

**MINUTES**  
**Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting**  
**Wednesday December 7, 2016 09:30AM**  
**Department of Corrections**  
**825 Marlboro Road**  
**Keene, NH**

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

**STAFF:** Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Superintendent Van Wickler, and Assistant County Administrator (ACA) Bouchard.

**Guests:** Commissioner Elect, Cartwright, Treasurer Elect Wozmak, member of the public

At 9:30AM Chairman Rogers opened the meeting with a moment of silence in observance of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941.

Superintendent Van Wickler was then recognized by the Chair to present the Department of Corrections semi-annual report.

Van Wickler opened by saying that a grant has been received from the State of NH for a full body scanner that would pay half of the total amount which is estimated at approximately \$180,000.00. Van Wickler said that he is recommending to not accept the grant. New Hampshire Senate Bill SB406 was passed to fund the purchases for the jails and prisons with the purpose of the grant being to provide a full body scanner for all inmates being taken into the facilities to deter the smuggling of contraband.

The Commissioners asked questions concerning the background of the bill and purpose of the grant.

Van Wickler discussed how inmates attempt to smuggle drugs into the facility and how the staff has been able to interdict their efforts and prevent them from bringing contraband into the facility. He said that since the grant is a fifty percent (50%) matching grant he doesn't see the value in accepting the grant and then be obligated to find another \$180,000.00 in matching funds for a device that would not substantially add any value to the operation of the facility.

Captain Knowles was then recognized and presented the staffing / manning roster for the jail and he reviewed the personnel gains and losses for the year to date. A discussion of the Correctional Officer (CO) training program and job expectations of new hires was covered.

Captain McLaughlin was then recognized and discussed the inmate transports that are being accomplished and how the growth of the transportation unit is expected to continue into 2017. He said that he believes that based on conversations with the Federal Sheriff's office and State of Vermont authorities he sees the program will grow especially in the State of Vermont.

Lieutenant Blasick was then recognized to discuss the electronic monitoring (EC) program. Van Wickler discussed the background of the program and the changes the program has seen over the past year. Blasick said that currently twelve (12) inmates are on the program. Eight (8) are sentenced and four (4) are pre-trial. Blasick covered the charges being generated from the program and describes how the program checks-up on the inmates on the program.

Blasick responded to a question about the length of time that inmates are on the program. She said that it can be from a few days to over a year depending on the inmate's charges, legal proceedings, and personal situation.

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Blasick then discussed the risk assessment that is conducted to allow inmate's to be on the Electronic Monitoring program and how some inmate's fail in the program due largely to drug use.

A discussion of the cost of having inmates on the Electronic Program vs. having them in the facility was had. The cost of the EC program is substantially less than incarceration and EC provides a re-entry point into the community.

A discussion of the genesis of the program was covered and the positive impact on both the inmate and the community was discussed.

Van Wickler then presented a heavily used chair from the booking department that has broken wheel casters and other damage and asked for permission to purchase three (3) new chairs for the booking department at the cost of \$800.00 each, for a total of \$2,400.00. He said that the current chairs have lasted seven (7) years of 24X7 use and are now at the end of their economic and useful life. Van Wickler also said that the funds to purchase the chairs are available from his operating budget surplus.

Following a short discussion, **Commissioner Weed moves to authorize the purchase of the chairs for \$2,400.00 and Commissioner Graves seconds the motion. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

IT Director Hummel was then recognized and discussed the purchase of computer workstations for the coming year and asked the Commissioners to waive the bid requirements because of special circumstances concerning the acquisition process. He said that he has once again investigated the purchase of refurbished computers to keep the cost of the acquisition of the units' low and in response to a question from the Commissioners concerning the research to find the systems, Hummel said that he has done an extensive study of the possible sourcing of the equipment and that few companies were able to meet all of the specifications that are required. He said that he has received two (2) quotes, one from a Canadian company and one from a U. S. company. He said he expects to get about five (5) years of use from the equipment and the both vendors are offering a full five (5) year replacement warranty.

**Commissioner Weed moves to authorize the lease purchase of forty-six (46) workstations for the total price of \$16,911.75 under a no-bid approval from 2ndGear of Lutherville, MD. Commissioner Graves seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

Hummel then discussed the research that he has completed on the implementation of a video training program for the County staff. Hummel discussed the audience categories and how to provide training programs to the different skill levels.

Hummel then discussed how packaged training is not suitable in many situations because it constantly goes out of date due to program changes, updates, and customization by the departments. He said that he will report out again once a fully developed plan is in place for the training.

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Coates then discussed the new Human Resources (HR) Employee Handbook and it was decided to put off final review and approval until next week to give the Commissioners more time to review the language in the new handbook.

A discussion of the Milk Barn roof was begun and the cost of the repair of the structure was had. It was discussed that the building may be at risk if the roof is not repaired. Following discussion, it was decided to contact the contractor to obtain a written condition assessment of the roof and a recommendation how to fix the leaks before proceeding.

Director Trombly was then recognized to discuss the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) quarter budget review. Trombly described the quarterly budget process and how the budget is reviewed by the delegation on a quarterly basis. She then presented the following review:

***RE: 3rd quarter 2016 Budget Review***

*At the end of the third quarter, revenues adjusted for the tax collection pattern have reached 76.81% of the budgeted revenue projections with the Nursing Home having achieved 72.50%. As revenues should be at 75%, this indicates that revenues are ahead of expectations for the General County but running short for the Nursing Home. The totals combined provide for an excess of approximately \$227,834.*

*At the end of the third quarter, expenses are below budget by \$928,000 after adjusting for major items that have either been fully expended or not due to timing Overall county expenses are at 77.08% spent and Maplewood having expended 70.68% of their appropriated budget.  
As you review the third quarter reports, the following areas may be of interest:*

**Revenues: General County**

*Page 1— Municipal Assessment is a 0.00% of the projected budget. This remains at zero for most of the year until the Department of Revenue Administration provides the appropriation listing and the bills have been mailed Taxes will be due by December 19<sup>th</sup> for 2016.*

*Page 1— Federal Grants Revenues — This revenue source offsets certain expense throughout the budget such as 4461 — County Received Grants, 4462 — Drug Court and other significant capital expenses attributed to the build out of the new Sheriff's Dispatch Center. Although revenues as of September are at 68% achieved, they will come in by year end to offset the corresponding expenses as listed.*

*Page 2 — Federal Inmates revenues have already exceeded the 2016 budgeted revenues. The 2016 census is budgeted for 27 Federal Inmates. To date the average census has been 51 with a high of 63. It is projected that this revenue source will result in an excess of nearly \$1,000,000 by year-end.*

*Page 3 — Sale of County Property — This revenue item is for the anticipated sale of the Blood Farm Home in Westmoreland. The property began actively being marketed at the beginning of June.*

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*Page 4 — Jaffrey District Court Lease — This budget line is at 11.03% of its projected revenues at the end of the third quarter but will attain 100% of its budgeted revenue. This revenue is the lease payment received by the State of NH that is directly tied to the annual bond payment for the Jaffrey District Court House. The State reimburses the County two times a year to coincide with the timing of the interest and principal payments.*

*Page 5- Transfer from Fund Balance is at 0.00%. This line item will remain at 0.00% throughout the year. No entry is made as the offset is an accounting function of an automated decline in fund balance based on actuals and the final amount needed from fund balance at year-end.*

*Page 5 — Transfer from Capital Reserve — This item is at 0.00% as of the third quarter. This budget item specifically offsets certain capital reserve projects. A transfer will be made at the end of the year to offset the applicable expenses.*

**Expenses General County**

*Page 6 — Delegation — This department is slightly over. Due to an increase in the number of meetings held in 2016 associated with the Maplewood subcommittee, fees and travel are projected to go slightly over by year-end.*

*Page 13 — 14 — Information Technology — This budget is at 79.55% spent and is due to a transition to a new telephone system. During the transition, there was a period of time that the two systems were overlapping requiring payment to two providers. This overlap has ended and as a result the line item will begin to stabilize.*

*Page 21 — General Government — At 83.29% spent as of the third quarter, insurance payments for the General County Property and Liability Insurance has impacted the acceleration of this budget. This department is expected to come in on target for 2016.*

*Page 34 — Drug Court — This budget is running slightly over as of September 30<sup>th</sup>. As this budget is fully grant funded, any overage will have corresponding revenues to offset.*

*Page 35 — Bonded Debt — Debt payments are made according to debt payment schedules throughout the year. As of September 30<sup>th</sup> all debt payments other than the interest due on the Tax Anticipation Notes have been paid for 2016.*

**Revenues — Maplewood Nursing Home**

*Page 37-38 - Overall Maplewood Nursing Home has achieved 72.50% of the 2016 revenue projections which calculates to a current shortfall of approximately \$320,000 at the end of the third quarter. A census of 134 was budgeted for 2016. As of September 30<sup>th</sup>, the actual census was 128 with an average census to date of 126.*

*Based on the current average census, the short fall for revenues for 2016 could amount to approximately \$430,000 by year-end.*

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**Expenses — Maplewood Nursing Home**

*Page 39-56 — Maplewood Departments — Overall expenses for Maplewood are at 70.68% expended (adjusted for timing). This equates to expenses being under budget by approximately \$718,000.*

*As you review the Nursing Home expenses you will find that nearly every department is well within or well under budget. Therefore, the revenue shortfall will be managed by expenses coming under.*

*The nursing home administration, with the support of the nursing home departments, continue to work hard to manage expenses with the realization of the lower census by modifying staffing needs when appropriate. Additionally, another challenge that is being faced is the nationwide shortage of nurses. Due to this shortage, there is an increased need to utilize agency nursing services and traveling nurses. As nurses employed by these means are not actual employees, benefit lines such as social security and retirement are also coming significantly under budget.*

A question and answer period with the Commissioners began and a discussion of the County General Fund balance requirements and the Moody's rating that the County currently has was covered.

The Commissioners thanked Trombly for her report and then took-up a request from the incoming Treasurer Elect to appoint a Deputy Treasurer to act on his behalf if he is unavailable. It was discussed that this has been done for the past few election cycles and could be a help to the finance department if they require the presence of the Treasurer or the Deputy for legal reasons.

**Following discussion, Commissioner Weed moves to accept the recommendation of the Treasurer elect to nominate Gus Lerandeanu as the deputy Treasurer. Commissioner Graves seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

The County Administrator then provided the weekly operations report

Coates said that the New Representative orientation meeting will take place this Friday beginning at 10:15AM at the County Hall building. The orientation will help new representatives understand their duties and responsibilities as county representatives and will introduce them to the department managers, functions of the county, and include visits to the farm and Maplewood campus.

Coates then said the Employee Recognition and Longevity Awards luncheon will be held at the Nursing home next week following the Commissioners Meeting and encouraged everyone to attend.

Coates then said that a meeting he recently had with the Humane Society resulted in a request for the County to work with the towns to coordinate a standard method of handling animal control. More discussion is needed to determine how this would work and if it is something that is in the purview of the County.

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Coates described a meeting at Maplewood with Steve Horton (The Maplewood reconstruction owner's representative) that was accomplished and he said that the responses to the RFQ's are due on Friday of this week.

Coates discussed that the LCHIP grant funding was moving forward for windows that the LCHIP team was very open to receiving a separate grant request for rebuilding of cupola. This will be followed up and a separate request will be generated and submitted when funding requests open in the spring.

Coates the discussed the on-going wage and classification study and said that a major roadblock to being able to make recommendation on the study is a lack of salary comparisons that are equivalent to the economic area. He said that on-going efforts are underway to try to obtain the data and that he will keep the Commissioners informed of progress.

Under New Business, a letter from an inmate was received by Commissioner Rogers was reviewed and discussed and Commissioner Rogers has agreed to meet with the inmate following the meeting to receive more information.

The weekly census was then reviewed.

The Commissioners calendar was reviewed.

**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 November 30, 2016 were then reviewed and Commissioner Graves moved to accept the minutes as presented and was seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon vote the motion passed with unanimously.**

**At 12:01PM there being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Weed moved to adjourn the meeting and the motion seconded by Commissioner Graves. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

P. Graves, Clerk