

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday November 14, 2018 09:30AM
Count Hall Building
Stillman Rogers Conference Room
12 Court Street, Keene, NH 03431

Present: Commissioners Peter Graves, Joseph Cartwright and Charles Weed

Staff: County Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Grants Manager Bansley, and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard

Guest(s):

At 9:30AM Chairman Graves opened the meeting and recognized Sheriff Rivera to discuss the Semi-Annual report for the Sheriff's Department.

The Sheriff said that so far in 2018 there have been 2,197 civil services by the deputies and 2,064 transports.

He then said that a supervisor in the Dispatch department is retiring and both an internal and external search will be conducted to fill the position.

Rivera then said that funding by the State has been received to create a part-time forensic lab that will be located in the Sheriff's department.

The Commissioners asked a number of questions about the existing town contracts that are in place for the Sheriff to provide law enforcement services and also asked about the school Truancy program in Keene.

The Commissioners thanked the Sheriff for his report and then recognized Grants Manager to discuss Master Agenda Item #629: Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Grant Award Acceptance.

Bansley asked the Commissioners to vote to accept the award and execute award documents for the 2019 and 2020 Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) grant "DV Prosecutor Grant" from the New Hampshire Department of Justice for \$30,000 per year plus \$10,000 per year match. She said that the funds will be spent to partially offset the salary of a domestic violence prosecutor. The County match will be met with the prosecutor's benefits.

Following discussion, Commissioner Cartwright moved to accept the grant and was seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

Bansley then updated the Commissioners and said that \$106,000.00 in administration fees have been received thus far in 2018 and approximately \$2M in new grants have been obtained this year.

Coates was then recognized to discuss Master Agenda Item #630: Disposal of County Assets – Department of Corrections Steam Boiler and two (2) Steam Kettles.

Because this issue had been previously vetted by the Board, Commissioner Cartwright moved to authorize the sale of the steam boiler and two (2) steam kettles at the Department of Corrections. Commissioner Weed seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

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Administrator Coates was then recognized for the Weekly Operations Report.

Coates discussed a letter that has been received from an employee requesting adding to the County education reimbursement policy the inclusion of books, printed materials, and software needed to complete the course work. The request was discussed, and it was decided to further investigate the potential impact of the request and to hold any decision until that work was completed.

Coates then said that he met with the Chair of the County Delegation, Rep. Eaton, in preparation for the December 10th Delegation meeting for the 2019 Proposed Commissioners budget crossover, the new Delegation organizational meeting, and the executive committee meeting for budget review dates all scheduled for December 10th. Public notices will be sent out next week in anticipation of the meeting.

He went on to say that the new State Representative orientation will also occur that day and that existing representatives who wish to have a refresher would also be welcome. A tour of the campuses will occur later in the Spring of 2019 as the new wing of the nursing home is completed.

Coates said that he met with the County Safety Officer in anticipation of their pending retirement at the end of the year to lay out a plan that will allow a smooth transition of duties and responsibilities. A potential transitional consulting period is also being discussed.

Coates then said that the four of the restored Old Courthouse windows were installed yesterday and that a local architect assisted in the selection of colors for the windows as well as suggesting trim and wall colors for the pending cupola project.

Coates has been contacted by the Chamber of Commerce concerning the Annual Chamber of Commerce Gala in January. He said that he will be arranging the attendance list in the next few weeks.

Coates said that he met yesterday with Ann Laundry, the director of the 1115 waiver grant program for this area. He is arranging for a meeting in February with the Commissioners to review the history of the program and to prepare for presenting to the Delegation later in the year.

Coates said that in a recent meeting with the Executive Director of the New Hampshire Association of Counties (NHAC) he confirmed with the NHAC staff that Commissioner Weed will continue as the Vice President of the organization. He said that five members from the County including the two new County Commissioners and staff will be appointed as County representatives.

Coates said that the Edge Theater will be presenting their latest performance in the Delegation meeting room on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The performance is of the play "Few Good Men" that was made into a popular film in 1992.

Coates mentioned the NHAC conference calls with the Dupont Group that provides status updates for Counties on state legislative actions will at the end of this month.

He then said that propane costs for the nursing home have been quoted at \$1.27 based on the anticipated high volume of usage for the new boilers being installed. He said that the County is seeking a contract for at least a year at that rate. Further bids are being sought from other vendors for County-wide deliveries.

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He then said that the next round of union negotiations at the nursing home will take place tomorrow.

Coates said that he has been notified that the Superintendent of the Merrimack Department of Corrections has been appointed as the interim administrative coordinator for the County.

Jack Dugan and Tim Murphy then joined the meeting and Coates introduced the topic of the investigation of installing an Economic Development Coordinator for the County. Commissioner Graves spoke of his concerns regarding the cost of position if done in conjunction with the Cooperative Extension program. Coates outlined the history of the need of the position and discussed how the relationship with the Monadnock Economic Development Corporation and the Southwest Regional Planning Commission and County will work together to create the position.

The Commissioners asked Dugan and Murphy what their opinions were of how the position should be set-up. Dugan said that the current configuration of MEDC is to focus on very granular activities that result in putting into place the financial packages needed to implement corporate growth objectives.

Murphy said that the SWRPC focuses on providing data and services that meet the Federal requirements of grant programs for economic development but the “foot soldiers” are missing between the data gathering the implement services provided by MEDC. He said that Cheshire County is the only county in state to lose jobs over the last year.

Commissioner Cartwright said that the discussion is really down to if the position should be a County employee or an employee of the Cooperative Extension.

A discussion of how Cheshire County has more in common with some Vermont and Massachusetts counties vs New Hampshire county due to adjunct geography was covered.

A further conversation concerning the history of the economic development work that has been done over the past two plus years in the area was discussed. Commissioner Weed asked what Dugan’s opinion was concerning a succession plan for him as his retirement horizon is about eighteen months out.

Commissioner Cartwright moved to have the Economic Development Coordinator a County position and was seconded by Commissioner Weed.

An extended review of the potential duties and responsibilities of the position were discussed.

In response to a question from Commissioner Cartwright, Dugan said that as a part of his organizations succession plan they have a short list of possible candidates that could be consider for this position.

Following general discussion, **the Commissioners deliberated having have the Economic Development Coordinator a direct hire (FTE) County position, contingent on the confirmation by the County Delegation.**

Upon vote, Commissioners Cartwright and Graves voted Yea and Commissioner Weed voted Nay. The motion passed 2-1.

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The 2019 Holiday Schedule was then reviewed, and Commissioner Cartwright moved to accept and authorize the holiday schedule. Commissioner Weed seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

Trombly was then recognized and discussed the health plan investigation results. She said that a re-insurance company has presented a plan to our Health Plan Inc, health plan administrator, the ability to save approximately \$134,000.00 by raising the stop-loss level from \$125,000.00 to \$150,000.00.

Commissioner Weed moved to accept a new stop-loss plan that would raise the County exposure to \$150,000.00 per incident. Commissioner Cartwright seconded the motion and upon vote the passed unanimously.

Trombly discussed adding a rate cap that would cost \$34K but would help manage the rating experience of health plan. The Commissioners were agreeable to implementing the plan as presented.

Coates then discussed the 2019 Budget status and Trombly reviewed the current line item debits and credits based on a thorough review of actual and projected expenditures.

Commissioner Cartwright moved to accept the 2019 Proposed Commissioners Budget and was seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

At 12:33PM Commissioner Cartwright moved to enter a non-meeting to discussion a union issue and seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

At 12:37PM the Commissioners voted unanimously to return to public session.

Old Business:

New Business: Trombly then said that she received a call this morning that a lien that the County has on a residence has been sold and the County will be reimbursed the money that is outstanding for services provided by the nursing home.

The Weekly Census was then reviewed.

The Weekly Manifest was then reviewed, and **Commissioner Cartwright moved to accept the Manifest as presented and was seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

The minutes of November 7, 2018 were then reviewed and Commissioner Weed moved to accept the minutes as amended and was seconded by Commissioner Cartwright. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

The calendar was then reviewed.

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General Discussion: None

At 12:41PM there being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Weed moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn was seconded by Commissioner Graves and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Charles Weed
Clerk, Board of Commissioners