

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, February 17, 2021
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: Jack Wozmak, Robert Englund, and Terry Clark

Staff: County Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, HR Director May, Treasurer Weed, and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard.

Guest(s): Kyle Cline of the National Association of Counties (NHAC), Garrett MacDonald, and Alex DeRosa of three+one, Inc. and Marge Shepardson, Nancy Gillard, and Susan Butcher from the Carbon Cash Back program.

At 8:30 AM, Commissioner Englund opened the meeting, and County Administrator Coates conducted a roll-call of the Commissioners attending the meeting. Commissioners Englund and Clark responded as "present."

Commissioner Wozmak 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, 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 is 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:

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

Coates then outlined the rules of the meeting.

1. The 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 issues 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 to the meeting.
7. This meeting is utilizing a Zoom Platform so listeners can join us via audio or audio/visual.

At 8:33 AM, the Chair opened the meeting and recognized County Treasurer Weed to discuss Master Agenda Item #852: Carbon Cash Back Program.

Treasurer Weed introduced the Carbon Cash Back program discussion and said that he would be joining the City of Keene Clean Energy and Climate committee next month. He introduced Marge Shepardson, Nancy Gillard, and Susan Butcher, who are involved with the program.

Gillard spoke to the local efforts to introduce the program and said that several communities are preparing to discuss participating in the program. Roxbury, Walpole, and Nelson currently have it on their town warrants for this spring's town meeting. Six other towns have already passed the warrant article and have started to initiate the program.

Weed then spoke of the effort to move the program's implementation to Congress to start the program on a national basis. He said that the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (EICDA) bill has been introduced in the house and is planned to be introduced in the Senate.

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(The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019 is a bill in the United States House of Representatives that proposes a fee on carbon at the point of extraction to encourage market-driven innovation of clean energy technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.) [Wikipedia](#)

The Commissioners asked questions concerning how the pricing model works as the price penalty for fossil fuels will increase steadily over the next 30 years. It was discussed that the price impact starts at .25 a gallon when fuel is purchased and that approximately \$250.00 per year would be returned to each household that participates.

From the Green Energy Times: The implication is an increase of one cent for each pound of CO₂ that burning a fuel will release. That implies an increase for the price of gasoline of about 18¢ per gallon – an increase of 1¢ per mile for some gas-guzzlers. That cost could be considerably lower than what people might pay for a single, unwise political assassination in the Middle East. It's important that the amount of money gathered in would be equal to the amount sent back to residents. Those people who are the most wasteful would pay the most. Those people who are at low income would benefit the most, in terms of a percentage of their income. Representative Ken Wells of Andover told us that he believes the majority of people, about 60%, would come out ahead financially. For people who are very short of cash, Wells said there is an amendment to the bill that would allow them to be paid monthly.

<http://www.greenenergytimes.org/2020/01/15/carbon-cashback-coalition-in-new-hampshire/>

The New Hampshire H.B.735 would implement carbon cashback, with 100% of the increased fuel costs going back to residents.

And: <https://sites.google.com/view/carbon-cashback-coalition/>

It was decided that the Commissioners will discuss and review the issue and will take-up further deliberations at next week's meeting.

At 09:04 AM – Master Agenda Item #853: Cash Vest Program was taken-up for discussion. Treasurer Weed introduced the Cash Vest staff attending the meeting. Kyle Cline of the National Association of Counties (NHAC), Garrett MacDonald, and Alex DeRosa of the company three+one who owns and runs the Cash Vest program was recognized.

Cline then spoke and said that he was here to endorse the three+one staff that runs the Cash Vest program. He stated that the NHAC has been working with the company for several years and that NACO has thoroughly and carefully vetted the program. Cline said that the Cash Vest program staff have performed at a high level for counties throughout the country. <https://threeplusone.us/>

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MacDonald provided a high-level overview of the operations of the company and the services provided to county governments. He answered a question from Commissioner Wozmak concerning the program's primary value saying that the aim is to improve overall County liquidity and offer an in-depth analysis of cash flow and other financial markers to maximize the County's ability to manage monies and investments.

An extended discussion of services and the usefulness of the data to the County was covered, and the impact of new CARES funding opportunities was reviewed. It is hoped that additional funding for County and municipalities could be forthcoming.

It was stressed that three+one is not a bank or lender but provides data analysis and recommendations based on rigorous data analysis using sophisticated financial algorithms found in the financial industry.

DeRosa then outlined the process for implementing the program, the interviewing and review process, and a discussion among the Commissioners and staff about the value of participating in the Cash Vest program began.

Engagement documents will be sent to the County for review, and a final decision to participate will be made in the upcoming weeks.

Master Agenda Item #854: Auditor Engagement Letter was then taken-up for discussion. Trombly spoke to the hiring of an auditing firm to complete the 2021 County audit and provided the engagement letter that the Chair signed. The audit will cost \$26,910.00 this year, which is down in price from last year. The cost reduction is due to the review conducted entirely remotely, with added responsibilities placed on the finance staff to provide the needed documents online.

Administrator Coates was then recognized for the Weekly Operations report.

Coates said that another staff member tested positive at the nursing home, but it was not a clinical staff person. He discussed the COVID overall numbers and stated that there had been a significant drop in overall numbers in the past month. Still, it was noted that the numbers do not reflect the area colleges that are just entering into in-person class schedules.

Coates said that the nursing home received an additional \$128K from the CARES act. It will be determined in the next few weeks how to allocate the funds.

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Coates then discussed the Maplewood fire alarm monitoring issue. The conversation covered that the current vendor has problems receiving the Westmoreland campus fire-control systems data. Other options are being looked at to resolve this long on-going problem.

He then said that preparing a presentation on the Energy Audit continues and that a narrated video is being designed to highlight the essential elements of the project.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Consent Agenda: Minutes of 02/03/2021 and Manifests for the week. Commissioner Wozmak moved the consent agenda and was seconded by Commissioner Englund. The motion passed with unanimous consent upon roll call vote.

General Discussion: None

At 10:58 AM, Commissioner Englund moved to enter non-public session Pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(e) to discuss the 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, The motion was seconded by Commissioner Clark. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

As a result of deliberations in a non-public session, it was decided to proceed with a letter to the staff at the Department of Corrections concerning recent personnel changes.

At 11:04 AM, the Commissioners, upon roll call vote, voted unanimously to return to public session.

At 11:06 AM, there being no further public business to conduct, Commissioner Englund moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Clark. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Minutes recorded by:
Assistant County Administrator Bouchard

Reviewed and submitted by:
T. Clark, Clerk