is another Program that's managed separately and funded separately from Fuel Assistance because their monies come from some Federal dollars, but a lot of it comes from the public utilities as well. New Hampshire Electric Cooperative and Public Service also donate funds to that Program. The list is quite long but they prioritize by the most need or the worse situation where somebody actually is in a dire straits situation, they will go right out and fix the problem. Greydon asked whether or not it depended on if they owned their own home. Ms. Abraham stated you can own your home or you can rent; however, you must get permission from the Landlord if it's a person that's in a rental situation.

Karen Umberger stated they show 601 households serviced within Conway and 162 are elderly and 213 were disabled households. What were the other group or groups of people that were serviced. Ms. Abraham stated the 95 are families that have children under 6 years old. Karen stated the other one is 95 more are just other households. Ms. Abraham stated yes, those include the families that have children under 5 years old. Karen asked if they get preference over someone else. Ms. Abraham stated basically they use that information, beginning in July they're the ones that they contact to apply first, the most vulnerable families. Karen stated that still doesn't add up to 601. Ms. Abraham stated the 601 is a household that is actually an application; the 1,317 figure are the beneficiaries. It's the number of people that are included in all of those households. Karen stated you took in 601 applications and then what you are saying is that out of that 601 you served this many people or this was the breakdown of the 601. Ms. Abraham stated that was the breakdown. The 601 applications include 1,317 people that are beneficiaries. Karen stated but that doesn't matter because if you don't serve them, they aren't a beneficiary. Ms. Abraham stated they receive benefits from Fuel Assistance, they were beneficiaries of the Fuel Assistance dollars that went to their household. Karen stated she was trying to get this straight; you said that the 601 represented the number of applications, of that 601 applications how many people were serviced. Ms. Abraham stated 1,317. Karen stated not people, households and stated she was sorry. Ms. Abraham stated 601. Karen stated you did not receive any more applications from Conway. Ms. Abraham stated that was right. Karen stated all 601 applications from Conway were provided dollars for Fuel Assistance. Ms. Abraham stated yes. Karen stated so no one else from Conway applied. Chairman Sordi stated in other words there was no one who applied that was turned down. Ms. Abraham stated there were denied applications and that figure is 51; 51 applications were denied from Conway.

Dick Klement stated if he was reading correctly on page 3, the total compensation is \$167,000.00 and change and if he were to look at their salary and benefits that comes to roughly \$165,000.00 which leaves you \$85,000.00 total for funds for this Program. Dick asked if he was

correct. Ms. Abraham stated she believed the \$167,133.00 is the total of the \$121,093.37 and the \$11,849.00. Dick stated essentially the employees are being paid or benefited by \$167,000.00 and your total revenue is \$250,000.00ish leaving \$85,000.00 for money to spend on this Program for benefits for people. Chairman Sordi stated no. Ms. Abraham stated no. Dick asked that he be told where he is wrong. Karen Umberger stated this Program provides no benefits for people; this Program only provides management of the Program. Ms. Abraham stated it's for the administration. Karen stated there's no money out of this Program. Dick asked okay, then what are you doing. You're talking about assisting people who are in dire straits for fuel, food, etc. and there's no money that you are helping these people with yet you are paying, and he guessed they were an employer, because you're spending \$167,000.00 on salaries and benefits. Ms. Abraham stated that money comes from the administration dollars from the LIHEAP Funds and it's a very small percentage that is allotted for the administration of the Program. That's why they have to come to the towns for additional funding because it's inadequate. Dick stated excuse me, you said that your total income was \$247,000.00, is that including the Grant. Ms. Abraham stated that includes the income from other towns, \$84,300.00 under the 2011; they don't receive any County or State, the Federal dollars from LIHEAP is \$146,550.00. Then there is donations of \$3,333.00, a small number of contributions and then the Town of Conway. Dick stated if he has it correct then, you're getting \$250,000.00, you're paying \$167,000.00 in salaries, what do you do with the other \$85,000.00. Ms. Abraham stated it's in the other expenses; they have a mortgage, they have administration charges. Dick stated so all of that money is spent in administration and overhead. Ms. Abraham stated absolutely.

Dick Klement asked how are you helping these people if you have no money. Are you just saying we'll give you a loan or we'll give you a phone number to call. Ms. Abraham stated the dollars from LIHEAP are helping the people with their fuel. Dick asked where are those dollars. Ms. Abraham stated that's separate; the dollars are on the Municipal Report Grid. Dick stated that doesn't say it's Revenue, it's says that these are dollars; so this is Revenue. Ms. Abraham stated this is not Revenue to the Program, no; it's Revenue to the people that receive the assistance from the Federal Government. Dick stated so you're essentially washing the money from the Feds to the people. Ms. Abraham stated they are a conduit; the Community Action Plan nationally has the contract to administer the LIHEAP Funds from the Federal Government.

Chairman Sordi stated to hold on, we don't need to get so confrontational in the questions. Let's tone it down a little bit.

Dick Klement stated so the Revenues essentially are the money shown on the Municipal Report Grid plus the \$250,000.00. Ms. Abraham stated actually the Federal money is plus, the Federal alone is \$146,000.00. That was for administration only that was out of the LIHEAP money; it's what is on the Municipal Report Grid that people receive for a benefit. They only receive as far as the administration portion of the fund from the Federal Government is like 1%. It's not enough to cover all of the Community Action agencies in administering the Programs and that includes people doing the paperwork, doing the intake, following up with the applicant. It's a lot of work and she wasn't trying to justify her job,

but this is what they do, they are in the trenches with these people and without this funding, she can foresee that they may not have a local presence in this county any more.

Brian Charles stated being new, he didn't know what LIHEAP was, but instead of explaining that right away, he thought what was happening here is that they administration of a Federal source of money and what we are talking about here is running the process for getting that money to people. He has two questions: 1) What is LIHEAP and 2) Are we funding you or is our money going towards someone's fuel. Ms. Abraham stated it's actually the funding of the administration piece. Brian stated so we're funding administration and the money that goes to people we don't either give or take from that. Ms. Abraham agreed. Brian stated we're helping you to provide that service to the people. Ms. Abraham stated exactly.

Brian Charles asked what LIHEAP was. Ms. Abraham stated it is the Low Income Heating Assistance Program and it's a Federal line item Budget in the budgeting process. Brian asked if they weren't here, there's a certain amount of money that is going to be given out to Carroll County, where would they go. Ms. Abraham stated if they weren't here to administer the Program, she could see people probably having to go to Berlin to apply for Fuel Assistance. If this money was not received and they had to cut staff and she'd lose her job and her staff would lose their jobs, that's what would happen. She could see people having to go to Berlin to apply for Fuel Assistance. Brian stated so somebody could go from here to Berlin to apply for it. Is there an administration in each different County or Town. Ms. Abraham stated yes, Carroll County is in Tamworth, it's centrally located in Carroll County. In Coos and Grafton there are 4 or 5 separate local offices.

Bill Marvel stated in your introductory comments you mentioned a reduction of about \$1.3 Million, \$6.7 Million to \$5.3 Million, he was under the impression that the \$6.7 Million was the amount that was distributed in this vicinity, is that correct. Ms. Abraham stated that was right. Bill stated so it's been reduced about 20%. Ms. Abraham agreed. Bill stated one of the perennial justifications of Programs like yours is that it compensates that Town, well it doesn't compensate it offsets the amount that the Town would have to pay out for Fuel Assistance and that sort of thing, but if the overall amount has been reduced 20%, can you understand how it might be viewed how the contribution of the Town ought to be reduced apportionately if you're going to take that somewhat mercenary view of the benefit. Ms. Abraham stated if that money is reduced, then it reduces the money that they would receive any way so it kind of puts them out of business.

Mike DiGregorio stated earlier in the year we were talking about the Welfare Department and the cost of administering a program with salaries and benefits to a small amount of money that we put out. His understanding of the way this works is because you're a large organization you're probably more efficient in the management of it in the sense that you're distributing more money and administering less. You're not from around here so what he was getting at is that they spend \$40,000.00+ in salary and benefits to administer \$36,000.00 of benefits and you guys are just the opposite; you're actually giving out more benefits with less administration.

Mike DiGregorio stated in response to Brian's (Charles) question about where would they go if they didn't go to her organization, they could come to the Town because the more he learns about how their Welfare Program was structured, the towns really don't have a lot of choice but to deal with the people they are dealing with, they are required by law to deal with it.

Mike DiGregorio stated he thought that what Ray (Shakir) was talking about with his first question, and he didn't want to speak for Ray, but his problem that he's always had with the Program is any time you take Federal money and buy something with it, it artificially inflates the cost of that item. If you're buying a million gallons of oil for \$3.5 Million, the price of that oil is up here rather than, to him, where it should be, but that's a whole other argument. The more he learns about the Welfare Program, the more he understands that this Program does help us in many ways because we are kind of getting a big kick back for what we put into it. He still doesn't like the idea of buying fuel oil for anybody, he just doesn't like it.

Chairman Sordi stated let's not get into personal feelings, is there a question in there somewhere. Mike DiGregorio stated the question really was because you (Brian Charles) asked that question he wanted to answer that. He has been reading a lot about Welfare especially since Dick (Klement) asked a lot of questions about it at the beginning of the year and the fact is they can come right to the Town and the Town is required to help them under the law. So, your Program does help the Town in many ways save money directly to the Town.

Brian Charles stated he knew members weren't suppose to speak directly to each other today, but if it came to the Town, where would we get this money. Mike DiGregorio stated we raise taxes, plain and simple and a lot more than \$13,000.00 by the way. Brian stated this is a huge benefit to us. Mike stated it's all how you look at it, but yes.

Chairman Sordi asked if there were any more questions; we are starting to get into politics here. Dick Klement stated here's the problem, we have two agencies, the Town and this Agency providing a service. If we were to say let the Town take that Federal money, the portion due Conway, let the Town administer it, you cut out the middle Agency. Chairman stated he understood what Dick was saying, but what he was trying to do here, we are already running way behind, he didn't want to get into politics, didn't want to get into positions yet. Mike DiGregorio stated he (Dick) does have the question can the Federal Government skip you and give the money directly to the Town. Chairman stated that was a fair question. Ms. Abraham stated the answer would be no and the reason why is because it's a contract thing between the Federal Government and the Community Action Agency.

Chairman Sordi thanked Ms. Abraham for coming in.

Chairman Sordi apologized to those waiting to present their Budget; last year we were running ahead and so he asked that they be here one-half hour early; now they are running behind so he again apologized for making them wait a little bit longer than initially thought.

GIBSON CENTER FOR SENIOR SERVICES, INC.

George Cleveland, Executive Director, made the presentation to the Committee. Mr. Cleveland stated it was wonderful seeing everyone on such a lovely day. He thought their request this year was fairly straight forward. They are flat lining, it's the same amount of money that they've asked for for the last several years. In the prepared materials that members had been given, they footnoted any place that they felt there may be a question or something unusual. Going into this Budget season was one of the most difficult ones they have ever had to put together and that was due to the basic rising costs and particularly the rising costs of health insurance. They took a great big knife and skimmed a whole lot of fat, a lot of alleged perks that some of the staff got aren't there any more. They even cut the funding for the Staff Christmas Party this year.

Mr. Cleveland stated he wanted to draw their attention to Note 10 and that is regarding their Transportation Contract with the State. This year it seems to be audit fever has struck Concord, he guessed they had a lot more money than they're letting on to send these auditors out. The State insists it wasn't an audit that they had, it was a deep site review. In the course of this deep site review, they looked at how Gibson Center calculated a transportation Unit. The way they are reimbursed for their transportation is by a Unit and because we are a rural area, they had for 19 years, calculated a Unit by zip code. If you're in Manchester, your trip to go pick somebody up and take them to the hospital might be a .5 trip. Here that could be a 20 mile trip one way in our catchment area, so it was a little fairer because they may be driving 20 miles. The State said no you have to do it our way which is a Unit is when you get on a bus and when you get off a bus. It doesn't matter if it's between here and Memorial Hospital, if you've stopped 5 times, that's 5 rides as long as you get on and off the bus. They said Gibson Center had to stop counting it the way they've been counting it and go by the State's way retroactively to the beginning of the fiscal year.

Mr. Cleveland stated what that did was put a \$50,000.00 hole in their present Operating Budget and you can't make that up raffling doilies in the Dining Room. That's a lot of money. They are looking at this very proactively, their Board is immensely engaged in solving this challenge and he is going to go to the State and ask them to change it back because he thinks it is the usual situation and this is not political where a lot of times they seem to feel that what applies in Manchester and Nashua is good for the whole state and he thought there were a lot of legislators, some certain definite exceptions, that felt once you get north of Laconia, you're speaking French and you need a Passport. The thing that they are not doing is whining; they are trying to fix it and trying to fix it where it needs to be fixed which is with the State. In the process, they have also had some other fairly significant challenges come up this year.

Mr. Cleveland stated the Department of Transportation also did an audit on them which has curtailed some of their out-of-state trips. Hopefully that's going to be solved within the next week or so.

Mr. Cleveland stated as the members could see, the service to the people of Conway is pretty much remaining in terms of meals and overall services still is in that 78% to 81% range. They are able to keep the cost of their meals down significantly because for one thing they have an excellent kitchen staff that not only can cook, but also know how to manage the kitchen. Also through the New Hampshire Food Bank and Shaw's Supermarket, they have been able to get a significant amount of food at no charge and the community of course has been remarkably helpful. Restaurants that are seasonal, when they close, bring their excess to them, the Veggie Volunteers through the Co-operative Extension Service and they are able in the summer time almost every single meal literally has something that is locally grown in the meal and he thought that was pretty exceptional.

Mr. Cleveland stated basically that's it; they are flat lining again this year and he'd like to say wouldn't it be great if he could tell members that would probably happen next year, he doesn't know. If anyone knows what is going to happen tomorrow, let him know. That's basically his spiel and if there are any questions, he would be more than happy to answer them.

Chairman Sordi stated he noticed the budget for benefits went down about \$10,000.00 and it looks like it was because you increased the deductible from \$2,000.00 to \$3,000.00. If you hadn't done that, what would have happened. Do you know what the increase would have been. Mr. Cleveland stated he thought it was close to five figures; it was a lot. They also have one staff member who takes it in cash instead of that coverage. Every year they dread the insurance visit and this year they are going to be looking at insurance costs, not because of the anticipated rise in insurance rates, but because they have to bring expenses down.

Ray Shakir stated he really believed they were doing the best job of any non-profit in the community by far and that was just his personal opinion. The question is that you mentioned that Shaw's was throwing you stuff for free and being very cooperative. What happened to Hannaford. Mr. Cleveland stated you need to talk to Hannaford. This is a program that Shaw's does regionally; it's not just us, but everybody who is in the food business in, he thought, New England and certainly New Hampshire. It is an arrangement that Shaw's parent company has made with the larger Food Banks. He thought all of the Food Banks in the area benefit from this; it's been tremendous. Hannaford helps many people in their own way, so he can't speak to what goes on behind the corporate door.

Ray Shakir stated is credit for Shaw's contribution paramount; do a lot of people know, do you make it your business to ensure they know. Mr. Cleveland stated anybody coming into their Dining Room with any regularity, they'd know it. Quite frankly, they sometimes give us more than we can handle and when that happens we either send it home in Meals on Wheels, the frozen meats and in some cases they also do it with the vegetables and they will give some to people who have come for meals to help make their food budget go a little bit further.

Ted Sares asked who was on Mr. Cleveland's button. Mr. Cleveland stated it was the Moxie man.

Chairman Sordi thanks Mr. Cleveland for coming in.

CHILDREN UNLIMITED, INC.

Jackie Sparks, Executive Director, made the presentation to the Committee. Ms. Sparks thanked the Committee for inviting her to present the request for the Town. Again this year it is level funded as members can see in the information. Children Unlimited is a non-profit agency and it has several children and family services but the family centered Early Support and Services, better known in the rest of the country as Early Intervention but New Hampshire needs to have its own labels, is the only Program that they come to the Town to ask for some assistance for the uninsured and the underinsured children, Birth to 3.

Ms. Sparks stated they served 90 children this year in total and 51 of them were from Conway. That's about 58% of the number of kiddos that they see around the greater Mount Washington Valley of the 9 towns. She further stated she would be happy to answer any questions.

Chairman Sordi stated he was surprised by this because of what you've been able to do, but he noticed their benefits have dropped substantially between 2011 and 2012 and he was just curious as to how they were able to accomplish that. Ms. Sparks stated not happily, what they did was because their percentage was going to go up between 15% and 18% and they can't handle that because they have lost funding over the years and so they got a very different plan with a much higher deductible and it's kind of a modified HMO so that's how they did it. The employees are paying more in deductibles and in co-pays definitely and as she said, not happily. Their hand was forced to do that at this point.

Mike DiGregorio stated he knows personally people that they have taken care of and you've done a phenomenal job with that. In fact, one of them when they went to you at a very early age could barely talk and that child is brilliant today. It is amazing what you guys did to take that kid out of their shell and fix a problem and he could tell her who the child is afterwards. His question is: do you get money from other towns too. Ms. Sparks said yes and the combined amount is on page 2 of the budget packet, \$17,700.00 comes from the other towns.

Mike DiGregorio stated that actually plays into his next question and he has to admit that he doesn't know the answer to this: when a Warrant Article comes to the Town through the Selectmen's Office, we are responsible to pay through the Selectmen's Office. When a Warrant Article goes through the School, they spread that out amongst all of the towns; since this is directly educationally related, how come you don't put a Warrant Article on the School Warrant so that it's spread out every where. Ms. Sparks stated they go to all of the 9 towns that they serve for the Early Intervention Program. It's not considered educational, it's considered development. These are for children Birth to 3, so it's not under the Department of Education yet. That's why it doesn't show up there, nor do they come to the Town for their pre-School or Kindergarten Programs. Mike stated that answers the question because he knows at 3 years old the School is responsible. Ms. Sparks stated Birth to 3 it's the Department or Bureau of Developmental Services and the Department of

Health & Human Services. This state is a little bit different in that Birth to 3 is under the Department or the Bureau of Developmental Services and Department of Health & Human Services, so then at 3 to 21 it goes to the Department of Education and then at 21 on it goes back to the Developmental Disabilities Bureau. This state is split up; some aren't, some are all under the Department of Education, all ages. Mike thanked her for all of the work that they do.

Bill Marvel stated his question was based on a misunderstanding of what the \$17,700.00 was contributions from all of the towns, not all of the other towns and was wondering why we were paying three-quarters. Is it apportioned according to the approximate population usage, population of the towns. Ms. Sparks stated the most fair way that they decided a long time ago was to look at the population consensus which sometimes is 2 years behind, but in looking at the proportion that way because some years they've served 68 children from here, this year it's 51. Other towns it's been 1 child or 5 children, so it just seemed like the most fair way each year by population and then a formula which is a pretty minimal amount per capita.

Dick Klement asked you do service children over the age of 3. Ms. Sparks stated they do, but not under this Program. Dick stated if the child is developmentally disabled, as an example you would receive funds from the District for that. Ms. Sparks stated not all of the children that come through the Early Intervention Program who continue to be developmentally disabled or require special needs, come to their pre-School program. They couldn't handle as many children as they see in Early Intervention. Some of the children in Early Intervention actually don't go on to need more services; they actually "graduate" from Early Intervention. Some go on with very minimal, they may have started out with significant issues but have really benefited, particularly in the area of speech. You can sometimes have a non-verbal child who in that three years or even two years learns how to talk and then the parents are saying why are they talking so much. They go on to the School System and don't require services or they require minimal services. The children that they basically have at Children Unlimited in their pre-School Program are the most severely involved children in the District. Behaviorally, Autism, multi-handicapped and severe Syndromes that require a lot of different therapies which they have their own therapeutic staff. Those are the only children that they have there.

Dick Klement stated correct, but to answer the question, are those children supported from the Conway Educational System. Ms. Sparks stated Conway, Albany, Bartlett. Dick stated so you are receiving funding from the Schools for the children in that niche above 3. Ms. Sparks stated yes, if they qualify and that has to be moderate to severe.

Dick stated you show some 90 children and families services that cost would be about \$270,000.00 per year based upon your statistic of \$3,000.00 per child, but yet you're showing a total revenue of \$233,000.00 in your 2012 proposed Budget. That's about a \$40,000.00 difference. Ms. Sparks stated she wasn't quite sure she understood Dick's question. Dick stated on your Town Warrant Fact Sheet you show some 90 children/families services provided; the cost per child is \$3,020.00 per year. If he has his math right, that's about \$270,000.00 per year, but on

page 2 you have your total income for 2012 proposed at \$233,000.00 and that's about a \$40,000.00 difference.

Chairman Sordi stated he thought the 90 and the \$3,000.00 is done in arrears. Ms. Sparks stated yes. Chairman asked how many children were they planning on servicing in the coming year; is it going to drop from 90. Ms. Sparks stated their Budget is based on a much lower number. They have to base their budget on between 68 and 70 children because that's what the Contract that they have with the State says and that's what they're projected numbers are for them and they base their Budget based on that. However, they are required by law, rule or whatever, to serve whoever comes through the door and so they have to make that work.

Dick Klement asked how did they do that because you budgeted \$260,000.00 last year and that's a \$10,000.00 difference. Ms. Sparks stated they had a loss. Chairman Sordi stated they spent \$266,000.00. Dick asked if they had a Reserve Account and Ms. Sparks stated yes. Dick asked how big it was. Ms. Sparks stated it's very small, it's about \$6,000.00.

Karen Umberger stated her question just dealing with "to help defray Early Intervention costs for children who are uninsured or underinsured with no ability to pay". Medicaid doesn't cover some of this. Ms. Sparks stated that's correct. Medicaid only covers those children who are Medicaid eligible. Karen stated but if they can't pay, generally aren't they Medicaid eligible. Ms. Sparks stated no, they are not. Around here particularly people have 2 and 3 jobs and they don't have insurance and they also don't qualify for Medicaid and that's where they run into the difficulty. The other thing that you should know is that they do bill for private insurances, but she knows just as the members know all of the loopholes, and a lot of kids with developmental delays aren't covered and like last year they billed \$82,000.00 and received \$8,100.00 from those billings. This past year they billed \$79,000.00 and she thought they received \$9,500.00 back. There's a lot of billing that goes through, but there are a lot of loopholes for kids with developmental disabilities and there are even insurances that don't pay anything for the developmentally disabled. However, they are entitled to intervention.

Karen Umberger asked of the 90 children, how many fall into this category. Ms. Sparks stated if she could break that down into a monthly number that would be great. If they are serving approximately 32 children in a month, about 17 have Medicaid and the others either have some insurance or have no insurance. That's why she comes to ask for this assistance.

Mike DiGregorio asked how often do you have someone who either has the full insurance or who pays in cash. Ms. Sparks stated they are not allowed by either the State or Federal Government to charge anybody a co-pay or for the service. Mike stated if someone came in and the child was under 3 years old and wanted you to work as a Speech Therapist, they couldn't just write you a check. Ms. Sparks stated under 3 they would have to go under the Early Intervention Program and no, they are not allowed. That's been in discussion for the last 6 years on whether they would think about asking for a parent's share of the cost, but at this point, the Federal Government does not allow that because it's under the IDEA.

Chairman Sordi stated they can make a donation. Ms. Sparks stated some of the parents do; they can make a donation.

Chairman Sordi thanked Ms. Sparks for coming in.

WHITE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

Patricia McMurry, Executive Director and Judith Towne, Business Manager, made the presentation to the Committee. Ms. McMurry stated in listening to the other non-profits they have a similar story in that through the Governor's Budget they had over a \$130,000.00 loss this year. Her background is in For Profit Health Care so she does run the Health Center like a business and it's fortunate that she does because otherwise it would be "Oh my God" and that was her first reaction until she could work with the team to decide what they were going to do and how they were going to do it.

Ms. McMurry stated some of the financials the members see do not reflect some of the changes they have made in the Budget and what she means by that, as you've heard from other people, they've made downward or decreases in the benefits, and again it's not something you want to do but you've got to do what you've got to do. They have made some changes in their programs; they are presently in the process to re-engineering what they do and how they do it. Members have probably seen her in the paper several times accepting checks so she is constantly writing Grants and has been pretty successful in doing that. Some of the Grants help them leverage themselves and some of the Grants go directly into operations. They are all very strategic in what they write for.

Ms. McMurry stated overall what the Health Center does is they are charged with helping provide an out patient setting for people who are underinsured or uninsured. They do derive some revenue from people who do have insurance, Medicaid and Medicare. About half of their patients are on a fee scale that's based on the National Poverty Level. They really are there to provide those services to people in need. Besides just regular medical out patient services, they have many wrap around services that also help patients in terms of nutrition, social work and Food Bank. They have many Funds that they fundraise for to help people with their medications if they need an antibiotic that day when they walk out their door and they don't have the cash to do so, they have a discount with a local Pharmacy and they pay the Pharmacy. Those people are not repeats, it's usually only one time they do it and that's the way they like it because they do fundraise for that Fund. They have several Funds too. Overall that's what they do. This Committee over the years has heard what they do, members hear what they do and the only change is that it's a little more of a financial struggle this year. They appreciate the Town's support in the past and hope members think what they provide is a good return on the investment because they certainly think that they do.

Chairman Sordi stated a few weeks ago someone came up to him that knew he was on the Budget Committee and said that they had heard that the Center was going to close and he was sure it was because of some of the cuts in funding that they had. At least through 2012/13 what's the long term prognosis, have you been able to re-engineer such that your long term

financial health is sound. Ms. McMurry stated yes and it's going to be another year, but they do plan to stay open and it looks like they absolutely will. It may be that as they look at things they focus a little differently on the services they provide and it may mean that some services are done differently and those are things that they have to really look at. It's not an easy re-engineering process because of all of the services they have traditionally provided. They know that people coming into the Health Center have a lot of needs and what she has said in the past is that people that come see them have less and they feel like they have to provide more and that's traditionally what they have done. The short answer is yes.

Ray Shakir stated the question simply is do you, and if you do, how do you filter out freeloaders. Ms. McMurry stated they do, they ask for their last 3 or 4 pay stubs and if they are not working, Carroll County actually has the highest number of self-employed people in the County and if that is the case, we ask for their W-2. Unfortunately there are people that don't work and aren't self-employed and it's hard to filter some of those people out. There are some people that come in with no documentation and they do serve them; they don't turn people away.

Ray Shakir stated in essence, even though you stated you did, the bottom line is that you don't. Ms. McMurry stated they do as best they can with people that are working or who are self-employed and have full documentation. Ray stated but if they have no documentation, you don't. Ms. McMurry stated if they need medical services, they do see them and they do receive State funds and that is the exportation.

Ted Sares stated he noticed that the physician salary is low; is that because he or she, he recalls having read about the person having come in after having been retired at another location and donating quite a bit of his own time. Ms. McMurry stated they had a physician that moved to Vermont and she was one day a week. The gentleman that they have now is from Maine and he has a part-time practice there and he's also at the Nursing Home as the Medical Director and he works with them half a day a week. Ted stated he's heard some good things about him.

Dick Klement stated you show 3 Social Workers, 2 part-time and 1 full-time, do you meet regularly with the School officials when it impacts on a child when in school. Ms. McMurry stated they don't meet regularly; they meet as needed because they do have teens that are ADD/ADHD and also have other behavioral issues. Dick asked if they would see a benefit for all of the agencies within the geographic area of Town, etc. to kind of form their own sub-group to meet once a quarter and try to harmonize these efforts a little better. Ms. McMurry stated that would be good and there is a group that is sort of like that but not in total and they do meet monthly. The leader of that group is actually their Prenatal Social Worker and they bring people together from the school systems, from Children Unlimited, the physician groups are invited to come as well and they do talk about infants and children that are in the system or going into the system that have issues.

Ray Shakir asked if they were a local non-profit. Ms. McMurry stated yes. Ray asked how does a local non-profit justify a \$91,000.00 salary for the Executive Director. Ms. McMurry stated when she came to the Health

Center, the Health Center was just about ready to go under and the reason they brought her in was because of her skill level. Again, she has a For Profit background in Health Care; she was an Executive Director in a hospital system for many years. Currently she has brought in as much money as her income just through Grants, donations and so forth. She believes that she is worth what she gets and the Board believes that too.

Chairman Sordi thanked Ms. McMurry and Ms. Towne for coming in.

VAUGHAN COMMUNITY SERVICE, INC.

Denise Leighton, Administrator, and Dan Jones, Chairman of the Board, made the presentation to the Committee. Ms. Leighton stated she was here to report to the Town of Conway the services they provided to the community this past year. During the calendar year of 2011, the Vaughan Community Service Food Pantry served the Town of Conway by providing 89,373 meals to 2,371 residents, plus 142 Thanksgiving baskets and 40 Christmas baskets. The needs are growing larger by the month, especially with the fuel costs this year and they are seeing an increase in clients using the Food Pantry. Managing the Food Pantry involves over 3,380 volunteer hours just to assist the clients, plus a paid employee who assists her in keeping the figures for their monthly reports which includes 364 hours a year. This does not include her time overseeing the operation and organizing fundraising efforts to purchase additional food. There is a tremendous need in our community for the services they provided, not only as the Food Pantry but the service of providing the Clothing Depot.

Ms. Leighton stated the Clothing Depot offers clean, warm clothes (coats, pants, sweaters, shirts, shoes and boots) and accessories, such as hats, mittens and gloves, and socks to the residents of Conway. In addition to the Clothing Depot and the Food Pantry, they provided assistance for community referral and resources. They also host a monthly support group for Survivors of Suicide.

Ms. Leighton stated through donations their discretionary fund has been able to assist and provide some of the following services: home fuel, groceries, gas cards, electric bill, vehicle repairs and motel housing assistance for displaced residents. These recipients are residents of Conway that fall through the cracks.

Ms. Leighton stated this past year we received funds for the Hurricane Irene Flood victims and were able to help several families with this Fund. They were also able to help the Town of Conway through this Fund with \$1,000.00 towards their efforts that were not covered by FEMA. They were a conduit for the Ian Merserve fundraising as a community service.

Ms. Leighton stated she is also serving as Chairperson for the committee to help revamp the town's Welfare Department application. The Vaughan Community Service, Inc. serves the towns of North Conway, Conway, Center Conway, Intervale, Redstone and East Conway. Thank you for your time and consideration and she was open for questions.

Ted Sares asked if the increase in part reflected the fact that the Vaughan Community Center Day Care is reducing theirs. In other words,

there is an offset of \$320.00+. The umbrella is the Vaughan Community Center; one spoke is the Day Care and another spoke is yours and one is going down and another is going up. There's an offset and the offset is that it's a minus. Was that factored in. Ms. Leighton stated no. Ted stated he noticed that she talked about Tropical Storm Irene and, of course, that's a one in a one situation, it's likely not to happen again. Ted stated he thought is was wrong to factor in anything based on that. Dan Jones stated he thought he could qualify what Denise (Leighton) was saying. Was there thought put into why Vaughan has increased and Day Care has decreased. First of all, Day Care for whatever reason for the last two years has been turned down at their request for \$5,000.00. Ted stated he was sorry because he didn't realize that and thanked Mr. Jones for answering his question.

Ray Shakir stated same question he had for the last non-profit. Do you and how do you filter freeloaders. Ms. Leighton stated for the Food Pantry she makes sure people bring her a copy of their electric bill so that she knows they are a resident of Conway plus a picture ID to make sure that they aren't getting outter lying communities coming in for the Food Pantry. They don't deny anybody for food. Ray stated then you have no method. Ms. Leighton stated they have a USDA form that they have to make out and sign of what other services they get now. They don't make that judgment call, they service everybody. Mr. Jones stated there's a full application process they go through and in addition just to make sure that people weren't using our Food Pantry and other Food Pantries in town as their personal Shaw's or Hannaford, we've been communicating with each other to make sure everyone knows whose coming and going. Is it going to happen? You know it will, it's bound to. There are people who will abuse any of these non-profits and take advantage of them. They had a discussion on this at their Men's Breakfast at the Church and the bottom line is for people coming in for the Food Pantry, for people coming in for clothing or coming in for help. He doesn't know why the homeless person is homeless; he doesn't understand why an alcoholic is an alcoholic or a drug addict is a drug addict, he's not God. He thought the time we start trying to play God and make those decisions, we are not doing the work of God.

Ray Shakir stated he wanted to make sure he and Mr. Jones understood each other. He is not disputing that at all; he's not disputing at all that there are people in genuine need, but if anybody's paying attention to life lately, it's gone years ago from a very, very proud existence where you would not even dream of asking for these things unless you really needed it to a situation now where you can get over on people. It becomes stylish to get over on people and he was sure Mr. Jones understood what he was talking about and he thought they were on the same page. Ray understands perfectly that there are people in need, no doubt about it, but what he is just trying to figure out if there is a genuine method of highlighting these individuals. Ms. Leighton stated she could address that for him. They do communicate with other Food Pantries that send her the names if they can and if they found someone that has double dipped as she calls it, they are refused any food from any of the Food Pantries for the following month and then they are told that if they do it again, they won't be allowed to use their services. They try to keep people from doing that; there are so many people in need of food right now.

Chairman Sordi stated one of the things that the Committee heard from George (Cleveland) was that Shaw's provides sometimes too much food for their use. Ms. Leighton stated they do not get Shaw's. Chairman stated that wasn't what he was going to ask; if Gibson has too much food, is there a conduit or a link between them contacting you to provide food. Ms. Leighton stated they have once this year which she didn't even know that they received the Shaw's food and was surprised to hear that. Just so members know, she thought Hannaford sends most of their food to the New Hampshire Food Bank because they do get things from the New Hampshire Food Bank which she purchases from them monthly and it's always from Hannaford so she thought that was where they trickle their overstock or whatever. Chairman stated communication with George might be helpful. Ms. Leighton agreed stating she heard that today so she will find out. Their biggest thing is to find places to store the food. Their numbers are going up and she has to find another place to put clients because they're blocking the doorway when they come in. They have any where from 12 to 15 families four times a week coming in for food now and it's a little overwhelming even for the volunteers and she is trying to get more volunteers because it's becoming taxing on everybody.

Ted Sares stated it was hard to argue with a mission of God, but a 56% increase and it's the highest increase of any non-profit which begs the question, he feels stuck because he's for non-profits, but they come in with something that he feels is not quite right and there's no process or way he can say to them "gee I wish you would come back with less even more than you want but less than you're asking for". The process doesn't allow it; it's all or nothing and that puts him on the spot so later on if he happens to vote no he wants them to know why. He has no choice, there has to be some process, there has to be a way in this process that suggests that they can get a second bite of the apple but there's not. He just wanted them to understand where he was coming from, not that he's going to vote no, it's going to be part of the thought process.

Dick Klement stated you mentioned in passing that when you get food from the New Hampshire Food Bank which is donated to the Food Bank by a number of stores you have to pay for it. Ms. Leighton stated certain items they do have to pay for, not all of it. She thought they purchased stuff like the meats; it's not all free.

Dick Klement stated you provide home fuel, groceries, electricity, etc., etc. There are a number of agencies within the Town, some don't ask for money from us, some ask for a lot of money from us, that duplicates services and that may not be fair to use "duplicates", do you guys work together to figure this thing out. How does a person that if they need heating fuel that there are 6 agencies out there that provide heating fuel and goes to Agency #1 that's used their budget for the year, do they point to another Agency. Ms. Leighton stated more than likely and they do work with the Town of Conway and this is the reason for the revamp of the application which they've had problems with this past year. She is constantly in communication with the Town Office here to find out. People do fall through the cracks because of their incomes or whatever the reasons may be and they try to help them and if she can't help them then she will send them to the next agency down the line. This is what they are trying to do, get a better communication with all of the non-profits that offer these different services.

Karen Umberger stated you mentioned the Clothing Depot, but she didn't think Ms. Leighton did the best service to the Clothing Depot because not only do they have clothes, they have household accessories, small appliances, and there is a very minimal charge. Ms. Leighton stated it's by donation if they choose to. Karen stated for people that do have problems, nobody should be without a coat, nobody should be without clothing because this service is there for the community.

Ted Sares asked Karen Umberger what it was she said about the Clothing Depot because he missed it. Karen stated she didn't think they did as good a job explaining the services of the Clothing Depot as they could have. Ms. Leighton stated they also do give furniture to people if she knows somebody wants to give away furniture. She keeps a list and if somebody should call and needs something, she moves them down to that person to call them.

Bill Marvel stated he was wondering and has noticed that the Day Care Center has been refused two years in a row since the furor a few years back and he was wondering a) if the voters are misunderstanding or perhaps somehow associating the North Conway Day Care Center with the Board of Directors, he thought that was dead wrong in that issue and thereby inadvertently punishing the Day Care Center for what should probably have been directed to Vaughan. Has there been any consideration having Vaughan supplementing the Day Care Center's services for that reason. Ms. Leighton stated actually Vaughan's income has dropped because they do get a considerable amount from the Church each year and their funds have dropped drastically what they used to give Vaughan Community Service. Right now she is getting paid very part-time hours, but she has an assistant to help her so that she can maintain her regular job which is Administrative Assistant for Vaughan, Day Care and the Church so their need for the extra income is administration costs because she's had to hire that person 10 hours a week and where their income has dropped from the Church quite a bit, that's the reason for the difference.

Mike DiGregorio stated first of all he liked the fact that their salary detail was a pretty low number and again he was sure that the Town has been criticized that they spend a lot on salary and benefits but distribute a small amount of money. When you work with the Town, you can't get information from them as to the honesty of the individuals because it's confidential Ms. Leighton stated they have a sheet that has to be signed by the client so that they can speak to other agencies, the Town does. Mike stated so if they sign that piece of paper. Ms. Leighton stated then the Welfare Office can talk to her. Mike stated so that is an avenue for you as Ray (Shakir) was asking earlier, that's an avenue for you to weed people out that may not be terribly honest because the Town can require information from individuals. Ms. Leighton stated she also has an application that she can require information for these other services which she has and then she can check back once they sign off and give her permission to talk to other non-profits. Mike stated so you do have a way of weeding out the people that may be dishonest. Ms. Leighton stated as much as they can. Mike stated and the reality is that there are people out there doing that. We have found people that make very good money go in there and say "I don't make a thing" or "I don't have any assets" and then through the process we find out that they're not being

honest; so you are able to weed some of those people out to some degree. Ms. Leighton stated they were.

Mike DiGregorio stated he appreciated the work that they do; this is one of those things that if we give you a little bit of money you can administer it because your administrative costs are so low and you can distribute that and that's a good thing. Ms. Leighton stated keep in mind they took over the Food Pantry for the Town of Conway, they were asked to do that. Keep that in mind, otherwise this would be on the Town. Mike stated that was another point he wanted to bring up, if they aren't getting it from you or from one of the other agencies, they can come to the Town because of the way the laws are written and get money out of the Town.

Ted Sares asked when that was done. Ms. Leighton stated that was done in about 2000. Ted stated then the delta between \$2,880.00 and \$5,000.00 doesn't reflect that. Mr. Jones and Ms. Leighton both stated no.

Mr. Jones stated he wanted to respond to one thing that Ted (Sares) had brought up and he just wanted to make sure it's clear; the \$1,000.00 they gave back to the Town regarding Hurricane Irene was not like they had \$1,000.00 floating around in their books that they had extra and said here's a donation. That was a Fund that was set up specifically, and he thought it was driven by Greg Frizzell at the radio station, to raise money for Hurricane Irene victims and the money was raised, they were a conduit as a non-profit to take the money in and the goal was to give it back out again to everyone that needed help. They ran out of people fortunately because there were some getting funds from other sources and Earl (Sires) said the Town was short, can you help us out and they had about \$1,000.00 left in the account and they gave it to the Town.

Ted Sares stated it had no impact on the budget. Mr. Jones stated that was correct, no impact.

Chairman Sordi thanked Ms. Leighton and Mr. Jones for coming in.

#### NORTH CONWAY DAY CARE

Jackie Howe, Director of the Day Care Center since 1972, made the presentation to the Committee. Ms. Howe stated our program is requesting funds from the Town of Conway to help working Conway families that are not eligible for the State of New Hampshire Child Care Scholarship Program because they are just over the income guidelines. This situation goes back to the original request for many years to the Town. The majority, 76% and these are current facts, of our families are from the Town of Conway, 28% of the Conway families do receive funds from the State, 48% of those Conway families depend upon the assistance that Vaughan can provide.

Ms. Howe stated it has always been the mission of their sponsoring agency, Vaughan Community Service, Inc. to try and keep the cost of child care affordable for the working families in our town. Many of our working families are in the service industry or working at two or more jobs to make ends meet. Child care costs are a tremendous challenge for these working families. The Vaughan Board established a sliding fee schedule to

help families that are not eligible for State assistance to have access to affordable child care in a safe and nurturing environment. Our center provides this with staff that is both highly trained and State certified.

Ms. Howe stated this past year they served 5,909 breakfasts, 6,883 lunches and 6,271 snacks to help provide nutritious meals for the children in our case. Having a good breakfast and lunch each day helps with these families' concerns in providing for their children's well being and on the right track in healthy eating habits and to be ready to learn.

Ms. Howe stated the cost of operating our program keeps going up. We work to raise money from events including Mud Bowl, our Annual Golf Tournament and our annual appeal. However, this is not enough. They are asking the Town to help them provide quality children care for Conway working families so they can continue to work. Twenty percent of these Conway residents are one parent homes. They are just one step away from having to give up their jobs and go on full assistance if they cannot afford their child care costs. It would, of course, be a much greater cost for the Town than keeping these people in the work force.

Ms. Howe stated the subsidy for these Conway residents, in comparison to the full cost, see their rate sheet, for one week is \$274.00 and this does fluctuate. Annually, they subsidize \$13,700.00 a year to help Conway families. They are asking the Town of Conway for \$3,000.00 or actually \$69.76 per Conway child per year.

Ms. Howe stated they try very hard to make things work for all families in this economic climate. Schedules change and they try to accommodate this with changing staffing schedules. They have the staff available when enrollment numbers are up and decrease same when numbers are down. She believes this is what other businesses do to try and be cost effective.

Ms. Howe stated she hoped that the Board of Selectmen, the Municipal Budget Committee and the voters of the Town of Conway will support their request to assist the Town's working families with an affordable, safe and nurturing environment for the Town's children. If families can stay working, they will continue to contribute to the economy of the Valley. Thank you for providing us with an opportunity to speak with you today about our programs.

Dick Klement stated it has been mentioned you have a bus for Kindergarten to the Day Care. Ms. Howe stated they have a contract with Fast Taxi which is paid for by the parents. Dick asked if they serviced any children outsourced by the School System. Ms. Howe stated they have two children which they bill SAU 9 for. Dick asked where that was referenced in income. Ms. Howe stated it was encompassed in the cost. Dick asked if it would be possible to have a separate line item next year for SAU 9 and Ms. Howe stated they could.

Ted Sares asked if they had been turned down the last two years and Ms. Howe stated yes; they've gotten the vote count and it is getting closer. Ted stated on the other hand, you've come in and reduced your request over the last two years which he thought was very laudable. He thought as an observation what Bill (Marvel) brought up before was just a very

salient point that he thought sometimes, at least in the last two years, this particular non-profit has been punished, not for intrinsic reasons, but for what he would call quasi-political reasons. It's a sad thing.

Mike DiGregorio asked if the Town of Conway goes to full day Kindergarten, how is that going to effect their Budget. Ms. Howe stated it's a mix and it's like this every year (Ms. Howe showing up and down with her arm). Last year they had one Kindergarten child; this year she has 7 and it all depends on who needs their service. She does have one from Conway and the mom leaves work and picks up that child and brings him a couple of afternoons. It will open more slots for Pre-School children, not that she knows of any child care center that is really full right now and that's because of the fluctuating unemployment, but she thought it would open up more spots for younger children because they can move kids around. It's all about being flexible in Day Care.

Mike DiGregorio stated you're saying that you have 7 Kindergarten age kids in there right now, they would be in all day Kindergarten. Ms. Howe stated next year could be a total different thing. It all depends; they have kids that go to Bartlett and they are already in full time and she knows Tamworth went full time and she meant to talk with Nancy Coville to find out what effect that has had on her. Hopefully they can open up more spots to other children and younger is a big issue. It's very hard to find under 3 child care.

Ray Shakir asked how long had the Day Care been affiliated with the Food Pantry and the Clothing Depot. Ms. Howe stated they were the first program that opened up in 1972. Ray asked if this has always been a part of Vaughan. Ms. Howe stated always.

Maureen Seavey stated you also have kids before school and after school. Ms. Howe stated yes and that sort of goes back to Kindergarten, those kids during School vacations, summer time, would be in their books also as far as their being able to accommodate those children.

Chairman Sordi asked if there was a limit on the number of children they can accommodate. Ms. Howe stated license capacity says 100 and they, because of the whole way people work here, they try to fluctuate that. They are real busy in the winter season and real busy in the summer season, they have some of those off seasons that they have to cut back. If parents get cut back at work, they can't afford to send their kids and they do try to be flexible. She does know that the southern part of the State that was mentioned before, there's a lot of employment that goes Monday through Friday, we don't have that here.

Chairman Sordi thanked Ms. Howe for coming in.

#### STARTING POINT

Suzette Indelicato, Executive Director, made the presentation to the Committee. Ms. Indelicato stated they just celebrated their 30 years or existence in Carroll County. They are the agency that provides support, prevention and advocacy services to victims. Their emergency services include a 24-hour Support Line, Hospital and Police accompaniment and emergency shelter, 24 hour consultation to law enforcement and their

ongoing services provide support groups, on-going peer support for individuals, child advocacy center services, Court accompaniment and then a variety of social service accompaniments. The prevention education program sees about 1,000 students each year in 12 schools throughout Carroll County and they work with their Community Education working with law enforcement to do trainings, the community-at-large, they've undertaken a social media campaign this year with some really great response from the community.

Chairman Sordi stated he knew that last year Ms. Indelicato had talked about and he knew it was in the packet, the percent of individuals that have come into Starting Point from Conway. This year it's 37%, what was the percentage last year. Ms. Indelicato stated she did not remember and she didn't bring her application. Chairman asked if it had gone up or down. Ms. Indelicato stated the number did go up.

Chairman Sordi stated on their Budget Sheet, they show they had a successful year with in-kind donations; by in-kind donations, is that just people's time volunteering. Ms. Indelicato stated it is. Chairman asked if it was reflected in the volunteer below that and Ms. Indelicato stated it was.

Ted Sares asked who was on the Board of Directors. Ms. Indelicato stated Dot Seibel is the Chair, Vice Chair is Ed Alkalay, Treasurer is Tom Roberts, Secretary is Rachel Wilkinson; the rest of the Board is made up of Beth Campbell from Conway, Ginny Hollis, Susan Klomp, Seth Dresser and Michelle Rober.

Ted Sares stated the other thing that he has noticed is that each year it has gone up. Chairman Sordi stated no, last year it went down actually. Ted stated how can that be with what he is looking at. Chairman apologized to Ted and stated the reason he asked about the percentage was because it had gone down 2 years ago because they were basing it on the percentage of people from Conway that was using their service. He again apologized.

Ted Sares stated he assumed this year they would not come back with another request because there had been an administrative mistake. Ms. Indelicato stated her Petition is already turned in; one mistake.

Ms. Indelicato stated their Town funding line item has not gone up for the last 4 years. They have maintained the same across the Town line item. What they do is each year they proportion that out based on the amount of victims served in each community and your percent this year is up over last year's percentage and that's why your percentage of the amount is up but they have maintained the final line.

Dick Klement asked if they had a relationship with the High School to exchange information or get a referral for some of these young people. Ms. Indelicato stated they do, they have a great relationship with Kennett and they work with all of their Health classes so that every student at Kennett will see them at least once during their time at Kennett if not twice. They work with their Guidance Councilors to run a Peer Support Group right now so they have a chance to get referrals in that case. Then individual students, they work with the nurses and the

Guidance Councilors so if they have concerns about a student they will go in and see them individually.

Ted Sares stated just to capture the point and it may be that it would help too if the School reached out to these other agencies. Dick Klement stated he asked if it was two-way. Ted stated something's got to make this happen.

Bill Marvel stated he noticed that the Shelter Manager is compensated at such a level you would think that it was a full-time motel. Is the Shelter basically full all the time? Ms. Indelicato stated it is; they have 5 bedrooms and actually have enough space for 15 people and they've been full since they moved to their new location. What people do once they are there is they work to overcome their immediate housing issue. A lot of people can put that in place, there's just no place necessarily for them to go. She has been with Starting Point for 16 years and she was the original Shelter Manager and at that time people only stayed with them for 2 weeks because that's what funding required people to do - move on after 2 weeks. The reality of people who are going to move from an abusive home into to independent safe living is somewhere between 9 months and a year now that someone will be in a Shelter. It's a totally different way of contemplating what a Shelter is. These people are working on their goals; they're making huge strides forward and there's not a place for them to go that they can afford. They are on housing lists and that's when they move out. The Shelter Manager herself is working with a variety of 5 to 8 families, depending on the make up and then in addition to that she does other direct service; she's not just charged with those 8 people.

Mike DiGregorio stated the time period that they are there is quite a bit longer compared to the old days. He took it that there must be a fair amount of training or something that you're working with that person to get them out of that life style. If they are there with you for so long, how are they progressing on. Ms. Indelicato stated most people there have jobs and are working on overcoming other barriers. Some people that come in from an abusive relationship have really no connections; they haven't been in Mental Health Services; they haven't had counseling to address their issue; they haven't had transportation to help their children; they haven't had jobs for the most part; they may not have training because depending on how long that relationship was they may not have entered the work force.

Mike DiGregorio stated he didn't mean training as in work force, he meant teaching, counseling, stuff like that. Ms. Indelicato stated once individuals are at Starting Point then they can avail themselves to all of the services; anyone can avail themselves so they run Support Groups that are on site, provide child care so people can go and engage in those services, but they also recognize that they are an empowerment organization so people have to choose what's right for them. She can run a great Support Group, she can get 20 people in the community to think it's great, but if you are there because you are forced to be there, you're not going to make steps forward with that. They work with people to find the right fit for them; it might be them, it might be Mental Health, it might be using something else. The people do spend a lot of time working on themselves and on their children while they are in

Shelter and they make great strides. She was really proud of the Shelter Program as it is and as it has grown because they see people come from not ever living on their own or not ever feeling that they can be independent and have a budget and make steps to be safe on their own to being able to do that and transitioning out.

Mike DiGregorio stated and that's the ultimate goal; to transition out and be on their own. Mike further stated he wasn't sure how to ask, but what kind of a success rate do they have with that. Do they have people that have gone through the Program and then 6 months later they're back. How successful is the Program. Ms. Indelicato stated with the Emergency Shelter, there's kind of two ways to think about it. Some people use Shelter for what's really a respite, they're just looking to stop the immediate violence, they're not ready to leave their relationship, they really just want the violence to end and they are still in the state of the cycle of violence that they believe that if they go back things will get better. So they really use the Shelter as respite to end the violence that's temporarily happening.

Ms. Indelicato stated the people that are staying longer are people who have committed that the relationship can not be fixed and need to leave that relationship. They serve about 50 people in their Shelter a year and one thing about the economy is that people who leave generally leave because they've been experiencing years and years of violence that's not gotten any better. By the time people leave, they've exhausted all of their chances of going back. This year in particular they served two individuals out of the 50 that did go back to the relationship; a majority of the others left and went into other housing. Of that 50, not everyone left and went to their own independent housing; some of them found roommates and moved on; some of them found other living situations. Living in a communal situation is tough. You try living with 5 other people that you don't know and at any given time she can take somebody out and put somebody in. Communal living is a really tough environment and so people end up not being able to live in communal living and end up sleeping on people's couches.

Ms. Indelicato stated what they define as success at Starting Point is that somebody will know that their door is open again if violence reoccurs in their lives and they need the support in order to get on. To say that success is that somebody moves out to their own home, isn't always defined as success because if somebody moved out and thought that Starting Point could never provide them any services again because they were asked to leave because of a rule violation, that's not success to her. Success is that this individual will leave, find their own way through a safe life free of violence and knowing that they are there again in the future. That's probably not how you would define success, but that's how she does.

Bill Marvel asked how many actual families were represented by this nearly \$500,000.00 expenditure last year. Ms. Indelicato stated their total number of individuals served was 632. Bill asked does that not include children with their mothers. Ms. Indelicato stated depends; if they provide a service to that child then that number is in the 632. If they provide services to a mom, but not directly to her child or if she comes in to work on a Restraining Order and safety planning and her child

is in the room, they don't count that child if no service has been provided.

Bill Marvel stated he guessed he didn't state his question clearly enough. What he really meant, getting back to the Shelter, how many families are represented in that. Ms. Indelicato stated she didn't think she had those exact numbers with her and honestly couldn't give the number of family units. Chairman Sordi asked if she would be able to get that information to the Committee. Ms. Indelicato stated yes, she can get that information. It was 50 individuals over the whole year that they served in the Shelter, but what the break up was she honestly couldn't say off the top of her head, but she can send an e-mail or follow up with the Committee. Chairman asked that she forward the information to Earl (Sires).

Chairman Sordi thanks Ms. Indelicato for coming in.

COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES, INC.

Ruth Hall, Esq., Supervising Attorney at Community Legal Services and Jeannette Haney, Director made the presentation to the Committee. Attorney Hall stated she would like to say that in understanding their Budget given to the members that there were a couple of things that they wanted to note. One is that they help people help themselves. They don't do free legal services, at least right at the moment, but they do do low cost legal services. They require user fees from these folks that come to them and it's been quite an experience helping folks, helping them understand the Court system, helping them through their legal problems and helping them through some very difficult financial times. Since members had been given the packet of information which shows that they helped 6 people in the two months since they started up again in their North Conway location, they've added two more individuals and they also went back through their information by hand yesterday for 2008 and 2009 and found an additional 9 people who had traveled to Rochester from Conway.

Attorney Hall stated they currently have 3 Clinic locations: one in Rochester, one in Keene and one in North Conway. They don't do this by proportion, percentage or population. The reason is that what they've seen in their Clinics is that once the word gets out that they are there, they are able to handle with more and more ease the numbers of people that come in because each person that comes in represents a user fee. It costs the same up front in terms of paying their attorneys and paying their hosts. It costs the same amount for them to help one person in a Clinic in Keene in an afternoon as it does to serve 5 people because it's all proportional. The attorneys get paid per session. A session is a unit of time that they measure which is approximately an hour that they spend with the client. Their host also gets paid on an hourly basis. The host is the person who welcomes the client, goes over the initial contract with that client, sets up the Clinic and breaks down the Clinic. Those are their only two paid positions.

Attorney Hall stated in the past sporadically Jeannette (Haney) and she have gotten occasional stipends when, for instance, they ran Bingo games for 14 months. That enabled them to actually pay each of them just under

\$100.00 a week for doing that. Unfortunately, when you do something like that it takes an immense amount of time to run the Bingo that's bringing in the money and they found it took 6 to 8 volunteers every week for a period of time from 4 hours to 6 hours depending on how much each individual was taking so they decided it was better to forego the stipend and concentrate on other fundraising activities that were perhaps more relevant to the people that they were helping in an immediate way.

Attorney Hall stated they will not be coming back here when they get to the point that they are serving 18 people and saying "we want twice as much" or anything like that because what they need is a good kick in the pants to help them get North Conway very well established. She would like to use the paradigm that they saw happen in their Keene Clinic. They had a young attorney there that came and shadowed Attorney Hall a couple of times when she happened to be doing the Rochester Clinic and she got so excited about the concept of what they do that she said she wanted to do this in Keene. She lives in the Swanzey area and said she wanted to do it Keene. She went out, boots on the pavement, talking to people, finding a location and that actually was mated with not only her enthusiasm, but the first host that they had in Keene got out these brochures that they have all over the Keene area and now they have a Clinic that is full about half of the time which means it is getting closer and closer to being self-supporting.

Attorney Hall stated the problem comes in that she and Jeannette (Haney) and their Board members donate their time. There's an awful lot of back office stuff that needs to be done. She would love to be able to receive a salary for this, but realistically all that they are asking is that each town that they have a Clinic location in give them a little money so that they can afford to spend the time that they need on additional advertising and answering the phone. Mondays they have the phone ring off the hook. Literally Jeannette can't spend any time working on anything else because she is just there answering the phone "Community Legal Services", "Community Legal Services".

Attorney Hall stated some may ask why don't they do free. First of all, there's no State or Federal funding for any free services for them. There are already established programs and that's a different clientele. They aren't trying to reach people who qualify for free legal services, there's already programs in place for that. There's no Federal or State program for what they do. Probably all of you would fit into the category of people they could help because each of us probably has a budget and can probably live within our means. If an emergency arises and you need to pay a lawyer, you're going to be paying somebody \$200.00 an hour and probably will have to dish up a retainer of any where from \$2,500.00 to \$25,000.00 depending on the matter you're talking about. People can't afford that kind of thing and yet what do we deal with, we deal with the same kind of necessity problems that you've talked about today. For instance, Shelter; they deal with a lot of eviction problems. Does that mean that they jump right into court and raise the banner for this client and stamp all over the Landlord? No, they try to work with people and try to save the situation so that they won't be coming to the Town of Conway and they won't be saying "I've just gotten evicted and I need a place to stay and I need you to pay my security deposit and first month's rent"

which is something you are going to be hearing more and more of. They have some very good things to offer the Town.

Ms. Hall stated the other thing is that they believe in paying it forward. She did not know if any one saw the movie "Pay It Forward". That's their philosophy. They think every single person no matter how poor or how desperate or how oppressed have something to give to their community and they give them the opportunity, again they'd rather have it be a carrot than a stick, they give them the opportunity to lower their session fee by \$15.00 by putting in an hour of community service. They offer that community service first to the people they partner with. In Keene they partner with Hundred Nights which is a homeless shelter and they've worked something out with them because they've given them location and access to the Internet which is what they basically need in a Clinic. Here in Conway, they are partnering with the Visiting Nurses and Hospice who recently merged and they have in back of their big white building on Seavey Street a unit and that's where they have their Clinic. Right now they are kind of renegotiating what time and day because the VNA and Hospice haven't quite figured out when they're needing the rooms that Community Legal Services would use, but generally speaking they expect it to be Wednesdays late afternoon or early evening. It was a little earlier in the afternoon, but they had some other time demands.

Attorney Hall stated they are asking that the Committee support them; they think that they do have a lot to offer the Town. They did come before the Budget Committee and did not know if any of the current members were on it, but their then Director came before the Budget Committee a few years ago and the advice that they got, at least as she recalls and she didn't think she made the presentation, the advise they got was that they want to actually be supporting non-profit folks who have a presence in our town so they stepped back and said okay, that makes sense. They are now going to each Town where they have a Clinic location and asking those towns to support them. Does that mean you're supporting some folks from some other towns, heck yes, because they can't control who makes the phone call and so on. Everything is by appointment; everything is prepaid into a holding account. They don't get paid until the actual service is given and at that point they have the money transferred from the holding account to their operating account.

Attorney Hall stated they've been able to help in total about 310 people since they started in 2005/2006 and as she said they definitely know that 9 plus 6 of those were from the Conway area. Those numbers will spike once they are able to intensely blanket the area with their brochures. They have hired a host for the Conway Clinic and part of her job includes, not just what she told the members about a host doing, but she's their publicity person. Because of their volunteer status and because of their funding limitations, they can only pay her \$10.00 an hour for 10 hours a week. That's what she gets and all of their folks get a 1099 at the end of the year and she believes they did 19 of them. If you have any budget questions, Jeannette (Haney) is the one really familiar with the Budget.

Chairman Sordi asked if they do civil and criminal cases. Attorney Hall stated yes and no; it's a little bit complex. The way the Rules of Court were changed, there was nothing saying you couldn't do criminal cases

when you did unbundled services. Unfortunately, or fortunately depending on your view point, judges don't like having somebody coming in for just one hearing when there's a criminal and possible Constitutional consequence. What they do is they've just started another program involving a slightly different Contract although the same fees where they've estimated how many prep sessions, how many sessions with the attorney and how many Court appearances will be required for those criminal matters that do not involve the possibility of jail time. She's talking your basic speeding tickets, your violations and your misdemeanor B's because you can't get jail time for those. The reason they are doing that is because people who get a Public Defender there has to be a possibility of jail time. You don't qualify for a Public Defender if there's no jail time hanging over you.

Chairman Sordi stated the other question that he had was given that they are a non-profit, he looks at their Budget and for 2011 Budget they show a profit for the Actual 2011 of a \$5,000.00 profit and in your Budget this year, you're showing a \$2,000.00 profit. What happens to that additional income. Attorney Hall stated basically it's just held in reserve. They have frequent equipment failures. Their Clinics are composed of a couple of printers and a couple of laptops in each location. North Conway currently has just one printer and two laptops, they haven't bought a second printer yet. Because they get hauled around a lot, in and out of storage, setting up, breaking down, they don't last that long. Periodically they have to replace the laptops and other associated equipment, but usually it's the laptop that gives out. Chairman stated he would suggest that in the future they should show that as a reserve. Attorney Hall stated the other problem is that they were on a different fiscal year. Chairman Sordi stated he read and understood that.

Ted Sares asked has the scenario been considered that you view your mission as a start up and you need angel funds to start it up so you go to the various attorneys in North Conway and Conway and ask proportionately on their billings for a contribution to start you up instead of doing it this way. Attorney Hall stated they had thought of that and the reason it doesn't work is because they are viewed as very low cost competition. It's very unfortunate; to her it doesn't make any sense because their clientele are people who couldn't afford to retain an attorney, but the way it gets perceived by bar members unfortunately very often is "ooh, they're offering it for not free, but for a whole lot cheaper and they're going to take my business away". They don't do that because their mission is about bringing people together with competent counsel and many times they refer people out. If someone comes, they spend a session with them, and they say they know so and so over here on Seavey Street handles that kind of work and maybe he could work something out affordable, they'll make a referral. They're not about keeping these people, but that's a message that's really hard to get across to small businessmen, small business people. Your local attorneys here are basically all small business people and unfortunately Community Legal Services is viewed as competition.

Attorney Hall stated they do have a lot of Grant applications going out and are hopeful of getting at least one and that's what they put on their Budget. They just had a Web-on-air with the New Hampshire Charitable

Foundation about the Tilletson Fund which is for the North Country, more north than you guys are and are very hopeful about being able to get some funds from them. That's what they are about. They have done it gruelingly user fee by user fee, but now with this many Clinics going it is just almost at the point of where they have to close the doors of her private law office because they're spending so much time on this thing that they love.

Mike DiGregorio stated he would look at it as competition for the local attorneys and maybe Attorney Hall could clarify for him, but in his mind if someone goes into an attorney's office because they're having problems, usually there's some kind of compensation back to them, the client. If Mike came to her (Attorney Hall) and said he was having a problem with someone and was suing him for something, Mike's going to get some kind of compensation back. Attorney Hall stated no, that's so rare. Mike stated if someone came to you that had a problem that was financial, they were going to sue somebody for something, they don't come to you for that. Attorney Hall stated not very often. Jeannette Haney stated she thought what he was talking about was a contingency thing where you would get money because they would represent him and collect money from somebody else and come back. They do not do contingency.

Mike DiGregorio stated so if he had a Landlord that was treating him badly or trying to evict him, that's more of what you are talking about. You don't get involved in any cases at all where there would be monetary value coming back. Attorney Hall stated true; they usually try to find an attorney who does that kind of work that they can funnel that case to. People sometimes come in with Worker's Comp cases for instance and there's a lot of very competent New Hampshire attorneys that do Workers Comp and if the person is already receiving Workers Comp and what you're going after is that lump sum award because the company is fighting that, it's something they can get another attorney to take because they are going to get some financial remuneration. Unfortunately, there's an awful lot of cases where people have genuine issues and they're really hurting, but there isn't any pot of gold, it's not a rainbow it's a thunderstorm and there's no pot of gold and they are there with this little tiny umbrella trying to help them learn how to get through the process. Ms. Haney stated one other thing that they do handle is people that are threatened with foreclosure. Attorney Hall stated very successfully. Ms. Haney stated they do file the paperwork for them and try to work out something with the mortgage companies.

Mike DiGregorio stated to Attorney Hall that she mentioned she is also in private practice. He assumed that some of the other attorneys are as well. Attorney Hall stated yes. Mike stated if a client came in the door in this world that we are talking about right now and it turns out that it's going to be a monetary issue, do you send it over to the private aspect of these attorneys. Attorney Hall stated no; it varies on the individual. They try to assess whose going to be the best fit, they have 5 attorneys that are currently contracted with Community Legal Services, some of them have expressed interest in various things such as bankruptcy. Community Legal Services can not file an Appearance in a Federal Court because the Court Rules that allow them to help people on this pay as you go, chunk by chunk basis, are State Court Rules. In Federal Court, if you file an Appearance, you're stuck for the case and

that's it so of course if somebody's going to file bankruptcy, the bankruptcy attorney involved has to state this is his fee and gets it up front because he's in for the duration of that case. Anything Federal, they can talk to somebody about it, they can say this is what the process is, this is what you're going to face, here's a selection of attorneys that can do it and explain what the paperwork is and so on, but Community Legal can not file an Appearance in a Federal matter for them.

Mike DiGregorio stated he assumed that at the same time if someone's walking in the door and you think whatever they've got going on is totally frivolous, he assumes she would tell them that and say pay your bill and stop complaining. Attorney Hall stated that's one of the biggest gifts they can give a community is eliminating some of these frivolous things. They happen occasionally when people misunderstand their rights. They don't happen quite as occasionally as what the public perception is out there, but people will come in and say this particular thing happened to me, I have a right, blah, blah, blah, can't I sue. Community Legal asks for more facts, listens to what they have to say and if it's not a legitimate case, she'll tell them not to go down that road. Community Legal is not going to help with that and any private attorney is probably not because you can't afford to pay them or you wouldn't be here.

Bill Marvel stated this is one case where your explanation of how you avoid competing with private attorneys works against you because anyone who can take business away from a lawyer gets his vote, but does the Bar Association not still assign Pro Bono cases. Attorney Hall stated yes, but this is not Pro Bono, this is not free. Bill stated he understood that, but except for the cost involved, is that not essentially equivalent. Attorney Hall stated no, not at all. Bill asked how so. Attorney Hall stated it's a different clientele. The Pro Bono attorneys that give their work want to be somewhat assured that there doing this and that it's not going to people who could pay, but don't. The Pro Bono Program in Concord which is sponsored by the Bar Association has an application process and people either qualify or they don't, similar to what LARC which is the Legal Resource Referral Center and New Hampshire Legal Assistance have, which is a very particularized application process. If you are earning more than 125% of the Poverty Line as set by the Federal Government that year for the size of your family, then you don't qualify. She was not sure if they use the same scale over in Concord for the Pro Bono Program, but no, it's not the same clientele.

Attorney Hall stated they are helping people who need a little extra help in the department of lower fees to be able to handle the process. Very often people just need some guidance and then they'll go into Court and they'll handle the Court part on their own or Community Legal often gives people homework in their session. They will say the next thing you are facing in your process is this, you need to get this, this and this done; go here to get this piece of paper, go get your criminal record in Concord to show that what she's saying about you isn't true; do this and do this. They will hand them a homework assignment and people would never have thought of those things. Once they've gotten those things they can go into that custody hearing or whatever it is and actually be more successful than they would have been otherwise.

Bill Marvel stated he knows from personal experience that the Pro Bono system and the Bar Association is not as rigorous as it should be in determining eligibility. Attorney Hall stated she did not have any inside knowledge to comment on that. Bill stated but, despite her explanation, it still seems somewhat equivalent. Attorney Hall stated all lawyers have an obligation, but it's not like a law, they have an obligation as professionals to do something to help out their communities, but Pro Bono is a term; the Program is free, but the actual term, the actual legal term means doing it for a lesser cost. There are reduced fee programs, but the problem is there's usually a waiting list. Very often what happens, for instance they just got a frantic call from someone, and this happens over and over and over, someone who puts their name on the list for Pro Bono help or has even been qualified for some other agency such as NHAL, which has cut way back by the way, and it comes up to a week before their hearing date and they have not gotten a lawyer because there's a waiting list. They call them and say "I've got a hearing in 4 days, what am I going to do?" Unfortunately when this lady called yesterday they don't even have a Clinic before her hearing, so Attorney Hall made special arrangements for her to come in to see her and she is going to handle it as a CLS attorney because that's part of what she does, as a supervising attorney, is to fill in those gaps.

Attorney Hall stated the system ain't great, but with each little part helping she thought we are moving towards better representation for folks and it's all about getting that playing field a little more even, and she's not just talking about rich and poor because that's kind of an artificial thing, but when you walk into Court and you're facing on one side an attorney, like herself who has been doing it for 25 years and knows all of the tricks of the trade, or you have someone who is pro se, for one thing the case takes longer, it bogs down and what they are trying to do is insert an attorney into that process as much as they can at a much lower cost for folks.

Chairman Sordi thanked Attorney Hall and Ms. Haney for coming in.

Chairman Sordi reminded the members of the next meeting Monday night at 6:30 PM.

**Betty Loynd moved, seconded by Ted Sares, to adjourn the meeting at 11:53 AM. Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Iris A. Bowden, Recording Secretary