



COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Wednesday, April 2, 2025

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 8:30 AM

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

Absent:

Staff: County Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Director of Executive Services/Communications Bernstein, Register of Deeds Tilton, Maplewood Administrator Kindopp, and Superintendent Iosue.

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 #1252: Semi-Annual Report, Maplewood – K. Kindopp

Action Expected: To receive an informational report on the last six months of operations from the Maplewood Administrator.

1. Maplewood Administrator said that the regulations of nursing homes have superseded nuclear facilities as they are held to an extremely high standard.

Kindopp said there is mandatory weekly reporting which takes up several staff hours. This used to come with a \$10,000 fine, this has ended but being out of compliance brings major issues with the survey.

Commissioner DiBernardo asked if there was anything that could be done to reduce the high amount of reporting.

Kindopp said working through NACO and our elected officials is one option, but she said

focusing on a potential loss of Medicaid funding is of the utmost importance now.

Master Agenda Item #1253: Private Room Rate Adjustment – S. Trombly & K. Kindopp

Action Expected: To discuss and vote on the adjusted private room rate for Maplewood Nursing Home.

1. Finance Director Trombly stated the formula to determine if a County is eligible for Pro-Share funding has changed.

The delta between costs and the deficit Medicaid causes is divided in two, resulting in our yearly Pro-Share disbursement.

To be able to draw down the difference in costs and Medicaid receipts, the private pay rate has to be 60% or lower than the daily cost as determined by the cost report.

This is different than what our rate is today, they look back to July 1, 2024, and estimate costs up to June 30, 2025. They look at the “paid” days and come up with what they believe our daily rate to be.

She said she is working with Susan Ryan and Cristy Roy through the State of New Hampshire, as we are near 61/62% which is above the mandated threshold.

The current customary charge is \$436 per day. A reduction in the rate would likely be \$390 or less.

Pro-Share would be moved from five million to two million if we do not meet this threshold. Currently Trombly and Kindopp are looking to see if a rate reduction to a private pay rate may help to get us under the 60% threshold.

Yet, if we reduce the rate for May 1, 2025 and it has no impact on bringing us below the threshold, this would be a lose lose as the rate would be reduced for no benefit.

There are many unanswered questions Trombly has lobbied at the State. It is uncertain if the 61/62% figure would completely change the formula resulting in a major reduction in Pro-Share funding, or if it is proportional resulting in a smaller hit.

Master Agenda Item #1254: Educational Reimbursement Rate Adjustment – S. Trombly

Action Expected: To discuss and vote on the adjusted rate for educational reimbursement for Cheshire County employees.

1. Trombly said the County currently reimbursed employees for up to \$2,700 for pursuing higher education or external trainings.

With the recently ratified CCEMS union contract, an increase of \$300 was added resulting in \$3,000 a year.

Trombly said she would like to make this equal for all County employees.

Commissioner Clark made a motion to increase the education reimbursement from \$2,700 to \$3,000. Commissioner Stewart seconded. Upon a roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

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 he met with NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management Director Buxton on Monday March 31.

Coates said they discussed funding opportunities for Southwest NH District Fire Mutual Aid's communications infrastructure project.

Coates said they also discussed a potential partnership to bring in a staff member to the County to be more involved directly with emergency management of towns and the County.

2. Coates said he attended an event at Tempesta's Restaurant in Swanzey honoring the law enforcement officers of New Hampshire.

3. Coates said he has joined and recently attended a meeting on housing through NACO. This is in partnership with two other Counties to look towards ways in which unused County land could be utilized for housing.

4. Coates said a local college student is interested in a data focused internship with the County. The internship is paid for through their college. Coates said he would look towards having this student assess the unused County land.

5. The Commissioners discussed the public perception of Cheshire County as a sanctuary community. County Administrator Coates said this is not true whatsoever.

Coates said this false perception began with a statement Sheriff Rivera made in 2017, which is not the official ratified position of the County.

The Commissioners and the Delegation have never taken a vote to put this in place.

Commissioner Stewart and DiBernardo stated they would like to discuss additional cooperation with ICE at the DOC in the near future.

Coates said he has reached out to the NH Journal to clarify Cheshire County is not a sanctuary community.

6. Coates said the planning with Visa Solutions is going well, and we could see the first

new RN at Maplewood in a matter of months. He said HR Director May will give further details at the next meeting.

III. Old Business

IV. New Business

V. Consent Agenda Items:

Vote to accept the Weekly Manifests and Minutes of March 26, 2025

VI. Calendar

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

VII. General Discussion for Commissioners

VIII. Nonpublic Sessions:

RSA 91-A:3, II (a) The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted.

RSA 91-A:3, II(b) The hiring of any person as a public employee.

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. This exemption shall extend to include any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant.

RSA 91-A:3, II(d) Consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community.

RSA 91-A:3, II(e) Consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation which has been threatened in writing or filed against this board or any subdivision thereof, or against any member thereof because of his or her membership therein, until the claim or litigation has been fully adjudicated or otherwise settled

RSA 91-A:3, II(l) Consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel, either in writing or orally, to one or more members of the public body, even where legal counsel is not present.

IX. Adjournment

At 10:48AM Commissioner Clark made a motion to adjourn, and Commissioner Stewart 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