

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, September 01, 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 Jack Wozmak, Robert Englund, and Terry Clark

Staff: County Administrator Coates; Finance Director Trombly, HR Director May, Register Anna Tilton, Dispatcher Director Crowell, Sheriff Rivera, Gants Manager Bansley, ARPA Consultant Will Pearson, and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard.

Guest(s):

At 8:31 AM, Commissioner Wozmak opened the meeting, and Administrator Coates conducted a roll-call with the Commissioners, and Wozmak, Englund, and Clark responding as "present."

At 8:32 AM, the Commissioners opened the floor for public comment and Department Head updates. Tilton was recognized and asked for some masks for the kiosk in the 33 West Street lobby. She also asked if she can hire someone to bring many books to the State Archives in Concord. A short discussion of the insurance available to transport the books began.

Master Agenda Item #910: Human Resources Semi-Annual Report was then taken up for discussion and May was recognized. She presented the following report to the Commissioners.

Human Resources Activity 4/01/2021 - 8/31/2021

Total Hires: 39

Keene - 7

ARPA -1 Intern

System of Care - 2 Care Coordinators

Sheriff Dept. - 4 - 1 Bailiff, 1 Deputy & 2 Dispatcher

Department of Corrections - 6

Corrections Officers - 6

Maplewood - 26

Activities - 1 Activities Director

Administration - 1 Receptionist

Assisted Living - 2 PCA

Dietary - 4 Dietary Aides

EVS - 9 Housekeeping Aides

Nursing - 3 LNAs, 1 MNA & 4 Ward Aides

Social Services - 1 Social Worker

Total Terminations: 63

Keene - 6

Assistant County Attorney - 1

Deeds - 1 Reproduction Clerk

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IT - 1 IT Specialist
Sheriff Department - 2 Dispatchers & 1 Bailiff

Department of Corrections - 10

Corrections Officers - 7
RN - 2
Transport Officer - 1

Maplewood - 47

Activities - 1 Activity Director
Assisted Living - 1 PCA & 1 Housekeeping Aide
Dietary - 5 Dietary Aides
EVS - 4 Housekeeping Aides & 1 Laundry Aide
Human Resources - 1 HR Generalist
Nursing - 22 LNAs, 2 LPNs, 2 RNs & 6 Ward Aides
Social Services - 1 Social Worker

- Of our terminations, the most alarming is losing 22 LNAs in five months. The reasons for their leaving is as follows:
 - COVID related - 2
 - School - 3
 - Leaving healthcare field - 4
 - Money - 4
 - Moved out of the area - 4
 - No reason given - 4
 - Childcare issues - 1
- MNH successfully completed another LNA class in conjunction with LNA Health Careers in August 2021. We graduated seven students who took their State Boards on 8/31/2021. 4 of those students were already with MNH as either a Ward Aide or Personal Care Assistant. We have another class scheduled to begin September 28th with three current employees interested.
- Hiring during the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be challenging to say the least.
- We are currently offering a \$2,000 sign-on bonus at Maplewood for any LNA, Dietary Aide, or Housekeeper hired at Maplewood. The bonus money is paid out as follows: \$500 at three months, \$500 at six months, and \$1,000 at one year for a 40 hour/week employee - prorated for part-time.
- We are in a staffing crisis concerning LNAs - we are currently using more agency/traveler staff than we ever have before. Several of those contracts end in early May, and they will be gone until late July, if not permanently.
- The impending vaccine mandate has created some hard feelings among those who remain unvaccinated. Maplewood currently has 45 unvaccinated staff members. Early conversations

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with those staff lead us to believe approximately ½ of them will choose to leave the healthcare field as a result.

A discussion of the staff levels and the local labor market conditions were covered. Also reviewed were the staff ratios at Maplewood vs. the for-profit nursing homes. The training programs for Licensed Nursing Assistants (LNA's) at Maplewood were discussed, and it was learned that fifteen LNA's had left Maplewood in the past five months. (See report above).

A discussion of recent internal staffing changes was covered, and several positions were highlighted.

The Commissioners thanked May for her report and then took up Master Agenda Item #911: Dispatch Communications Plan Updated - E. Rivera and A. Crowell

Sheriff Rivera was recognized and said that two project phases were essential to review. The first is the overall project upgrade, and the second is ongoing technical support once the project is completed. He explained that a consultant is preparing an implementation plan.

Crowell then said that the quotes for both phases should be available in about two to four weeks. Some initial equipment has been recently acquired through a grant was sent to the radio shop for installation preparation. She then said that the result would be a fully Internet Protocol (IP) based system for all of the existing fourteen radio sites and two relay sites. The consultant is designing a total system upgrade that will most likely add at least two more sites (radio or relay sites) to cover the County adequately.

The Commissioners asked several questions about timelines, configuration issues, changes to the base technologies, possible collaboration with the South West Mutual Aid staff, and costs. A lengthy discussion ensued, and the Commissioners asked to be kept abreast of progress.

Master Agenda Item #912: Updated Travel Policy Connected Families of NH was reviewed by Grants Manager Bansley. Bansley discussed the updated travel policy and an extended discussion of how to configure the policy to cover many possible scenarios began.

Commissioner Wozmak moved to accept the new policy and was seconded by Commissioner Englund.

After further discussion, it was quickly determined that the language in the policy needed further refinement, and Finance Director Trombly will work with Bansley to come up with a final draft for the Commissioners to review.

Following discussion, the motion was tabled for further investigation policy development and review.

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Coates was then recognized for the Weekly Operations Report.

Coates then said that Will Pearson had sent the forms for the application for businesses and non-profits to several County organizations for review and input on form design. Their information was beneficial, and the completed forms will be created and posted to the County website and Facebook page later today.

Coates then discussed the founding meeting that will create the Community Power Coalition of NH (CPCNH) would be held on October 1st. Clark and Coates will attend to sign the documents formally.

Coates then said that he has been working with Primex to set up a cybersecurity Zoom meeting for the municipalities because of Peterborough's recent loss of \$2.3. He noted that Primex had hired a person to conduct on-site forensic analysis in the event of an attack. The information on the session will be sent to all municipalities, the County Delegation, and other interested parties in the next few days.

Coates then related that the Attorney for the County is finalizing the Jaffrey Courthouse financing and deed release documentation. Following an update and discussion, Coates asked for a motion to authorize the Administrator to sign the pending deed release.

Commissioner Wozmak authorized the Administrator to sign the deed releases, and Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Coates then said that the County has one old generator from the nursing home reconstruction that may be placed with a local Fire Department. Another opportunity to reuse the generator at 12 Court Street may occur when the present generator from 1979 is updated, hopefully in the coming year when the American Recovery Act Plan (ARPA) funding could be used.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Consent Agenda: Minutes of 08/25/2021 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.

General Discussion: None

At 10:40 AM, Commissioner Englund moved to enter a non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(d) Consideration of the acquisition, sale, or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community.

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Commissioner Clark seconded the motion, and upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

As a result of deliberations in a non-public session, Commissioner Englund moved to authorize the Administrator to engage the services of an outside consulting firm to begin the planning and implementation of the Cheshire EMS department. (Commissioner Wozmak recused himself due to a personal conflict). Commissioner Clark seconded the motion, and upon roll call vote the motion passed two to zero. (2-0).

At 11:55 AM, the Commissioners voted unanimously to return to the public session.

At 11:56 PM, there being no further public business to conduct, Commissioner Clark moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Englund. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Minutes recorded by:
R. Bouchard, Assistant County Administrator

Reviewed and submitted by:
Terry Clark, Clerk