

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, June 23, 2021
County Hall
12 Court Street, Keene, NH 03431

Conference Call Information
Phone Call-in Number: +1 646 558 8656
Meeting ID: 409 748 8803
Pin #: 6031233

Present: Commissioners Robert Englund and Terry Clark (Commissioner Jack Wozmak absent with notice)

Staff: County Administrator Coates; Finance Director Trombly; Will Pearson, ARPA Project Manager.

Guest(s):

At 8:34 AM, Commissioner Englund opened the meeting and County Administrator Coates conducted a roll-call with Commissioners Englund and Clark responding as “present” and “here” respectively. Commissioner Wozmak was absent as previously noticed.

At 8:35 AM, the Commissioners opened the floor for public comment and Department Head updates.

Seeing no requests, Administrator Coates was recognized.

Coates made note that the Commissioners Meeting Agenda that was sent out stated that the meeting “will be conducted in person for Commissioner and Senior Staff”. It was discussed that future agendas will not require this language due to the emergency orders being lifted.

Commissioner Englund then inquired if the Commissioners Meetings were to be relocated to the Stillman-Rogers Room and Coates said it was the plan to do so however, the logistics of using the Zoom meetings in the room needs to be worked before the change can be made.

In response to a question by Trombly asking if unvaccinated people are still required to wear a mask, Coates said that the Governor’s newest order recommends that unvaccinated people wear masks, but there aren’t any notices on the 12 Court Street campus. Coates suggested that signs could be put up.

At 8:37 AM, Coates began his Weekly Operations Report.

Coates met with Representatives Berch and Eaton on Friday to update them on county projects. The issues reviewed included revenues, grants, capital reserves; internal needs/process for the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) project as well as the anticipated work on the cupola.

Following up on the ARPA projects, Coates stated that the ARPA State & Local Zoom Meeting that was held on 6/21/21 went well. Coates went on to say that he’d like to continue doing these presentations to a broader audience and with other guests, like NHMA or someone from the Governor’s Office.

Coates informed the Commissioners that the county has contacted Monadnock United Way in an effort to reach out to non-profits concerning APRA funding. He mentioned that the next

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presentation will likely be geared toward the local non-profits and said that to the best of his knowledge that Cheshire County is the only NH county that is doing this sort of work concerning ARPA and that it will be a major resource for municipalities throughout the next four years.

Coates then moved on to discussing a County concert series that he'd like to start with Dr. José Manuel Lezcano, Professor of Music at Keene State College [KSC]). The series would be modelled on a jazz concert series that the county hosted several years ago.

Coates went on to express his interest in getting the county more involved with the arts; perhaps create a county poet laureate award to give out annually. Coates also suggested that the concert series could eventually expand to venues in towns throughout the county.

Commissioner Clark stated that KSC is cutting a lot of funding for their music program and this could be an important outlet for that program and Commissioner Englund asked if programs (like the poet laureate) need to go through the delegation for funding.

Coates said that the current positive revenue streams make this a possibility and if a way is found to make them sustainable it may be possible to scale up the program(s) in the future.

Coates went on to discuss Maplewood. The facility has opened visitation from 1:00 - 4:00 PM and only two visitors are allowed at a time. Masks are still required, but goggles/glasses are no longer required. He said that there is still a requirement for masks inside the building.

Coates then addressed the rehab of the Monadnock Center for Violence Prevention office space and said that work in basement has been largely completed with only a county sink and cabinets to be installed.

Coates went on to discuss the NH Associations of Counties Annual Conference to be held at Grand hotel in North Conway from Monday-Wednesday November 1st – 3rd.

At 9:00 AM, Coates concluded the Weekly Operations Report and Commissioner Englund opened the floor to discussion on any new or old business.

New Business: None

Old business: None.

Consent Agenda: Minutes of 06/16/2021 and Manifests for the week. Commissioner Englund moved the consent agenda and was seconded by Commissioner Clark. The motion passed with unanimous consent upon roll call vote.

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At 9:01 AM Coates said that the federal inmate census numbers are holding at above the budgeted level, but the ebb and flow of inmates can vary dramatically.

Coates said that the Department of Corrections (DOC) and Maplewood facilities departments would be putting together their budget requests for next year including upcoming capital projects. Coates suggested the replacement of the flooring in two of the DOC inmate housing pods each year (4 pods in total).

Commissioner Englund praised the quality of the county's DOC facility/policies and said that there is a big difference between how Cheshire County runs the DOC compared to other areas in the country.

At 9:07 AM, the commissioners recognized any general discussion.

General Discussion: none.

At 9:08 Commissioner Clark moved to enter a non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(e), for 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. Commissioner Englund seconded the motion, and upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

As a result of deliberations in a non-public session, no decisions were made, and no vote was taken.

At 9:49 AM, the Commissioner's vote unanimously to return to public session.

At 9:50 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:
William Pearson, Finance Assistant

Reviewed and submitted by: