

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday September 13, 2017 09:30AM
Department of Corrections
825 Marlboro Road
Keene, NH 03431

Present: Commissioners Peter Graves, and Joseph Cartwright, and Commissioner Weed

Staff: Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Superintendent Van Wickler, DOC Captain Scott McLaughlin Sheriff Rivera, Behavioral Health Director Potter, County Attorney McLaughlin, and Assistant County Administrator (ACA) Bouchard.

Guests:

At 9:30AM the Chairman opened the meeting and recognized Sheriff Rivera who discussed Master Agenda Item #522: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SAU 29.

Rivera said that SAU 29 (Keene School District) has asked the Sheriff's office to pilot a truancy program for the school district. The Sheriff has been requested to supply sworn personnel for three (3) days per week (21 – 25 hours) during the school year. (November 2017 through June 2018 for the pilot program). The truancy cases that will be focused on are those where students have missed between 80-120 days of school. The Sheriff said that the cost to the SAU is \$43 per hour or between \$30k - \$40k per year. He said that the part-time staff position costs should be offset by the revenue from the program.

Commissioner Cartwright asked questions concerning the coverage area and the revenue stream of the part-time position. Rivera said that because the position is part-time there will not be any retirement payments and / or benefit costs. He then said that there has not been a truancy officer in Keene for over a year and half.

Commissioner Weed asked questions about how the program would actually operate and Rivera laid out the visits and interaction with the student and families and said that the purpose of using uniformed personnel is to potentially deter truancy in the future. A further discussion of the how the deputy will interact with the school and families then followed.

Commissioner Cartwright moved to authorize the Sheriff to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SAU 29 to provide a Pilot Program for Truancy services for the period of November 2017 through June 2018. Commissioner Weed seconded the motion. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

Master Agenda Item #523: JAG Grant Review was then taken up for discussion.

Commissioner Graves asked the Sheriff to review his position of communicating with the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) as it relates to the JAG Grant and other Federal grant requirements.

The Sheriff discussed his written policy and explained that his policy conforms to all of the requirements of the JAG grant and all other federal grants.

An extended discussion of the use of ICE detainers and how the Sheriff's policy when and how to communicate with ICE was had by the Commissioners, Sheriff, and County Attorney.

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County Attorney McLaughlin discussed the legal details of how notifications could be dealt with to meet federal requirements and how communication with ICE could be made that meets the federal grants requirements.

The Commissioners then said that based on the discussion with the Sheriff and County Attorney, they felt that the County will meet the federal requirements as noticed and will support the acceptance of federal grants by the County.

M. Potter, Director of Behavioral Health was then recognized to review and discuss. Master Agenda Item #525: Behavioral Health Semi-Annual Report

Potter presented the following written report to the Commissioners.

Second 2017 Bi-Annual Report
Cheshire County Behavioral Health Court Programs
(March 27th through August 28, 2017)

Current client population = 28

- Females = 9 Males = 19
- Clients in Keene Circuit Court = 13
- Clients in Superior Court = 13
- Clients in both Courts = 2

Total Admissions to date = 32

- Since March 27 = 19
- Since March 27 Alternative Sentencing = 6
- Since March 27 Mental Health Court = 13

Total successful Completions = 33

- Since March 27 = 21
- Since March 27 Alternative Sentencing = 5
- Since March 27 Mental Health Court = 16

Total non-successful completion = 8

- Since March 27 = 4
- Since March 27 Alternative Sentencing = 1
- Since March 27 Mental Health Court = 3

Average number of clients per week since March 27 = 30

Number of co-occurring = 28 (88%)

Number of just mental health disorder = 1

Number of just substance misuse disorders = 1

Age breakdown:

18 to 25 = 3 26 to 35 = 6 36 to 45 = 6 46 and up = 4

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Comparison from same time period for 2016 and current:

	2016	2017
• Client population	47	28
• Average number of clients per week	53	30
• Admissions	29	32
• Successful completions	25	33
• Non-successful	14	8
• Number of co-occurring	49	28
• Number of Mental Health disorders only	2	1
• Number of Substance Use Disorders only	0	1
• Number of clients in Circuit Court	31	13
• Number in Superior Court	14	13
• Number in both Courts	3	2

NARRATIVE:

Case load continues to be lower than in 2016 but as in the last report the current number is larger than in before 2016. Reason continues to be the current Court conditions and that Superior Court has been using the House of Corrections' Electric Monitoring Program more for pretrial supervision than it has in the past. This is allowing CCBHCP staff to assist Drug Court as they are in the process of securing a new hire for that vacated position.

CLIENT INSURANCE:

Since the Feds have not taken any direct action re: insurance it has keep those to budget lines far below of what it could have been however I would caution the Commissioners and Delegation on expecting that the Feds will not do major changes.

DRUG SCREENINGS:

It has recently brought to our attention that at least one private insurance company (Harvard Pilgrim) has denied payment of drug testing. There is some uncertainty whether other major insurance carriers will follow suit. Currently there is no word on whether N.H.

Medicare/Medicaid has or will deny payment. The Lab that is being used (Aspenti formerly Burlington Labs) has not received a payment from them or a denial letter.

If the insurance companies refuse payment and clients cannot pay for this service, this would make the County, once again, payer of last resort. Drug testing is expensive and the most if not all clients will not be able to afford payment of such services.

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Currently neither CCBHCP nor CCDC has a contractual agreement with Aspent Labs for the drug screening service they provide. It is unclear right what kind of discount we could arrange with them or if other Labs can provide the same service as Aspent at a better price. This will be investigated if it is required.

This point is being brought up at this time because we are working on the 2018 Budget. And again I caution that the outside service lines of the budget not be reduced below what will be requested.

CLIENT TREATMENT:

The State is still experiencing a shortage of treatment facilities, inpatient bed space and providers for substance use disorders as well as mental health clinicians. Most facilities are now triaging and taking pregnant females and females who are addicted to opiates/opioids and still using first and then others depending on their severity. This is causing problems with getting people into needed treatment especially males.

Another greatly needed treatment area is half way house. It is extremely difficult for those being released into the community when their living environment is not safe to return to and they do not have adequate support to reframe from using. More resources are needed to deal with this problem.

FINANCIAL:

There appears to be enough funds in the budget to take CCBHCP through the rest of the year unless the County ends up paying for drug screenings.

Potter discussed the reasons that some of the program numbers are lower overall this year vs last year. He said that the new Felony's First program is having an impact and the new focus of the court to use more supervision programs within the County Jail facilities.

The issue of drug screening payments being denied was reviewed and the issue of Medicaid denying payments was also discussed. Potter said that each test costs around \$1,200.00 and the insurance companies are reimbursement is about 50% of the total.

A discussion of the reasons that Keene is the hub for the County for both addiction treatment and buying drugs was covered and the problem of individuals in recovery who are unable to find safe housing to and to live in a safe environment.

Potter then discussed the loss of a staff member who had supervisory responsibility of two other staff for Mental Health education supervision. He said that to have outside supervisors monitor and certify the two remaining staff members it would cost approximately \$6,000.00. Following discussion, it was determined that the use of the Outside Services line would be the best vehicle to track and account for the costs.

Potter was thanked for his report and Coates was then recognized.

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Coates discussed the number of beds for federal inmates that are being held and turned the discussion over to Superintendent Van Wickler and Captain Mclaughlin.

Mclaughlin provided data and charts showing the increase in federal transports and the increase in revenue and discussed the costs involved in running the program. He said that this year the number of NH federal inmates has doubled and requires an increasing number of transport trips. He said that the staffing per-diem list has dropped significantly and it is increasingly difficult to find police personnel to work for the wages being offered.

Mclaughlin said that he prepared a suggested change to attract more staff to the per-diem staff list that was approved by the Finance Director and reviewed by the Commissioners. The request is to increase the per-diem officer compensation to \$26.00 per hour.

Following an extended discussion, Commissioner Cartwright moved to authorize the increase to \$26.00 for the per-diem officer pool for federal inmate transports. Commissioner Weed seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

Superintendent Van Wickler then introduced Rick Pratt from the Facilities Staff who discussed on-going issues with power instability problems at the facility during storms and discussed that this problem has caused damage to HVAC equipment through the building. He said that the total costs for the outages thus far this year has been \$8,157.25.

Master Agenda Item #524: Wage and Salary Out-of-Cycle Reviews – C. Coates
Action Expected: To discuss out-of-cycle wage requests for staff.

Coates discussed two recent requests from department heads for mid-year salary increases for staff members. A discussion of past practice and budget neutrality issues was covered. Following discussion, it was decided to adhere to the current policy and procedures.

Coates was then recognized for the Weekly Operations Report

He said that a Rindge resident will be in attendance at next week's Commissioners meeting to discuss their concerns about a recent incident that caused a great deal of concern.

Coates then discussed the removal of the pool at MNH due to on-going mechanical breakdowns, lack of use of the pool, and the ending of the trust fund that paid for operation of the pool. He said that with the reconstruction of the building to begin next year this is right time to re-examine the continued use of the pool. Following discussions, it was agreed to have the pool removed as part of the reconstruction project and to use the space for expansion of the Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy departments.

Coates the said that he had met with Dan Eaton and Paul Berch this morning at their request for the purpose of reconvening the delegation Farm Committee. A meeting will be scheduled for the Farm Committee in the near future.

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New Business

Commissioner Graves asked about the Fire Department response to a recent fire alarm call to Mutual Aid from the nursing home. It was discussed that there was a fair amount of confusion at Mutual Aid about whom to contact and as a result three (3) different staff members were called. Two (2) of the staff were not on site while the third person who was on-site had already called into Mutual Aid twice with follow-up information. Due to the confusion and the number of calls that occurred, only one Fire personnel came to investigate the alarm in their personal vehicle. The Administrator and staff at the nursing home will meet with the local fire chief to discuss proper procedures and expected responses to alarms at Maplewood.

Old Business

Commissioner Weed reviewed information from meetings on the issue of spending funds dedicated to increasing Assisted Living Facilities staff compensation and it was discussed that the best way to use the funds would be to use the monies in next year's budget cycle.

Coates said that a Moody's rating review discussion will take place on the 26th in anticipation of the bond for Maplewood.

The County Census was then reviewed.

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

The minutes of September 6, 2017 were then reviewed and Commissioner Weed moved to accept the minutes as presented and was seconded by Commissioner Cartwright. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

The Commissioners calendar was then reviewed.

At 12:22PM there being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Cartwright moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn was then seconded by Commissioner Weed and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
C. Weed