

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, January 4, 2023

County Hall Building
12 Court Street, Keene, NH 03431

Zoom 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, Grants Manager Bansley, and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard

Guest(s):

At 08:32 AM, Upon roll call vote, the Commissioners voted unanimously to start the meeting.

Commissioner Englund moved to elect Commissioner Wozmak as Chair of the Cheshire County Board of Commissioners, and Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Clark then moved to elect Commissioner Englund as the Vice Chair of the Cheshire County Board of Commissioners, and Commissioner Wozmak seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Englund then moved to elect Commissioner Clark as the Clerk of the Cheshire County Board of Commissioners, and Commissioner Wozmak seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments

Upon recognition from the Chair, a Public Comment on topics of interest may be made, at most three (3) minutes in length.

I. Elected Officials & Department Head Updates

To receive, as informational, departmental updates requiring Commissioner review, participation, approval, and impactful departmental and operational issues.

Iosue was then recognized and spoke to the issue that a third COVID-19 outbreak has hit the Department of Corrections quite hard and is now in the general population and staff. He said it is being dealt with, but scheduling is complex, and funding is rapidly being used to pay for overtime coverage.

II. Scheduled Items

Master Agenda Item #1057: Department of Corrections Meetings with the City of Keene - D. Iosue

Action Expected: To receive, as informational, a report from the Superintendent concerning ongoing discussions with the City of Keene.

Iosue spoke to a meeting with the City of Keene about the release of the inmates, and he reviewed the procedures for the safe and responsible release of inmates into the community. He

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said a follow-on meeting, including the Sheriff, will be held in the coming weeks to explore more options and to provide assistance to the inmates released to help decrease recidivism. The inmates involved are largely temporary safety holds.

Commissioner Wozmak asked a question about the statistics on the homelessness of released inmates. He also asked about the inmate release data to help determine the impact on local homelessness.

He explained some of the challenges in the current local and state laws and the issues that exacerbate the problem in Keene. For example, the Sheriff outlined how the person is usually brought to jail for a Protective Custody (PC) case when no one can pick up the person quickly.

Master Agenda Item #1058: Representation of K9 Grant - S. Bansley and E. Rivera
Action Expected: Discuss and review the updated information on the pending K9 Grant.

Bansley and Rivera were then recognized. Rivera then reviewed the purpose of the Grant and spoke of the three cycles of the Grant, acquisition, training, and ongoing care and support. Total \$51,900 in grant funds. Approximately \$20K will be used during years two through five.

Following an extended discussion, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to table the topic and investigate further issues that surfaced during the discussion. A further discussion will take place in the next few weeks.

Master Agenda Item #1059: Maplewood Nursing Home - NH Governor's Office for Emergency Relief and Recovery (GOFERR) Grant - S. Bansley
Action Expected: To receive, as informational, a report from the grants manager on the Maplewood GOFERR grant.

Bansley was then recognized and said that \$941,000 was granted to the County to complete the Maplewood Nursing Home project. Trombly then spoke about how the grant amount was determined and applied for.

Bansley then asked the Commissioners to vote to accept the grant funds formally. Commissioner Englund made the following motion;

That Commissioner Chair John "Jack" G. Wozmak, J.D. or County Administrator Christopher C. Coates or Grants Manager Suzanne Bansley are authorized on behalf of the County of Cheshire to enter into the County Nursing Home Infrastructure Program Loan Agreement for State Fiscal Recovery Funds with the State of New Hampshire, Governor's Office for

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Emergency Relief and Recovery and to execute any and all documents, agreements and other instruments, and any amendments, revisions, or modifications thereto, as he/she may deem necessary, desirable, or appropriate to effect the purpose of this vote. This authority is retro-active to December 28, 2022.

That County Administrator Christopher C. Coates is hereby authorized on behalf of the County of Cheshire to enter into any subcontracts or subrecipient agreements as necessary to carry out the goals, objectives, and activities of the agreement.

That Grants Manager Suzanne Bansley is hereby appointed as the authorized certifying official and primary contact and liaison with regard to the above-referenced agreement and is hereby authorized on behalf of the County of Cheshire to certify or sign vouchers or requisitions for payments or claims to the agreement.

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

Commissioner Clark as the Clerk of the Cheshire Board of Commissioners, then signed the required documentation to be submitted to the state in support of receiving the grant.

A lengthy conversation began about how to use the funding, and several tax savings ideas were discussed in-depth.

III. County Administrator

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

The Commissioners meeting to be held on 01/11 will be approximately one hour to attend a Richmond Select Board meeting at 11:00 AM.

On 01/18, Keene City Manager Elizabeth Dragon and Derrick Ferland will attend the Commissioner's meeting at the Department of Corrections to continue the discussion of inmate release into the community and the services required for a successful transition.

On 01/19, Coates will attend a meeting with the Keene City Council to update them on the status and operations of the County EMS program.

Coates reported that the first phase of upgrades for the new Audio Video system in Delegation Hall is nearing completion. The system will be tested next week, and any issues will be identified and reported to the vendor for final resolution.

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Coates said that Griffin construction was in the building yesterday, and an implementation timeline is being prepared for the upcoming interior renovations.

Coates then said that the contract for space for Connected Families of NH at 86 West Street in Keene has been signed, and the internet connections are underway. In addition, utilities will be swapped over to the County in the coming weeks.

Coates then mentioned that the additional ARPA payroll funding appearing on employees' payroll checks will now be consolidated into a single payroll entry. He was effusive in his praise for the hard work put into the project by finance and specifically thanked Misty Hall and Sheryl Trombly for the many hours of work to make the program work.

Coates related that nine ex-employees of the now-closed Sununu Center were arrested for various criminal acts perpetrated on children living at the center in years past. He said the projected costs to the State are anticipated to be approximately \$100M. He was also made aware that the nine persons arrested will still be allowed to collect their NH pension benefits because of how NH State law is written.

Coates then said that the house on Lake Street in Swanzey at the new EMS location that is being prepared for visiting nursing staffing is proceeding well, and the project should be completed before spring.

IV. Old Business

V. New Business

VI. Consent Agenda Items:

Vote to accept the Weekly Manifests for December 28, 20 and January 4, 2023, and the Minutes of the December 21, 2022, meeting.

Commissioner Englund moved to accept the Weekly manifests, the December 14th meeting minutes, and the Commissioners calendar as presented. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion, and upon roll call 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. Adjournment

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At 10:57 AM, the meeting was recessed for the biannual swearing-in ceremony.

At 12:03 PM, There being no other public business to discuss, Commissioner Wozmak moved to adjourn the meeting, and Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. 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