

**MINUTES**  
**Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting**  
**Wednesday December 14, 2016 09:30AM**  
**Maplewood Nursing Home**  
**201 River Road**  
**Westmoreland, NH 03602**

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

**STAFF:** Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Administrator Kindopp, HR Assistant Jardine, and Assistant County Administrator (ACA) Bouchard.

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

At 9:35AM Chairman Rogers opened the meeting and recognized County Administrator Coates who provided the weekly operations report:

Coates said that he had a discussion with the contractor who provided the quote to repair the milk barn roof concerning the overall condition of the roof and he was told that the roof should be able to make it through the winter without further damage. He said that the issue will need to be re-addressed in the spring.

Coates then discussed the Latchis parking lot and the investigation into the installation of security lights and a power barrier gate to control access into and out of the parking lot. The goal of the project is to be able to potentially rent a small number of spaces to the public. The project should be budget neutral as a stipend from the power company to place a transformer in the back area of the lot should cover the lights and gate costs.

A discussion of a request from an elected official concerning cell phone usage was had and it was determined that a formal cell phone usage policy needs to be created. Coates and Bouchard will draft a policy for all users and present it to the Commissioners for review and approval.

Coates then discussed a recent conversation that he had regarding the Carpenter Home assisted living facility in Swanzey. He said that in September he had a conversation with a consultant for the Carpenter Home who was exploring a joint relationship with the County nursing home for assisted living services. He said that there is a need for much greater clarity on what the relationship would look like and how it would be structured before any options could be discussed. Coates will follow-up with the Swanzey town administrator after the first of the year to gain more input.

Coates then discussed the System of Care grant program which is a four million (\$4M) dollar four (4) year grant aimed at coordinating multiple service organizations with the goal of improving the overall mental health of school age children. He said that he sits on the finance committee that administers the grant and that they had sought but not received approval of an amendment for the use of grant funds to hire personnel for the administration of the program. He then said that an email from the federal government with approval to proceed with the hires was received this morning and that the hiring process can now move forward so that the program can begin to be implemented.

Coates discussed the “reconstruction of Maplewood” project that is in process and said that eleven (11) RFQ responses have been received and will be reviewed at the meeting with the owner’s representative this coming Friday. Coates detailed the high quality of the responses and mentioned the decision will be very difficult because the qualifications from most of the architects and construction management firms are extremely good.

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Coates then recapped a meeting that was held yesterday (12/13/16) with a representative of the regional USDA to discuss financing of the upcoming reconstruction project. Trombly reviewed the details of the discussion around the loan structures from the USDA highlighting the positives and negatives. A discussion of a matching funds contribution began as it is not clear if a dollar match is required, or what the matching amount needs to be for a loan from the USDA program. A matching loan amount would most likely mean that a separate bond need to be funded to meet the match. It was discussed that all USDA loans are set for an amortization period of thirty (30) years instead of the usual twenty (20) years that the County uses. This could greatly impact the overall interest cost of the loan and potentially negate the cost savings of the interest rate offered by the USDA loans. It was also learned that there is also an automatic loan review that takes place after the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) year and every three (3) years thereafter.

The difference between the twenty (20) and thirty (30) year loans costs were discussed and the possible impact of paying a thirty (30) year load back on a twenty (20) repayment schedule. The Finance Director will run payback / cost scenarios and report back to the Commissioners with the results.

The Employee Handbook was then taken-up for discussion and Trombly reviewed the final changes that have been made before being sent to Human Resources (HR) for publication and distribution. The Forward page of the document has been changed and American Disability Act (ADA) language has been simplified to make it easier to understand. Under the Gifts and Favors clause a change was made to change the language to reflect the Federal standards language. The drug and alcohol paragraph was then reviewed and language clarifying the intent of the paragraph was made. A language change concerning prohibiting smoking on County campuses was also made to include the use of e-cigarettes. And finally, a further change regarding employee grievances procedures was made to clarify the process, and under the Computer policy section, a clarification of the ePHI (electronic Privacy Health Information) was made.

**Following the completion of the review, Commissioner Rogers moved to adopt the new Employee Handbook as amended and was seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon Vote the motion passed unanimously.**

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

**The minutes of December 7, 2016 were then reviewed and Commissioner Weed moved to accept the minutes as presented and was seconded by Commissioner Graves. Upon vote the motion passed with unanimously.**

A short discussion of video visitation at the Department of Corrections was had and Commissioner Weed then discussed the placement of material into an employee personnel file. HR Assistant Jardine stated that it is a present policy that nothing is placed into a person's file without their knowledge. A longer discussion of how employees can access their personnel files and how documents are placed in the files took place.

**At 11:22AM Pursuant to RSA 91-A (II) (a), (b) and (c), a matter, which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the body or agency itself,**

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**without that person having requested an open meeting.**

**As a result of discussions in non-public session no decisions were made and no vote was taken.**

**At 11:33AM the Commissioners voted unanimously to return to public session.**

A discussion of the up-coming Commissioners meeting on December 21<sup>st</sup> and December 28<sup>th</sup> was discussed and it was decided to cancel the meeting scheduled for December 28<sup>th</sup> due to a number of participants being unavailable. A meeting could be called for the 28<sup>th</sup> if an emergency meeting is required.

The weekly census was then reviewed.

The Commissioners calendar was reviewed.

**At 11:56AM 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