



COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Wednesday, May 13, 2026

Minutes

This meeting will be conducted in person and via Zoom at
Maplewood Nursing Home
201 River Road
Westmoreland NH, 03467

Zoom Call-in Number: +1 646 558 8656

Meeting ID: 409 748 8803

Pin #: 603123

Start Time 9:30 AM

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

Absent:

Staff: County Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Grants Manager Bansley, Maplewood Facilities Director Newman, Sheriff Rivera, HR Director May, and 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.

II. Scheduled Items

Master Agenda Item #1351: RTP-CRT Fitzwilliam (Fiscally-Sponsored) Grant Agreement - S. Bansley

Action Expected: Vote to accept and sign the grant agreement and associated documents from the New Hampshire Bureau of Trails Recreational Trail Program (RTP) grant for \$80,000 plus \$20,000 match (to be met by the subcontracted trail work vendor) to rehab 4.7 miles of the Cheshire Rail Trail that runs through the town of Fitzwilliam.

1. Grants Manager Bansley said the project is out to bid. There is a fixed amount of funds for all four segments of the trail, but the project may only be three of the segments depending on how the bids turn out.

Commissioner DiBernardo asked if this will finish up the Fitzwilliam portion of the rail trail.

Bansley said it is likely it will finish up the project.

WHEREAS: The New Hampshire Department of Natural and Cultural Resources has awarded

the County of Cheshire a Recreational Trails Program “RTP” grant from G&C execution through September 30, 2027 for \$80,000.00 with a cost share of up to \$20,000.00 to be met by cash donation or discount from a subcontracted trail work contractor.

VOTED: That Commissioner Chair Terry M. Clark or County Administrator Christopher C. Coates are hereby authorized on behalf of the County of Cheshire to accept the aforementioned grant, if awarded, and to enter into a grant agreement with the aforementioned funder and to execute any and all documents, agreements and other instruments, and any amendments, revisions, or modifications thereto, as they may deem necessary, desirable, or appropriate to effect the purpose of this vote; and to also enter into any contractual agreements; including, but not limited to vendor subcontracts, subrecipient agreements, and/or memorandums of understandings; as necessary to carry out the goals, objectives, and activities of the agreement.

VOTED: That Grants Manager Suzanne Bansley and Grants Specialist Jamilla Pucciarello are hereby appointed as the authorized certifying officials, contacts, and liaisons with regards to the above referenced agreement and are both hereby authorized on behalf of the County of Cheshire to certify or sign vouchers or requisitions for payments or claims to the agreement.

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution has not been amended or repealed and remains in full force and effect as of the date of the execution of this document. I further certify that it is understood that the State of New Hampshire will rely on this certificate as evidence that the person listed above currently occupies the position indicated and that they have full authority to bind the Municipality. **This authority remains valid for thirty (30) days from the date of this Certificate of Authority.**

Commission Clerk, Skipper DiBernardo

Master Agenda Item #1352: Sole Source Contract for Water Treatment Engineering Study – S. Bansley

Action Expected: Vote to authorize sole source of a contract for Maplewood Water Treatment Engineering Study with Aries Engineering for \$29,000, term 5/14/26-10/31/26.

1. Grants Manager Bansley said the contract would be paid for by \$25,000 of Community Development Block Grant funds, and \$4,000 of the Maplewood Facilities Department budget.

Maplewood Facilities Director Newman said the the main purpose for this study is to find a cost-effective, solution for upgrading either the surface water treatment plant or potentially transitioning to wells, providing a secondary water source for the county complex.

Commissioner DiBernardo made a motion to approve the sole source, and Commissioner Stewart seconded. Upon a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Master Agenda Item #1353: Sheriff’s Office Vehicle – E. Rivera

Action Expected: To receive approval for purchase of a vehicle.

1. Sheriff Rivera said they are getting three cars. Two of them are through the state contract system, and another comes through a local dealer who provided incentives to purchase in the amount of \$9,700.

The Sheriff said he is looking for approval to purchase the vehicles and waive the bidding process.

He said one vehicle is electric and they will be paying \$10,000 to install two electric vehicle chargers in two locations.

Commissioner DiBernardo said he was not interested in supporting the purchase of an electric vehicle without having done more research. He said he was concerned with how it would function in the local weather.

Commissioner Stewart agreed.

Commissioner Clark said they work well, and has done research to know they work well in New England.

Sheriff Rivera said a Sheriff in Vermont uses an electric vehicle and likes it.

Clark and Rivera defended the decision based on cost savings, reduced maintenance, and the vehicle's police-specific design.

Stewart expressed concerns about the technology choice and its limitations, particularly regarding range and charging infrastructure.

The discussion centered on whether to approve a sole source purchase from or put it out to bid, with Rivera arguing that the delegation had already approved the car purchase and the commission's role was to authorize the sole source, not the technology choice itself.

Commissioner Clark made a motion to approve the sole source, and Commissioner Stewart seconded. Upon a roll call vote the motion passed 2-1, with Commissioner DiBernardo voting against the motion.

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 the forum on downshifting in conjunction with the City of Keene, SAU 29, and Senator Fenton was a great success. He suggested he would like to hold a similar event at the County in the Fall.

2. Coates said he met with the Hinsdale Selectboard to obtain a letter of support for a rail trail grant managed by the County.

III. Old Business

IV. New Business

V. Consent Agenda Items:

Vote to accept the Weekly Manifests and Minutes of May 6, 2026

Commissioner Stewart made a motion to accept the manifest and minutes of May 6, Commissioner Clark seconded. Upon a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

VI. Calendar

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

VII. General Discussion for Commissioners

VIII. Nonpublic Sessions:

IX. Adjournment

At 10:40AM Commissioner Clark 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