

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday December 30, 2015 09:30AM
County Hall Building
Commissioners Conference Room
12 Court Street
Keene, NH

PRESENT: Commissioners Stillman Rogers, Charles Weed, and Peter Graves

STAFF: County Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Maplewood Administrator Kindopp, PT Director Laurel Moody, IT Director Hummel, Sheriff Rivera, Register of Deeds Tilton, and Assistant County Administrator (ACA) Bouchard

GUESTS: Members of the public.

Vice - Chairman Weed opened the meeting at 09:31AM with Commissioner Graves present and recognized Administrator Coates who introduced Linda Mangones and Josh Meehan of Keene Housing for the purpose of discussing Master Agenda Item #331: CDBG Grant Riverbend (Rehabilitation of 24-unit Riverbend Apartments on Route 10 in West Swanzey and conducting three public meetings concerning the \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant for the rehab of the low-income Riverbend housing units in Swanzey NH.

The Vice-Chair opened the first public hearing at 9:32AM

Linda Mangones, CDBG Administrator at Keene Housing, gave a brief introduction to the CDBG program. She stated the major purpose of the hearings was to explain and discuss the proposed Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application for the rehabilitation of Riverbend Apartments located in West Swanzey.

She also explained that for technical reasons it was necessary to hold this meeting as three separate public hearings: (1) proposed project (2) Cheshire County Housing and Community Development Plan, and (3) Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan.

Commissioner Rogers then joined the meeting at 9:34AM

Ms. Mangones then presented an overview of the CDBG program. CDBG funds come from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and are administered in New Hampshire by the NH Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA). The County may apply for up to \$500,000 for housing and public facilities projects each year, and up to \$500,000 for economic development grants. All projects must meet the state goal of having primary benefit for low and moderate income persons. Application for Housing and Public Facilities grants are due on the last Monday in January and July of each year. Applications for Economic Development projects are accepted throughout the year on a first-come/first-served basis. Also available are opportunities to apply for Emergency grants and Planning grants.

Cheshire County has participated in the CDBG program since 1995, and has been awarded grants in many years. Because the amount of money is lower this year, 2016 will be a particularly competitive year.

Linda Mangones provided a project handout. The proposed application to the CDFA is for \$500,000 in CDBG Housing and Public Facilities funds. The funds would be used to provide

MINUTES
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grant funding to Keene Housing to be used for the rehabilitation of Riverbend Apartments which is located on Route 10 south of West Swanzey. Riverbend has 24 apartments, all of which are permanently affordable housing for families. The buildings were constructed in 1997 and now need new roofs, new windows and siding, and other exterior repairs. This area of West Swanzey has an old private water system, and the water it delivers causes plumbing and heating fixtures to require replacement sooner than would normally be the case. As a result, the boilers all need to be replaced, and the bathroom fixtures are also in the plan to be replaced. A water filtration system is also part of the project. Some lighting fixtures will be replaced with more energy-efficient lighting.

The total project will cost \$750,000, of which Keene Housing will provide \$250,000. Of that amount, \$27,500 would be available for administration of the project by Southwest Region Planning Commission and the County.

If funding is awarded by the CDFA, the funds would be subgranted to West Swanzey Affordable Housing Associates Limited Partnership, the owner of title for Riverbend Apartments. Riverbend was developed as a Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) property in 1997. LIHTC developments are often partnerships between for-profit entities and non-profit entities. In these cases, the for-profit entities withdraw from the partnerships after the required 15-year period of compliance. This withdrawal of the for-profit entities occurred in 2015, leaving Keene Housing as the effective 100% owner of the property. Within the past few years, Keene Housing has improved the cash flow of the property by providing project-based subsidies for all residents there. Thus, the rents actually paid by the residents are based on their incomes, and the subsidy program pays any remainder. In the future, 100% of households will continue to be of low- or moderate income. With the addition of the project-based subsidies, the property should be better able to create replacement reserves in the future.

The Town of Swanzey supports this project. However, the Swanzey selectmen decided that they needed to maintain the opportunity to apply in July, 2016 for CDBG funds for water system improvements to the West Swanzey water system. For that reason, the County's assistance with the grant has been requested.

The Chair opened the floor to public comment on the projects.

A visiting member of the public from Winchester asked a number of questions concerning the ownership of the Riverbend apartments and how the grant funds would be administered and the fee's involved in the transaction. Mangones and Meehan answered the questions and outlined how the project would be managed.

At 9:43AM hearing no (further) comments, the Chair closed the public hearing on the project.

At 9:44AM the Chair opened the second public hearing for discussion of the County's Housing

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
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and Community Development (HCD) Plan.

Linda Mangones explained that the preparation and adoption of an HCD Plan is a requirement of the CDBG program and it must be adopted or re-adopted with every application for CDBG funds. In this case, the HCD Plan adopted December 18, 2014 is still current, and the proposal is to re-adopt it. No changes have been made to the existing goals and objectives.

The proposed project conforms to the County's HCD Plan in that:

1. It supports community efforts to conserve and rehabilitate the aging housing stock.
2. It encourages all Cheshire County communities to make some provision so that lower income persons can reside or maintain their homes within the community.

The Chair called for public comment on the Housing and Community Development Plan.

At 9:50AM hearing no (further) comments, the Chair closed the public hearing on the HCD Plan.

At 9:52AM the Chair opened the third public hearing regarding the County's Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan (also known as the RARA Plan).

Linda Mangones explained that the County has pledged in both this plan and the HCD Plan to minimize displacement of residential households. If a project results in permanent or temporary displacement of households, the County or Subrecipient must assist the residents in accordance with the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 as amended.

Linda Mangones noted that no permanent or temporary displacement is planned or considered necessary for the Riverbend rehabilitation project, as all of the work can be accomplished with tenants in residence. Under the certification section of the application, the County will certify that the Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan is in place, and that in the unlikely event that displacement becomes necessary, a displacement implementation plan will be submitted to the CDFR prior to obligating or expending funds.

At 9:56AM the Chair called for public comment and upon hearing none the Chair closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Weed then moved to approve and support the County's grant application to the New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority for \$500,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds to be used by Keene Housing for the rehabilitation of Riverbend Apartments, which provides affordable housing for families in Swanzey; that the Commissioners reaffirm the Housing and Community Development Plan and adopt the Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan; that the County will accept the grant if it is approved and enter into a contract with the Community

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday December 30, 2015 09:30AM
County Hall Building
Commissioners Conference Room
12 Court Street
Keene, NH

Development Finance Authority; and, further, that the chairman of the commissioners and the county administrator are authorized to execute any documents which may be necessary for the project. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Graves and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

At 10:01AM Pursuant to RSA 91-A (II) (a), (b) and (c), Commissioner Graves moved to enter into a non-public session to discuss the hiring of any person as a public employee. Commissioner Weed seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

Based on discussion in non-public session it was decided to offer E. B. employment as a per-diem Physical Therapy Assistant at the rate of \$21.39 per hour based on education, training, and five (5) years of experience.

At 10:06AM the Commissioners voted unanimously to return to public session.

Coates then discussed the conversation he had with Superintendent Van Wickler concerning an interview on the topic of heroin in the region with a reporter from MSNBC in the next few weeks.

Coates reminded the Commissioners that the next Maplewood Sub-committee meeting would be held on January 29th at 12 Court Street.

He then said that the meeting with the State of New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) that was scheduled for yesterday was moved to next week due to the winter storm.

Coates related that he will be meeting with the New Hampshire Association of Counties (NHAC) Executive Director, Ron White and the NHAC President to discuss Correctional Officer certification issues on January 5th.

Director Hummel was then recognized and presented a request modify the IT on-call policy. He explained his reasons for requesting the change and a discussion ensued as to how or if the requested changes would affect other departments. Following discussion it was suggested that a financial assessment be made to determine the potential effects of the requested change. Director Trombly will report back next week with an overview.

Coates then said that a discussion concerning other options for C. O. certifications outside of the current NHAC certification process was being scheduled for January 13th.

He then said that Attorney Matthew Upton has been contacted and a meeting for today at 2:30PM has been scheduled to discuss the pending collective bargaining agreement with the newly formed bargaining unit in the Sheriff's department.

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
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County Hall Building
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Coates then handed out copies of the schedule for the Delegations Executive Committee Budget review meetings scheduled to start next month.

Attorney McLaughlin was then recognized for the purpose of discussing the Felony First program that is scheduled to start on January 1, 2016. He said that the program would start at midnight on December 31st and that he expects a few small challenges as the Police departments get used to the new procedures. He discussed the hiring of the new Attorney for the program with the Commissioners and said that his department was ready for the switch over.

It was also noted the farm of Commissioners Graves was highlighted in a recent Keene Sentinel ELF article.

Register of Deeds Tilton was then recognized and discussed that the State will be taking a significant portion of the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) funds from the program to be used for the general fund. She also discussed how the LCHIP is funded.

She then reviewed pending State legislation bills and said that among the bills is a move to create a separate Land Title registry. She doesn't have any of the details yet as to the reasoning behind the program but will keep the Commissioners informed if the bill moves forward

Sheriff Rivera was then recognized and also discussed pending legislation to allow the service of papers directly from Attorney's offices instead of through the County Sheriffs offices. He said that it could potentially have a significant impact on the department's revenues.

He then addressed the radio equipment failures and repeater problems that the Dispatch department has faced and a discussion concerning contingency / reserve funds began. It was agreed that it makes sense to try to increase reserve funds in anticipation of the equipment needs it was also a challenge given the budget climate. It was also discussed that if a major failure occurred and needed to be rectified immediately, the funds could possibly be taken from the operating surplus and / or a meeting with the delegation executive committee to seek emergency funding could also be pursued.

Rivera then said that a \$500.00 grant to furnish the Lactation room in the building has been received from Cheshire Medical Center.

Master Agenda Item #325: Final capital figures for the 2015 Mechanical Lift Project - K. Kindopp was taken-up. Kindopp presented her request to purchase two (2) mechanical lifts and batteries as part of the on-going standardization and maintenance program for resident lifts at the nursing home. She said that she found that the Arjo manufactured lifts which the County has standardized on have become available from on-line sources but also said that the cost is far in excess of what the lifts and batteries can be purchased for directly from Arjo. She asked that the Commissioners approve the purchase of two (2) lifts and seven (7) batteries from Arjo for

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday December 30, 2015 09:30AM
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\$17,148.52.

Following an extend discussion concerning the reasons for standardized of the lifts and the increase number of residents that require the use of the lifts, **Commissioner Weed moved to authorize the purchase of the two (2) lifts and the seven (7) batteries directly from ArjoHuntleigh Incorporated of 2349 W. Lake St., Addison, IL 60101 for a total of \$17,148.52. Commissioner Graves seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

At 11:18AM Pursuant to RSA 91-A (II) (a), (b) and (c), Commissioner Weed moved to go into non-public session to discuss consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation which has been threatened in writing or filed against the body or agency or any subdivision thereof, or against any member thereof because of his membership in such body or agency, until the claim or litigation has been fully adjudicated or otherwise settled. Commissioner Graves seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

As a result of the deliberations in nonpublic session no decisions were made and no vote taken.

At 11:34AM The Commissioners unanimously voted to return to public session

Finance Director Trombly was then recognized and discussed Master Agenda Item #326: Tax Payments from four (4) towns that were received late by the County. She explained that when the tax payments were received this year four (4) towns had returned their payments on time but to the old 33 West Street address which caused the payments to be rerouted through the post office to 12 Court Street which caused them to be received late by the Finance department.

Trombly said that she had spoken with the towns and they have now updated their addresses and does not expect to see the issue arise again. She went on to say that by statue any payment that is received late incurs a late payment penalty which may be waived by the County Delegation upon appeal and she said that this is what she is recommending as it was a clerical error that caused the payments to be received after the due date. Following a short discussion the Commissioners agreed and a request will be put forth to the Delegation to waive the late payment fees.

Master Agenda Item #327: System of Care (SOC) request for funding proposal for marketing and communication plans was then reviewed. Grants Manager Bansley presented the results of the RFP process for the marketing and communications plan for the SOC grant. She said that five (5) firms had submitted proposals and four (4) staff members had concluded a review of the proposals. She said that based on the results of the review that they requested that New Ground Studio, of Brattleboro, VT be awarded the contract. **Following discussion, Commissioner Weed moved to award the SOC marking and communications contract to New Ground Studio, LLC, dba New Ground Creative located at 139 Main St, Suite 602, Brattleboro, VT**

MINUTES
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05301 for the total of \$12,000.00 to be paid from grant funds. Commissioner Graves seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

Master Agenda Item #328: Drug Court Sole Sourced Subcontract with Metro Clinic was then presented by Bansley. Bansley explained that the purpose of the request is to be able to supply personnel in the Drug Court program with a treatment drug known as Suboxone that is an opioid medication use to treat opiate addiction. She said that the previous physician who provided the drug treatment has closed their practice and is no longer prescribing to the Drug Court participants. She went on to say that only two (2) local options are available and only one (1) will has a sliding scale fee for low income and accepts Medicaid payments which is the predominate form of payment for many Drug Court participants.

The Commissioners asked a number of questions concerning costs and treatment efficacy and at the conclusion of the discussion **Commissioner Graves moved to award a sole source subcontract for Medication Assisted Treatment for the Cheshire County Drug Court program to Metro Treatment Center of Keene Drug Addiction Treatment Center at 640 Marlboro St, Keene, NH 03431. Commissioner Weed seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

Master Agenda Item #329: DOT5310 Budget Amendment. Bansley requested a reallocation of funds and service transfer for the Monadnock Regional Coordinating Council for Community Transportation (MRCC) in the amount of \$12,570.00.

This transfer of funds represents the first phase of American Red Cross retiring its volunteer driver program. The Fiscal Year 2016 transfer is intended to cover January 1, 2016 to June 30, 2016 by transferring ride services from American Red Cross to Contoocook Valley Transportation Company on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays in Dublin, Hancock, Greenfield, Jaffrey, Peterborough, Sharon and Rindge.

American Red Cross estimates 838 trips will be absorbed by Contoocook Valley Transportation Company. America Red Cross's trips are billed at \$15 per trip ($\$15 \times 838 = \$12,570$) and Contoocook Valley Transportation Company will continue providing services for the 838 trips at the American Red Cross rate.

Following discussion Commissioner Weed moved to accept the request for reallocation and was seconded by Commissioner Graves. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously. The Chairman then signed the authorization acceptance document.

Master Agenda Item #330: Regional Public Health Network Initiatives grant.

Bansley said that a vote was needed to conditionally accept and sign the award documents for \$40,000.00 for the Regional Public Health Network Initiatives grant for "Building Resilience

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday December 30, 2015 09:30AM
County Hall Building
Commissioners Conference Room
12 Court Street
Keene, NH

against Climate Effects” funds to develop a Climate and Health Adaptation Plan "CHAP". She said that a conditional vote was needed to subcontract the work under this grant to Antioch University New England’s Center for Climate Preparedness and Community Resilience to research data and with Southwest Region Planning Commission (SWRPC) to write the CHAP, with all of these actions contingent upon review, approval, and affirmative vote for the authorization of the named vendors by the State of New Hampshire’s Governor’s and Council committee.

An in-depth discussion of the purpose of the grant was had and following review, Commissioner Weed moved to approve the grant and was seconded by Commissioner Rogers. Upon vote the motion passed with Weed, and Rogers voting Yea, and Commissioner Graves abstaining.

Master Agenda Item #332: 2015 Departmental Budget Rollovers – S. Trombly.

Director Trombly presented a list of department budget items that for various reasons were either not able to be completed in 2015 or are in contract and pending or are currently in implementation but not invoiced and need to be rolled over into the 2016 budget. Since these items are already funded and budgeted there will be no impact on the 2016 budget for these fifteen (15) items. **Following a short review and discussion Commissioner Weed moved to rollover the fifteen project items to the 2016 budget for a total of \$261,307.21 and was seconded by Commissioner Graves. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

New Business was then taken-up and Director Trombly said that the IRS has published the new 2016 mileage reimbursement rates and the new rate will be .54 per mile vs the 2015 rate of .55.

The Weekly Manifest was then reviewed and Commissioner Weed moved to accept the Manifest as presented and was seconded by Commissioner Graves. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

The minutes of December 16, 2015 were then reviewed and Commissioner Weed moved to accept the minutes as presented. Commissioner Graves seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

The Commissioners Calendar was then reviewed and no changes noted.

At 12:36PM there being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Weed moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion seconded by Commissioner Graves and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
P. Graves, Clerk