



## COMMISSIONERS MEETING

### MINUTES

Wednesday, August 2, 2023

This meeting was conducted in person  
and electronically (via Zoom) at the

County Hall  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Commissioner's Conference Room  
12 Court Street, Second Floor  
Keene, NH 03431

#### **Start Time 08:30 AM**

**Present:** Commissioners Bob Englund and Terry Clark

**Staff:** County Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Superintendent Iosue, Grants Manager Bansley, Human Resources Director May, Connected Families NH Director Calcutt, Project Manager Bouchard, and Executive Assistant Gouger

**Guest(s):** Jim Fauth, Director of Behavioral Health Improvement Institute

At 8:33 AM, Commissioners Englund and Clark responded as "present." Commissioner Wozmak is absent with notice.

#### **Public Comments**

Upon recognition from the Chair, a Public Comment on topics of interest may be made, at most three (3) minutes in length.

#### **I. Elected Officials & Department Head Updates**

To receive, as informational, departmental updates requiring Commissioner review, participation, approval, and impactful departmental and operational issues.

Superintendent Iosue said that they are currently experiencing a Covid-19 outbreak. On Saturday, several inmates reported symptoms, and after testing was conducted, there are currently 16 positive cases in one housing unit. It is by far the highest number of cases in any of their outbreaks. Iosue said that two cases of staff have also tested positive for Covid-19.

Commissioner Englund asked about the symptoms of the tested-positive inmates and the protocol being followed. He said that the masking protocols have been reinstated in the housing units and that most cases are mild.

Iosue said that they now have another inmate that requires outside medical appointments.

Trombly was recognized and discussed that the County needs to secure a line of credit through the end of 2023, which happens annually due to the County only receiving payments

from the towns at the end of the year. In the past, they could get through a large portion of the year before borrowing money. She has contacted three local banks for quotes to secure a line of credit as a resource should we need it.

## II. Scheduled Items

Master Agenda Item #1107: USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Public Meeting – C. Coates, S. Bansley

**Action Expected: Conduct a public meeting for a USDA RD CF grant application to renovate the Red Barn on the County Farm into an educational facility.**

At 8:34 AM, Commissioner Englund opened a public hearing for the Red Barn project in Westmoreland, NH. Commissioner Englund invites Grants Manager Bansley to begin the public hearing.

There are no members of the public present. Employees present were Commissioner Englund, Commissioner Clark, Rod Bouchard, Chris Coates, Courtney Gouger, Sheryl Trombly, Doug Iosue, and Kim May.

The following presentation was provided to those in attendance.

### Cheshire County “Red Barn Project” Handout for Public Meeting \* 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023

#### *Summary*

This proposal’s objective is to convert an old timber frame, 2-story, 5,200-sqft, 150-year-old barn into a 3-season multi-purpose center/facility capable of holding about 40 people. The property is situated on 640 acres of mixed forest, prime agricultural farmland, and wetlands along 6,700 feet of Connecticut River frontage. It is presently leased by two local farmers who combined maintain 100 head of sheep, 80 head of cattle, and they grow corn and other crops. Antioch University maintains a vegetable and fruit garden on the property with a high tunnel and corn/forage crops. This project involves securing the integrity of the building, which includes framing, roofing, siding, windows, doors, and the installation of a bathroom. Use of space by nonprofits will be free.

#### *Expected Outcomes*

The main outcome expected is an educational facility with an adjacent outdoor classroom for project partners to provide learning opportunities including hands-on demonstrations, classroom instruction, peer-to-peer learning, and applied research. Audiences will include professional famers, agricultural producers, novice and hobby gardeners and farmers, forestland owners, foresters, natural resource professionals, and members of the general public. Topics may include best management practices and innovations to ensure environmental stewardship, business viability, forest and stream ecology, wildlife habitat, climate change resilience, socio-economic benefits of sustainable agriculture and conservation.

#### *Potential Impact*

1. Increased social and cultural awareness of agriculture and conservation issues.
2. Increased awareness of local level action that can be taken to reduce water contaminants and soil runoff and improve soil health.
3. Greater community involvement and engagement around local activities and efforts underway to improve farm resiliency.
4. Greater engagement and collaboration around improving farming practices, promoting conservation, and sustaining local farms.
5. Enhanced stewardship of natural and agricultural resources and greater protection of water quality and economic investment.
6. Improved soil quality and reduced contaminants prior to “storms-of-the-century.”
7. Increase adoption by famers to use cover crops and no-till planting techniques, along with other soil conservation practices.
8. Improved water quality for up to five states, including New York and the Long Island Sound.
9. Reduced risk of water contamination from roughly 2,000 acres of commercial farmland in Cheshire County along the river.
10. Opportunities for workforce development through training in agriculture and natural resource concepts and practices.

#### *Partners*

UNH Cooperative Extension, Cheshire County Conservation District, Antioch University, Cheshire Career Center, Fall Mountain School District, Windyhurst Farm, Westmoreland Town, Walpole Town, Chesterfield Town, and all schools in county



Bansley said that they have an extensive list of partnerships such as UNH Cooperative Extension, Cheshire County Conservation District, Antioch University, Cheshire Career Center, Fall Mountain School District, Windyhurst Farm, Westmoreland Town, Walpole Town, Chesterfield Town, and all schools in the County.

Coates said that this is another step in expanding the Cheshire County Westmoreland campus and that there is much opportunity with the space surrounding the barn. Bansley said that it also expands on the EDA program that is in development to get young adults to stay in the area for educational purposes.

Although there was initially a plan to make it a four-season building, Bouchard said that it would be a three-season building, and the bulk of the project would be to replace windows, doors and tighten up the framework. The building has local history, and the intent is to preserve it. He said that long-term plans include work outside the building and possibly some level of solar energy.

Commissioner Englund asked if there were any questions from the public. With no further questions, at 8:47 AM, the public hearing closed.

Master Agenda Item #1108: Connected Families NH Semi-Annual Report – D. Calcutt  
**Action Expected: To serve as a six-month informational report from Connect Families NH Director Dennis Calcutt.**

## Connected Families NH

County Commissioners SemiAnnual Report  
August 2, 2023



## Expansion Grant is now heading into year 4

- 09/20-24, funding of 1 million annually
- **Expansion of NH Wraparound for the birth to 5 population has now expanded statewide**
- Development of more in-home supports is expanding to our intensive in-home providers
- Implementation of Multi-Tiered System of Support for Behavioral Health and Wellness (MTSSB) is strong into two of the districts we are working with



## Connected Families NH, under the governance of Cheshire County

- We are heading into our 10<sup>th</sup> year of System of Care work
- We have now had over 550 (up from 390 at our last semi annual meeting) youth and families referred from across our region and state.
- County backbone remains unique, critical and supportive



## Care Management Entity

- Started September 23, 2020,
- Additional funding to support system of care enhancements in areas such as data collection and CPP (Child Parent Psychotherapy)
- NH Wraparound-FAST Forward
- TR-ECC (Transitional Residential -Enhanced Care Coordination) for residential care and psychiatric hospitalizations
- Early Childhood Wraparound (Birth to 5)
- **The Care Management Structure has proven to be a real strength for the state and they are looking to increasing our involvement**



## Budget update

- Revenues
  - 10/01/2020-12/31/2020 \$392,882.26
  - 2021 \$2,953,993
  - 2022 \$3,831,981 thru October
  - 2023 \$2,173,484 thru July
- Expenses
  - 10/01/2020-12/31/2020 \$268,232
  - 2021 \$1,857,827
  - 2022 \$2,558,733 thru October
  - 2023 \$1,780,387 thru July
- Contract budgets
  - FY21 \$1,200,000
  - FY22 \$1,150,000
  - FY23 \$1,925,000
  - FY24 \$1,150,000 possible amendments still to be made



## Staffing update for long term sustainability

- Staffing
  - 2014 one staff person
  - 2016-20 five staff
  - 2021 15 staff
  - 2022 25 staff
  - 2023 possibly 40
    - Supervisors have started
    - Intake coordinator was added
- Retention is critical
  - significant attention is being paid to culture, self care and secondary trauma
- Review staffing struggles from this year



## Support structures

- Feedback continues to be critical to our success
- We have statewide support
  - Children's System of Care Advisory Board
  - State Care Management Entity meeting
  - System of Care Implementation Team
  - Shared measures
- Regional meetings
  - Care Management Team
  - Monthly Evaluation
  - Collaborative meetings with other regional initiatives



## An understanding of our clients

- 10 year old from Chesterfield
- Traumatized sexual and physical abuse by bio parents. Youth was made to perform sexual acts on her younger brother.
- In and out of 8+ foster homes until this family (with whom we are currently working) adopted her
- Behaviors increased when the family had a baby boy.
- She has tried to suffocate her younger baby brother more than once, and has been aggressive toward her younger sister age 3
- She has tried to strangle herself at home to take her own life
- She has attacked her parents and others, at one point yielding an ax
- She has run off numerous times, including intake 9 to get hit by a car
- In and out of emergency department's multiple times in the last year, including time at Brattleboro Retreat
- No placements accepted her at a level 4. Recently her Comprehensive Assessment for Treatment (CAT) came back a level 3, and so far we have no luck placing her. Hampstead's level 3 won't accept her due to her young age. We have been searching since January.
- Parents are burnt out, they don't know what to do. Worried for the safety of all the kids in the home. Minimal immediate family near by, and no one will watch her, even if we offer payment for Respite.



## Challenges

- Understanding the complexity of the role
  - We need to attend to secondary trauma by supporting staff to strike a balance
- We are struggling to place youth in residential treatment
  - A youth who is difficult to place has exhausted NH and New England placement and we are now looking nationally
  - 15% (8 of 55 in TRECC) are difficult to place
  - 24% (13 of 55) are involved in a residential search
- Catching our breath?
  - Keeping up with our Interim Support List (ISL) is important and we are developing options to do this better
- Uninsured youth and families is still to be addressed in our new contract



## Successes

- Connected Families NH
  - We are a critical partner in the State of NH's System of Care efforts
- Our next phase with supervisor support has begun
- Future planning with program integrity in mind
  - Site review results will be formally reviewed on August 17 – you are invited
  - We have made good progress in the integration of our documentation and practice
  - PERM-Medicaid oversight was completed without issue
- Changing our coaching model for TRECC will reduce costs
- 15 year old youth, who needed to be transported to Florida for treatment is now at home and in school
- Testimonial video
- System of Care enhancements
  - NH's new Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (level 5 PRTF)
  - 988 and Rapid Response
  - Comprehensive Assessment for Treatment (CAT)
- We have new office space, check out our green door



Commissioner Englund asked about the residential facilities and if there are any within Cheshire County. Calcutt said that there are none within the County, however the state does have programs, but they can be limited. There are day programs that are local to the area as well, and Calcutt said that the successes within those programs can vary.

There is discussion regarding the residential facilities that are in the state and the services that they offer.

Commissioner Englund asked if there is much in the line of long-term follow up for those that have been discharged from the program. Calcutt said while they do not have any direct follow up, they do take into consideration those that come back into the program.

Calcutt said that in the last 5-6 years, it is the most growth any state agency has achieved.

### III. County Administrator

Weekly Operations Report - The County Administrator will update the Commissioners on activities that have taken place since the previous meeting.

Coates said an Executive Committee meeting is on Monday, August 7<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 am at County Hall.

Coates said that on Monday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, there will be a dedication of the Covid-19 memorial at 6:30, and immediately following, the Delegation Meeting with begin at 7pm.

Coates said that on Monday, there was a meeting at Cheshire Medical Center regarding Rescue, Inc giving notice that they were pulling out of contracts at 12:00 am on August 1. There was a concern for towns that needed paramedic intercepts and backups/mutual aid. The towns represented were there, the City of Keene manager, Keene Fire Chief, and members of Rescue Inc. Coates said there were discussions to support the towns as needed, but no final decisions were made.

Coates said the hospital was looking to see how they could be involved with paramedic intercepts. For them to get a program up and running, the cost would be roughly \$60,000. The biggest thing that they have asked about is a vehicle. Coates said that they are exploring the partnership by leasing out a vehicle.

Commissioner Englund asked what the partnership between Rescue Inc and the City of Keene will be, and Coates said that if the city decides to pursue that route, then they will pay for those services.

Coates said it is important to remember that the County has developed an EMS continuum of care, between 911 calls, inter-facility transfers, and wheel-chair services.

Coates said that Finance Director Trombly will now discuss the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Budget Review:

*To: Cheshire County Executive Committee*

*From: Sheryl Trombly, Finance Director*

*Date: August 1, 2023*

*RE: 2nd quarter 2023 Budget Review*

*At the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, revenues adjusted for the collection of taxes and timing for the receipt of other revenues have reached 49.53% for the General County budgeted revenues with the Nursing Home having achieved 46.80%. As revenues should be at 50%, this indicates that revenues are under for both the General County and Nursing Home. The totals combined are under by approximately \$748,000.*

*At the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, expenses are under budget by approximately \$2,820,970 after adjusting for major items that have not been expended due to timing. Overall county expenses are at 46.19% spent and Maplewood having expended 47.35% of their appropriated budget.*

*Additionally, Cheshire EMS, still in the start-up phase, is at 15.42% of revenues collected as of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter with expenses at 31.11% spent. Currently the year-to-date shortfall is at \$779,493.*

*As you review the reports, the following areas may be of interest:*

*Page 1 – Municipal Assessment is a 0.00% of the projected budget. This budget remains at zero until the Department of Revenue Administration provides the appropriation listing and the bills have been mailed. Taxes are due by December 18<sup>th</sup> for 2023.*

*Page 1 – Grant Reimbursement – Federal Grant Reimbursements as well as Non-Federal Grant Reimbursements combined, have achieved approximately 47.00% of budgeted revenues. These revenues are offset by expenses so any shortfall would have a direct impact on expenses coming under as well.*

*Page 2 – Registry of Deeds Fees – 2023 is seeing a decrease in sales as well as a decline in the value of sales. For the past couple years, we have seen exceptionally high revenues. As the market is leveling somewhat, it will have an impact on what will be achieved for 2023. This revenue source is likely to come under by approximately \$150,000.*

*Page 2 – Overall DOC revenues are running over, having achieved 58.52% received. Federal Inmates revenues is running over budget projections. The 2023 census is budgeted for 37 Federal Inmates, and the current census is at 48, with a YTD average of 45. This revenue is projected to exceed the original budget by approximately \$250,000.*

*Page 3 – Connected Families – The program revenues as of 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter are at 35.39% achieved. Although the revenues are under, expenses for this program are coming in under as well. There is a planned budgeted ramp-up of staffing for 2023 that has not fully taken place. As the ramp-up continues, revenues and expenses will continue to increase accordingly. This program will achieve the budgeted surplus for 2023.*

*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 Special Revenue Fund is at 0.00%. This line item is for funds that associated with approved expenses. When expended, a transfer will be made to offset the applicable expense.*

*Page 5 – Transfer from Capital Reserve – This item is at 0.00%. This budget item specifically offsets certain capital reserve projects, and as the projects are expended, transfers will be made to offset the applicable expenses.*

## **Expenses General County**

*Page 19 – Contingency - \$6,122 was spent on unexpected repairs to the Assisted Living Elevator.*

*Page 19 – Maintenance of County Buildings – This department is at 55% spent as of June 30<sup>th</sup>. Utilities in general, from electricity to fuel, are going over budget for 2023. Some are seasonal; however, budgets will be reviewed, and recommendations for changes will be made for the 2024 budget.*

*Page 28 – Human Services (Medicaid Expense) – This budget covers the County contribution towards the cost of County Residents living in Nursing Homes and Home and Community based Care and supported by Medicaid. The County is responsible for 100% of the nonfederal share. As of June, this budget is slightly over; however, the July bill annually provides a one-time credit that will cause this to come in as budgeted for 2023.*

*Overall, County expenses are running under in nearly all departments. Some will continue through year-end. As the year continues, payroll costs will ramp up due to the timing of the Cost of Living that did not go into effect until April 2, 2023.*

## **Revenues – Maplewood Nursing Home**

*Page 42- Overall, adjusted for timing, Maplewood Nursing Home has achieved 46.80% of the 2023 revenue projections. An original census of 120 was budgeted for 2023; however, the current census is at 98, with an average to date of 98.*

*The Nursing Home currently has had to keep an entire floor closed due to staffing levels. With the floor closed, the maximum census that can be attained at any time is 100. The hope was that staffing levels would have increased by this time in order to reopen the floor; however, this has not been achieved. Administration is working to potentially open 10 beds on the vacant floor. This is still in development stages to see how the staffing can be allocated to make this work efficiently and effectively. This revenue shortfall is more than covered by expenses coming under as well.*

## **Expenses – Maplewood Nursing Home**

*Page 43-59 – Maplewood Departments – Overall expenses for Maplewood are at 46.19% expended (adjusted for timing) with all well under the budget. This equates to expenses being under budget by approximately \$750,000.*

## **Cheshire EMS –**

*Page 59 – 62 – Cheshire EMS has been in operation since November, 2022 at which time started solely with Interfacility Transfers for Cheshire Medical Center. To date they have done nearly 1,100 IFT's and have slowly taken on some of the Town contracts.*



*As of June 30<sup>th</sup>, revenues are at 15.42% and expenses at 31.11%, with a combined shortfall of \$779,000.*

*Cheshire EMS continues in the start-up phase, as reflected in the percentages of revenues and expenses as of June 30<sup>th</sup>. The 2023 budget started with a full 12-month budget for a program, whereas many factors have not yet started or are just starting mid-year. The expenses are initially higher in this start-up phase as ramping up of staff is necessary as we prepare for the growth of the program.*

*The 2023 budget accounted for staffing 6 ambulances and 1 paramedic intercept; however, to date we are running 4 ambulances and 1 intercept.*

*Further, revenues accounted for covering all towns as of January 1, 2023; however, we are still in the initial revenue growth stages as Towns slowly sign on with contracts with Cheshire EMS.*

*Below is an outline of the towns that are utilizing the services of Cheshire EMS as their primary service provider and the effective date the contracts began:*

*Westmoreland – April 1, 2023  
Richmond - May 1, 2023  
Stoddard - June 1, 2023  
Swanzey - June 28, 2023  
Harrisville - July 1, 2023  
Gilsum - July 1, 2023  
Marlborough - July 17, 2023*

*As you can see from the effective dates, Cheshire EMS has had minimal revenues from Town Contracts as well as billable 911 calls as of June 30, 2023. We have not currently contracted with any towns for backup or intercept as of this date but are in discussion as Rescue Inc, that has been servicing these towns since the shuttering of Diluzio's, ended their services to the towns effective August 1, 2023.*

*Further, there will be areas of the expenses and revenues previously budgeted as it pertains to Wheelchair transport services that the County will not be providing.*

*Overall, Cheshire EMS is still in its initial growth stages that we will continue to keep tracked and reported out separately.*

Coates said that there are a few items that he would like to add to the Pro-Share funding.

Coates said he and HR Director May are discussing with a visa lawyer the procedures to bring in nurses from other countries to help with staffing issues. To fund the program, approximately \$100,000 will be needed. Most of the cost concerns the filing fees for which the attorneys are responsible.

Coates said that a request to use an additional \$248,000 of the Pro-Share funds for the Courthouse Generator project instead of using the ARPA funds that were previously allotted is being moved forward.

Coates said that the added monies from Federal Medical Assistance Percentages (FMAP) that were received were used to help offset the cost of the Sheriff's Dispatch upgrades.

Coates said that by the end of 2023, they will have received an additional \$500,000 in FMAP funds from the state and that they will recommend setting aside some of the funds in reserve for EMS at a future date.

Coates said all three Commissioners are booked for the NHAC conference in October, with tickets and hotel rooms reserved.

Coates said that Keene State College will be hosting the first meeting of the Cheshire County Nursing Pipeline project, and he is looking forward to launching the initiative.

Coates said that he and Commissioner Clark and Bouchard had a call with ReVision Energy yesterday regarding solar energy to explore what options and opportunities are available to the County for solar installations.

**IV. Old Business**

Commissioner Clark said he attended Roxbury's community session for CPCNH last night, where two citizens showed up. He will present to Dublin tonight, August 2<sup>nd</sup>. He is still in talks with Chesterfield, Sullivan, and he has not heard anything from Stoddard regarding the presentation.

**V. New Business**

None

**VI. Consent Agenda Items:**

Vote to accept the Weekly Manifests for August 2, 2023, and the meeting minutes of July 26, 2023, as presented.

**Commissioner Englund moved to accept the weekly manifests for August 2, 2023, and the meeting minutes of July 26, 2023, as presented. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion, and upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

**VII. Calendar**

Action Expected: To accept the calendar as informational and to make necessary changes/additions.

No changes.

**VIII. General Discussion for Commissioners**

Master Agenda Item #673: Commissioners - State Cost Shifting Letter and Restorative Justice Program

**IX. Nonpublic Sessions:**

**X. Adjournment**

**At 11:40 AM, Commissioner Englund moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion, and upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

Recorded By C. Gouger  
Edited by: R. Bouchard

Reviewed and submitted by: Terry Clark  
Clerk, Board of Commissioners