

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday June 01, 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

Staff: County Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Grants Manager Bansley, Carl Majewski, UNH Cooperative Extension, and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard.

Guest(s): Reality Check - Mary Drew and Jim Beeler

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. - No public comments were received.

II. Elected Officials & Department Head Updates

To receive, as informational, departmental updates requiring Commissioner review, participation, approval, and impactful departmental and operational issues. – No comments were received.

III. Scheduled Items

Master Agenda Item #988: Master Agenda Item: Northern Borders Regional Commission grant application

Action Expected: Vote to apply and sign an authorization for County Grants Manager to submit an application to the NBRC State Economic & Infrastructure Development Investment Program for an \$875,000 grant with a \$1,624,532 match to upgrade Cheshire County Dispatch telecommunications infrastructure; and vote to authorize County Administrator Coates or County Commissioner Chair Wozmak to accept funds and enter agreements if awarded.

Bansley was recognized and explained the purpose and request of the grant to help fund the upgrade of the Sheriff's department public safety radio network. Bansley said in response to a question about the rating and ranking of the applications that are under review that she believes the application has a good chance of being awarded. A discussion of how the grants are awarded and administered began. At the conclusion of discussions, **Commissioner Wozmak moved to sign an authorization for County Grants Manager to submit an application to the NBRC State Economic & Infrastructure Development Investment Program for an \$875,000 grant with a \$1,624,532 match to upgrade Cheshire County Dispatch telecommunications infrastructure; and vote to authorize County Administrator Coates or County Commissioner Chair Wozmak to accept funds and enter agreements if awarded.** Commissioner Clark seconded the motion, and upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Master Agenda Item #989: Reality Check - Mary Drew and Jim Belier

Action Expected: To receive, as an informational update, an overview of the Reality Check Program.

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Drew provided a comprehensive overview of the program, and she said that she was awarded a grant in March of this year that runs for one year and is focused on employer staff addiction issues. She said that the focus for Reality Check in the coming year would be working with employers.

She said that Reality Check provides training for Recovery Coaches and Master Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselors (MLADC) for certification and license awards. She noted that funding sustainability is the biggest problem that they face. They have continued to provide services in some areas even when funding has ended in some cases to assist employers and individuals.

The certification process for healthcare professionals was discussed, and it was reiterated that the State is a barrier to the certification of healthcare licensure. It was stated that another significant issue is that the low or no compensation available for Recovery Coaches prevents people interested in working in the field from participating.

The cost of services was covered, and how many small employers cannot pay for the services for their staff and therefore are at constant risk of losing trained staff due to addiction-related issues.

The treatment options for those with addictions were discussed, and it was related that there is only very few medium to long-term resident options for NH residents. Drew said that a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) grant Building Communities of Recovery grant is being sought this year to help fund the operation.

The discussion of Medicated Assisted Treatment (MAT) began. It was related that despite using suboxone to help end addiction, there is often no actual personal treatment offered through counseling due to a lack of qualified recovery coaches and professional counselors.

The Commissioner thanked Drew and Beeler for their presentation and then took-up Master Agenda Item #990: Semi-Annual Report – UNH Cooperative Extension
Action Expected: To receive as informational a report from the Cheshire County Cooperative Office Manager a report on the operations of the Extension Office.

Majewski was recognized and provided an update and the following information.



Report to Commissioners, June 1, 2022

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- Educational programs on a wide range of topics forest ecology, managing invasive species, agricultural equipment use, nutrition, tree fruit pruning
- 57 site visits to farms or landowners, covering approximately 5000 acres
- 137 youth participating in 17 4H Clubs across the county; looking to start a new club focused on outdoor skills and safety
- Restructuring in Youth and Family Program Area, with Nutrition Connections now falling under separate Health and Wellbeing. This has not led to any staffing changes in Cheshire County. Many programs are currently offered virtually statewide, and others will be available through a newly trained cohort of volunteers in Extension's Master Wellness Volunteer program.
- Matt is working with Steve Roberge and partnering agencies to identify a site for demonstrating "Climate-smart" forestry practices
- Frequent collaborations with other agencies and organizations, including Conservation District, area schools, Monadnock Children's Food Access Alliance, and Monadnock Understands Childhood Hunger
- Upcoming Programs:
 - June 10 - Managing Wildlife Habitat, Distant Hill Gardens 3-6 pm
 - June 30 – Mid-Season Corn Evaluation, Malnati Farm 11 am-1 pm
 - June 30 – Invasive Species ID and Control, Marlow Town Library 3-6 pm
 - 4H Activities at Cheshire Fair, Aug 4-7

The Commissioners and staff asked several wide-ranging questions, including inquiries about 4H programs, forestry management, invasive species responses, and other areas that the Cooperative Extension supports. Following discussions, the Commissioners thanked Majewski for his report.

At 09:50 AM, Commissioner Wozmak moved to enter a nonpublic meeting about RSA 91-A:3, II (a) The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against them unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion, and upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

As a result of the discussion in the nonpublic session, no decisions were made, and no vote was taken.

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At 10:24 AM, the Commissioners voted unanimously to return to the public session.

At 10:25 AM, Commissioner Englund moved to enter a nonpublic meeting about RSA 91-A:3, II (a) The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against them unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion, and upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

As a result of the discussion in the nonpublic session, no decisions were made, and no vote was taken.

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

The Commissioners then discussed and reviewed issues about hiring an EMS Chief and other issues surrounding the startup of the EMS department.

At 11:07 AM, Commissioner Clark 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 bargaining. Commissioner Englund seconded the motion, and upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

At 11:32 AM, the Commissioners voted unanimously to return to the public session.

IV. County Administrator

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

Coates was recognized and said that a lease for a single-family Westmoreland house had been sent to the owners for review and signature. The purpose of the lease is to supply temporary housing to County medical employees and traveling nurse personnel. He explained that rental housing, in general, is in very short supply throughout the County and makes it very difficult to hire and retain staff.

Coates stated that he met with Keene State College and that the County will be receiving some beds, chairs, and tables for the EMS department as donations of surplus equipment from the college.

Lastly, Coates said that he would meet with a local owner of an apartment building to determine if it could be used for traveling nurses' housing at acceptable rates and terms.

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- V. **Old Business**
- VI. **New Business** Commissioner Clark said that Senate Bill 265, signed by the Governor, will allow the County to participate in creating a Countywide Community Power Aggregation program. Coates then said that HB213, which was positioned to remove payment for the generation of Thermal Receipts produced by the County biomass systems, was tabled. Therefore, the current program will continue.
- VII. **Consent Agenda Items:**
Vote to accept the Weekly Manifests and Minutes of May 25, 2022. Commission Englund moved to accept the consent agenda and was seconded by Commissioner Clark. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.
- VIII. **Calendar**
Action Expected: To accept the calendar as informational and to make necessary changes/additions.
- IX. **General Discussion for Commissioners**
Master Agenda Item #673: Commissioners - State Cost Shifting Letter and Restorative Justice Program
- X. **Nonpublic Sessions**
See entries above.
- XI. **Adjournment**
At 12:01 PM, 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