

**MINUTES**  
**Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting**  
**Wednesday, August 24 2022**

**This meeting was conducted  
electronically via Zoom**

**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, and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard  
**Guest(s):**

At 08:32 AM, Chair Wozmak opened the meeting, and a roll call vote was conducted with 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.

Suzanne Bansley was recognized and said that a grant from Northern Borders Regional Commission for \$875K has been awarded to the Sheriff’s department radio network upgrade project. With the receipt of this grant and one other pending award, the project’s cost of \$2.7M will be covered with little to no impact on taxpayers.

Iosue said the Department of Corrections parking lot repaving project needs to be included in the 2023 budget for approximately \$300K. A discussion of the state of the paving condition was had, and the scope of the work was covered in detail.

**III. Scheduled Items**

Trombly then addressed Master Agenda Item #1012: Dental benefits after retirement. She explained that retirees have the option to continue on the County health insurance when they retire. However, they pay 100% of the cost. She explained that an employee who is retiring is interested in carrying just the County’s dental insurance. She said they have health insurance from a previous employer for everything but dental insurance. She said a call with the NH Retirement System explained that offering coverage is not mandatory in this case because a different organization’s health insurance covers the individual. Trombly asked if the Commissioners wished to consider offering the County Dental insurance plan to retirees.

Following a lengthy discussion, the Commissioners agreed to stay with past practices and not to offer separate dental plan coverage for retirees.

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Master Agenda Item: #1013: Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) update was then discussed.

Superintendent Iosue said that 31 out of 99 current inmates are in the MAT program with Suboxone (96) and methadone (3), the two main treatment drugs. He provided a background of the program and said that the bulk of the inmates on the Suboxone are Federally held Vermont inmates and the Methadone cases are local inmates.

He said that he was a big proponent of MAT, but it has grown dramatically, and the program has gotten far more complex and costly to run and administer than was first anticipated. He discussed grant monies available from the State through the Opiate settlement trust fund to help cover the cost and said that he and Bansley were working on a grant to offset the program's costs.

He said that if all psychotropic medications are included, about 65 – 70 percent of the inmate population receive treatment.

Iosue then addressed the grant cost that is being looked at, and he believes the grant will be between \$100K to \$200K. He responded to a question from the Commissioners about how the program is currently run and the possible expansion of the program to other inmates who are not eligible to participate presently.

The Doorway program in Keene was discussed, and Iosue said that the Doorway program in the County is robust and one of the best in the State. Coates noted that over 50% of clients served locally are for alcohol abuse. He said the County had contributed about \$90K last year to support the program.

Bansley was then recognized and asked the Commissioner to vote to authorize her to apply to the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services Opioid Abatement grant program for funds to support the MAT program at the DOC.

**Commissioner Englund then moved to authorize the submission of a grant request to fund the ongoing MAT program and was seconded by Commissioner Clark. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

**IV. County Administrator**

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

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Coates then discussed the status of the NH Opiate lawsuit and spoke to developments occurring with the legal teams representing the Counties. He said there are questions concerning the law firm running the Opiate lawsuit nationally having the resources to represent the needs of NH properly. He noted that some NH Counties are considering working with a different law firm to pursue a more aggressive approach. This topic will be discussed further at next week's Commissioners' meeting.

Coates said that meetings are being set to assist the Southwest Mutual Aid Fire Dispatch in upgrading their expansive radio network many years out of date. He stated that it is anticipated that the project will cost about \$6-7M to complete.

Coates said that the next phase of the cupola project is moving forward, and thus far, things have gone very well with the timeline, and the project has remained within budget. Coates said that a call from a constituent about the EMS project went very well.

Commissioner Clark then covered the status of the County Electrical Power Aggregation plan and said that two public hearings would be held on September 7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> during the Commissioner's meeting to meet the RSA requirements for public notice. Following the completion of the public hearings, the completed plan will be voted on by the Commissioners and then submitted to the County Delegation for final approval.

Coates then said that the State program to fund Nursing Home improvements was \$50M. The Portal to submit applications is now open for submissions. The funding amounts were discussed, and the impact on other income streams was covered.

**V. Old Business**

**VI. New Business**

**VII. Consent Agenda Items:**

Vote to accept the Weekly Manifests and Minutes of August 17, 2022. **Commissioner Englund moved to accept the Manifests 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**

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

**X. Nonpublic Sessions**

**XI. Adjournment**

At 10:03 AM, there being no other public business, Commissioner Englund moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Clark. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.