



COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Wednesday, March 4, 2026

Minutes

This meeting will be conducted in person and via Zoom at
County Hall
Delegation Hall
12 Court Street
Keene NH, 03431

Zoom Call-in Number: +1 646 558 8656

Meeting ID: 409 748 8803

Pin #: 603123

Start Time 8:30 AM

Present: Commissioners Terry Clark, Claudia Stewart, and Skipper DiBernardo

Absent:

Staff: County Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, HR Director May, Director of Executive Services/Communications Bernstein.

Guests:

Public Comments

Upon recognition from the Chair, a Public Comment on topics of interest may be made.

I. Elected Officials & Department Head Updates

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

1. Director of Executive Services and Communications Bernstein said the new website would be launched tomorrow (March 4, 2026). He explained that the website had been in development for nearly a year, and highlighted several improvements, including easier navigation, improved job application functionality, and better access to department contact information. He encouraged department heads to add their events to the calendar and noted that while some features might not be fully implemented at launch, all essential information would be available.

II. Scheduled Items

Master Agenda Item #1331: Auditor's Engagement Letter and Governance Questionnaire – S. Trombly

Action Expected: To have the Commissioners sign pertinent audit documents.

1. Finance Director Trombly presented the auditor's engagement letter and governance questionnaire for the Commissioner's review. She discussed the standard engagement letter, board records request, and questions about fraud risk and prevention.

She addressed the bond rating, noting that while the AA rating are currently stable, future reviews will depend on budget balancing and fund balance decisions. She expressed concern about the fiscal realities facing communities and the need to balance budget constraints without depleting fund balances, predicting that next year's budget will be more challenging.

County Administrator

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

1. County Administrator Coates said 19 out of 23 town Selectmen meetings have been attended so far by himself, Trombly, and the Commissioners.

2. Bernstein mentioned that Fitzwilliam and Alstead are the next towns to visit, with Sullivan scheduled further out for April 21st at 6:30 PM.

3. Coates and Trombly brought up a friendly amendment for the Delegation meeting regarding an ambulance purchase, involving a \$250,000 increase to the EMS budget. Cheshire noted that \$125,000 was already set aside in capital reserves, but this amount may need to be adjusted.

4. Coates proposed hosting a Department of Revenue Administration presentation, potentially via Zoom, to explain how state-imposed costs are calculated and distributed to towns. The group discussed updating the Cheshire County at a Glance document to reflect recent figures from the DRA.

III. Old Business

IV. New Business

V. Consent Agenda Items:

Vote to accept the Weekly Manifests and Minutes of February 25, 2026

Commissioner Stewart made a motion to accept the manifests and minutes of February 26, and Commissioner DiBernardo seconded. Upon a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

VI. Calendar

Action Expected: To review the calendar and to make necessary changes/additions.

1. Coates said the Commissioner's meeting would be cancelled on March 25, 2026.

VII. General Discussion for Commissioners

VIII. Nonpublic Sessions:

IX. Adjournment

At 9:22 AM Commissioner Stewart made a motion to adjourn, and Commissioner DiBernardo seconded. Upon a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Minutes Recorded by:

Davis Bernstein

Director of Executive Services & Communications

Minutes Reviewed by:

Commissioner DiBernardo

Clerk, Cheshire County Commissioners