

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, September 08, 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 (Via Zoom), Robert Englund, and Terry Clark
Staff: County Administrator Coates; Finance Director Trombly, ARPA Consultant Will Pearson, APRA Intern Davis Bernstein, Superintendent Iosue, and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard.

Guest(s):

At 8:32 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.

Commissioner Englund asked about the tour of the Registry of Deeds, and Bouchard said that because Commissioner Wozmak was attending virtually via Zoom this week, the tour was rescheduled for September 22nd at 8:00 AM.

Superintendent Iosue was recognized and, he spoke of the recent death of a Correctional Officer and the impact on the staff. He said that a memorial service is planned for this Friday at the Cathedral of the Pines in Ridge. He invited the Commissioners and staff to attend.

Coates spoke of the New Hampshire Association of Counties meeting this Friday held at Primex Insurance in Concord and virtually via Zoom. Coates said he would be attending in-person to help ensure that a quorum is present for the meeting.

Pearson and Bernstein were then recognized, and Pearson recapped the current status of the Pandemic Emergency Relief Fund program that was just rolled out this week. He said that they have already received four applications from small businesses and one from a non-profit. He also said he fielded an inquiry from a business in Hillsborough County and told them that the program was only for Cheshire County-based organizations.

The applications must be submitted by September 22nd to be eligible for funding, with the goal of funding sent out by mid-October.

A discussion of the funding process and potential applicants began.

Coates was then recognized for the Weekly Operations Report.

According to Cheshire Medical Center information, Coates stated that the COVID-19 infection rate now stands at 10.6%. He was informed that all of the available Intensive Care Unit (ICU) beds are currently full in the area.

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He said he is on two COVID teams for the area and that the current infection trends are concerning. He informed the Commissioners that the total number of unvaccinated staff at the nursing home and is trending down.

Coates then spoke to the Restorative Justice program. It was learned that one case is terminating, and a second case is starting next week. A discussion of enabling the program for the local school system began, and having all of the City of Keene schools participate was reviewed.

Coates then addressed the current work underway for marketing the Monadnock region through the use of a \$400K recently award grant, and the application pending for another grant to hire a regional marketing specialist was covered. He also spoke of the work being done with the City of Keene to obtain grant funds to develop the Heritage Trail system that runs through the downtown portion of the city. This information prompted a discussion of the problem of the aging workforce in the State and the County and the slow loss of population in the area. The issues for local businesses being unable to hire sufficient staff were discussed in detail. It was stated that the County is at risk of losing more local companies if the labor market keeps shrinking.

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Consent Agenda: Minutes of 09/01/2021 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 09:13 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.

Commissioner Clark 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 10:34 AM, the Commissioners voted unanimously to return to the public session.

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At 10:35 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