

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, June 17, 2020
County Hall Pursuant to Emergency Order #12 Pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04
This meeting will be conducted electronically.

Conference Call Information
Phone Call-in Number: +1 646 558 8656
Meeting ID: 409 748 8803
Building

Present: Commissioners: Charles Weed, and Robert Englund (Jack Wozmak absent w/notice)

Staff: County Administrator Coates, Director of Finance Trombly, Department of Corrections Interim Director of Operations Morey, and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard.

Guests: County Treasurer and Keene City Counselor Terry Clark

At 8:38AM Commissioner Weed opened the meeting and a roll-call of the Commissioners attending the meeting was conducted by County Administrator Coates. Commissioners Weed and Englund responded as "present".

Commissioner Weed then moved to conduct this meeting as an emergency meeting under the relevant provisions of NH RSA 91-A, and consistent with the recommendations contained in Executive Order 2020-04 Order 12 issued by Governor Sununu. Commissioner Englund seconded the motion and upon roll-call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Emergency Order #12 Pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04
Temporary modification of public access to meetings under RSA 91-A
Pursuant to Section 18 of Executive Order 2020-04 it is hereby ordered, effective immediately, that:

1. Pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, paragraph 8 provides: "State and local government bodies are permitted and encouraged to utilize the emergency meeting provisions of RSA 91-A to conduct meetings through electronic means while preserving, to the extent feasible, the public's right to notice of such meetings and ability to observe and listen contemporaneously."

2. Pursuant to Emergency Order #2 issued pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, gatherings of fifty people or more are prohibited.

3. To implement these orders and recommendations, the requirement in RSA 91-A:2, III (b), that a quorum of a public body be physically present unless immediate action is imperative, is waived for the duration of the State of Emergency declared in Executive Order 2020-04.

4. To further implement these orders and recommendations, the requirement in RSA 91-A:2, III(c), that each part of a meeting of a public body be audible or otherwise discernible to the public "at the location specified in the meeting notice as the location of the meeting," is waived for the duration of the State of Emergency declared in Executive Order 2020-04 so long as the public body:

- Provides public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by
- video or other electronic means;
- Provides public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting;

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- Provides a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are
- problems with access; and
- Adjourns the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting.

Coates then outlined the rules of the meeting;

1. Public has an opportunity at the beginning of the Commissioners Meeting under “Public Comment” to speak. Community input will not be allowed after that point, unless recognized and allowed by the Chair of the Commissioners.
2. All votes will be Roll Call and when recognized, we are asking that you re-state your name and yes or no
3. If you have a question or motion that you would like to ask to put forward, please state the following, “Mr. Chair, Commissioner (your name) has a question or motion”.
4. If you are having issue hearing the call, please text or call the County Administrator at 603-313-9002.
5. Please mute your phones so background noise won’t interfere with the meeting.
6. This meeting has been posted on our website so that the community, department heads and media can listen into the meeting.
7. This meeting is utilizing a Zoom Platform so listeners can join us via audio or audio/visual.

The Chair opened the meeting at 8:40AM and recognized Department of Corrections Interim Director of Operations Morey who provided a short update on the facility saying that two new officers have started this week and everything is going smoothly. The Commissioners asked a few questions that were addressed by Morey.

Director Trombly was then recognized and discussed Master Agenda Item #777: County Investment Funds Policy Review. She said that an update to the policy should be made so that funds can be placed with the NH Public Deposit Investment Pool (PDIP). The issue is the current language that calls out the requirement for collateralization of funds and the PDIP does not collateralize its deposits.

Administrator Coates was then recognized for the Weekly Operations report.

Coates asked if the Commissioners are available on Monday June 22nd for a Towns and Cities Zoom meeting and said that there are two potential guests that would join the call. Margaret Brynes, the Executive Director of the NH Municipal Association, who will address the question of the collection of taxes after close of the first half of municipal tax collections in July, and Keith Thibault Southwest Housing will discuss CARES act funding for residents who cannot make rent payments and other household payment due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A review of the available grants to municipalities will also take place.

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At 8:52AM Commissioner Wozmak joined the meeting.

Coates then said that the request made by the County for reimbursement for the increased cost of construction because of the 10-week extended timeline for the Maplewood reconstruction project due to COVID-19 has been approved for \$302K and that the funds have been received.

At 9:03AM Beth Galperin from the NH Public Deposit Investment Pool (PDIP) joined the call and spoke to questions from the Commissioners primarily around the lack of collateralization of funds at the PDIP. She outlined the structure of the organization and spoke to the stability of the pool saying that in the forty plus years that the fund has been in business no depositor has ever lost any money.

The question of the purpose of collateralization was discussed and the previous impact of the 1980's and 1990's banking crisis was discussed.

RSA 29:3 was referenced as the ruling authority of law for County investment options which calls out the following *"29:3 Excess Funds. – Whenever the county treasurer has in custody an excess of funds which are not immediately needed for the purpose of expenditure the county treasurer may, with the approval of the county commissioners and county executive committee and upon such terms as shall be approved by the county commissioners, invest the same in participation units in the public deposit investment pool established pursuant to RSA 383:22..."* whereas with funds that are invested with banks do requirement that the funds be collateralized on a 1:1 basis.

The Commissioners unanimously agreed that the County should modify the County Investment Policy to include the utilization of the NH Public Deposit Investment Pool as an option for the investment of County funds. Director Trombly will modify the existing document for final approval and vote at next week's meeting.

Coates then informed the Commissioners that the County the ProShare funds for this year for the nursing home is expected to be approximately \$1M over last years payment. A discussion of the reasons for the receipt of the extra funds was covered which included the reconstruction project at Maplewood.

Coates then discussed the overall financial status of the County as the impact of COVID-19 costs have been recognized over the past three to four months. He discussed the additional funds that may become available from State and Federal sources in the anticipated next round of federal offset funding.

Coates then spoke to the on-going discussions with Cheshire Medical Center concerning Telehealth and he said that a follow-up meeting will take place next week.

Coates said that the Governor has opened up Nursing Homes to outside visitation with residents and that it this will begin this weekend at the nursing home. The nursing home administrator is writing-up the

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procedures and rules that will need to be in effect for the visits. The rules and procedures will be posted on the County website here: <https://www.co.cheshire.nh.us/covid-19-county-news-updates/>
The status of the Region #1 Integrated Delivery Network (IDN) was discussed and the funding contribution by the County was covered. Ideas for funding local service providers and other programs that directly assist County residents was covered as the IDN program starts to wind down next year. The previous funding issues of the IDN across the State was then reviewed and the lack of funding by some of the Counties was discussed.

The existing County and Keene State College Memorandum of Understanding for the use of the college dorms during the pandemic is being terminated at the end of June. Coates has reached out to the Marriott hotel for the potential housing for employees who may not be able to return to their homes due to other family members being ill with COVID-19 or who may be in quarantine for other reasons or situations that require an employee not to return to their households.

A discussion of rescue services in the County and the provision of municipal ambulance services began and the cost to support the services was discussed in detail. The projected cost to have vehicles and personnel on duty was explored at length. It was agreed that the total overall cost is prohibitive for many small communities and ways to enact a cost sharing model were discussed.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Commissioner Wozmak moved to accept the Consent agenda for the Weekly Manifest and the Minutes from the week of June 03, 2020 seconded by Commissioner Englund upon roll-call vote the motion passed unanimously.

At AM Master Agenda Item #686: Semi-Annual Inspection of the Department of Corrections as required by RSA 30-B 12 was taken-up and the Commissioners began the inspection tour of the Department of Corrections physical facility and its operations.

At 10:40AM the Commissioner's began an inspection tour of the facility with everyone wearing face masks and observing social distancing rules. Interim Operations Director Morey accompanied the Commissioners and staff discussed the use of the computerize law library, a recent change in commissary providers and responded to a question by the Commissioners concerning the number of internal complaints and grievances received by saying that both categories were very low in number and quite infrequent.

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At 10:52AM the touring group entered the F-02 Pod and it was noted that the flooring in the entire Pod area appears to be rapidly degrading and should be scheduled for replacement. A discussion of the upgraded tablets used by the inmates was had and the use the video visitation system was covered.

A recently introduced change in the way that disciplinary issues are handled was discussed by DOC staff and it was learned that voluntary assignment to counseling has been successfully in some cases with inmates who are prepared to be actively engaged in the process in lieu of being placed in segregation cells.

At 11:05AM the Commissioners entered the Medical Unit and met with the on-duty personnel. The use of suboxone in addiction treatments was discussed and the number of diabetic inmates was learned to be much lower than usual. How medications are distributed to inmates in need was covered as well as the rules and necessity for being engaged one-on-one with medical staff in the medical unit instead of receiving medications in the holding Pods was reviewed.

At 11:14AM The R Block Pod was entered and it was again noted that the flooring is in poor condition. The Commissioner's checked for the presence of inmate handbooks, grievance forms, and medical request forms and all were found to be readily available to any inmate who wished to submit a request.

At 11:21AM The Commissioners passed-by room P0-2 where a recovery session was being conducted and it was noted that the room was almost full.

At 11:23AM The Commissioners entered the D Block Pod and found that the current population of the block is at 64. The use of the inmate tablets for communication with their families and friends was explained and how the communications are filtered to prevent prohibited communications was covered.

The flooring problem was once again noted and a plan for replacement will be developed and a budget will be submitted in the coming years budget request.

At 11:29AM The Commissioner enter the K Block Pod (high risk unit) and were informed that the current population in the unit is at 29. A discussion of inmate control techniques and officer was covered and how teleconferencing in the day rooms is handled was discussed.

It was noted that the air ducts in the unit need to be inspected for cleaning as it hasn't been done in some time.

At 11:33AM Commissioner Wozmak left the building to attend a previously scheduled meeting and the Commissioners adjourned for a short lunch and recap of the tour.

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At 12:01PM the Commissioner reconvened in the meeting room.

At 12:04AM there being no further public business to discuss, Commissioner Englund moved to adjourn and was seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon roll-call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Minutes recorded by:
R. Bouchard, Assistant County Administrator

Reviewed and submitted by:
R. Englund, Clerk