



**MINUTES**  
**COMMISSIONERS MEETING**  
Wednesday, September 6, 2023

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

County Hall Building  
12 Court Street  
Commissioner's Conference Room  
Keene, NH 03467

**Zoom Call-in Number: +1 646 558 8656**

**Meeting ID: 409 748 8803**  
**Pin #: 6031233**

**Start Time 08:30 AM**

**Present:** Commissioners Jack Wozmak, Robert Englund, and Terry Clark

**Staff:** County Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Human Resources Director May, Superintendent Iosue, Maplewood Administrator Kindopp, Grant Manager Bansley, Director of Executive Services and Communications Bernstein, County Project Director Bouchard

**Guest(s):**

**Public Comments**

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

At 08:37 AM, the Commissioners opened the meeting, and Commissioner Wozmak, Englund, and Clark responded as present.

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

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

Administrator Kindopp stated that the Center for Medicaid Services (CMS) has begun instituting minimum staffing requirements for registered nurses (RN) within nursing homes across the country. A discussion started where Commissioner Wozmak noted that these requirements would take 3-5 years to ramp up fully. County Administrator Coates pointed out that although we do not have the number of RNs it would take to fulfill CMS's requirements, we have Licensed Nursing Assistants (LNA) and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN) who have been providing impeccable care 24/7. The Commissioners agreed that we had known this staffing issue would be coming since 1980, but there has been no clear solution to the problem at hand. Commissioner Clark asked Director May whether a reformed visa program could help with staffing issues, and May stated that she was looking

into this. Coates expressed concern that the CMS requirements may put private nursing homes out of business, resulting in an influx of residents to Maplewood Nursing Home without additional staff available to handle increased numbers.

Kindopp moved on to bring a motion forward to the Commissioners. With the turnover of Maplewood nearly outpacing the rate of new hires, as well as several upcoming retirements and expected Family and Medical Leave, Kindopp proposed working with Health Pro Management Services to bring in outside professional therapists into Maplewood. This would require a waiver of the bidding process for one year to begin contracting with Health Pro Management Services.

**Commissioner Englund moved to approve the waiver of the bidding process, and Commissioner Clark seconded. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

Superintendent Iosue began his updates by bringing up an inmate who is undergoing dialysis treatments, causing medical expenses to be elevated at the County Department of Corrections (DOC). Another inmate in and out of the DOC four times within the past six months has received chemo treatments, which cost more than \$100,000 per treatment every three weeks. The DOC is performing the duties of serving as his sole caregiver as he is experiencing homelessness.

## **II. Scheduled Items**

Master Agenda Item: #1118: Timken Company Charitable & Educational Fund Grant Acceptance– S. Bansley

**Action Expected: Vote to authorize Grants Manager Suzanne Bansley to execute award documents and to accept on behalf of the County of Cheshire a \$20,000 grant with no match from Timken Company Charitable & Educational Fund to purchase radio-compatible hands-free headsets for Monadnock SRT.**

**Commissioner Englund moved to authorize the execution of award documents and accept the \$20,000 grant on behalf of the County of Cheshire to purchase radio-compatible hands-free headsets for Monadnock SRT. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously upon the roll call vote.**

Master Agenda Item: #1119: Semi-Annual Report Human Resources – K. May

**Action Expected: To receive as informational a report from the Human Resources Director on the previous six months of operations.**

Director May began her report by acknowledging the difficulties behind hiring candidates for housekeeping positions, whereas hiring for laundry positions is not nearly as difficult. Along with Kindopp, May has come up with a plan to train potential employees in general environmental services, which comes with a higher pay rate. This training would allow these employees to receive a higher wage, be trained in additional duties, and perform multiple services, including housekeeping. May said that the County has begun leveling off on hiring EMT-Basics, and they have started focusing on hiring paramedics. Within the DOC, there are still open positions for Correctional Officers. Last week, the County hired a full-time nurse for the DOC. May move her focus onto the Sheriff's Department, stating that we need to employ additional Sheriff's Deputies and dispatch center staff, including one full-time

overnight staff, one midnight-eight, and one part-time dispatcher. Kim expressed that hiring anyone for the overnight shift has been difficult.

A discussion began focused on how difficult it is to vet, train, and hire Sheriff's Deputies. The requirements include a good job history, a psychological assessment, a lie detector test, a credit check, and a physical endurance test. These requirements have served as a barrier to many interested candidates. Wozmak says that Sheriff's deputies shouldn't be delivering court summons and that becoming a deputy should not be so difficult.

Coates brought the conversation back to Maplewood and asked whether there have been ongoing conversations at Maplewood about hiring and retaining staff. May states that they have been having these conversations for some time. May has met with Maplewood staff to assess how a positive, long-lasting work environment can be nurtured. Coates states that he wants Maplewood to see a 60% hire rate with a 40% or less leave rate. The current rate of 50% hiring and 50% leaving is untenable. Commissioner Wozmak states that the reasons for staff leaving are not listed as financial.

Finance Director Trombly asks whether there is a way to encourage using the established mentorship program. May states that they have tried to utilize it fully.

Below is the Human Resources Report created and presented by Director of Human Resources Kim May.

**Human Resources Activity 4/01/2023 – 8/31/2023**

- EMT – 8
- AEMT – 3
- Paramedic – 8

**Total Hires: 77**

Keene - 11

- Administration – 1
- BHC – 1
- Connected Families – 5
- Finance – 0
- Grants – 0
- IT – 0
- Sheriff – 4
  - Bailiff – 2
  - Dispatch – 1
  - Receptionist – 1

Department of Corrections - 14

- Corrections Officers – 7
- Nurse – 5
- Assistant Cook – 1
- SARC - 1

CCEMS – 19

Maplewood - 33

- Administration - 2
- ALF – 1
- Dietary – 8
- Housekeeping – 7
- Nursing – 15
  - LNA – 6
  - RN – 1
  - Ward Aide – 8

**Total Terms: 60**

Keene – 11

- Administration - 1
- BHC – 1
- Connected Families – 4
- Facilities - 1
- IT – 1
- Sheriff – 2
  - Dispatch – 1

- Administrative Assistant - 1

Department of Corrections - 8

- Corrections Officers – 6
- Nurse – 2

CCEMS – 9

- EMT – 3
- AEMT – 1
- Paramedic - 5

Maplewood - 33

- Administration - 2
- ALF – 1
- Dietary – 5
- Housekeeping – 5
- Nursing – 18
  - LNA – 14
  - LPN – 1
  - RN – 1
  - Ward Aide – 2

- Some of the reasons for resignations are as follows:
  - Unable to return after medical leave
  - Realized work is not for them
  - Terminated due to attendance issues
  - Terminated due to behavior
  - Moved out of the area
  - Per diem, w/no availability to pick up hours
  - Retired
- We have modified our contract language with LNA Health Careers to make it more viable to have smaller classes more frequently. We now have hybrid classes, meaning the course content is online, and the clinicals happen at Maplewood.
- We continue to offer a \$2,000 sign-on bonus at Maplewood for any LNA, nurse, Dietary Aide, or Housekeeper hired. This is paid as follows: \$500 at three months, \$500 at six months, and \$1,000 at one year for a 40-hour/week employee - prorated for part-time. I am also offering this sign-on bonus at DOC.
- We continue to use more agency/traveler staff than we ever have before at Maplewood – although we have been able to hire a handful of LNAs in the past couple of months

Also, at Maplewood – we are researching using agency staffing in Rehab – the full-time Occupational Therapist has resigned, the Speech-Language Pathologist has resigned, the Occupational Therapy Director has dropped to 30 hours/week, and both physical therapists have active Family Medical Leave.

**III. County Administrator**

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

County Administrator Coates begins his report by stating that he received a call from Hinsdale School District on Tuesday, September 5<sup>th</sup>, to discuss the County’s restorative justice programs. Coates and Commissioner Wozmak agreed that the County needs to ramp up efforts to promote its restorative justice programs, as the County is in a unique position where there are nearly as many people in County restorative justice programs as local inmates in the County DOC. Coates wanted to inform the Commissioners that Executive Director of Monadnock Economic Development Corporation Cody Morrison will attend the

October 4<sup>th</sup> Commissioner's meeting to discuss ongoing and exciting new projects for the region. Coates also noted that the Cheshire County Community Power press release went out on Tuesday, September 5<sup>th</sup>, which is a good start for promoting the program.

**IV. Old Business**

**V. New Business**

**VI. Consent Agenda Items:**

Vote to accept the Weekly Manifests and Minutes of August 30, 2023.

**Commissioner Englund moved to accept the manifests and minutes and was seconded by Commissioner Wozmak. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

**VII. Calendar**

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

**VIII. General Discussion for Commissioners**

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

**IX. Nonpublic Sessions:**

*A nonpublic session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this board unless such person requests an open meeting.*

**X. Adjournment**

**At 10:46 AM, Commissioner Englund moved to adjourn the meeting, which Commissioner Clark seconded. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

Minutes recorded by:  
D. Bernstein  
Director, Executive Services and  
Communications

Reviewed and approved by:  
T. Clark, Clerk  
Board of Commissioners