

**MINUTES**  
**Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting**  
**Wednesday, May 25, 2022**  
**County Hall Building**  
**12 Court Street, Keene, NH 03341**

**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 Wozmak absent w/notice).

**Staff:** County Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Safety Officer Kroupa, Grants Manager Bansley, and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard.

**Guest(s):** Mike Kowalczyk, Rails to Trails, and Jeremy Evans, of Snowmobile Club.

At 08:33 AM, Commissioner Wozmak opened the meeting, and Administrator Coates conducted a roll-call with the Commissioners, Wozmak, Englund, and Clark, responding as "present."

- I. Public Comments**  
Upon recognition from the Chair, a Public Comment on topics of interest may be made, not to exceed three (3) minutes in length.
- II. Elected Officials & Department Head Updates**  
To receive, as informational, departmental updates requiring Commissioner review, participation, approval, and impactful departmental and operational issues.
- III. Scheduled Items**  
Master Agenda Item #986: RTP-CRT Surry-Westmoreland Fiscally-Sponsored Application  
**Action Expected: Vote to submit an application to New Hampshire's Bureau of Trails Recreational Trails Program for \$80,000 + \$20,000 match (to be met with in-kind volunteer time) to rehab at least one mile of the Cheshire Rail Trail from the Keene-Surry town line into Westmoreland (as far as funds will allow).**

Bansley was recognized and provided an overview of the proposed work, and she asked for approval to submit the grant. Mike Kowalczyk spoke and explained how the work would be completed and how the City of Keene and the Rails to Trails group would work together to improve the trail. It's unknown what difficulties will be encountered and, therefore how far west towards Westmoreland the work can be completed. Commissioner Englund said that he recently used the trail between Swanzey and Rindge and said it was a fantastic bike ride.

**Commissioner Clark moved to authorize the submission of the grant and was seconded by Commissioner Englund. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

Master Agenda Item #987: Semi-Annual Report County Safety Officer  
**Action Expected: To receive, as informational, a report from the County Safety Officer on the department's operations.**

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Kroupa spoke to the following written report.

To: Cheshire County Board of Commissioners  
From: Julie Kroupa, Safety Officer  
Date: May 13, 2022  
RE: Quarterly Report to the Commissioners

**Listed below is a summary of the current and ongoing projects for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2021 and the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2022.**

Currently working to create a Safety Policy Manual. Many policies have been completed, and more are to come. Books are being distributed to the facilities.

Ongoing management of the Worker's Compensation and the Temporary Alternative Duty program. Programs are current with the compensation process and are in compliance.

Renewed the Primex Annual Worker's Compensation and Property and Liability Reporting.

DHHS Life Safety Survey of Maplewood Assisted Living Deficiency Free.

Coordinate the required DOL annual inspections of all County-Owned facilities. The Cheshire County Joint Loss Management Committee and the Campus Safety Committees are responsible for inspections of their buildings and reporting deficiencies to the Safety Officer. Inspection reports are written, work orders placed, and reports submitted to each department for review/resolution. Inspections are ongoing.

Develop the agendas, facilitate the meetings, and create and distribute all the meeting minutes for the Maplewood Safety Committee, Keene Safety Committee, Department of Corrections Safety Committee, and the Cheshire County Joint Loss Management Committee.

Continue to train MNH employees on the new Disaster Plan along with ongoing testing of the plan, including updating policies as needed. Changes are distributed quarterly.

Coordinated a Live Bomb Threat Drill at Maplewood in December. This included all departments and the Sheriff's Office.

Planning a Table Top Drill to test the Maplewood Disaster Policy for a Missing/Wandering Resident. Coordination with all departments, NH State Police, Keene Police Department, and the Sheriff's office.

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Annual Safety Training for DOC completed for 2022. Maplewood does annual/new employee training every two weeks ongoing. Annual Safety Training for Keene Campus has been postponed to the fall due to the construction on 12 Court Street.

Annual live fire extinguisher training for Maplewood employees completed in October.

Fire drills were held in accordance with state and local regulations for Maplewood and Keene Campus. DOC handles its fire drills internally.

Completed all emergency equipment inspections and replaced items as needed- completed on a weekly/monthly schedule. Safety equipment in vehicles is now inspected twice yearly. Permits to Operate for Maplewood are current.

2022 Annual MNH Bed Entrapment Survey Completed.

Continue to maintain an active role in the Greater Monadnock Public Health Network, the Granite State Health Care Coalition, Regional Planning Committee, Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Alliance, the Healthcare Workforce Group and the Public Health Emergency Coordinating Committee. Will be pursuing MACE training. Some of these committees are still on hold from the pandemic.

Ensure all the MNH Transportation department drivers who transport residents have current safe driving records and/or defensive driving certificates on file.

Working to meet employees' ergonomic needs with the review of workstations, adding ergonomic devices and new furniture.

Member of the committee that organizes employee Health Fairs and Wellness Initiatives at MNH and Keene Campus.

Ongoing fit testing of all nursing staff at Maplewood for N95 masks to provide protection from Covid-19. Annual fit testing for Sherriff's deputies' gas masks, and for Maplewood Facilities dust masks.

**Workers Comp 2021-2022**  
October 1, 2021- March 31, 2022

**Oct 1-Dec 31, 2021**

Claims 4, 31 total incidents

4: Department of Corrections

0: Sheriff

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15: MNH Nursing  
1: Environmental Services  
7: MNH Dietary  
2: MNH Facilities  
2: MNH Rehab

**Lost workdays: 25 Light Duty Days: 6**

**Gender:** 21 – Female  
10 - Male  
2– 11:00-7:00  
2- 4:00-12:00  
3- 12:00-8:00

**Shift:** 16– 7:00-3:00  
8 – 3:00-11:00

**Day of Week:**

3- Sunday  
7- Monday  
2 – Tuesday  
10- Wednesday

1- Thursday  
5- Friday  
3- Saturday

**January 1-March 31, 2022**

**Claims 1, 33 total incidents**

2: Department of Corrections  
2: Sheriff Dispatch  
17: MNH Nursing  
3: Environmental Services  
8: MNH Dietary  
1: MNH Assisted Living

**Lost workdays: 0 Light Duty Days: 17**

**Gender:** 26 – Female  
7 - Male  
6– 11:00-7:00  
5- 4:00-12:00  
2- 12:00-8:00

**Shift:** 12– 7:00-3:00  
8 – 3:00-11:00

**Day of Week:**

5- Sunday  
2- Monday  
7 – Tuesday

3- Thursday  
5- Friday  
3-Saturday

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8- Wednesday

**County Administrator**

Weekly Operations Report - The County Administrator will update the Commissioners on activities that have taken place since the previous meeting.

Coates spoke to revenue generation programs that have been initiated and said that the latest income from the biomass boiler from the sale of Renewable Energy Certificate (T-REC) at Maplewood is approximately \$22,500.00 for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of last year. A discussion of the biomass boiler installation began and it was discussed that when the new Biomass boiler for 33 Winter Street and 12 Court Street buildings come online the income should rise substantially in the next few years.

Coates said that \$500k from Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) has been received earlier this year and that the second payment for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2021 was just received for \$250K. He asked the Commissioners to be able to apply it to the cost of the Sheriff's radio infrastructure upgrade project. He said at least one to three more payments will be received at approximately the same level of compensation.

In discussing a second payment that was received last week from the State, Trombly said that the State looks at funds budgeted for all state nursing homes at the end of the fiscal year and if any funds remain at the end of the year those funds are redistributed to the nursing homes that are applied against a complex budget neutrality formula. She said that this year \$490K in total will be received in two payments. The first payment of \$270K was received this week.

The progress of the Energy Upgrade was discussed and the Administration building, 33 Winter Street, and 12 Court Street buildings we discussed in detail. The cost of fuels and operational costs were covered and the eventual requirement of establishing a contingency fund for the building was reviewed. Coates said that the Copula project was is well underway and that the work is being very well received by the public.

Coates then provided the following update from the Cheshire Medical Center on the County COVID status.

IP Update Week of 5/23/22

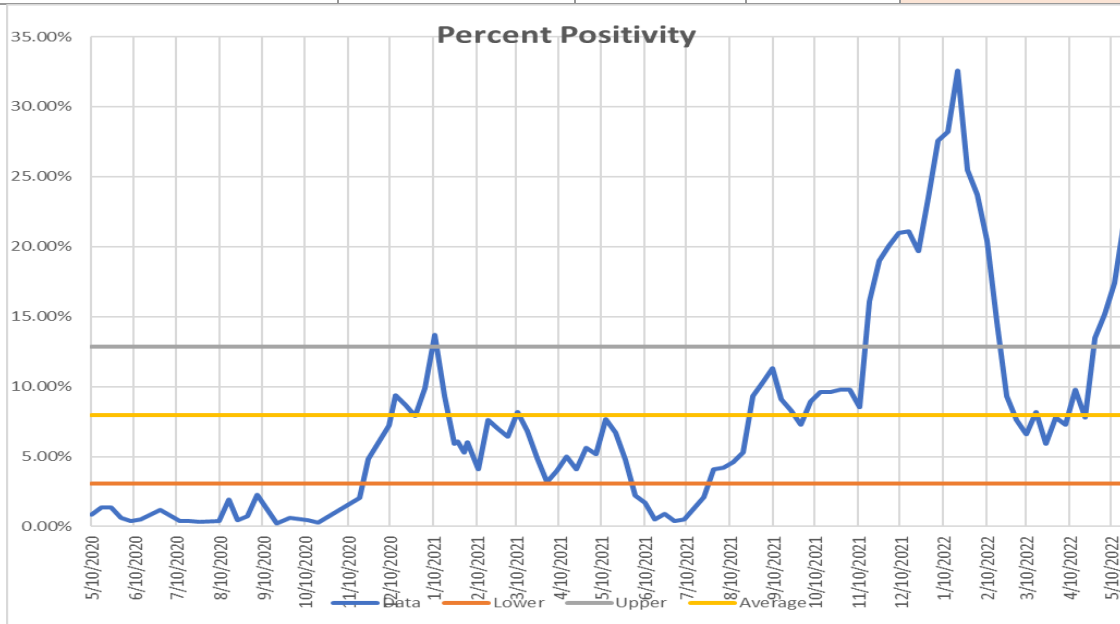
Total Tests Collected / Percent Positive: (per eDH)

	<b>Detected</b>	<b>Not Detected</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>% Detected</b>
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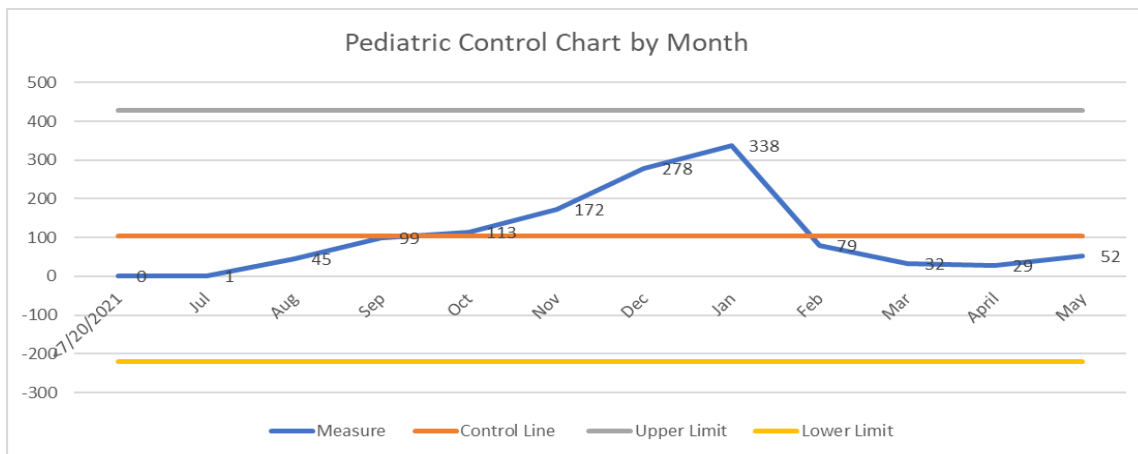
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<b>4/29/2022 – 5/5/2022</b>	61	340	401	15.2%
<b>5/6/2022 – 5/12/2022</b>	80	381	461	17.4%
<b>5/13/2022 – 5/19/2022</b>	90	321	411	21.9%
<b>Grand Totals since JAN2021</b>	<b>5,940</b>	<b>43,185</b>	<b>49,125</b>	<b>12.1%</b>



**Pediatric Control Chart:**

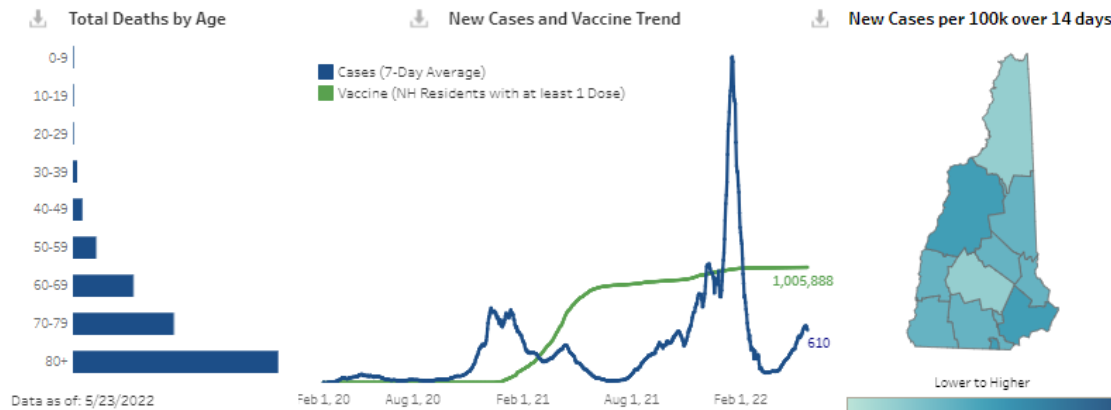
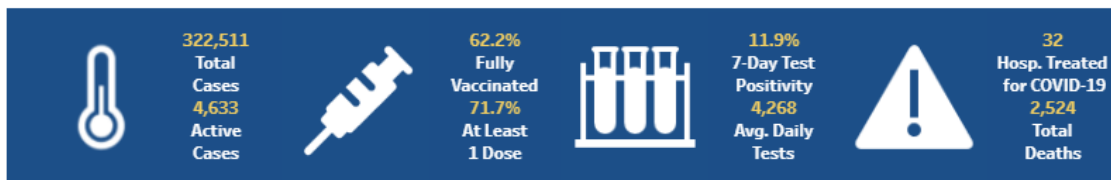


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**State and Cheshire County Data:** Per CDC metrics, updated on 5/19/22, most counties in New Hampshire are at a High level of transmission, the outliers being Cheshire (medium), Strafford (medium), and Coos County (low). As of 5/23/22, NH DHHS has Cheshire County's percent positive is 11.7%, with a new case rate per 100k of 609.8 over 14 days. See the below data from NH DHHS:

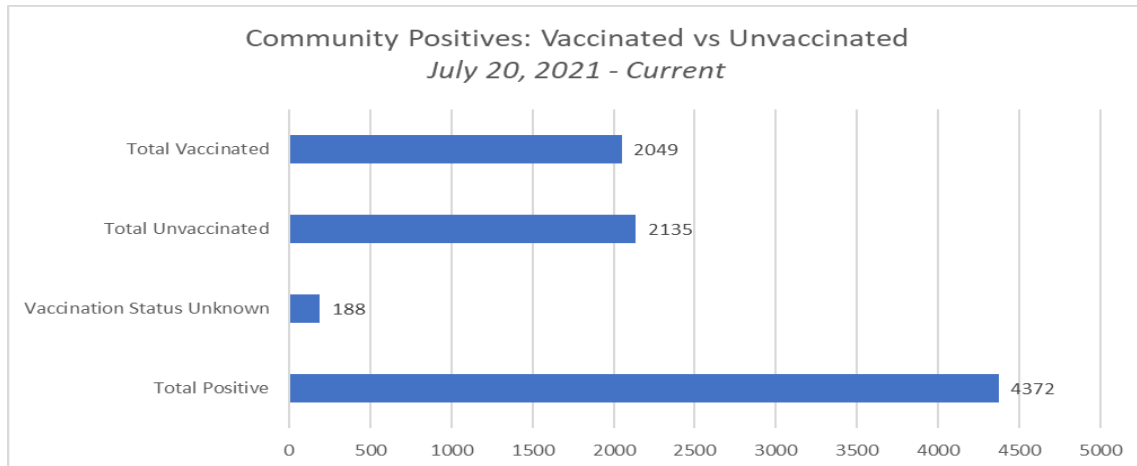
New Hampshire announced **264 cases** for May 23. There were an average of **610 cases per day** over the most recent 7-day period (May 17 to May 23). This is a **1% decrease** compared to the previous 7-day period.



**Positives Compared to Vaccination Status** (as of 1/1/22 this data includes community positives and employee positives only. Historic inpatients will remain.) **46.87% vaccinated / 48.83% unvaccinated / 4.30 unknown**

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**Inpatients** (7 day average, age range, and vaccination status) **39.90% vaccinated / 49.75% unvaccinated / 10.35% unknown**

5/6/22 – 5/12/22: total of **43** active COVID patients over 7 days, an average of **6.1** patients per day. This week we had **7** new admit, age ranging from **40-49, 60-69, 70-79, and 80+**; 5 vaccinated, 1 not vaccinated, and 1 unknown vaccination status.

Of the 7 new admit:

- Confirmed and admitted due to COVID – 4 (4 vaccinated)
- Confirmed asymptomatic and admitted due to other etiology – 3 (1 vaccinated, 1 unvaccinated, 1 unknown)

5/13/22 – 5/19/22: total of **29** active COVID patients over 7 days, an average of **4.1** patients per day. This week we had **11** newly admitted, with ages ranging from **20-29, 30-39, 60-69, 70-79, and 80+**; 8 vaccinated, 2 unvaccinated, and 1 had unknown vaccination status.

Of the 11 newly admitted:

- Confirmed and admitted due to COVID – 5 (4 vaccinated, 1 unvaccinated)
- Confirmed asymptomatic and admitted due to other etiology – 6 (4 vaccinated, 1 vaccinated, 1 unknown vaccination status)

Coates said that the COVID memorial garden project for the Winter Street entrance is proceeding and that the preliminary pricing is within budget. When renderings and final budgets have been established, they will be shared with the Commissioners for review.



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Coates then said that a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Emergency Medical Service (EMS) will take place on Tuesday the 31st at 1:00 PM at 53 Monadnock Highway in Swanzey.

Coates noted the passing of Ken Jue who had been active for many years in public service unexpectedly passed away. Coates said that he was one of the good guys and that he will be greatly missed.

Coates related that the renewed leases for the County Farm were sent are out and one has been sent back and we are awaiting the return of the second lease.

He then said that a lease has been arranged for staff housing at a location in Westmoreland that will provide rental housing for medical staff at the nursing home and potentially the EMS department.

Coates said that he was invited to attend a luncheon in Washington, DC on June 7<sup>th</sup> by Senator Sheehan. He will fly down for the day and following the luncheon will meet with the Senator and the rest of the NH congressional delegation.

He that the next meeting of the Monadnock Interfaith Housing meeting is tomorrow, and that the meeting will be held in Delegation Hall as in the past.

Coates stated that he and Commissioner Wozmak will attend the Harrisville Selectboard meeting tomorrow to review and discuss the new County EMS department as they had done on Monday evening in Stoddard.

Coates said that all disbursements from the first round of ARAP funding are complete and the second funding is ready to be sent once the federal monies have been disbursed.

Coates asked that the Commissioner's meeting that is scheduled for June 22<sup>nd</sup> start at 9:30 AM instead of 8:30 AM so that he could attend a board meeting for Cedarcrest.

Coates then informed the Commissioners that the Geothermal system at the Department of Corrections is now working successfully with only the addition of the cooling tower to be completed. He said that the water temperatures have declined slowly and steadily and the addition of the cooling tower should bring the entire system into balance for the first time since it was installed.

**At 09:59 AM Commissioner Englund moved to enter a non-meeting pursuant to RSA 91-A:2, I (a) to review and discuss strategy or negotiations with respect to collective**

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**bargaining and union matters. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion and upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

**At 10:02 AM the Commissioners voted unanimously to return to the public session.**

**IV. Old Business: None**

**V. New Business: None**

**VI. Consent Agenda Items:**

**Vote to accept the Weekly Manifests and Minutes of May 04, 2022. Commissioner Englund moved to accept the weekly manifests and the minutes of May 04, 2022. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion and upon roll vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

**VII. Calendar**

**Action Expected: To accept the calendar as informational and to make necessary changes/additions.**

**VIII. General Discussion for Commissioners**

**Master Agenda Item #673: Commissioners - State Cost Shifting Letter and Restorative Justice Program**

**IX. Nonpublic Sessions: None**

**X. Adjournment**

**At 10:15 AM Commission Clark moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Englund. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.**

Recorded and edited by:  
R. Bouchard  
Assistant County Administrator

Reviewed and submitted by:  
Terry Clark  
Clerk, Board of Commissioners