



COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Wednesday, December 17, 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 and Skipper DiBernardo

Absent: Commissioner Claudia Stewart (With Notice)

Staff: County Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, HR Director May, Director of Executive Services/Communications Bernstein, Conservation District Manager Hershon, Assistant Maplewood Administrator Priest, and Maplewood Administrator Kindopp

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. Superintendent Phillips said the new DOC inmate transport bus is ready to be delivered. He said that the old bus would need to be sold and he would keep the Commissioners in the loop about any decisions that need to be made in regard to the sale.

II. Scheduled Items

Master Agenda Item #1318: Semi-Annual Report, Cheshire County Conservation District – B. Hershon

Action Expected: To receive an informational report on the last six months of operations from the District Manager of the Cheshire County Conservation District.

1. Conservation District Manager Hershon said the local community working group was brought together in April. The USDA was present for this meeting. Key topics brought up were forest health, farm land conservation, and pollinator health.

Hershon said that a lot of farms were hit hard by the drought this past year. The NH Conservation District Climate Resilience Grant went to many of these farms. The 2026

application has just opened. House bill 246 aims to get state funding for the grant.

In Fall the district ran a bulk seed sale which was very successful in order to support local farmers especially for cover crops.

The district received a \$64,000 grant to bolster their farm equipment rental program to support farmers. The district bought new equipment that is available for rent by local farmers.

They held workshops to teach people how to use the new equipment available. The rental program has equipment out that covers nearly 10,000 acres across the County,

Hershon highlighted the Connecticut River Watershed Planning Project which has worked to reduce nitrogen runoff.

Hershon spoke about a program that provided \$20,000 in 2025 to local veterans to purchase local healthy food.

Master Agenda Item #1319: Annual Corporate Compliance Training – K. Kindopp & S. Priest
Action Expected: To have the Commissioners take part in the annual corporate compliance training.

1. Maplewood Administrator Kindopp said this training is required by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). She said that this training aims to reduce fraud, waste, and abuse.

Important tracts that this training touches on are disaster preparedness, background checks, competency checks, inappropriate usage of medication, and reporting compliance.

Kindopp said antibiotic stewardship is too strict and nationally nursing homes have gone from overusing antibiotics to underusing them to the point where residents are getting very sick before antibiotics can be used.

Kindopp showed the following video from the OIG. [Watch here](#)

Kindopp said that Commissioner DiBernardo attends the quarterly quality assurance and compliance meetings.

Kindopp highlighted the seven elements of successful compliance programs from the OIG.

- 1) Written policies and procedures.
- 2) Compliance leadership and oversight.
- 3) Training and education.
- 4) Effective lines of communication, the compliance officer, and the disclosure program.
- 5) Enforcing standards: consequences and incentives.
- 6) Risk assessments, auditing, and monitoring.
- 7) Responding to detected offenses, and developing corrective action initiatives.

Kindopp said there are incentives for employees to report fraud, waste, or abuse.

Kindopp said that the facility was reduced from a five-star facility to a four-star facility last January, this isn't due to any changes Maplewood has made, but an arbitrary change at the federal level to make it harder to attain a five-star status.

Kindopp also addressed the issue of psychotropic medication use, noting the need for proper documentation and the risk of misdiagnosis. She spoke to facility metrics, including the higher proportion of female residents and those aged 85 and older, which may contribute to higher dementia rates.

The Commissioners discussed increasing prevalence of dementia among residents, highlighting the complex interplay of biological, environmental, and social factors.

County Administrator Coates noted that Cheshire County is the County with the highest level of dementia in the state.

Kindopp addressed the importance of reviewing and updating policies annually, conducting regular hazard vulnerability assessments, and maintaining comprehensive records as per regulatory requirements.

Kindopp emphasized the facility's commitment to quality care, and noted the importance of staff training and reporting mechanisms to ensure compliance and address any issues promptly.

County Administrator

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

1. Coates said Sheriff Rivera put on a "Blue Wave of Support" for Deputy Mark Chamberlain who is experiencing serious health issues. This display of support included over 100 vehicles from various police and emergency departments from across the County and the state.

2. Coates said the Commissioners will meet with additional town Selectmen throughout January and February. The Commissioners have met with 13 towns, and aim to meet with all 23 municipalities.

3. Coates said that Grants Manager Bansley and himself will be meeting with the Downtown Keene group to support businesses during the Keene infrastructure project. Coates and Bansley will be helping to develop an application to Northern Borders Regional Commission grants programs.

Coates and the Commissioners discussed the concern they have for small businesses during the infrastructure project.

4. Finance Director Trombly said today is the day that taxes are owed to the County by the 23 municipalities. She said that eight towns have not made payments yet.

5. Coates said the state has certified the EMS training program through Scott Symonds.
6. Coates said he presented to Leadership Monadnock last week. He spoke about County government and presented the Cheshire County at a Glance document.
7. Coates said HR Director May and himself will continue to work with the City of Keene to develop leadership training programs.

III. Old Business

IV. New Business

V. Consent Agenda Items:

Vote to accept the Weekly Manifests and Minutes of December 10, 2025

Commissioner DiBernardo made a motion to approve the manifests and minutes of December 10, 2025. 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 11:00AM 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