

JOINT LEGISLATIVE FISCAL COMMITTEE

Legislative Office Building, Rooms 210-211

Concord, NH

Friday, September 13, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Ken Weyler, Chair

Representative Keith Erf

Representative Jess Edwards

Representative Mary Jane Wallner

Representative Peter Leishman

Senator James Gray

Senator Jeb Bradley

Senator Regina Birdsell

Senator Lou D'Allesandro

Senator Cindy Rosenwald

(The meeting convened at 10:00 a.m.)

(1) Acceptance of Minutes of the August 16, 2024 meeting

KENNETH WEYLER, State Representative, Rockingham County, District #14, and Chairman: Good morning. It being 10 o'clock, I will call the Fiscal Committee meeting to order for September 13th, 2024. First item on the agenda is the acceptance of the minutes.

****** JAMES GRAY, State Senator, Senate District #06: So move.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Motion by Senator Gray, second by Senator D'Allesandro to accept the minutes as written. Is there any further discussion? Seeing none. All in favor say aye? Opposed no? The minutes are adopted. Abstain. The minutes are adopted.

***** {MOTION ADOPTED}**

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: And you wish to be recorded as abstain?

(2) Old Business:

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Okay. We don't have any Old Business.

(3) RSA 9:16-a, Transfers Authorized:

(4) RSA 9:16-a, Transfers Authorized and RSA 14:30-a, VI Fiscal Committee Approval Required for Acceptance And Expenditure of Funds Over \$100,00 from any Non-State Source:

(5) RSA 14:30-a, VI Fiscal Committee Approval Required For Acceptance and Expenditure of Funds Over \$100,000 From any Non-State Source:

(6) RSA 14:30-a, VI Fiscal Committee Approval Required For Acceptance and Expenditure of Funds Over \$100,000 From any Non-State Source, and RSA 9:16-c, I, Transfer Of Federal Grant Funds:

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN 2021

CONSENT CALENDAR

(7) RSA 14:30-a, VI Fiscal Committee Approval Required For Acceptance and Expenditure of Funds Over \$100,000 From any Non-State Source:

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: We're moving on to Tab 3. And there is a Consent Calendar that covers Tabs 3 through 7. The House has asked to be removed under Tab 7 Item 281 and 284. Are there any requests for removal from the Senate? Seeing none. I'll entertain a motion to adopt the remainder of the Consent Calendar with those two exceptions.

****** LOU D'ALLESANDRO, State Senator, Senate District #20:
So move.

REGINA BIRDSELL, State Senator, Senate District #19:
Second.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Senator D'Allesandro moves, Senator Birdsell seconds to adopt the remainder of the Calendar. Any further discussion? Seeing none. All in favor say aye? Opposed no? That motion is adopted so we'll go to --

***** {MOTION ADOPTED}**

KEITH ERF, State Senator, Senate District #28:
D'Allesandro?

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Yes.

REP. ERF: Who moved and seconded?

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: D'Allesandro and Birdsell. Okay. Now we'll go to Tab 7 and look at Items 281 and 284. Beginning of the tab. Both items deal with the Department of Health and Human Services and we see the finance officer, Mr. White, is here. I'll recognize Representative Erf for questions.

REP. ERF: Let him introduce himself first?

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: All right. We'll let him introduce himself.

NATHAN WHITE, Chief Financial Officer, Department of Health and Human Services: Good morning, Members of the Committee. Nathan White, Chief Financial Officer with the Department of Health and Human Services.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Thank you.

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REP. ERF: Thank you, Mr. White, for being here. So in your -- not your -- but in the comments in the note it indicates that the -- the population of people not -- are still in E.D.s has gone down about half over the past year, and the wait time has dropped by about half over the past year. And you or somebody was kind enough to provide me the -- pointed to your on-line charts, and it seems that those numbers were as of May. And if you look as of today, it's gone back up again, both the numbers of people in the emergency rooms and the length of stay that they're there. And, Mr. White, if you had anything to say about that, if you can speak to that.

MR. WHITE: So -- um -- I -- I believe this was in response to FIS 24-281 which was the New Hampshire Hospital, I -- I think initially where we responded. And -- and we did provide an overview just for everyone's awareness on the Committee, we did provide a link to a Dashboard on-line that is for Mission Zero, which is the State's effort to get wait times down to zero. I mean, we -- we certainly see fluctuations in those numbers on a day-to-day basis; but overall the trends have been pointing in the right direction. Are you referring to like the most -- the most recent numbers that you were saying were going up?

REP. ERF: Right. So I'm referring to the -- the page you sent me to the link you sent me to.

MR. WHITE: Yeah.

REP. ERF: There's actually three tabs you can choose from. The middle one seemed to be the one that related to the numbers of people in the emergency departments awaiting a bed. And the -- and it seems to be a one year span basically from last September to this September. And it shows as you just indicated, and it has two things. It has the absolute numbers, and it also has the rolling 30-day average. And in looking at that as you just indicated

the -- the trend was down starting last September all the way until, I believe, May, both in terms of the absolute numbers and the rolling average. But since May it has gone the other way, it's been trending up. Not -- not to the original place it was a year ago, but maybe halfway back up, if you will, and halfway down in terms of the time they're spending there.

MR. WHITE: What specifically are you looking for a comment on?

REP. ERF: The trend.

MR. WHITE: Um -- so I -- I don't have the numbers directly in front of me to -- to that analysis. I can go back and take a look at that and provide more thorough commentary on those numbers, but I'm not looking at them directly in front of me. And I think there may be other factors that play as well, and I think I would need to check with the experts in the field just to make sure that we can provide you with a comprehensive answer.

REP. ERF: Okay. Thank you. Follow-up.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Follow-up.

REP. ERF: So on a separate note related to this. Can you provide us the contract, the Farnum contract you referenced if it's available or when it becomes available?

MR. WHITE: Sure. The -- the -- the Farnum contract that we're currently working on that -- that we're asked to being extended here the authority for this {Inaudible}. Yes, absolutely. We can bring that forward and those metrics once we release that to the Governor and Executive Council, but it's currently under development.

REP. ERF: Thank you.

MR. WHITE: Of course.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Further questions on Item 24-281? Seeing none. I'll entertain a motion to adopt it.

** SEN. D'ALLESANDRO: So move.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Motion by Senator D'Allesandro.

REP. ERF: Second.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Second by Representative Erf. Further discussion? Seeing none. All in favor say aye? Opposed no? The item is adopted.

*** **{MOTION ADOPTED}**

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Moving on to Item 24-284. I believe it's Representative Erf again has a question.

REP. ERF: So a couple of questions here. Um -- I guess the first one just the easy one. How much money is left to be expended that we're extending the date for?

MR. WHITE: I -- I -- I would have to go back and get that figure -- uh -- just to look at what's encumbered, what's been spent year-to-date, and what's available; but I -- I can provide that to you pretty easily.

REP. ERF: Okay. Thank you. And the other question is so I asked about the Medicaid roll-off to which you responded with a very excellent description; but one of the things you put down was not applicable. And, yet, if I go back and look at the -- the reference notes from prior years, that's exactly what's referenced in those notes. And I guess I'm just curious as to, you know, you sort of have these pools of money, and then they get expended in different ways.

Now, the Call Center thing was in all of them, but so is Medicaid roll-off. So I don't think it was completely inapplicable to ask about it because there was no reference in here to that no longer being part of the need for the funding.

MS. WHITE: Okay. So -- so -- so is your question will this funding be needed in -- in the future because of the -- because the Medicaid unwind is primarily complete? Is that your question?

REP. ERF: I guess I make it as more of a statement. Perhaps if you don't intend to use funding for purposes for which it was priorly said it was being used for and you're extending that funding, that you would just indicate that that funding is no longer -- that component is no longer needed to be funded.

MR. WHITE: Sure. So the Call Center currently fields calls and often deals with calls for people calling about eligibility. We are including a Prioritized Need in our next budget for this purpose to continue funding the Call Center. Because if -- if we do not have a Call Center that's funded, eligibility staff will likely be increased with additional burdens, which could increase wait times, which may have an impact on anybody seeking services.

REP. ERF: Thank you.

MR. WHITE: Of course.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Further questions on Item 284?

** REP. ERF: Move the item.

JEB BRADLEY, State Senator, Senate District #03:
Second.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Representative Erf moves and Representative Bradley seconds to adopt Item 24-284. Further discussion? Seeing none. Are you ready for the question? All in favor say aye? Opposed no? The item is adopted.

*** {MOTION ADOPTED}

REGULAR CALENDAR

(8) RSA 7:12 Assistants:

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Moving on to the Regular Calendar under Tab 8. The first item is Department of Justice. Money -- request for money for litigation expenses. Representative Leishman moves to adopt. Is there a second? Second Senator Bradley. Further discussion? Seeing none. All in favor say aye? Opposed no? The item is adopted.

*** {MOTION ADOPTED}

(9) RSA 9:16-a, Transfers Authorized, and RSA 9:17-a, III, Limitations:

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Moving on to Tab 9, Item 24-303. Any discussion? Senator Rosenwald.

CINDY ROSENWALD, State Senator, Senate District #13:
Thank you. I do have a couple of questions. This is, as I understand the narrative, this is about the Transitional Path Program housing for individuals who are leaving New Hampshire Hospital. It seems like we had money in Behavioral Health for this program, but we also made a House Bill 2 appropriation to the vendor NFI North. Would it be a fair characterization to say that we double budgeted these funds and now the Department is transferring one bucket of them to elsewhere?

MR. WHITE: No. So I can provide a little bit of history just for all the members and I'll directly answer --

SEN. ROSENWALD: I'm sorry, did you say no?

MS. WHITE: I said no, and I can directly answer your question, Senator Rosenwald.

So for context, in the Fall of 2020 the Department of Health and Human Services opened up the Path Transitional Housing Program for individuals that were exiting New Hampshire Hospital beginning in January of 2023. Following approval of a contract in December by G&C with NFI North, NFI North took over operating the facility at that point in time. As Rep -- as Senator Rosenwald referenced, during the budget in HB 2, Chapter 79, Section 504, it -- it carried forward funds that were previously appropriated via 91, Section 408, Laws of 2021, and it expanded the purposes for that. And within that was transitional housing and part of that as a goal of reducing the Emergency Department wait times. And the division -- and the reason we were seeking that was at that time was because it was -- I mean, it was more of a dynamic situation that we were trying to solve, and we were also rolling out Mission Zero at that time because that Amendment component happened during the Senate phase, which was also around the time that litigation was pretty active as well. So it was a direct response to that.

So while there are Other Funds budgeted in DBH, those have other purposes and earmarks. If you'd like, I can provide -- I can provide you with a plan for the General Funds that we do have budgeted -- uh -- for the other contracts if that would -- if that would give you -- um -- a -- a better explanation and the detail you're seeking just to -- just to verify that it's not double budgeted.

SEN. ROSENWALD: I think that would be helpful, but could I follow-up? Thank you. So the -- the Federal Court order, and this really goes back to Representative Erf's question about E.R. boarding, gave the State until May of this year to get any individual with certified IEA out of the E.R. within six hours. We are not yet doing that, are we? We still have people waiting longer than six hours.

MR. WHITE: I'm -- I'm not directly involved at that level of detail. I can certainly reach out to the individuals that are monitoring those -- those details on a closer basis and give you a follow-up explanation, if that's helpful. But I -- I prepared more so for the financial component today, less for the litigation that I don't necessarily think I should be commenting on.

SEN. ROSENWALD: You're just the person in front of us. Thank you.

MR. WHITE: Of course.

SEN. ROSENWALD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Further questions on the item? Seeing none. Is there a motion to adopt?

** SEN. BRADLEY: So move.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Senator Bradley moves. Senator D'Allesandro seconds to adopt the item. Further discussion? Seeing none. All in favor say aye? Opposed no? The item is adopted.

*** **{MOTION ADOPTED}**

(10) **RSA 216-A:3-g, Fees for Park System:**

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Moving on to Tab 10.

** SEN. BRADLEY: I move the item.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Senator Bradley moves the item. Is there a second?

SEN. D'ALLESANDRO: Second.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Second from Senator D'Allesandro. Any further discussion? Senator -- Senator Rosenwald.

SEN. ROSENWALD: Good morning.

SARAH STEWART, Commissioner, Department of Natural and Cultural Resources: Good morning. Sarah Stewart, Commissioner of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, and I'm thrilled to be here this morning for Jace Wirth's first Fiscal meeting.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Congratulations.

MS. STEWART: Yes, it's a big milestone in anyone's life.

(Inaudible).

SEN. D'ALLESANDRO: You have very low expectations.

SEN. ROSENWALD: Congratulations.

MS. STEWART: Jace comes to us with a wonderful background in outdoor recreation in the ski industry and he is our new JD, if you remember JD who ran Franconia Notch State Park and Cannon Mountain for 16 years. So I'm -- I'm thrilled to introduce you. I'm just going to let Jace briefly introduce himself and then we can get into any questions you have.

JACE WIRTH, Mountain Manager, Division of Parks and Recreation, Department of Natural and Cultural Resources:

Good morning, everyone. It's a pleasure to be here. So I'm originally from Steamboat Springs, Colorado. I've spent 14 years in the industry coming from the private sector. I've built my career on transforming independent resorts. And I've delivered dramatic improvements in financial results, operational efficiency, customer experience.

Most recently I served as General Manager of Granby Ranch in Colorado, similar in size and scope to Cannon Mountain/Franconia Notch State Park. And I'm -- I'm looking forward to the project presently at the mountain.

Um -- we're getting ready for fall foliage coming up. Already the leaves are starting to turn; but we're in a little bit of a breather here over the next 10, 14 days until we see the wonderful crowds come in. We're also preparing for the winter, and I've hired a number of key positions; but right now we are full tilt headed toward winter.

So, with that, you know, we've submitted our pricing recommendations to the Committee, and seeking your approval on them.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: We look forward to your changes and also you will find it much more colorful foliage in New Hampshire, having flown over the mountains in Colorado. They'll be all green on one side and all yellow on another because it tends to be monoculture on each side of the mountain, but it's not that way here. Questions? Senator Rosenwald.

SEN. ROSENWALD: Thank you. It's difficult to read this small type. But as I understand it, if you are a New Hampshire senior resident and you want to ski at Cannon on a weekend, and you buy your ticket on-line, you're getting a 21% price hike. And if you're going to the window the day you want to ski it's a 24% price hike. Could you explain why that's appropriate, please?

MR. WIRTH: Sure. That's a great question. First of all, I'll couch that in terms of all of the products. I think when I came in in late March, certainly we're a little bit in assessment mode as we evaluate the Fiscal Year 24's budget deficit. Presently, over the last three years we've seen a dramatic increase in costs upwards of 11% in trailing three-year average, with only about a 3% growth in revenues. So -- um -- a pricing study was conducted. I looked at our demand as well. And so all of the products that you see here I factored in a number of implementations to drive additional revenues, including to the New Hampshire resident products.

SEN. ROSENWALD: Follow-up.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Follow-up.

SEN. ROSENWALD: Thank you. Um -- I think I heard that you're pretty new to the state and the area. So are you aware that two years ago we increased the prices on seniors by about 30%? So in the last two, three years, we will have upped the prices for seniors to ski at a State Park by like 50%.

MR. WIRTH: Yes, I'm aware of that. I think what's important to consider it's been a part of -- of my study right now. If you can picture a particular day at the mountain, only about one-fifth of the skiers on the hill are actually on full price paid tickets. And so the outcome of that is, you know, Cannon overall benchmark's lower than industry average as it relates to revenue yield per skier visit. The rest of the skiers on the mountain on that particular day, ma'am, are season passholders. And, you know, split pretty evenly between season passholders and then all folks who are on heavily discounted programs.

So as I was evaluating demand, as I was evaluating products, I certainly looked for areas, number one, from a

whole-love business standpoint. How can we drive additional paid ticket visitation to increase our revenues. And then, also, where are some of those ways that I can, you know, if -- if it's not just a full penalty on New Hampshire residents, I -- I don't want it to be interpreted like that, but what are some of the ways that we can just overall increase revenue yield per skier visit and that was one of the considerations to that.

SEN. ROSENWALD: Final follow-up.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Final question.

SEN. ROSENWALD: Really more of a comment. It just seems like you're doing it on the backs of seniors. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Senator Bradley for a question.

SEN. BRADLEY: Thank you very much. My three sons live in Steamboat. You probably knew --

MR. WIRTH: Oh, wonderful.

SEN. BRADLEY: Yeah. I'm glad you're, you know, looking at the fee structure for skiing at Cannon. Cannon is way underpriced compared to other areas in New Hampshire. And certainly Steamboat Springs I believe is like \$150 or something like that for --

MR. WIRTH: If I may? It's actually \$300 to ski.

SEN. BRADLEY: Yeah. So --

MR. WIRTH: On a day.

MS. STEWART: Really?

SEN. BRADLEY: Congratulations. It's long overdue and my understanding is seniors in New Hampshire still get a weekday discount that's pretty significant. So I congratulate you.

MR. WIRTH: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Further questions on Item 301.

PETER LEISHMAN, State Representative, Hillsborough County, District #33: I have one, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: We have Representative Leishman.

REP. LEISHMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome to New Hampshire. So I was looking at the military day pass increase, and I see that on-line now is \$58 and the advanced or on-line purchase goes to \$79, which seems rather a steep climb for those that have served in the military and a benefit that we've provided for years.

MR. WIRTH: May I react? Two important considerations. So a key implementation that you'll find here in this menu is the implementation of variable pricing which is a common tactic used by virtually all ski resorts in North America, Europe, et cetera. And what it does is we're looking for opportunities to increase revenue yield per visit where we see price -- more price in elastic demand. So on your menu you'll see standard rates and then peak rates right there. On those days that I've listed below, those are where we see more price in elastic demand and where those price increases, price tiers take precedence and -- and that's where we would seek to boost that yield.

So for most of the days of the year, it's only about 20, 25 percent of our operating days. For the vast majority of the year, military one day lift tickets will be \$64 in advance, and then \$84 at the window. Um -- and then during

those peak period times where we see the greatest demand, that's when it would be \$79 and then \$99 at the window.

REP. LEISHMAN: Further question.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Follow-up.

REP. LEISHMAN: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. So, financially, how do you stand? It's always been a struggle to make ends meet, and I see you're raising about \$400,000 with your proposed fee structure.

MR. WIRTH: Hm-hum.

REP. LEISHMAN: So how does that put us financially?

MR. WIRTH: It's a great question. So, first of all, we're working with approximately about a \$1.5 million budget deficit from prior operating year. A couple of impacts.

There was a -- an unfavorable utility contract that took place in the last two years that took our electric rates from seven cents a kilowatt hour to 21 cents. It had a -- a \$700,000 plus net negative impact on the budget and that's a large contributor to that deficit. We have re-negotiated that contract or should I say DAS has re-negotiated that to more favorable terms. Now we're at .1387. So we've already taken out a large part of that deficit, upwards of 600 to \$700,000 a year there.

With some of the cost control methods and some of the contemporary best practices that I've implemented, we'll be expected to save at, you know, somewhere in the neighborhood of 300 to 400,000 in costs on this particular upcoming operating year. And then this kind of completes the puzzle on the revenue side is where can I meet that next, you know, 400, 500,000 to balance the budget at the end of the day. These are baseline figures, too.

If -- there's a real correlation between snowfall and increased visitation, snowfall and increased yield.

So -- um -- I'm optimistic that with a good snow year, knock on wood, that our revenues will advance beyond this. But I think that's a starting point from cost control methods, a renegotiated utility contract, and then targeted price increases.

REP. LEISHMAN: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Further from the Committee? Senator Gray.

SEN. GRAY: Uh -- so what you said and what I heard.

MR. WIRTH: Okay.

SEN. GRAY: What I heard was we're trying to shift the veterans and we're trying to shift the elderly into a slower period of time where they would get a better discount; is that correct?

MR. WIRTH: That would be one way of interpreting it, yes.

SEN. GRAY: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Senator Birdsell. We've already got -- we've got a motion to approve. All in favor say aye? Opposed no? Wish to be recorded?

***** {MOTION ADOPTED}**

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Thank you. It's an impressive first performance.

(11) Chapter 337:4, Laws of 2024, Continuation of Recruitment and Retention, and RSA 228:12, Transfers

From Highway Surplus Account:

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Going to Tab 11. We got an early item or late item rather, but it's the earliest of the late items. Number 24-298, Department of Transportation. Moving some money. Is there a --

** SEN. BRADLEY: I'll move it.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Is there a motion to accept?

SEN. GRAY: By Bradley.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Moved by Senator Bradley, second by Senator D'Allesandro to adopt the item. Any further discussion? Seeing none. All in favor say aye? Opposed no? The item is adopted.

***** {MOTION ADOPTED}**

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Before we move to the information items, we have another group of late items that we'll be discussing. Senator Bradley.

SEN. GRAY: Senator Gray.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Senator Gray.

SEN. GRAY: I do want to talk about late items before we get into the individual ones. This time I've got 12 on this list and I've got one even beyond that. And when I got these, I got these yesterday afternoon, okay. Uh -- getting that many items that short of time before the meeting does not give the Senators or the Representatives enough time to delve into these issues as much as they can. That does two things. That either says well, gee, we close our eyes and we push the button yes, you know, to vote for them, or we table them. And I do expect that there will be a motion to table at least one of these items because of that.

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So the deadline for getting to the Committee Members needs to be like noontime on Wednesday for even items that are going to be late, except in very rare circumstances. And I certainly trust the Chair to approve those that are those very rare circumstances. But, again, just as a general statement, that's the feeling expressed by the Senators when we met on these items is that there's just too many that are late items that if we had gotten them, like I say, by noontime on Wednesday, it would have given us time to interact with the Commissioner on those items and figure out what's going on. I know some of the other Senators may want to comment.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Further comments. Senator D'Allesandro.

SEN. D'ALLESANDRO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I -- I don't want to beat a dead horse; but, indeed, Senator Gray's made a -- I think a very worthwhile comment. You know -- you know how diligent we are at looking at these things and getting into these things. And you know by the quality of the questioning that you receive that people do their research, they want to know what's going on. And there are huge sums of money that are now moving. And if you -- if you don't know where and -- and when and how, it -- it becomes problematic, not only to you, but to the constituency that you represent. And it's -- it's -- it's very -- it's very important that we get these items in a timely manner. Uh -- and I know it puts a heavy burden on you as Chair to accept them, because that's -- that's the way it goes. That's the way this Committee is structured. But, indeed, I think all entities should be aware of the fact that -- that late items should only be considered on an urgency or an as-needed basis. And that's -- that's the key to the -- the -- the success of this -- this Committee, because it proves that we've done our worthwhile, you know, due diligence in terms of examining these items and -- and that's -- it's a key item. A lot of things happen here. We

spend a lot of money here. We appropriate a lot of money here, and I -- I think knowing the full array is -- is very important.

So I support Senator -- Senator Gray's comments and -- and I -- I understand the difficulty; but, indeed, I impress upon people that the budgets are getting bigger. The items are more complex, and we don't have a large staff to do research on this. We do it ourselves. So, indeed, if we don't get the items in a timely manner, it creates a problem for all of us. And -- and I think that's -- that's problematic because we want to do a good job. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Thank you. Senator Bradley.

SEN. BRADLEY: Thank you very much. While I agree with both of my colleagues, I -- I also want to give a shout out to Commissioner Caswell. The fact that, you know, we're under and GOFERR is under so much pressure to get these funding items funded so that we don't have to give, you know, this money back to the Federal Government, that's where the pressure is coming from.

So -- um -- we, obviously, need as much time as you can provide for us; but you deserve a shout out for, you know, making this happen, too. So I think we just have to deal with what we have to deal with. So, anyway, thank you, Taylor.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Further? The blame lies with me. When I get requests for late items, I almost always accept them. This was later than usual; but when I'm looking at ARPA items which we've all dealt with, there's very few of them that we really find fault with because we know that these things are shifting all the time. He's -- he's going through thousands of requests all the time. He's full-time reviewing all these things and seeing which one is most deserving. And he does a pretty good job of bringing us the

ones that we would probably all approve of. But we're going to see another pile next month, because that's a deadline.

And so I thought it would seem better to try to get some of them out of the way this meeting because I know we'll see more in October and, hopefully, we will have a little more time. But, again, he's right up against a deadline. He's gotten information at the last minute. Well, we can't spend this because we got disapproved for that. And so things are churning all the time, and I was just trying to be helpful. I know I put all of us under some strain; but I thought, you know, if we could look at it the night before and still have a good idea that it would be a good idea to get them out of the way in September before we get another slew in October. I apologize for the strain it's put anybody under.

SEN. BRADLEY: So if I could just add to that. No apology necessary. You deserve a shout out, too. So, I mean, you're doing what you have to do as Chair and I appreciate that.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Thank you. Representative and then Senator.

JESS EDWARDS, State Representative, Rockingham County, District #31: Yeah, I -- I -- just want to say as a former Army budget officer, at the end of every fiscal year there's a -- a crisis in trying to make sure that you obligate all the money. So I appreciate the stress that these programs have created in order to get the communication and the approvals needed. So -- so I do appreciate that.

I -- I just would ask that in the -- in the hurry and the rush of the days to come, in particular, that we maintain a sharp discipline, as sharp as possible, around using this one-time money for one-time investments and not go the easy route to slip some of this money into ongoing

operations. Because there's going to be a bill to pay for that in the coming years if we -- if we artificially feed operations now with one-time money.

So -- so that would be my encouragement as to at the working level maintain that discipline. One-time money for one-time expenses. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Senator Gray.

SEN. GRAY: I just want to go back and -- and clarify. I'm not opposed to late items themselves. But when we get a late item, if you get it after, say, noontime, the Senators get it after noontime on Wednesday, that is when we generally review these things and have the comments given to LBA, who can interact with the agencies and get us back the thing.

Okay. So there is a big difference between receiving the item at noontime on Wednesday and receiving the item oh-dark-thirty on Thursday. Okay. There's a big difference when, you know, research that you can do and questions that you can ask to be able to do that.

So it's not that we're opposed to all the late items. Okay. And there are going to be ones that come in even Friday morning. But we need to keep those to the minimum and give us the time to research the ones that -- so when I look at the list of 12, I won't go to the 13th one, but if we look at the list of 12, how many of those could we have actually had Wednesday at noontime? So, again, just --

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: All right.

SEN. GRAY: -- for what it's worth.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: I didn't realize that you were meeting that early this week. In the future for October

they will not be accepted after noon on Wednesday for late items. So anything further?

Let's move to the first item on the ARP late item list. 312, 24-312, is New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food. Any questions on this item? Entertain a motion to approve. Motion by Senator Bradley, second by Senator D'Allesandro to approve Item 24-312. Further discussion? Seeing none. Are you ready for the question? All in favor say aye? Opposed no? The motion is adopted.

***** {MOTION ADOPTED}**

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Next item is 24-313, Department of Safety.

SEN. BRADLEY: I'll move the item.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Motion by Senator Bradley, second by Senator Rosenwald to approve Item 313. Any further discussion? Seeing none. All in favor say aye? Opposed no? That is adopted.

***** {MOTION ADOPTED}**

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Moving on to item number 314, Department of Safety again.

****** SEN. BRADLEY: Move the item.

SEN. D'ALLESANDRO: Second.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Senator Bradley moves the item. Senator D'Allesandro seconds. Further discussion? Seeing none. All in favor say aye? Opposed no? That motion is adopted.

***** {MOTION ADOPTED}**

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CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Moving on to Item 315, Emergency Relief and Recovery.

** SEN. BRADLEY: Move the item.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Senator Bradley moves the item. Senator Rosenwald seconds. Is there any further discussion? Seeing none. All in favor say aye? Opposed no? That motion is adopted.

*** {MOTION ADOPTED}

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Moving on to Item 316 from the Emergency Relief or the ARPA -- ARPA, more ARPA funds. Any further discussion?

** SEN. BRADLEY: Move the item.

SEN. BIRDSELL: Second.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Senator Bradley moves the item. Senator Birds -- was it Birdsell second it for Item 316. Any further discussion? Seeing none. All in favor say aye? Opposed no? Item is adopted.

*** {MOTION ADOPTED}

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Moving on to Item 317. This is Emergency Relief and Recovery. Is there any further discussion on this item? Senator Bradley moves the item. Senator Rosenwald seconds. Any further discussion? Seeing none. All in favor say aye? Opposed no? That item is adopted.

*** {MOTION ADOPTED}

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: And one abstention, Senator D'Allesandro.

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Moving on to Item 318. Senator Bradley moves the item. Senator Birdsell seconds. Further discussion? Seeing none. Senator Rosenwald.

SEN. ROSENWALD: I do have a question --

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Okay.

SEN. ROSENWALD: -- for the Department. Well, actually, for -- I don't know it's for Nathan or for Commissioner Caswell.

TAYLOR CASWELL, Commissioner, Department of Business and Economic Affairs: I'll try, Senator.

SEN. ROSENWALD: Thank you. The explanation says this is the first of its kind -- um -- living arrangement in the state. But -- um -- there's a contract with an organization called Community Options that operates ten homes or 12 in New Hampshire, three of which are in Nashua, for individuals with developmental disabilities. So I'm not sure how this is different that makes it the first of its kind.

MR. CASWELL: Well, I would have to say that I can't confirm that it's the first of its kind. That would be something that we certainly went back and forth with the sponsor of the -- or this organization and that was information we get. So there might be some distinction that I'm not familiar enough with to speak to today. But I guess I would just put an asterisk next to that statement, perhaps.

SEN. ROSENWALD: Might Nathan know?

MR. WHITE: Um -- I -- I do not know the nature of the request or the specific project that's planned, but you -- you are correct. We have a \$3.2 million contract

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with Community Options for 32 beds in the state currently that's active; but I don't know the specifics of this program to be able to differentiate what's unique about it. We have to go back and just verify that.

SEN. ROSENWALD: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Further questions?

****** SEN. ROSENWALD: Move the item.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Senator Rosenwald --

REP. ERF: It's already been done.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: It's already been done?

SEN. BRADLEY: Yeah, I {Inaudible}.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Very good.

SEN. ROSENWALD: I'm sorry.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: All right. All in favor say aye? Opposed no? Item 318 is adopted.

***** {MOTION ADOPTED}**

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Moving on to Item 319, Information Technology. Any questions on this item? Senator Rosenwald has a question.

SEN. ROSENWALD: Yes, thank you. My day to ask questions.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: And we see Mr. Goulet take a seat.

DENIS GOULET, Commissioner, Department of Information Technology: Good morning, Mr. Chair, Members of the

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Committee. Denis Goulet, Commissioner of the Department of Information Technology. Good morning.

SEN. ROSENWALD: Good morning. We do have a health care workforce problem in New Hampshire. And -- um -- we've looked at various efforts to increase the pipeline of people entering health professions from programs in middle -- starting in middle schools to rural residencies, towards more training for nurse practitioners, lots of ways to increase the health care workforce. And, also, we always look to bring new doctors in.

I guess my question is that -- um -- I'm looking at the last paragraph on Page 2, which says the solution to this backlog is to implement a new, more effective licensing system. And it's really more of a comment. I mean, I think this is good and it will help; but I think it would be naive of us to think this is going to solve our health care workforce problem. Because there are a lot of different things we need to do. This is one and it's good, and I fully support it; but -- um -- I hope we're not getting the public to think that by making the software work faster we're going to get people faster doctors' appointments or faster entry into substance use treatment or mental health treatment because I -- I don't think this is the solution to that.

MR. GOULET: I would agree with that, and I think the intent of that comment, and I apologize if it wasn't clear, it was -- the intent was more around the -- the accuracy and timeliness and accountability of the process by which we vet and adjudicate those -- those applications. That's -- we -- we intend to solve that or improve that a lot. Um -- and I, you know, I've heard feedback directly from individuals on the experience and it's -- and sometimes it's not as good as it could be. And then that's what we, you know, the experience of actually getting licensed and that's really where -- where we're targeting.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Further discussion? Okay. I don't believe we have a motion on this. Okay. Motion by Senator Rosenwald, second by Senator D'Allesandro, to adopt Item 319. Is there any further discussion? Seeing none. All in favor say aye? Opposed no? The item is adopted.

***** {MOTION ADOPTED}**

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Moving on to Item 320.

****** SEN. BRADLEY: I would actually table this (Inaudible).

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Senator Bradley moves to table Item 320, second by Senator Rosenwald. Since a tabling doesn't have discussion, we'll move to a vote, unless Senator Bradley wishes to elaborate a little more.

SEN. BRADLEY: No.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Okay. Wants more information. Motion to table. We'll do it by show of hands. All in favor of tabling raise your hand? One, two, three, four, five, six, seven. It's tabled.

***** {MOTION ADOPTED}**

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: All right. Item 320 is tabled. Moving on to Item 321.

SEN. BRADLEY: I have a question of the item.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Okay. Motion by Senator Bradley to move the item, second by Senator Birdsell, and we'll have a question for Environmental Services.

SUSAN CARLSON, Chief Operations Officer, Department of Environmental Services: Good morning. For the record, my name is Susan Carlson, Chief Operations Officer with New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services.

SEN. BRADLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you. I just wanted to confirm my understanding of the four projects and the amounts. Lake Massabesic for \$3 million to raise the level of the lake, which will obviously help the entire water system of southern New Hampshire. \$1.5 million for Londonderry's water planning that will help the Groundwater Trust Fund save that money. \$1.5 million for a water system in Bartlett that has been the subject of litigation for a long period of time. And then I believe it's \$109,000 for a pump unit in the Town of Hudson.

MS. CARLSON: You are correct.

SEN. BRADLEY: Those are the four projects?

MS. CARLSON: Yes, they are.

SEN. BRADLEY: Okay. Very good. And, again, Mr. Chair, thank you for moving this one forward. I think this is a big item. We put a lot of focus on water in New Hampshire and I think all of us, you know, support that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Okay.

REP. ERF: Can I ask a question?

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Representative Erf for a question.

REP. ERF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In the future could you incorporate that kind of information into your note itself? I was just --

MS. CARLSON: Certainly.

REP. ERF: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Anything further? I'll entertain a motion to adopt.

REP. ERF: It's already been done.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Done. Okay. All in favor say aye?
Opposed no? Item is adopted.

***** {MOTION ADOPTED}**

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Moving on to late item number 322.
Everybody have this? This is kind of a summation.

MICHAEL KANE, Legislative Budget Assistant, Office of
Legislative Budget Assistant: Yes, Mr. Chairman. No,
that's informational; but if the members have any questions
for the Commissioner.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: All right. This is just an
informational item. Anybody have any question? All right.
Seeing none. We'll pass over that because we don't need to
vote on it. And the last item I show is 323, Fish and Game,
2,371,800. Any questions on that item? This one needs a
vote.

****** SEN. BRADLEY: I'll move it.

SEN. D'ALLESANDRO: Second.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Senator Bradley moves adoption of
24-323, Senator D'Allesandro -- excuse me -- seconds.
Further discussion? Seeing none. All in favor say aye?
Opposed no? That item is adopted.

***** {MOTION ADOPTED}**

(12) Miscellaneous:

(13) Informational Materials:

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Okay. We finished those items. And is there any before we move to the audit, is there any questions on the information items after Tab 11? All right. Seeing none. We're ready to move to review of the audit of the State Treasury.

AUDITS:

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Welcome the State Treasurer, Miss Mezzapelle.

CHRISTINE YOUNG, Director, Audit Division, Office of Legislative Budget Assistant: Good morning, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Good morning.

MS. YOUNG: And Members of the Committee. For the record, I'm Christine Young, Director of Audits for the LBA. We're here to present our financial audit report of the State Treasury for Fiscal Year 2023.

Colin Quinn, Audit Manager with our office, was the In-Charge Manager on this audit. He will present the report. And also joining us from the State Treasury is our State Treasurer, Monica Mezzapelle, who will be available for questions. And, with that, I'll turn it over to Colin for the presentation of the report.

COLIN QUINN, Audit Manager, Audit Division, Office of Legislative Budget Assistant: Thank you, Christine. Good morning, Mr. Chair, and Members of the Committee. For the record, again, my name is Colin Quinn, and we're here this morning to present the report on our financial audit of the State Treasury for the Fiscal Year ended June 30th, 2023. This report is presented in two sections.

The first section is the Management Letter section prepared by the auditors, and it contains our report on Internal Control and Compliance, along with three audit

Observations, which are then followed by the current status of prior audit findings.

The second section, the financial section, contains our independent Auditor's Report, followed by the Treasury prepared financial statements and notes. The focus of my presentation today will be on the Observations and Recommendations. However, we would be happy to answer any questions you may have on any part of this report.

If you turn to the Table of Contents, you will note that the three Observations contained in the report are all Internal Control Observations, none of which are considered to be material weaknesses. We did not identify any Observations related to State Compliance and Treasury concurred with all three of the audit Observations.

Turning to Page 3, we included a table to summarize the Recommendations as requested by the Committee. We have noted here that none of the Observations are identified as suggesting that legislative action may be required.

The Observations begin on Page 4, with Observation No. 1, which recommends the Treasury continue to improve the recordkeeping for its off-book accounts and prioritize migrating the accounts to the State accounting system. The total balance of the accounts at June 30th, 2023, was approximately \$61 million. These accounts are largely accounted for on Excel spreadsheets, which increases the risk of error and fraud as spreadsheets do not allow for the robust control framework which is inherent in general ledger accounting systems, such as the State system NHFirst.

Observation No. 2 notes the debt management system used by Treasury during Fiscal Year 2023 was limited in functionality, was outdated, and was not supported by the vendor requiring significant staff attention to ensure debt schedules were accurate.

Treasury entered into a contract with a new vendor for replacement system in May of 2024, and we recommend that Treasury work with this new vendor to ensure the new system meets Treasury's needs.

Observation No. 3 on Page 6 recommends the Treasury adopt policies and procedures to document the responsibilities of key employees in order to provide for reasonable continuity of operations in the event of unplanned employee turnover.

Moving to Page 9, the Appendix, located behind the tab on Page 9 reports the current status as of September 3rd, 2024, of Observations contained in the Fiscal Year 2013 State Treasury Management Letter. As noted on Page 11, twelve of the comments were fully resolved and one was unresolved.

The financial section of the report then follows with our Auditor's Opinion, which was modified as a complete set of financial statements was not presented.

The governmental fund financial statements begin on Page 8, with the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the General Fund, Education Trust Fund, and Capital Projects Fund. The balance sheet and statement of revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balance for non-major governmental funds follow on Pages 9 and 10. The fiduciary fund financial statements are then on Pages 11 and 12 with the notes to the financial statements beginning on Page 13.

This concludes my presentation. I would like to thank the State Treasury for the assistance we received over the course of the audit. The Treasurer and her staff were very responsive to all of our requests and comments. We would be happy to answer any questions the Committee may have.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Questions from the Committee?
Comments from the Treasurer.

MONICA MEZZAPELLE, State Treasurer, Treasury Department: Of course. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee. For the record, State Treasurer Monica Mezzapelle.

First, I would like to thank the auditors Christine, Colin, the members of the team, Jean, Donna, Nick, for their -- who were very professional. I want to thank them for their work and, of course, they were very patient with us while they were trying to -- um -- they were waiting for information from us for their audit. So I want to thank them for that work.

And so I would like to start. You may all recall I was once a LBA auditor. So I have a lot of respect for -- for the office and the work that Mike Kane and his team and everyone generates for the State. The State is very fortunate to -- to have the LBA and to have that work that they -- that they produce for the State.

So the -- the other thing I want to say is once about ten years ago I was sitting in Colin's Chair. I had the opportunity to lead the audit of -- the last audit of the Treasury. And at the time it was when Treasurer Provencher was moving on and Treasurer Dwyer was stepping in -- into that role. And I had the honor he asked me to be his deputy and I had the honor to join the Treasury.

Treasury Dwyer was very committed to resolve all of the Observations, and one of my first assignments was to work on all of those Observations. So I'm very pleased to report that we -- we resolved all of them, except for one, and -- and that last one is included in this report and it's Observation No. 1.

So -- so, with that, what I want to say is, if I may, Mr. Chair, I would like to just briefly go over the Observations.

So the first one I could say a lot of things where we haven't migrated all those accounts to the accounting system, but what I would like to focus on today is really that we -- to tell you that we do have plan to migrate them. As you all know, the -- the State is going through the process to upgrade the current accounting system to the -- to the Cloud. And so as part of that new functionality that will be available there's a -- there's a -- a component of that new system that will have a module that will have -- it has a dedicated space for these types of accounts, trust accounts. So our intent is to migrate all those accounts, take the advantage of the full -- full functionality -- take full advantage of that functionality and, again, migrate those accounts and -- and finally record and -- and -- and have the corporate accounting for -- for this -- for this accounts in -- in the accounting system.

So we are mindful of all of those risks and we have implemented controls to, again, try to mitigate any potential risk that manual accounting creates. So, again, we're mindful of that risk, and we have a plan to -- to -- to resolve that -- to resolve that issue.

The second Observation I'm very, very pleased to say that we consider that fully resolved. We have implemented a new debt management system. So as we understand that system has robust internal controls. We already using that functionality. We are already using the reports for the work that we provide for the preparation for the financial statements for the ACFR, and we're also already using it for projections for our budget, that service projections. So we're comfortable with that.

Of course, this needs to go through the process of being audited by the external auditors. KPMG is going to look at that; but, again, we're -- we're -- we're confident and I'm confident that we're going to see a positive outcome and -- and certainly the State, we are in a much better position today than we were before we had this system.

And the last Observation we completely concur with the auditors. We agree we need to have more documentation, not only for what our lead and our key employees produce, but also for our core functions of the Treasury. It is -- it is a real risk to the fact that when I look at my staff I can see many retirements in the future -- in the near future. And so it's -- it's something that we're mindful of and we are not only -- this is, of course, this is part of the solution to have more documentation, but also our goal is to continue to review the structure, our structure, our processes to ensure that we maintain a resilient Treasury, a Treasury that can survive all of us.

So, again, we're -- we'll be mindful -- we are mindful of this risk, and we continue -- we'll continue to create more documentation as -- as recommended by the auditors. And, obviously, that work will be ongoing, and so we'll -- we are committed to continue that work.

And the last thing I want to say, I really want to thank my staff. Here with me is Deputy Treasurer Lauren Warner and if it wasn't for my Deputies, also Rachel Miller, Chief Deputy Treasurer, and -- and my staff, the Treasury wouldn't be what it is today. And so very thankful for -- for having the opportunity to work with them. And I also, again, I want to thank the audits for their work. I feel like I passed the test. I'm not sure. But -- um -- but, again, we're very committed to -- to maintain and I did -- I -- I am fully aware that I'm responsible for having strong internal controls to make sure we are -- internal controls over financial reporting

to ensure that we have -- we protect our funds. And, again, I'm committed to continue with this work. And, with that, I'll be happy to answer any questions.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Thank you. Questions?
Representative Edwards and then Senator D'Allesandro.

REP. EDWARDS: You know, thank you for this. Thank you for the audit. I'm -- I'm focusing on the third recommendation about improving the documentation of key responsibilities. To me, that's been critical in every role I've ever had to be very clear on who was doing what. And -- but I -- but I understand documentation can get out of date. So what I'm really interested in is you're -- you're describing the environment in which your agency is operating. Are you operating an environment in which the rate of change is so great that it's difficult to keep the documentation current, or are you operating an environment where these documents just drew inattention. That -- that -- you just assumed what they said rather than reusing them at annual performance updates, reviews.

MS. MEZZAPELLE: Thank you for the question, Representative. So -- so you are absolutely correct. Documentation can get stale very quickly and that's one of the challenges. I think what we are -- what we -- again, thinking about how we're going to approach this, there are some key -- key -- key pieces that we can focus on.

So, for example, believe it or not there is not a job description of the Treasurer. So we're going to start with, you know, key components of documentation. Things that are, you know, you will consider critical in any organization. So organization start to change a little more. Again, we're going to go through a whole upgrade of the accounting system. The work that the Treasury does relies on that system to reconcile accounts, to -- to receive reports. So for over 15 years has been about the same. And so now we're looking at our structure and trying

to, again, trying to see what the future is going to look like in a year or two.

And -- and you actually -- you -- you -- there are some changes you may see in the budget process in order to prepare for some of those -- some of those changes that we're seeing and, again, trying to prepare for what we see as the Treasury of the future. So -- so we're going to, again, so we're going to try to document key pieces, but it is -- but you're correct. I think that the challenge is going to be to try to keep up with that documentation as we see the Treasury transition, as we see the State changing their environment. Technology needs to drive what we do. A lot of the processes that we do are very manual. We rely on institutional knowledge of some key employees, and we just said they're about to retire. So we need to revisit all of that and rely a little more on technology, and then document procedures based on those, again, around that technology and the key functions of the Treasury.

So I'm not sure that answers your question. I think -- I think the -- the key -- the challenge is going to be to stay current; but also, again, we want to move forward to thinking about how the future is going to look like and -- and just update those procedures as -- as -- as we change.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Follow-up.

REP. EDWARDS: So what I think I heard you say it's a little bit of both. That there was the -- environmentally there was a little bit of a lack of attention to the documentation; but more -- more importantly, as you go forward and you're innovating at the agency that -- that you have a proactive requirement to -- to adapt to the technologies and the procedures and -- and then clarify job roles as you manage your change process.

MS. MEZZAPELLE: That is correct. And -- and so we do have a lot of documentation of different things. But there perhaps, and this is what the auditor -- the audit focused on is to document key -- key concepts, key procedures, key -- key things that are not documented. So we're going to focus on that and, again, try to identify what it is that is critical that we need to have documentation on.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Senator D'Allesandro.

SEN. D'ALLESANDRO: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, Monica, I want to commend you for a magnificent job. I look at the focus every month and let me tell you something, this budget's balanced by interest income and your management of those funds makes that happen. Kudos to that.

I've been around here for a long time. I remember when Bob Flanders was our Treasurer. Now I'm probably the only one around this table who remembers Bob Flanders. Maybe. Okay. Mary Jane does. But -- and I used to deal with him on a daily basis. I think the job you've done is terrific. As I say, just people look at the focus every month. Look at what's happened, look at that bottom line number, and you know that we're in balance because of that. So kudos to the work you've done.

And I think the thing that we all should be cognizant of is the number of retirees that will be happening in the near future. And we've got to replace these retirees with -- with very capable, very competent people, and that's a tough job. And that's very, very difficult to do. But it's an -- it's an ominous responsibility. The retirements will be -- will be something to look at. And then you had a tragedy in your office, a person passed away very unexpectedly. You had to deal with that and -- and you did. So kudos. And I haven't seen an audit report as good as this in a long time where all of the things are addressed.

MS. MEZZAPELLE: Thank you.

SEN. D'ALLESANDRO: So that Michael Kane must be a dynamo putting the pressure on. But that's -- that's really magnificent. It is wonderful to see that, to get a report where everything has been done, and you can't beat that. That's good government at work. So kudos for that.

MS. MEZZAPELLE: Thank you, Senator. Thank you.

SEN. D'ALLESANDRO: I'm going to miss you, Monica, but I've got to tell you this. That \$6.07 return I got because when you did the escheatment process that was wonderful. That made the difference in my budget. So thank you very much.

MS. MEZZAPELLE: Thank you, Senator, and we've been fortunate, speaking of interest, we've been fortunate to -- to -- for a period of time to have a very strong cash balance. So -- and, obviously, interest rates have held. So that we -- we definitely took advantage of that time. Times are going to change. But we -- we feel that we are positioned to -- to -- to do better in the future based on, you know, the opportunity that we have some cash sitting in our bank for some time. So as we've been here and a balanced budget will be key to this; but thank you very much. I appreciate your kind words, and I will miss you, too.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Further? How many employees do you have?

MS. MEZZAPELLE: Twenty-two in total. We're 22.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Thank you. Twenty-two employees. Representative Erf for a motion.

****** REP. ERF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Actually, I have two motions. So the first relates to the financial report of the State Treasury that we just heard. I move to accept, place on file, and release to the public in the usual manner.

REP. EDWARDS: Second.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: All in favor? Motion's adopted. Any negatives? No.

***** {MOTION ADOPTED}**

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Second motion.

REP. ERF: Unrelated to the Treasury.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Okay.

****** REP. ERF: I'd like to make a motion to accept, place on file, and release to the public in the usual manner any audits which will be presented at the October and November Fiscal Committee meetings when available, and I'd like to speak to my motion.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: You are recognized.

REP. ERF: So we currently release reports, such as the ACFR audit, such as the ACFR ahead of time, independent of when the Fiscal Committee meets. And I'm actually asking that we do that for all of our audits, at least the ones coming up in the next couple of months here, so those that work better with PDFs can have those available prior to the meeting. Thank you.

REP. EDWARDS: Second.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Motion second that we have all the audits in the PDF format. Everybody understand that?

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Seconded. Thank you. All in favor say? Opposed no? That motion is adopted.

***** {MOTION ADOPTED}**

(14) Date of Next Meeting and Adjournment:

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Now we talk about -- thank you. Excellent results from all of you. Appreciate it very much. Future meetings. If we go to the third Fridays and we try to schedule them two months in advance we would be Friday, October 18th and November 15th for the third Fridays. If you'd all note those down and let me know if that's -- seems acceptable. We'll go ahead with the October one without objection and be ready for the November one as well.

SEN. BRADLEY: I'll probably not be able to {Inaudible}

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: We'll have a replacement, I'm sure.

REP. EDWARDS: May I ask a question? May I ask a question, Mr. Chair?

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Certainly.

REP. EDWARDS: Okay. The 18th is no issue for me. In November, what -- what are -- what are -- what would be the possible alternative dates given that that's Thanksgiving month? Is there an alternative to the 15th?

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: I think I'm trying to look and see when Thanksgiving comes.

SEN. BRADLEY: It's 28.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: 28th. So it's quite a few days later and it'd be the -- and it be two weeks later that we'd have Thanksgiving. So it would be difficult to move it later;

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possibly earlier, but that kind of puts a cramp on things. October I expect, as I announced, we'll have the final on the ARPA. Hopefully, I'll get it to you Wednesday morning at the latest and -- and November sometimes we have -- we make a motion for the CAFR, because it's -- it might come up late in December. I don't want to have to hold that up.

REP. EDWARDS: I'm fine. Thanks for the discussion.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Thank you. So, without objection, those will be the dates for those meetings. Is there any further information to come before us? Appreciate you all. And all those of us that won the Primary we'll be seeing you again. You're not running again.

SEN. D'ALLESANDRO: {Inaudible}.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: I've read that.

SEN. D'ALLESANDRO: {Inaudible}.

REP. EDWARDS: Microphone.

SEN. D'ALLESANDRO: He was a good Senator, good contributor.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Dave Boutin. He was also a State Rep on Ways and Means.

SEN. D'ALLESANDRO: And we send our sympathies to his family.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: Thank you. Better put that in the record. Anything further? Entertain a motion to adjourn.

** SEN. BRADLEY: So move.

CHAIRMAN WEYLER: All in favor? We are adjourned. Thank you.

JOINT LEGISLATIVE FISCAL COMMITTEE

September 13, 2024

(The meeting adjourned at 11:11 a.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Cecelia A. Trask, a Licensed Court Reporter, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript from the YouTube audio/video recording of the proceeding in the above-entitled matter to the best of my professional skill and ability.

Cecelia A. Trask

N.H. Licensed Court Reporter #00047

JOINT LEGISLATIVE FISCAL COMMITTEE

September 13, 2024