

Coös County Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Coös County Nursing Hospital - W. Stewartstown, NH  
March 16, 2011

Present: Commissioners Bing Judd, Paul Grenier and Tom Brady; County Administrator Suzanne L. Collins; Director of Finance Jennifer Fish; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Nursing Home Administrator Louise Belanger; Superintendent Craig Hamelin; Chief Deputy Keith Roberge (*arrived at 10:15*); Administrative Assistant Linda Harris; County Treasurer Fred King; Lisette Huot and members of the press.

Commissioner Judd opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

1. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the minutes of the February 9, 2011 meeting. All approved 3-0.
2. The Board reviewed the Payrolls and Disbursements for the month of February 2011. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the Payrolls and Disbursements for the month of February 2011. All approved 3-0.
3. Hearing of the Public: None.
4. Report of the County Administrator Suzanne L. Collins. The written report that was submitted to the Board in advance of the meeting was as follows:
  - a. The 2011 Collective Bargaining Unit Agreement with the SEA for certain employees of the Corrections Department was approved by the membership and cost items were approved by the Delegation. Sue provided an updated CBA for Board signatures. Commissioner Grenier asked if the deductible plan was \$250 per person/\$750 per family and Sue replied that was correct. The Board signed the final agreement which Sue will forward to Anna Marie Welch for the SEA signatures. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the new salary schedules. All approved 3-0.
  - b. AFSCME has indicated that it would not be ready to present the county offer to its employees until March 18 and the AFSCME staff representative is not available to meet with the County again until the last week of March.
  - c. A letter to employees informing them of the 50-cent per hour increase effective 5/1 was presented for the Board's review and signature. Preparations are being made to have Primex<sup>3</sup> explain a new deductible plan to employees during mid to late April. The Board signed the letters for each facility.
  - d. Jessica Riendeau has recruited for and has a recommendation for the 16-hour clerk position in the Victim Witness Office. In accordance with the Coös County Employee Policy Handbook, approval of this hire is the responsibility of the Commissioners. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the recommendation from Mrs. Riendeau with a start date of July 1. Commissioner Judd agreed it was a good idea due to the upcoming move. All approved 3-0.
  - e. Regarding the proposal before New Hampshire House Finance Division III to divert \$33M of MQIP funds to replace State General Fund dollars in the Home support area, NHAC

Executive Director Betsy Miller reported that the House committee may be looking at a new additional credit from the cap in the amount that would be diverted from MQIP. This is an attempt to hold counties harmless from the Governor's proposal. The House committee, however, wants to raise the \$105M CAP by \$2M for State Fiscal Year 2013. Counties are strongly opposed to this. The counties are fortunate to have Ms. Miller watching and lobbying this issue on behalf of property taxpayers.

- f. In Washington, the House Overwhelmingly voted to protect PILT Payments. On February 18, the House of Representatives defeated an amendment to the FY 2011 Continuing Resolution (HR 1) offered by Congresswoman Kaptur (D-Ohio) which would have cut funding to the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program (PILT) by 75 percent. Upon learning of the amendment, the National Association of Counties quickly developed an overnight grassroots campaign against the Kaptur amendment which culminated in a vote of 394 to 32 in opposition to the amendment. Congressman Charlie Bass voted for the amendment's defeat and Sue wrote to him thanking him for supporting continued full funding of PILT.
- g. The application for the federal Retiree Drug Subsidy for health plan year 2011-2012 was approved by CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid) on March 15.
- h. On February 23, Sue notified the Bureau of Court Facilities of the County's intent to vacate the current space occupied by the Coös County Attorney in the Coös County Courthouse. The State has accepted the notice to vacate.
- i. Coös County offers a deferred compensation program (457(b) plan) to its employees. The current plan document does not include an election to permit loans for the purchase of the participant's principal residence or for unforeseeable emergencies. Loans are solely secured by the participant's vested account balance and withdrawals for unforeseeable emergencies require documentation of severe financial hardship. Currently one employee is requesting that the Board approve this amendment. There is no cost to the County to offer this option to employees and Sue recommended approval of this amendment. Commissioner Grenier asked if this amendment was for all county employees and Sue replied that it was. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve Sue's recommendation. All approved 3-0. Commissioner Judd signed the amendment.

*Report of the County Farm:*

- a. With the determination to cease dairy operations before summer, Sue cancelled the crop insurance for 2011. The deadline to inform the crop insurance agency of any changes was March 15.
- b. Sue requested non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (d) Consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community.

*Report of the Unincorporated Places:*

- a. The Coös County Planning Board will be holding its next meeting on April 13 at 6 PM at the Coös County Nursing Home in Berlin. The Planning Board is inviting the Commissioners and members of the Delegation to the meeting. Planning Board Chairman John Scarinza has arranged for the Community Forest Collaborative to make a presentation on its work in New Hampshire and how that might be translated into a possible model and opportunity for a County Forest. Julie Renaud Evans will be representing the Sustainable Forest Futures, Rodger Krussman will be there representing the Trust for Public Land and Marcy Lyman, a

consultant for the Community Forest Collaborative will also be present. Also making a presentation at the meeting will be Pip Decker from Brookfield Power with an update on the Granite Reliable Wind Park.

Commissioner Judd reported that work has begun in clear cutting for the wind project. Local contractors have been hired to do this work. Commissioner Judd noted that there will be several tons of chips that may not be taxable as the chips will be used on site. He will be contacting the State Timber Appraiser for further input.

- c. On March 15, Sue received the Excavation/Reclamation 155-E application form for the Dillon 5-Mile Pit in Success. Sue has not been able to determine if the application is complete and therefore did not request its approval at this meeting.

Commissioner Grenier asked if the new salary schedules for all county employees would be available at the next meeting and Sue replied in the affirmative.

5. Report of the Superintendent of Corrections Craig Hamelin. The written report that was submitted to the Board in advance of the meeting was as follows:

HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS	16
PRETRIAL	13
STATE PRISON INMATES	3
ELECTRONIC MONITORING	1
WORK RELEASE	0
OTHER COUNTY INMATES	2
INMATES AT OTHER FACILITIES	BELKNAP DOC: 1 HOC MALE CARROLL DOC: 2 HOC FEMALE, 1 PT FEMALE NHSP: 1 HOC M, 2 PT M, 1 HOC F

- a. Applications are being reviewed for the vacant Second Shift position. Physical fitness and aptitude testing will be scheduled once the field is narrowed to 3 final candidates.
- b. Officer James Lesperance successfully completed the Field Training Program. He has been assigned to Third Shift and will attend the NHAC Correctional Officer's Academy in April.
- c. There has been much interest in seeing the facility recently and Craig has received nothing short of positive feedback. David Whitham and Rick Alpers of Primex<sup>3</sup> toured the facility on February 15. Lisa Perras and seven students from White Mountain Regional High School's Business and Law class toured the facility on February 23. (See attached press release from the WMRHS)
- d. Discussions with DSI/ITI, which provides the Jail Management System and inmate telephone system, are ongoing. Meetings and presentations have been set up from other providers, such as Securus and Archonix, to see what their software and inmate phone systems can provide compared to what the Department currently has.

Commissioner Grenier asked if any capital costs will be incurred with switching systems. Superintendent Hamelin is working on obtaining a proposal with no additional costs. One of the issues is that the call volume is low at Coös County compared to other facilities. DSI will continue to work month to month and wants to keep Coös County as a client.

Commissioner Grenier added that this is the time to bargain. Superintendent Hamelin stated that it will be difficult to obtain free equipment as in the past contract.

- e. Superintendent Hamelin has found that most Jail Management/inmate phone companies have either gone or are going to off-site storage for the management of inmate phone calls, which will likely require either T1 or DSL data connections to the facility for proper transfer of files. These high-speed data connections will also be necessary in order to continue the video conferencing system, as the court systems and other facilities are upgrading from soon to be obsolete ISDN line systems to high speed IP address systems. He will continue to research ways to get these high-speed data services to our W. Stewartstown facilities for cost savings and better data transfer and management. Commissioner Grenier warned about Internet storage of inmate data offsite.
  - f. Superintendent Hamelin requested nonpublic with the Board.
6. Report of the West Stewartstown Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills. The written report that was submitted to the Board in advance of the meeting was as follows:
- a. Census: The census today was 65. The average census for February was 66; occupancy for February was 67.7%. In February there were three (3) admissions and two (2) deaths. Since the beginning of March there have been two (2) more admissions but also three (3) more deaths.

Of the 65 residents, thirteen (13) are Private Pay. One (1) of these has been denied Medicaid so is considered Private Pay but at this time no one is paying the bill. Six (6) of the Private Pay residents are from Vermont and five (5) residents are Vermont Medicaid.

With the five admissions coming in it was difficult finding appropriate rooms since the residents had been consolidated onto two floors. The decision was made to reopen First Floor on a very limited basis by returning seven residents who required minimal assistance. Staff is still being kept at a minimum.

- b. Respiratory Illness: Over the past two weeks we have seen a great deal of respiratory symptoms in both residents and staff. The flu has been reported in the area so additional precautions have been taken and visitors have been encouraged not to come in if they are ill or to at least wear a mask while here and practice good hand washing.
- c. Nurse Staffing: Nurse staffing on the night shift is going to be an issue. Out of four regular nurses, one is out with an injury, one is leaving the area and one has applied for a different posted position. Ads have been placed in the local papers.
- d. Staff Development: The current Staff Development Director, Deb Wells, has accepted the MDS Coordinator position that will be vacant when the current MDS Coordinator retires in May. Laura posted the Staff Development position in house and received four applications. Laura will be interviewing for the position in the next two weeks.

Laura requested that the Staff Development position return to a 40 hour position from the current 36 hours. A new hire in this position will have a much lower salary so the cost of 40 hours will still be less than what is being paid to the current Director for 36 hours. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to reinstate the Staff Development position to 40 hours per week. All approved 3-0.

- e. Laundry: The large Milnor dryer had a cracked drum. It was still under warranty and once the part was received the staff from the Maintenance Department installed it last week.
- f. Bariatric Residents: The Nursing Hospital is facing a new challenge with the increasing number of potential bariatric residents needing nursing home care. The facility is not completely set up for bariatric residents as most of the equipment is only rated to 350 pounds. So far the facility is just staying within its limitations but may have to purchase specialty equipment for residents if they go over this 350 pound threshold after admission. Bariatric equipment is much more expensive and the number of caregivers needed to provide care is also higher.

g. Nursing Hours at HOC:

2010	MINUTES	Hours	2011	Minutes	Hours
January	3,821	64	January	3,907	65
February	3,678	61	February	<b>4,035</b>	<b>67</b>
March	3,474	58	March		
April	3,350	56	April		
May	3,031	51	May		
June	3,048	51	June		
July	2,509	42	July		
August	4,013	67	August		
September	3,895	65	September		
October	3,784	63	October		
November	3,699	62	November		
December	3,460	58	December		

- h. Laura requested non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (a).
7. Report of the Berlin Nursing Home Administrator Louise Belanger. The written report that was submitted to the Board in advance of the meeting is as follows:
- a. Census: The current census is 99 with an admission scheduled for March 17. Thirteen residents are Private Pay at this time. The average daily census for February was 97.5. There was 1 death and 4 admissions in February.
  - b. Primex<sup>3</sup>: Employees were invited to attend a “Fit for Life Challenge Kick Off” held on February 16. The Fit for Life Challenge is designed to encourage all Health Subscribers, their spouses and families to participate in a challenge that just doesn’t take a look at weight management or exercise. Wellness is getting those preventative screenings, utilizing the tools that the health insurance carrier has to offer; wellness is also educating employees and their families about prescription medications, managing stress through the employee assistance program, getting out and moving, knowing one’s numbers (blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar, etc.) and what they mean. Wellness is all this and more. The kick off challenge was well attended by the employees. The various components of the challenge will continue for the next five months, ending with approximately 27 prize drawings ranging from \$75 to \$300.
  - c. Dietary Department: The Assistant Dietary Manager resigned on February 17. The position has been advertised in a variety of newspapers. The focus is to hire a well-qualified individual keeping in mind that the Dietary Manager will be retiring later this year.

- d. Maintenance: The parking lot light pole is not working. Ray's Electric has assessed the issue and the problem is somewhere underground between the facility and the pole. There will be no excavation at this time of year. PSNH will be placing a light on the telephone pole at the facility entrance; the light will be 1,000 watt. The facility will be charged \$80 per month for the light; this charge may be less than the cost of the parking lot lights that are currently not working.
  - e. Health Education Fair 2011: The Health Ed fair was held on March 15. Fire Safety, Resident Rights and Infection Control were reviewed. David Witham, Risk Management Consultant for Primex<sup>3</sup> was also on hand to review "Slips, Trips and Falls".
  - f. 5 Star Rating: On February 1, the Nursing Home was notified by CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) of its 5 Star Overall Quality rating. A few days later Louise was notified of the Nursing Home's number 2 ranking in New Hampshire for the U.S. News Best Nursing Homes 2011. The Nursing Home's **consistent** five star ratings over the past several years have contributed to its recognition by U.S. News and World Report.
8. Other Business:
- a. Bids on Tax Anticipation Notes: County Treasurer Fred King reported that he had received two replies to his request for bids. Laconia Savings Bank, borrowing \$8 million as needed with a rate of 1.9% and Passumpsic Savings Bank, borrowing \$8 million as needed with a rate of 1.87%.
- Mr. King stated that Laconia Savings Bank is set up to electronically transfer funds when needed. Passumpsic Savings Bank does not have the capability to do so. Mr. King would need to drive to the bank make a transfer to Northway Bank. Last year, Mr. King had signed a few withdrawal slips and Passumpsic would walk to Northway Bank and make the deposit. In his opinion it is a security issue. Commissioner Judd stated the Board would go with the County Treasurer's recommendation. Jennifer Fish stated that it is very risky to have signed withdrawal slips. If the maximum amount were borrowed in 2011 there would be a difference of \$2,400 more for the Laconia Savings bid. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to award the bid to Laconia Savings Bank for tax anticipation notes. All approved 3-0.
- b. Follow-up to 2011 Budget Meeting: Sue reported a few changes were made to the budget. Commissioner Judd expressed his dismay with the farm closing.
9. Unincorporated Places:
- a. Approval of 2011 Contract for the General Assessing Services for the Unincorporated Places - Commerford Nieder Perkins. Linda reviewed the terms of the contract: \$5,400 flat rate for 50 parcels, anything over the 50-parcel count will be assessed at \$64 per parcel; hourly assessing work, including but not limited to, current use penalties, current use assessments, gravel pit assessments, local level tax appeals and any other assessing function determined by the Contractor will be performed at an hourly rate of \$88. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the 2011 contract for General Assessing Services in the Unincorporated Places for Commerford Nieder and Perkins. All approved 3-0. The Board signed the contract.
  - b. Approval of 2011 Tax Map Maintenance Contracts - Cartographic Associates, Inc. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve

the 2011 contract for map maintenance and updates in the Unincorporated Places. All approved 3-0. The Board signed the contract.

- c. MS-2 Report of Appropriations Voted on and MS-22 Report of Appropriations Voted for School District. The Board signed all forms as requested.
- d. Geographic Names Board: Machia Brook. Mr. King asked what the qualifications were to be on the Board of Geographic names. Sue did not know. Mr. King also asked why the Commissioners had to approve these names and why was the Federal Government naming brooks in Coös County. Sue read information from the forms provided. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the name Machia Brook. All approved 3-0.
- e. Geographic Names Board: Agiocochook Crag - Thompson & Meserve's Purchase. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the name Agiocochook Crag - Thompson & Meserve's Purchase. All approved 3-0.

Commissioner Judd signed the forms for both on behalf of the Board.

Chief Deputy Roberge presented the USDA forest patrol contracts for the Sheriff's Department. He reported that the funds had decreased from \$15,000 to \$7,500. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commission Brady to authorize the Chair to sign on behalf of the Board. All approved 3-0.

10. Any other public input:

Edith Tucker, The Coös County Democrat asked for clarification on the bank security issue. Sue explained that a password token is involved when transferring money online. An electronic security system is in place.

A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Grenier that a letter be sent to the Governor and appropriate committees to request that the rest areas remain open based on the Delegation's motion on March 13. All approved 3-0. Commissioner Judd will sign the letter.

11. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to enter into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II (a) (d) and RSA 91-A:3 III (b) at 11:00 a.m. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to come out of non-public session at 11:40 a.m. All approved 3-0. The following action was taken:

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to terminate a Nursing Hospital employee per the Administrator's recommendation. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to hire a corrections officer off-step. All approved 3-0.

The next regular monthly meeting will be held April 20, 2011 at the Coös County Courthouse in the Grand Jury in Lancaster at 9:00 a.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Grenier to adjourn the meeting at 11:40 a.m. All approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas M. Brady, Clerk