

MINUTES

Wednesday, February 01, 2023

This meeting will be conducted in person
and electronically (via Zoom) at the

County Hall Building
Delegation Hall
12 Court Street
Keene, NH 03431

Zoom Call-in Number: +1 646 558 8656

Meeting ID: 409 748 8803

Pin #: 6031233

Start Time 8:30 AM

Present: Commissioners Jack Wozmak, Robert Englund, and Terry Clark

Staff: County Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Grants Manager Bansley, Sheriff Rivera, Superintendent Iosue, Assistant County Administrator Bouchard

Guest(s): Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) - T. Johnson, Senior Project Manager Ben Gradert, Associate Planner with Southwest Region Planning Commission, Sara Powell, Hanna Grimes, Keene

At 8:32 AM, Commissioners Englund and Clark responded as “present.” Administrator Coates informed the meeting Commissioner Wozmak was running a few minutes late. Commissioners Englund, Vice-Chair, of the County of Cheshire Board of Commissioners, opened the meeting and addressed Master Agenda Item #1067: CDBG Microenterprise Public Hearings.

Public Comments

Upon recognition from the Chair, a Public Comment on topics of interest may be made, at most three (3) minutes in length. – No public comments were received.

I. Elected Officials & Department Head Updates

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

II. Scheduled Items

Master Agenda Item #1067: CDBG Microenterprise Public Hearings – B. Gradert, SWRPC

Action Expected: Conduct public hearings for a mid-grant hearing for the SFY2022 CDBG Microenterprise program and an application to the SFY2023 CDBG Microenterprise program, to include approval of the application, the Residential Anti-displacement and Relocation Plan, and designation of authorized officials.

The Vice-Chair opened the first public hearing for discussion of the CDBG Microenterprise project at 08:33 AM and read the public hearing notice.

Ben Gradert, Associate Planner with Southwest Region Planning Commission, explained that the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program must hold a public hearing while a project is underway to allow the public the opportunity to comment and ask questions about the

project. He noted that this first hearing would provide an update of the 2022 Microenterprise projects.

Gradert explained that Cheshire County received \$414,000 in CDBG Microenterprise funds to support Microenterprise centers around the State in 2022. Cheshire County sub-granted the majority of the funds as follows, less administration costs:

- \$219,489 to the Hannah Grimes Center in Keene. The center will provide access for 50 microenterprises to its hands-on workshops, one-on-one coaching, retail training at the Hannah Grimes Marketplace, and in-depth programs, such as their incubator. Through the first two-quarters of the project, Hannah Grimes has served approximately 40 microenterprise business owners.
- \$119,000 to the NH Small Business Development Center's Pathways to Work initiatives in Durham and Manchester. The services they will provide to approximately 50 participants include classes on how to start a small business, e-courses on finance, and workshops on topics like marketing and accounting. Through the first two-quarters of the project, they have served 14 microenterprises.

Sara Powell, the representatives from the Hannah Grimes Center and the Small Business Development Center provided the following details about the current projects: Gradert said that two programs, including grants and direct funding to micro clients, including helping a client obtain equipment for a hot dog vending cart to be opened in Keene.

Powell said that the funding had been an enormous help to their clients and that the Microenterprise project has been fully subscribed and very welcomed and well received.

The projects are scheduled to close out by June 30, 2023.

The Chair opened the floor to public comment on the projects. No public comments were received.

The Chair closed the first public hearing at 8:42 AM.

The Chair opened the second public hearing to discuss the Community Development Block Grant Applications at 8:44 AM.

Gradert explained that CDBG funds are available to municipalities for economic development, public facility, and housing rehabilitation projects that primarily benefit low- and moderate-income persons. Cheshire County can receive up to \$500,000 in the housing and public facilities category, up to \$500,000 in the economic development category, up to \$750,000 in the microenterprise category, and \$25,000 for feasibility studies. In addition, Gradert provided a handout describing the NH Community Development Block Grant Program eligible activities that included the area HUD income limits.

Gradert provided a project handout. The proposed microenterprise applications are for up to \$750,000 to support two entities in southern NH: the Hannah Grimes Center in Keene (HGC) and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). The funding is used by each entity to provide training and technical assistance and, in some cases, microloan servicing to low- and

moderate-income micro-entrepreneurs. If the proposed applications are successful, the funds will be awarded to Cheshire County, which will sub-grant the funds, less administration, to the two Sub-recipients.

Cheshire County has applied for and has been awarded Microenterprise funding for the HGC and SBDC each year since 2015. The HGC and SBDC are interested in continuing to be recipients of the Microenterprise funding in 2023. The proposed activities meet the goals of “Support[ing] the development of a diversified economy” and “Support[ing] educational and training facilities which upgrade the skills of residents” in Cheshire County’s Housing and Community Development Plan, last adopted in June of 2021. For this program year, the three entities anticipate serving an estimated 105 microenterprises.

Representatives from the Hannah Grimes Center and the Small Business Development Center provided details about the proposed projects.

At 8:47 AM Commissioner Wozmak joined the meeting.

Jason Cannon of SDC spoke very positively about Cheshire County, saying that the County was very supportive and effective in operating the program. Powell added that they were very grateful to be able to help local micro-businesses with the support that the County provides.

The Chair opened the floor to public comment on the projects; none were received.

Commissioner Englund moved to close the Public Hearing on the Projects portion of the CDBG Block Grant Application Hearing, seconded by Clark. Upon roll call vote, the *Motion passed unanimously.*

Commissioner Clark moved to approve the submittal of the applications, vote to authorize County Administrator Christopher Coates or County Commissioner Chair John Wozmak as the Authorized Designees to sign and submit the CDBG applications, and vote to authorize Grants Manager Suzanne Bansley to serve as Authorized Designee to sign environmental review related documents, and upon approval of the CDBG applications, authorize the Authorized Designee to execute any documents which may be necessary to effectuate the CDBG contract. Seconded by Commissioner Wozmak. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Wozmak moved to open the third public hearing regarding the Residential Anti-displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan. It was seconded by Commissioner Clark. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Ben Gradert of SWRPC explained that if any permanent displacement takes place as a result of this project, the Uniform Relocation Act must be followed, which requires that any permanently displaced household or business in a project using federal funds must be found comparable housing in a comparable neighborhood at a comparable price. Gradert noted that no permanent displacement is planned at this time. Under the certification section of the application, the County will certify that the Residential Anti-displacement and Relocation Assistance (RARA) Plan is in place, and in the event that it is discovered that this specific project does permanently displace persons or households, a displacement implementation plan must be submitted to CDFA prior to obligating or expending funds.

Chair called for public comment, and none was received.

Commissioner Clark moved to close the third public hearing to discuss the proposed RARA Plan. It was seconded by Commissioner Englund. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Wozmak moved to adopt the Residential Anti-displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan, seconded by Commissioner Clark. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

HR Director May was then recognized and addressed a request for an FMLA request for eight (8) additional weeks of leave due to medical issues. Following a very discussion, Commissioner Englund moved to approve the leave, and Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Master Agenda Item #1069: Congressionally Directed Spending Request, Officer Training – S. Bansley, E. Rivera

Action Expected: Vote to approve the execution and submission of a Congressionally Directed Spending Request to Senator Shaheen to purchase an Apex Officer Training Simulator; and to give Grants Manager Suzanne Bansley the authority to execute a grant agreement if this request is awarded.

Sheriff Rivera was then recognized and discussed a grant for Virtual Reality (VR) training for Police Officers and Deputies to train them in dangerous situations.

Bansley spoke to the funding and said that the funding is for \$79,925.00 and is funded by direct congressional funding sources. Commissioner Englund asked how the funding was structured, and Bansley responded that the funding process is very similar to the process the County uses to fund outside agencies.

Rivera said that the training would be available to local police departments and would benefit all police agencies in the County.

Bansley spoke at length about the possible uses of the equipment, and Rivera discussed the various training scenarios that can be modeled in the training.

Following discussions, Commissioner Wozmak moved to approve the grant submission, and Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Coates then discussed a request from the Union to extend a semi-permanent leave of absence for a Department of Corrections employee that has been on loan to the Teamsters Union for the previous twelve months.

Iosue spoke to the request and said that he has many questions about how the request, and it greatly concerns him because part of the request imposes a requirement for continued seniority at the County Department of Corrections despite being away from the organization for an indefinite block of time.

An extended discussion of how leaves of absence have been treated in the past began and how it applies to all staff positions Countywide was covered in-depth, and several options were discussed at great length.

Additional investigation into the legal implications and organizational impacts of the request will be made, and a decision will be made following the attainment of the information.

Master Agenda Item #1068: Cheshire Community Power Cost Sharing Agreement – T. Clark
Action Expected: To review and sign the Community Power Coalition of NH (CPCNH) Cost Sharing agreement. The agreement does not obligate the County to incur any costs unless and until it purchases electric power through CPCNH.

Commissioner Clark was recognized and said the following:

Cheshire County entered into a joint powers' agreement with the Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire on September 3rd, 2021, in order to implement aggregation of electricity used by County facilities.

The cost-sharing agreement you see before you today is a necessary step to ensure that the costs, expenses, debts, and liabilities directly or indirectly incurred by CPCHNH on each member's behalf are recovered through member CPA revenues, or from grants or other third-party sources.

Since the Public Utilities Commission recently approved Cheshire County's electric aggregation plan. We are now ready to implement the partnership with CPCNH as soon as May of this year.

Essentially, this agreement lays out the specifics of our shared costs, and method of providing those costs as a portion of costs and method of providing those costs as a portion of the cost of the electricity we use.

Our electricity is now paid to Freedom Energy Logistics at a rate of 15.9 cents per kilowatt. That contract runs through August of 2023. Rod is looking into the exit clause of that contract to see if it's feasible for us to start buying electricity through COCNH in May at a lesser rate, whether or not we have no impact on this cost-sharing agreement.

Commissioner Englund moved to adopt and sign the Cost Sharing Agreement with Community Power of NH (CPCNH), and Commissioner Wozmak seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Master Agenda Item #1070: Grants Semi-Annual Report – S. Bansley
Action Expected: To receive, as informational, a report on the operations of the Grants department.

Bansley presented her semi-annual report and presented the following information.

Grants Recap

WRITING

- In 2022, and 2023 to date
- Plus denied, pending, writing now, and soon

MANAGEMENT

- Award value
- Award revenue
- Return on investment

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE

- Fiscal sponsored orgs
- Free grant writing course
- Assistance provided in 2022 and 2023 to date

Awarded in 2023

1. Stanton Foundation K9 Grant
\$32,000

TOTAL AWARDED 2023 = \$32,000

Denied & Pending

DENIED (2022)

1. US-DOJ, OVW, Justice for Families
2. Opioid Abatement - DOC MAT

PENDING (Currently)

1. GOFERR – Emergency Equipment \$1,176,125
 - Notice of Award expected by early April
2. Timken – Monadnock Special Response Team for headset equipment \$15,000 (informal request)
 - Notice of Award expected by May

Awarded in 2022

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Homeland Security - MCP Electronics Update \$130,599 | Westmoreland \$28,671 |
| 2. NH DOJ ARPA Municipalities – Peer Support \$8,484 | 12. Timken – Rail Trail – Troy \$25,000 |
| 3. Victim Witness (VOCA) SFY23 (cont. application) \$50,000 | 13. COPS (CDS 2021) - Advanced Radio LE Network \$750,000 |
| 4. SAMHSA - EMS Training \$200,000 | 14. JAG FFY22 – Mobile Data Terminals \$12,218 |
| 5. NH DOS - Body Cameras \$47,500 | 15. DV Prosecutor 2023 (cont. application) \$30,000 |
| 6. Drug Court State Grant SFY23 (cont. application) \$300,000 | 16. Homeland - Monadnock SRT equipment \$12,439 |
| 7. Congressionally Directed Spending- Red Barn \$112,000 | 17. Victims of Crime Training \$7,046 |
| 8. Mascoma – Rail Trail – Troy \$2,500 | 18. Healthy Monadnock x 4 = \$2,000 |
| 9. NBRC-Radio Network \$875,000 | 19. Highway Safety \$8,200 |
| 10. Bulletproof FFY2022 (cont. application) \$1,900 | 20. Opioid Abatement – Drug Court Recovery \$46,044 |
| 11. Recreational Trails Program (RTP) – | 21. GOFERR-Nursing Home \$920,768 |
| TOTAL AWARDED 2022 = \$3,611,269 | |

Writing Now & Starting Soon

WRITING NOW

1. Congressionally Directed Spending request for Apex Officer Training for Sheriff's Office \$75,000
2. Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program (amount and project TBD)
3. NH DOJ VOCA continuation application for \$50,000 for victim-witness coordinator
4. NH-DOT for Monadnock Region Coordinating Council for Transportation \$490,600 (two years)

STARTING SOON

1. Federal agency application for the Congressionally Directed Spending request to Shaheen in winter 2022 for the Red Barn
2. Recreational Trails Program (project and amount TBD)

Managed in 2022 - Award Value

- 2022 YTD: 41 grants \$12.1 million
 - ❖ 2021 year-end: 37 grants, \$13.7 million
 - ❖ 2020 year-end: 41 grants, \$13.6 million
 - ❖ 2019 year-end: 40 grants, \$9.4 million
 - ❖ 2018 year-end: 37 grants, \$8.4 million
 - ❖ 2017 year-end: 39 grants, \$10.3 million
 - ❖ 2016 year-end: 41 grants, \$10.7 million
 - ❖ 2015 year-end: 42 grants, \$5.8 million

Managed in 2022 - Revenue

- Revenue - \$2.7 million
 - Admin/indirect \$122k
- ❖ 2021 revenue of \$3.7 million includes \$138k in admin
- ❖ 2020 revenue of \$2.7 million includes \$147k in admin
- ❖ 2019 revenue of \$3.4 million includes \$141k in admin
- ❖ 2018 revenue of \$2.4 million includes \$120k in admin
- ❖ 2017 revenue of \$2.7 million includes \$115k in admin
- ❖ 2016 revenue of \$2.5 million includes \$80k in admin
- ❖ 2015 revenue of \$1.2 million includes \$63k in admin

Return on Investment

$$(\text{Rev} - \text{Exp}) \div \text{Exp} = \text{ROI}$$

- Return on annual grant revenue
 - Grant revenue 2022 = \$2,714,504
 - Grants department 2022 expenses = \$121,895
 - $[\$2,714,504 - \$121,895] \div \$121,895 = 2,127\%$
 - 2,127% ROI on grant rev
- Return on new awards
 - New awards 2022 = \$3,611,269
 - Grants department 2022 expenses = \$121,895
 - $[\$3,611,269 - \$121,895] \div \$121,895 = 2,863\%$
 - 2,863% ROI on grant rev

Fiscal Sponsorship

1. Monadnock Regional Coordinating Council for Community Transportation
2. Community Development Block Grants
3. City of Keene (JAG subgrantee)
4. Greater Monadnock Medical Reserve Corps
5. Chamber – marketing/tourism initiative
6. Monadnock Region Rail Trail Collaborative
7. Monadnock Special Response Team – NEW

Free Grant Writing Course

ATTENDEES = 14

1. Cheshire Children's Museum
 2. Hannah Grimes Center for Entrepreneurship
 3. Jaffrey Rindge Memorial Ambulance
 4. Keene Family YMCA
 5. Montessori Schoolhouse of Cheshire County
 6. Southwestern Community Services, Inc. (SCS)
 7. Stonewall Farm
 8. SWRPC
 9. The Community Kitchen
 10. The Walpole Foundation
 11. Monadnock Peer Support
 12. Town of Westmoreland
 13. Keene Serenity Center
 14. Cornucopia Project
1. Tue, Nov 15, 9a-12p: **Overview and Project Design**
 2. Tue, Nov 22, 9a-12p: **Need/Problem, Outcomes & Impacts, & the Evaluation**
 3. Tue, Nov 29, 9a-12p: **Sustainability, Capabilities, Budget, Pointers, and Searching**

Assistance Provided in 2022

1. Child-parent visitation center
2. Monadnock Region Rail Trail Collaborative
3. Keene State
4. Town of Winchester
5. Stonewall Farm
6. Poshous & Parisi Enterprises
7. Keene Y & DEI Coalition
8. Dreamseed Consignment
9. Montessori Schoolhouse
10. Calcite & Comfrey
11. Keene High School's Model United Nations Club
12. Jaffrey-Rindge Ambulance
13. Cornucopia Project
14. Montessori Schoolhouse

Assistance Provided in 2023

1. Fitzwilliam Highway Department
2. Alstead Police Department
3. Park Theater Jaffrey
4. Southwest Community Services
5. Community Kitchen
6. Cornucopia Project
7. Swanzey Preservation Society
8. Golden Rod Grange in Swanzey

Presently Working On

1. Training new grants assistant.
 - Please meet Jen Robinson
2. Just finished 2022 reconciliation/closeout
3. NBRC NEPA communications ongoing
4. CDS application to Kuster w/Eli
5. Assistance to (recently):
 - a. SCS Emerging Leaders
 - b. Chamber's ARPA-Hillsborough grant application
6. Actively searching for:
 - a. Still on pause until a new assistant is trained

Bansley then described a recent Grants training class held in Delegation Hall for non-profit organizations from within the County and said that the feedback from the participants was very positive and that another class is being planned for some time in the May timeframe. She said the plan is to host thirteen (13) students from non-profit organizations to help them develop a grant they would submit for funding. Based on student feedback and Barnsley's observations, this class would be structured differently than the first. A discussion on local projects began, and a number of potential projects that could be funded were covered.

Bansley introduced the new Grants Assistant and said she would also be included in the class to understand the grants processes and requirements better. Bansley remarked that she could set aside the grants management process once the new assistant is up to speed and can return to writing additional grants in the next few months.

The Commissioners thanked Bansley for her report and strongly commended her for her outstanding work and results for the County.

III. County Administrator

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

Coates reminded the Commissioners that the Annual Gala would be held at Keene State on March 16th, from 6:00-9:00 PM.

Coates said the City of Keene meets with the NH Municipal Association (NHMA) at 6:00 PM tonight, and he will attend for a portion of the meeting.

Coates said that he was happy to report that Keene State College has asked if Cheshire EMS would cover Keene State for the NCAA tournaments this weekend. The staff at CCEMS has agreed to do so and will be in attendance for the duration of the tournament.

Coates said the Right to Know request (RTK) received relative to Cheshire EMS had been fulfilled and is considered complete.

He then stated that Northern Borders Regional Commission is reviewing the environmental documentation submitted for the Dispatch radio upgrade and will respond to County shortly if additional documentation is needed.

Coates then discussed the visit by Congresswoman Kuster and said that the meeting went very well and was primarily focused on the radio upgrade project funding and the use of funds for the Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Programs in the County. In addition, he said she was particularly interested in the program being administered at the Department of Corrections.

Coates then said that the interior renovation of 12 Court Street is underway and going well. He said he had received several positive remarks for the work, especially for the new front doors.

Coates stated that several COVID infections have occurred at the Nursing home, but the infection rate is beginning to lessen. As of today, the Commissioner's meeting scheduled for March 29th at Maplewood will be held on-site.

Coates said wheelchair service, SMARTRide in Peterborough, is now up and running, and a contract with Cheshire Medical Center is under discussion.

Coates then addressed a Facebook posting by a Firefighter riddled with falsehoods and inaccurate information concerning the startup of the County EMS service.

Coates said that he and EMS Chief Spain participated in a community information session on local issues and activities held with Keene State at the Keene Sentinel this week. He said that it went very well, and he was pleased to be asked to participate in the program.

IV. Old Business

- V. **New Business** – Commissioner Englund spoke to the meeting with Congresswoman Kuster concerning the Medicated Assisted Treatment (MAT) program at the Department of Corrections. He said that he contacted a doctor who is a researcher and surgical oncologist who is very interested in looking into a possible collaboration to provide the missing data that Congresswoman Kuster and many others are seeking on post-release recidivism. A senior Ph.D. researcher has been potentially identified who may be able to drive the program forward. More information to come as the discussion develops.

At 11:46 AM Commissioner Wozmak left the meeting for a previously scheduled appointment.

VI. Consent Agenda Items:

Vote to accept the Weekly Manifests for March 01, 2023, and the meeting minutes of February 15, 2023.

Commissioner Clark moved to accept the manifests of March 01, 2023, and the minutes of February 15, 2023, as presented. Commissioner Englund 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

The potential hiring of a nurse at the Department of Corrections began, and a conflict with current County policy regarding qualifications to participate in the Baylor program began.

May outlined the current standards in place for Baylor shifts. She explained that a nurse who is a long-term employee from the Nursing Home is considering a move to the Department of Corrections under the Baylor shift concepts that include working every weekend and either Monday or Friday for a three-day shift. The staff members in this program receive a six (6) hours bonus payment. The position offered at the Department of Corrections is structured differently and falls outside the traditional definition of Baylor shifts.

A lengthy discussion began, and the HR and Finance Directors spoke about the possible change and its impact on existing staffing. They indicated they could not support the change due to a potential ripple effect across the other departments that would cause a substantial cost increase with the departments not benefiting from needed coverage work hours.

More discussion and investigation into this issue will take place in the coming week so that a final decision can be made.

IX. Nonpublic Sessions:

X. Adjournment

At 12:17 PM Commissioner Englund moved to adjourn the meeting, which Commissioner Clark seconded. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.