

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, July 29, 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

Pin #: 6031233

Present: Commissioners: Charles Weed, Jack Wozmak and Robert Englund

Staff: County Administrator Coates, Director of Finance Trombly, Department of Corrections Superintendent Iosue, Sheriff Rivera, and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard.

Guests: County Treasurer and Keene City Counselor Terry Clark,

At 8:30AM 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 and 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 Wozmak 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, II 1 (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, II 1 (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 8:35AM and recognized Sheriff Rivera who discussed the contract that is in place between the County and the State for providing security to the court systems. He discussed a stipend that is paid to the head bailiff for supervisory duties. The amount is approximately 4 hours per month. The Sheriff informed the state of the added hours as they were submitted for the COVID-19 payments and the state responded by saying that because the duties are local and not state authorized it is a liability of the County that amounts to about \$65.00 a month. Rivera said that the funding received from the state for the normal course of coverage for security will cover the additional expense to the County and will not impact the budget.

At 8:33AM Commissioner Wozmak joined the meeting and a short discussion of the Sheriff’s request began.

Following discussions, Commissioner Weed moved to authorize the continued payment of the supervisory stipend to the lead bailiff from County funding. Englund seconded the motion and upon rollcall vote the motion passed unanimously.

Department of Corrections Superintendent Iosue was then recognized and briefed the Commissioners on the recent operations of the department and said that an existing staff member has moved into the case manager position and a new staff hire for the therapist position is pending.

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Commissioner Wozmak discussed the need for reinforcement of the formal progressive discipline process for Department of Corrections staff. He said that the Commissioners are very concerned with due process issues and want to ensure that corrective actions are being put in place. Iosue explained that the issue and process is being actively addressed and that he believes that the changes that already in place with more to come in next few weeks will fully address the problem.

Finance Director Trombly was recognized and discussed the upcoming second quarter budget review and the Pro Share funding changes for the 2021 budget. An extended discussion concerning potential budget shortfalls in 2021 was covered and it was noted that no new funding is planned in the next round of federal relief funds for counties and cities as proposed. A review of the options and possible fund raising for the benefit of the economic health of the area was discussed.

At 9:00AM Commissioner Wozmak left the meeting for a previously scheduled appointment.

Administrator Coates was then recognized for the Weekly Operations report and said that he was concerned that there isn't any funding allocated from the New Hampshire Association of Counties (NHAC) to assist the counties in advocating at the state and federal level for additional COVID-19 funding. He stated that although the Dupont group that provides administrative service for the NHAC is doing a very good job they are limited in hours that can be allocated for NHAC advocacy by the current management agreement funding. He will ask the group to discuss and review the issue in the coming weeks.

Bouchard was then recognized to discuss the work being done to open the courts for the first trial in the state upon the COVID-19 reopening scheduled for the Cheshire County Court House in mid-August. Bouchard covered the meetings with the State personnel including Chief Justice, Judge Nadeau last week and reviewed the steps being taken by the courts and by the County to ensure an environment that is safe and healthy for all participants.

Coates then addressed an issue with the County propane contacts at the nursing home and at the Department of Corrections saying that due to the re-commissioning work at the DOC and the installation of the biomass boiler at the nursing home the projected usage commitments are not being met. He said that in the cases of DOC the reason was that the re-commissioning work has resulted in a much more efficiently running heating and cooling system as well as the elimination of the large steam boiler that was used by kitchen and used propane fuel has resulted in significantly less overall propane usage in the facility. He then said that the new biomass boiler at the nursing home has proven to be far more efficient than was previously projected and has resulted in very little propane usage by the backup boilers. He finished by saying that a meeting will take place next week to review the situation and to determine the best path forward.

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Coates the said that a County wide travel policy document was sent out to department heads concerning staff traveling during the COVID-19 pandemic. He said that some concern was expressed by staff concerning specific situations that they faced and that each situation has been addressed.

New Business: Trombly said that the interest payment on the Maplewood bond was made a day late because the paying agent used bad email addresses in their communication with the County. She said that no penalties or repercussions will be placed on the County due to this communication error.

Old Business:

Commissioner Englund moved to accept the Consent agenda for the Weekly Manifest and the Minutes from the week of July 15, 2020 seconded by Commissioner Weed. A short discussion of revenues and expenses for the Department of Corrections occurred and then upon roll-call vote the motion passed unanimously.

At 09:38AM there being no further public business to discuss, Commissioner Englund moved to adjourn and was seconded by Commissioner Wozmak. Upon roll-call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Minutes recorded by:

R. Bouchard, Assistant County Administrator

Reviewed and submitted by:

R. Englund, Clerk