

**MINUTES**  
**Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting**  
**Tuesday, November 10, 2015 09:30AM**  
**Department of Corrections**  
**825 Marlboro Road**  
**Keene, NH 03431**

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Charles Weed, and Peter Graves (Stillman Rogers absent with notice)

**STAFF:** Finance Director Trombly, Superintendent Van Wickler, Case Manager Iosue, Mental Health Manager Peterson, HR Manager Hurley, County Administrator Coates, and Assistant County Administrator (ACA) Bouchard

**GUESTS:** Westmoreland Selectman Hammond, and a member of the public

Vice-Chairman Weed opened the meeting at 09:30AM and recognized Administrator Coates who provided the Weekly County Operations report.

Coates reminded the Commissioners that the Maplewood Sub-Committee would be meeting on Friday November 11<sup>th</sup> at 10:00AM.

Coates reported on the crafting of the 2016 budget and said that as of the meeting today, well over a million dollars has been removed from the proposed budget and more cuts are being reviewed. When a draft budget is completed it will be presented to the Commissioners for further review and acceptance before it is passed to the Delegation Executive Committee for their vetting and changes.

Master Agenda Item #303: Wage and Classification Study RFP Recommendation was then reviewed by Coates. He said that six (6) vendors had submitted proposals and ranging from \$81,000.00 to \$15,500.00. After reviewing the submissions two firms were selected for follow-up and during this period one of the firms was removed from contention based on not being able to meet the requirements of the RFP at the quoted price. A third firm was then reviewed and based on face-to-face interviews with the Director of Finance and the County Administrator, D. I. Jacobs Consulting Company of Holden MA was chosen to be recommended to be awarded the contract. The Commissioners asked a number of questions around the scope of the work and the ability of the vendor to complete the project on time and on budget. **Following discussion, Commissioner Graves moved to award the Wage and Classification Study Project to D. I. Jacobs of Holden MA. For the bid amount of \$15,500.00. Commissioner Weed seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed with two (2) Yea's.**

Coates then said that the Deletion meeting held in December would be on December 14<sup>th</sup> this year at 7:00PM and the meeting would be held in the Delegation meeting room at 12 Court Street, Keene, NH.

Superintendent Van Wickler was then recognized and said that he had asked Case Manager Iosue to attend the meeting to follow-up on a previous Commissioners request to gain more information on how Medicaid expansion would affect the programs at the Department of Corrections. Iosue presented the following handout:

### **Medicaid Expansion and Criminal Justice/Corrections**

*NH Medicaid Expansion (NH Health Protection Program) became effective July 2015, with coverage starting August 15, 2015*

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- Offers coverage to NH residents:
- HIPP: Health Insurance Premium Payment Program: offers coverage to help supplement coverage provided by employer
- Bridge Program: Offers coverage to individuals and families not covered through employer, based on an income scale: Individuals qualify if they make less than \$16,105 per year

NH HPP and Cheshire County DOC:

- At the start (i.e. - August 2014), average uninsured rate for CCDOC inmates was **71%** (2013 full year data). It was anticipated that nearly all of these individuals would qualify for the NH HPP Bridge Program
- Partnership with Service Link began September 2014:
- On site applications for inmates to be released within 30 days
- 48 individuals enrolled in 2014
- 78 individuals enrolled to date in Calendar Year 2015
- **126** individuals total enrolled
- Current uninsured rate has dropped to **40%**

NH HPP and its impact on the criminal justice population

In general, the criminal justice, incarcerated population is a 'high risk/high need' population, with many risk factors associated with re-offending, recidivism and re-incarceration. They are generally, in poor health with low access and poor commitment to good preventative care (medical, dental, psychiatric, addiction).

The following provides a quick summary of the profile of our County inmate population in terms of their needs and risk factors.

<b>Case Management Services Statistics:</b>			
<b>January 1, 2014-December 31, 2014</b>			
	<b>2015 YTD</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013 Comparison</b>
<u>Total new cases:</u>	285	351	320
<u>Gender:</u>			
Male:	63%	247 (70%)	255 (80%)
Female:	37%	104 (30%)	65 (20%)
<u>Sentencing Status:</u>			
Pre-sentenced:	45%	131 (37%)	93 (29%)
Sentenced:	52%	206 (59%)	213 (67%)
Federal:	3%	15 (4%)	14 (4%)
<u>Level of Case Management Service:</u>			
Full Assessment/Release-Reentry Plan:		199 (57%)	207 cases (65%)
Brief/Focused Intervention:		52 (43%)	113 cases (35%)

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<u>Percent of offenders presenting with:</u>	<b>2015 YTD</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013 Comparison</b>
Alcohol/Drug	87%	89%	87%
Mental Health	54%	48%	51%
Unemployed: (not on SSI)	62%	70%	71%
Homeless or at risk of:	21%	22%	20%
Disabled (on SSI or SSDI)	14%	10%	14%
Developmental Disability	0%	1%	1%
Offense correlated with Substance Abuse: (of those with a Substance Use Disorder):	89%	90%	87%
<u>Primary Drug of Choice:</u>			
Heroin	57%	53%	35%
Alcohol	13%	19%	31%
Marijuana	13%	12%	16%
Prescription Opiate	11%	8%	8%
Cocaine	5%	5%	4%
Synthetic	1%	3%	4%
Other pills	0%	1%	2%

	<b>2015 YTD</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013 Comparison</b>
<u>Ohio Risk Assessment Level</u>			
Low Risk:		3%	12%
Moderate Risk:		26%	29%
High Risk:		51%	43%
Very High Risk:		21%	17%*
<u>Housing Status at Intake:</u>			
Stay with family member:	45%	49%	52%
Rents an apartment:	21%	13%	13%
Homeless or potentially homeless:	21%	22%	20%
Stay with friend:	12%	15%	6%
Rents a room:	1%	0%	2%
Owens a home:	0%	1%	4%

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<u>Educational Level:</u>			
8th Grade or less:	2%	1%	1%
Some high school:	33%	23%	30%
GED:	17%	26%	28%
High School Diploma:	4%	44%	37%
College diploma:	6%	7%	4%
<u>Employment Status at Intake:</u>			
Unemployed (willing to work; job search)	51%	45%	49%
Employed (position secure at release)	24%	19%	15%
Possible employment/strong lead	11%	22%	17%
Disabled (on SSDI and/or SSI):	14%	10%	14%
Unemployed (min. willing, capacity to work)	0%	4%	4%
<u>Health Insurance Status at Intake:</u>			
Uninsured:	40%	63%	71%
Private insurance:	12%	16%	13%
State/Federal (Medicaid and/or Medicare)	25%	21%	16%
NH HEP (Wellness or NH Families)	23%		
<b>Release-Reentry Patterns</b>			
<b>(Data/Statistics obtained at point of Release-Reentry)</b>			
<u>Completed Referrals at Release-Reentry:</u>		<b>2014</b>	<b>2013 Comparison</b>
Formal Housing (Shelter(s), 2nd Chance, Mary's Place)		44	42
Informal Housing (family/friend)		25	22
Intermediate Housing (SCS, KHA Programs):		7	18

<u>Completed Referrals at Release-Reentry</u>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013 Comparison</b>
Alcohol/Drug:		
(Residential Level of Care):	63	68
Alcohol/Drug:		
(Outpatient Level of Care):	80	107
Mental Health Services:	38	37
Medical/Primary Care:	69	74
Employment/Vocational Support:	32	36
Basic Needs/Assistance/Insurance/Other:		

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Food Stamps	24	*
SSDI	14	*
Medicaid/NH HPP	48	*
DCYF Involved	27	*
Child Support Modification	9	*
Offenders Released to Monitoring/Court Ordered Programs:		
Probation:	156	136
CCASP/MH Court Program:	34	13
Cheshire County Drug Court:	30	7
<u>Disposition: County/State</u>		
% released within Cheshire County:	90%	86%
% released to Massachusetts:	2%	2%
% released to Vermont:	3%	2%
% released to Rockingham County:	3%	6%
% released to Sullivan County:	1%	1%
% released to Hillsborough County:	0%	2%
% released to other state:	1%	1%
*data sets not tracked separately for these categories in 2013		

<b><u>Offender Recidivism (within Cheshire County DOC)</u></b>	
	<b><u>% Returning on new charges and/or VOP within 1 year of release:</u></b>
2013	31.40%
2012	*data unavailable due Spillman>Xjail Conversion
2011	31.2
2010	32.2
2009	29.7
2008	29.1
2007	31.1
2006	34.6
	<b><u>% Returning on new charges and/or VOP within 3 years of release:</u></b>
2013	*Data not available until Jan. 2017
2012	*Data unavailable due Spillman>Xjail Conversion
2011	*Data unavailable due Spillman>Xjail Conversion

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2010	*Data unavailable due Spillman>Xjail Conversion
2009	39.20%
2008	44.60%
2007	37.70%
2006	46.30%

The statistics were discussed at some length and in response to a question from the Commissioners concerning addiction and specifically Heroin use, Iosue said that a majority of the Heroin users he sees have had significant trauma events in their lives usually tied to family interactions.

Iosue provided a detailed review of the data and the programs noting the disturbing trend of greatly increased heroin and opiate usage over the past two years.

The Commissioners thanked Iosue for his report and Van Wickler then discussed personnel changes that recently occurred in the Medical department. He introduced Mental Health Manager Barnes Peterson who discussed the suggested reorganization of department.

Peterson said that the previous medical coordinator had recently resigned and that it presented an opportunity to consider the redesign of how the department is managed. He suggested that two (2) of the existing medical staff T. A. and J. W. who are full-time LPN's at the facility are capable of splitting the responsibilities of the Medical Coordinator and that he would assist when needed. He stated that both of the employees are long-term employees and that both have agreed to split the position with various duties being assigned according to their strengths and interests. Peterson presented a breakdown of the shared and separate duties of the employees and said that he would like to try this new approach to determine if a Medical Services Coordinator position is required.

The Commissioners asked questions around the work loads and the ability of the employees to handle both the medical and administrative needs of the department. Peterson said that he believed that based on his discussion with the employees and his analysis of the work and department requirements that the suggested configuration would work. He also asked that the two employees taking on the added supervisory work be compensated with an additional one (1) dollar per hour.

Finance Director Trombly said that this was in keeping with the County's policy on non-management staff members assuming supervisory duties and that the additional \$1 per hour is a supernumerary payment that is not tied to hourly base compensation and that if the employee ceases to carry supervisor duties then the \$1 per hour would be forfeited.

**Commissioner Weed moved to award the additional supervisory pay of one (1) dollar per hour to T. A. and J. W. based on their assuming the supervisory / management duties of the Medical Coordinator position. Commissioner Graves seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed with two (2) Yea's.**

Van Wickler then said that Granite State Automation has made significant progress in fixing the HVAC

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issues in the building and that he anticipates that the work will be completed by the end of the year.

**At 10:46AM the Commissioners adjourned the meeting to conduct the second 2015 semi-annual Department of Corrections inspection as required by RSA 30-B: 12.**

The Commissioners began the inspection by briefly attending a training class being held in the training room for Correctional Officers (C.O.'s). The class was on the safe use of holds and restraints for obtaining compliance during acting out incidents.

At 10:56AM the Commissioners entered one of the multi-purpose rooms to conduct interviews with the staff and inmates with the purpose of providing a safe environment for both groups to express their candid views on the operation of the facility.

The first interview was with "K" a female C. O. who discussed the impact of staffing levels on morale and the amount of overtime needed accomplish tasks such as federal inmate transports. She said that she has worked in all of the pods and central control and is satisfied that the training she has received has been adequate. She stated that she is a certified officer that was trained at the in-house academy. She said that a strong sense of mission among the C. O.'s exists within the ranks and that many of them share a strong bond and close relationship.

At 11:09 the second interview with staff began with "F" a male C. O. who has been at the facility for approximately five (5) years. He said that he received his certification from the in-house academy and that he thought the training was more than adequate. He spoke of the turnover of C. O.'s the facility is experiencing and said that he believed that in large part it was that new employees came into the environment with an unrealistic expectation of the environment and those that cannot adapt soon leave. He said that even his own entry into the job was stressful at first but with training and experience it makes the job easier and more enjoyable. He also stated that being able to talk about problems and issues with mentors to better understand how to succeed in the environment proved to be very helpful to him. When asked for suggestion to improve the operation of the department he said that more mental health services for the inmates would be beneficial as would more Licensed Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselor (LADAC) staff.

At 11:18 inmate "N" a male, was interviewed. In response to questions from the Commissioners he said that he gets along with almost everyone and that he has about another five (5) weeks to serve before he is released. He went on to say that it is his hope to be able to enter the military and in 4-5 years become certified as an Army Medic. His eventual goal is to move to California to become an EMT. He said that the biggest lesson he has learned from his incarceration is to "stay away from the party crowd" and to stay away from alcohol. In response to a question about his perception of the C. O.'s he said that most of the inmates have a perception that all C. O.'s are bad but that is not his outlook as his father was career Military Policeman in the Army.

At 11:39 inmate "L" a female was interviewed. She said that she is from Rockingham County and is being held in Cheshire County because of a lack of facilities in Rockingham. She said that she has been told multiple times by the inmates in her cell block that she is very lucky to have been placed in the

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Cheshire County facility instead of one of the other County's facilities. She explained that she is possibly eligible for Electronic Monitoring (EM) release soon and that she is very much looking forward to being reunited with her family.

At 11:50 inmate "L" a male was interviewed. He said that he has been in the jail for four (4) months on drug and burglary charges. He explained that his family support system are his grandparents. He went on to say that he is a high school graduate and that he was deeply into drug abuse before he came to jail. He said that because of eating regular healthy meals that he has gained fifty (50) pounds in the last four (4) months. He also said that he gets along with the C. O.'s and doesn't have any problems with the staff. He then said that he was hoping to be able to participate in the work release program if he is offered the opportunity.

At 12:02PM the Commissioners ended the interviews and began a tour of the facility by visiting "D" block that was locked down for maintenance work.

At 12:10 the Commissioners entered "R" block and heard from the accompanying C. O. about how the work release program and electronic monitoring programs work. After inspecting the housing the Commissioners stopped at the Classification office at 12:13PM and heard about the procedures used to assign incoming inmates to the proper holding areas and how the interview process is conducted in order to ensure that an inmate is properly placed.

At 12:17PM the Commissioners entered "F" block and spoke with inmates. The C. O. described how the block was arranged and operated and the Commissioners observed the noon time meal being served.

At 12:29 the Commissioners entered the Booking area and learned about how inmate intakes are conducted and how the booking area works with local police and State police departments processing their arrests.

At 12:35PM the Commissioners entered the Medical department and met with the Mental Health manager and the on-shift nurse. A short discussion of the how the department operates was had and a visual inspection of the facilities occurred.

At 12:39PM the Commissioners entered the staff dining area and stopped for a lunch break during which impressions of the visit were discussed.

At 1:12PM the Commissioners returned to the Executive Conference and resumed the public meeting.

**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 October 28, 2015 were then reviewed and Commissioner Graves moved to accept the minutes as presented. Commissioner Weed seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**



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The Weekly Census and calendar were then reviewed.

**At 1:30PM there being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Weed moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion seconded by Commissioner Graves and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
P. Graves, Clerk