

**MINUTES**  
**Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting**  
**Wednesday September 28, 2016 09:30AM**  
**County Hall Building**  
**Commissioners Conference Room**  
**12 Court Street**  
**Keene, NH 0341**

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

**STAFF:** Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Grants Manager Bansley, Conservation District Manager Littleton, and Assistant County Administrator (ACA) Bouchard.

At 9:34AM Chair Rogers opened the meeting and recognized Conservation District Manager Littleton who presented the following semi-annual report to the Commissioners:

Master Agenda Item# 415: Semi-Annual Report - Conservation District - A. Littleton  
Cheshire County Conservation District – September 28, 2016

**Soil**

1. The District had a keyline plowing workshop in Alstead at Orchard Hill as part of a NH Association of Conservation Districts (NHACD)/Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) demonstration project let by Sullivan County Conservation District.
2. We started an NHACD/NRCS Interseeder demonstration with Windyhurst Farm in partnership with the Merrimack County Conservation District and UNH Cooperative Extension.
3. Equipment is available for rent and we have been taking reservations for September and October.

**Water**

1. Offering rentals of two skidder bridges and planning another skidder bridge building workshop in the Spring of 2017 where the District would create a new bridge to offer as a rental and start to sell off older bridges.
2. Windyhurst Farm has started construction on their milkhouse waste and nutrient management State Conservation Committee grant in partnership with NRCS.
3. Planning for the annual Source to Sea River Clean Up is underway for a late September clean up in Keene and Swanzey

**Wildlife**

1. Cheshire County Pollinator Initiative – The District is continuing to manage the existing pollinator habitat and establish new habitat in 2016. There is an education plan in place for 2016 that will include four workshop on pollinator habitat establishment and pollinator identification. The second year of inventory is underway.
2. Falls Brook Culvert Removal and bridge construction is underway. Construction is complete and a volunteer planting day is scheduled for early October
3. Timber Tour in Alstead NH to look at Beech Control.

**Farm Viability**

1. Continuing work with Farmer's Markets of Keene, Keene Housing Buying Club, and Piccadilly Farm to double Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits

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through the Granite State Market Match Program, and also working with the NH Food Bank through the NH Nutrition Incentives Network.

2. Continuing work with partners to run Monadnock Menus – the aggregation and distribution program for wholesale food buyers and farms in the region. The 2016 sales goal is \$150,000. A second delivery day and new route to buyers was started in the Southern portion of Cheshire County in July.
3. Twenty-two (22) Scholarships were offered to youth in 2016 though the Monadnock Locavores.
4. Working with the Monadnock Food Coop to develop a grant program for farmers looking to expand their wholesale market.

**Items of Note:**

- The Conservation District Board of Supervisors is undertaking a strategic planning process that will result in a three (3)-year strategic plan for the organization.
- The Local Work Group meeting was held in partnership with Sullivan County Conservation District (CCD) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).
- The District is partnered with the NH Association of Conservation Commissions in September for a potluck of Cheshire County Commissioners.
- The Annual meeting for 2016 is set for October 25, 2016 at the Keene Country Club – Chris Schadler will be the keynote speaker focusing on the biology and management of coyotes.

The Commissioners asked a number of questions about the river-shed clean-up and discussed how each year the volume of trash and waste is growing. Discarded tires are becoming a larger problem.

It was then discussed by Littleton that the Monadnock Menus program will be looking to acquire a refrigerated truck to deliver produce to the growing number of customers. She said that they have been renting a vehicle for a few days each week but that expanding the program wouldn't be possible without their own truck.

The discussion then turned to the cost of produce and meats from the program and how competitive it is with the large commercial produce sellers. Littleton said that there is a misconception on the part of some buyers that the Monadnock Menus prices are much higher than they actually are, especially for in season produce items. They will be working to expand the program beyond the \$150,000.00 goal for this year and hope to be able to land more local restaurants as customers.

The Commissioners thanked Littleton for her report and recognized Grants Manager Bansley who presented an updated CDGB form that updates the terms for the finance structure of grant

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administration for the County. **Following a short discussion and review, the Commissioners reviewed the form and then signed the document.**

Master Agenda Item# 416: 2017 Budget Book Presentation - M. Hall  
Hall presented a revised document to help track the changes made to the yearly requested budgets books. The change will enable the budget reviewers to more easily see the positive and negative changes to individual line items for all budgets.

Following discussion, the Commissioners approved the changes and Hall will implement the changes for the upcoming 2017 budget review books.

Administrator Coates was then recognized and provided the weekly operations recap.

Coates discussed the NH Association of County's annual conference in Portsmouth and recapped the events for the Commissioners. He said that he found the conference useful and learned about what the other Counties are doing as well as picking up some information on resources sharing among towns and County's at one of the breakout presentations.

Coates then discussed the meetings that he had with some other County Administrators, staff, and Commissioners, and what he learned from those discussions.

Coates then reminded the Commissioners that the Department of Revenue Administration DRA will be giving a presentation on property evaluations on October 11<sup>th</sup> at 12 Court Street in Keene at 6:30PM.

Coates then discussed the progress on the rehabilitation of the County Hall entrance doors and said that once the doors were stripped of the many layers of paint it was found that wood of the doors is a soft wood such as pine or poplar and not the mahogany or oak that was hoped to be found. The doors will now be scheduled for repainting using a historic original color pallet.

The draft of a HVAC Balancing RFP for the Department of Corrections has been completed and forwarded to Granite State Automation for review and once completed will be sent to targeted company's for bid consideration.

Coates then discussed the hiring of a new Director of HR that is upcoming and the temporary hiring of an administrative assistant to help the HR department during the hiring transition. He said that he has assembled a team of staff to review the HR job description and the advertising for the position will begin shortly.

Coates then reviewed the Handyman program that is being implemented in the County and how the program will operate. He stated that the purpose of the program is to assist elderly citizens to stay in their homes longer before they require assisted living or nursing home care. He also said

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that the program will be self-sufficient and will not require County funding.

Coates then discussed the signing of the farm leases with the two new tenants this week and said that the farm and fields are already looking much better. He said that overall the farm is being brought back up where it was planned to be when the first lease was signed five years ago. He said that more work needs to be done but the progress has been steady and the public comments on the operation and condition of the farm property has been uniformly positive.

Coates then asked Bouchard to discuss the implementation of the website revamp project. Bouchard said that next Monday will be the initial meeting with the Millennium Integrated Marketing group president to begin the rollout process. He said that the project will be very challenging and that he anticipates the new site should be ready in the first quarter of next year.

S. Trombly was then recognized to recap and review an earlier request from the Commissioners for an overview of the anticipated savings that the Department of Corrections may experience from the recent switch from the New Hampshire retirement system Group 1 to Group 2 for all new hires at the facility. She said that based on the current projections up to \$40,000.00 in savings could be realized.

The weekly census was then discussed and the growing number of Medicaid pending residents was reviewed. Trombly discussed the lack of staff at Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) processing claims and said that all the Counties are experiencing the same problem. It was decided that Commissioner Rogers will work with Director Trombly on a letter to be sent to the Commissioner of DHHS to discuss the concerns of the very lengthy review and approval process for the growing number of pending cases for Medicaid recipients in the County nursing homes.

**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.**

**Commissioner Weed moved to accept the Minutes as amended of the September 21, 2016 meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Rogers. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

The Commissioner's Calendar was then reviewed.

**At 12:03PM 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 with unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
P. Graves, Clerk