

Coös County Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Meeting held remotely in accordance with the
Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04,
April 8, 2020

As Chair of the Coös County Commissioners, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting. All members of the Coös County Commissioners have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone # 1-646-558-8656 and meeting ID # 863 716 807, or by clicking on the following website address: www.zoom.us/join

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom or telephonically. Instructions have also been provided on the website of the Coös County Commissioners at: www.cooscountynh.us

If anybody has a problem, please call 246-3321 Ext. 1262 or email at: jennifer.fish@cooscountynh.us

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled. Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law.

The following individuals were in attendance remotely: Commissioners Tom Brady, Paul Grenier and Rick Samson; County Administrator Jennifer Fish; Director of Finance Carrie Klebe; Superintendent Ben Champagne; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Nursing Home Administrator Lynn Beede; HR Coordinator Julie Brunault; Sheriff Brian Valerino; Captain Keith Roberge; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris; and a member of the press.

1. Commissioner Brady opened the Commissioners' meeting at 9:05 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Approval of the Agenda: A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the agenda, as presented. The motion was approved by roll call 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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3. Approval of the Minutes from the March 11, 2020, regular meeting, as presented: HR Coordinator Julie Brunault requested that a section of her report on page 8, item 12 d. be amended as she had not completed the sentence prior to submitting the report.

d. Reason for separation/Change of Status

10 did not meet job requirements (*employees who previously resigned and requested to remain on as "Temps"*)

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to amend the minutes of the March 11, 2020, regular meeting. The motion was approved by roll call 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the amended minutes of the March 11, 2020, regular meeting. The motion was approved by roll call 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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4. Approval of Payrolls and Disbursements: A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the Payrolls and Disbursements for the month of March and to authorize the Treasurer, during the month April, to meet all payroll obligations and pay all other obligations due during the month. The motion was approved by roll call 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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5. Correspondence: There was no correspondence to report.

6. Hearing of the Public: There was no public comment.

7. Report of the County Administrator Jennifer Fish. The written report that was submitted to the Board in advance of the meeting was as follows:

- a. The final renewal rates from NH Interlocal Trust for the county's health insurance plans effective July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021 were received. There will be a 12.35% increase in premiums. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the the renewal rates from NH Interlocal Trust effective July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021 with an increase of 12.35% in premiums. The motion was approved by roll call 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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- b. The renewal rate for the Health Trust plan for the SEA employees effective July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021 was also received. There will be a .9% increase in premiums. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the renewal rates from the Health Trust plan for the SEA employees effective July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021 with a .9% increase in premiums. The motion was approved by roll call 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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Superintendent Champagne requested a discussion with the Board to allow non-union employees to enroll in the Health Trust insurance plan. Commissioner Grenier noted that the plan allowed a minimum of 50 people. He asked how many people were currently enrolled. The HR Coordinator replied 11 SEA union members. Commissioner Grenier stated that this plan offers a huge cost savings and why not offer the plan to upper management. The County Administrator suggested that the plan be offered to the Department of Corrections to include the superintendent, sergeants, corporals and DOC nursing staff. Superintendent Champagne inquired if the members of the Sheriff's Department could qualify and take advantage of the savings. Captain Keith Roberge stated that he definitely was interested. HR Coordinator Julie Brunault stated that she would forward plan information to him to review before agreeing to the plan as there are differences in the plans. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to allow employees of the Department of Corrections and the Sheriff's Department to enroll in the health insurance plan currently offered to the SEA. The motion was approved by roll call 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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- c. Wage Schedules: The non-union wage schedules have been updated to include a 1.5% cost of living increase for all positions. The licensed nursing staff positions have been increased \$1.00 per hour. The SEA wage schedule has been updated to include a 2.0% cost of living increase. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the updated wage salary schedules. The motion was approved by roll call 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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- d. The County Administrator has worked with SNS to set-up the County Administration and County Finance employees to be able to have remote access to the their work computers.
- e. NH Association of Counties: The county administrators will be having a teleconference with representatives from FEMA and NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Ms. Fish is hoping that the counties will receive more guidance on eligibility of grants and assistance.
- f. The notice from the State of NH Department Education regarding National Forest Reserve Funds was received. The unincorporated places will receive \$104,936.39 for education in Coös County. The 2019 amount received was \$107,207.06.

Ms. Fish reported that she has contacted SAU20 to obtain tuition information for the students from Millsfield attending Errol Consolidated School. In the past, the NFR funds have been used to pay for the tuition of the Unincorporated Places students and any remaining amount was distributed equally among the school districts in the county. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to recommend to the Delegation that the National Forest Reserve Funds be appropriated to fund the tuition for the students in the Unincorporated Places and any remaining monies be distributed equally among the school districts, as has been done in the past. The motion was approved by roll call 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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8. Report of the Superintendent of Corrections Ben Champagne. The written report that was submitted to the Board in advance of the meeting was as follows:

TOTAL IN FACILITY	22
HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS	9
PRETRIAL	13
NH STATE PRISON INMATES	2
OTHER COUNTY INMATES	3
ELECTRONIC MONITORING PROGRAM	0
WORK RELEASE PROGRAM	0
FURLOUGH	0
HELD AT OTHER FACILITIES HOC= HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS PT= PRETRIAL	GRAFTON DOC: 2 HOC FEMALE HILLSBOROUGH DOC: 1 PT MALE NHSP: 1 PT MALE
AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION MARCH	22
MALE DAYS SERVED IN FACILITY MARCH	682
FEMALE DAYS SERVED MARCH	153 (11 females)
FEDERAL INMATE DAYS SERVED MARCH	0
TOTAL INMATES BOOKED MARCH	17
TOTAL INMATES RELEASED MARCH	24

- a. The department has been very busy over the last month. There have been several in-house meetings to determine what the most effective, practical and achievable steps would be to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. The DOC is restricting all non-essential personnel from the facility. All staff or necessary personnel are screened for fevers before entering the facility. On March 18, 2020, the Superintendent made the decision to house the entire general population of sentenced and pretrial inmates separate from all incoming new inmates. All sentenced inmates are being housed in the Unit #2 Dorm and all pretrial inmates (admitted before 3/18/20) in the Unit #1 Dorm. This allows the DOC to keep all incoming inmates separate from the rest of the population. These inmates if asymptomatic will be monitored for 14 days before they can be moved in with the rest of the general population. There are two housing units that are designated for anyone that is symptomatic that must be isolated. The Superintendent has written a Pandemic Preparedness policy that was previously forwarded to the Coös County Commissioners. Official approval of that policy was requested. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has been challenging to get and continues to be a daily task of procurement attempts. Staff has been fortunate with what they have at this point; however, they fully acknowledge that the long road ahead and PPE will become scarce.
- b. The Superintendent began a discussion regarding contingency plans and get input on thoughts of using the county house as a place for staff to shower, eat, sleep and launder clothing in the event they are forced to go to two- 12 hour shifts or short term call backs. This is a widely circulated topic of discussion as we could have the potential for significant staff shortages. The Superintendent proposed placing cots/ linens and make the basic necessities available to allow all county staff the ability to utilize this if absolutely necessary in a last resort situation. Another part of his reasoning was based on the fact that not all staff live local. This would reduce the burden and exhaustion related to returning to work after a short time.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the Pandemic Preparedness Policy and the use of the county house contingency plan. Commissioner Samson inquired if the Board was still considering moving the county employees to the county house. Commissioner Grenier replied that would be discussed at a later date. The motion was approved by roll call 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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c. The Superintendent requested a non-meeting.

9. 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 was 74. The occupancy for the month of March was 89.4% based on a bed count of 85. In March, there was one (1) admission, no discharges and three (3) deaths.

Staff is currently working on six (6) admissions who are currently holding at home for as long as they can but may need to come in before operations return to normal.

Of the 74 residents, eleven (11) were Private Pay, nine (9) residents were Vermont Medicaid, five (5) residents were Medicaid Pending, (three for NH and two for VT.) In many instances, residents are dying while on Medicaid Pending. Once they die, the state closes the case without paying. The Social Services Director and Resident Accounts have scheduled monthly telephone meetings with NH Medicaid to work through these cases. It continues to be a struggle. The NH Medicaid offices are overworked, understaffed, and disorganized. Resident Accounts and Social Services continue putting many hours in every week attempting to get the backlog of issues corrected. Totals for 2020: Four (4) admissions, nine (9) deaths, and one (1) discharge.

At the meeting, Ms. Mills reported that she has been hesitant about taking admissions. However, there are people in the community who are desperate. There is a possibility of three admissions from home over the upcoming week. All individuals have been secluded at home.

b. Staffing:

The Nursing Department has 120 hours open for RN/LPN (3 FTE). Two (2) contract LPNs are covering the hours. One 32-hour RN is on Medical Leave.

The Nursing Department has 364 open LNA hours (9.1 FTE). One 32-hour LNA and one 36-hour LNA are out on Workers Comp and one on FMLA. Six contract LNAs are covering some of the hours.

c. LNA and MNA Classes: The Nursing Hospital's 4th High School LNA Class is on hold due to Covid-19. Hopefully it will be completed once operations are back to normal. It is hoped to run another MNA Class early this spring.

d. IT: Many IT issues continue to be worked through with SNS and printer issues with Porter Office.

e. Facility Issues:

- Work on switching the sprinkler system over to W. Stewartstown water is on hold.
- Staff is currently working on installing a shower to be used by staff.
- The facility is set up to have an isolation unit in the Family Room for an initial COVID, if there was one to possibly prevent further spread to others.

f. QAPI: Staff continues to make progress on the QAPI Plan for the new regulations and continues to work on the PIPs for SBAR, Communication and making the admissions process smoother.

- g. Family/Resident/Staff Concerns: No Ombudsman Reports were filed in March.
- h. Coronavirus/Influenza: The Nursing Hospital continues to be closed to visitors except under very specific circumstances. We have not had to allow in any visitors at this point. Residents and staff continue to be monitored daily for symptoms of illness. The facility remains at an elevated level of alert.

There continues to be a need of PPE. There just is not enough to go around. The Nursing Hospital is on the list with many companies to receive whatever they can get us.

COVID-19 is ruling our lives right now.

Administration is working on processes for remote access. This is essential as, if/when there is a positive case, all non-essential (especially non-nursing home employees) will need to be out of the building.

- i. Dentist: The search continues for replacement dental services for our residents. Currently residents are not seen by a dentist except for emergencies due to Covid 19.
- j. Committee Reports:
 - NHAC Executive Committee: attended the meeting on March 6, 2020.
 - NHAC Nursing Home Affiliate: attended the meeting on March 12 by telephone conference. Nursing Home Administrators are meeting weekly via conference call during the Covid-19 Pandemic.
 - Workforce Development: No new meetings have been set.
 - UCVH Board of Directors: attended the March 26 meeting via telephone conference.
- k. Nursing Hours at the Department of Corrections:

	2019	2020
	Minutes	Minutes
January	59	2
February	5	69
March	53	155
April	1	

- l. The Nursing Hospital Administrator requested a non-public session RSA 91-A:3 II (c).

10. Report of the Berlin Nursing Home Administrator Lynn Beede. The written report that was submitted to the Board in advance of the meeting was as follows:

- a. Census: The current census was 93; Private Pay 15; Medicaid Pending 3; and Hospice 2. The average daily census for March was 95.3; Admissions 5; Deaths 2; Discharges 4. The year to date average daily census was 95.
- b. Nursing Shortage: Open positions increased for both: RN/LPN 13.3 FTEs; LNA 25.3 FTEs. Agency contracts are filling some of the open hours.

- c. LNA Program: The Nursing Home will be utilizing the NH Caregiver Career Program (NHCCP) to recruit LNAs. CCNH-Berlin Training Program is pending completion for submission.
 - d. QAPI: Process improvement projects, to include: COVID-19; Family Communication; Weight Loss; State Mandated Reports – *three*; Medications; Exit Interviews; Music and Memory Program; Wheelchairs; Antibiotic Stewardship; Care Planning; Employee Retention – *CMS Employee Satisfaction Survey implemented- results to be presented April's meeting*; Dementia Training.
 - e. COVID-19: DHHS Health Alert #11. The Nursing Home is taking donations of community masks. Two employees who are seamstresses will be assigned to sew community masks for staff and residents. A wing has been established should a quarantine area be required. Staff continues all same meetings, with a newly added breakout meeting for SNF/Long-Term Care with Dr. Talbot, Dr. Chan, Elizabeth Daly, Taylor Selembo from DPHS, our Medical Director and rounding providers will be attending as well. Supplies continue to trickle in, which is very concerning. AVH donated 2 boxes of XL gloves as the Nursing Home was out. AVH has loaned the facility a fit-test hood, Connie has now fit 38 staff, which should hopefully see us through. Should W. Stewartstown obtain a hood and solution, our IP has volunteered to fit-test the Nursing Hospital and Correction employees.
 - f. Residents: All staff are going above and beyond to keep residents active in their rooms, for example offering “tele-bingo” with disposable paper sheets. Families and medical providers are utilizing video conferencing, Skype, FaceTime, etc. to keep connected with residents.
 - g. Budget/Financials/Payroll: Payroll teleconference with Carrie Klebe - next meeting pending. BMSI software updates pending for new weighted overtime calculation. Two-year lookback in process for Bonus OT calculations.
 - h. Dietary Department Food Steamer/Kettle has arrived. Installation is pending.
 - i. The Nursing Home Administrator requested a Non-Public: Three concerns to discuss, per Title VI, Chapter 91-A:3 II (c).
 - k. Meetings/Committee Reports:
 - NHAC Nursing Home Affiliate: Next meeting April 9, 2020 at 10 a.m.
 - Executive Committee unable to attend the March 6 meeting.
 - AVH Extended Care Meeting: 3/17/20
 - NHAC HR Affiliate: Danielle Rioux attending, requesting teleconference, connected via email.
 - NHAC Billing Affiliate: Vicky Nason and Jane Ryan attending 4/24/20 at Merrimack County, they are seeking teleconference.
11. Report of the Director of Finance Carrie Klebe. The written report that was submitted to the Board in advance of the meeting was as follows:
- a. The department is currently working on software and solutions that will allow the Finance Department to be able to work remotely if necessary. There is a long ways to go to make this possible, but it is not impossible:

- Beginning a web-based Purchase Order System so all department heads will be able to access and have a system to scan invoices.
 - Working with SNS for remote access to desktops.
 - Working with Electronic signature software for Commissioners to sign Manifests and DRA MS-forms.
 - Working with SNS to make available payroll direct deposit advices to employees by email.
 - Working with Smartlinx to upgrade our current system to allow an employee portal
- b. Staff is currently working with Steven McKinney, the Community Outreach & Resource Planning Specialist for the US Department of Labor. He is helping to navigate thru the DOL rules and to keep the County in compliance with all the regulations.
- c. The firm Vachon Clukay & Company PC is still working on the financials for the 2019 Financial Audit. Staff is also working with Actuary for the 2019 valuation needed for the audit.
- d. In regards to the issue with Bangor Savings Bank and Passumpsic Bank not being in compliance with the NH State Statute. This has become a bill, HB 1119, which is currently in the Senate. There seems to be good support for this bill, so we are hopeful it will move forward. We are continuing to use Bangor Savings Bank in Colebrook and Passumpsic Bank in Lancaster.
- e. NH Government Finance Officers Association: The April Executive Committee meeting was cancelled. The Annual NHGFOA conference in Conway on May 7 & 8 has been postponed until the end of October.
- f. The Primex³ Emerging Leaders program has been postponed. It was supposed to begin April 20 and has been moved to June 2 & 3.
12. Report of the HR Coordinator Julie Brunault. The written report that was submitted to the Board in advance of the meeting was as follows:

HR Activity Report: 3/01/2020 – 3/31/2020

a. New Hires: 5

Department:	#	Positions
Nursing Hospital	4 (PT)	RN, LNA's
County	1 (FT)	Corr. Officer

b. Separations: 3

Department:	#	
Nursing Home	1 (PT)	RN
Nursing Hospital	2 (PT)	LNA's

c. Change in Status: 1

Department:	#	
Nursing Hospital	1 (PT)	DA

d. Reasons for separation/ Change of status:
2 new employment

1 personal
1 relocated

e. FMLA/Leave of absences/ADA/WC:

Nursing Home 10
Nursing Hospital 5

- f. Due to COVID 19 as of today non-nursing home employees located in West Stewartstown will be working remotely from home. Jennifer Fish, Laura Mills, Carrie Klebe and the HR Coordinator met on Monday, April 6, 2020, to streamline a plan to ensure continuity of service. The Registry of Deeds, the County Attorney and the Coös County Soil Conservation also have some of their employees working remotely from home.
- g. With the emerging health crisis associated with Corona virus and the announcement of the State of Emergency by Governor Sununu, Coös County has taken and will continue to take the appropriate steps to protect employee health and safety and to comply with federal and state laws. A "Temporary Travel and Leave Policy" was approved by the commissioners on March 18, 2020, and distributed to all employees. On April 1, 2020, the federal government enacted the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), which required adjustments in how County leave policies were administered. The "Coös County Emergent Protocol" was created and approved by the commissioners. This was distributed to all employees.
- h. The HR Coordinator has been working with Darrel Covell, UNH Director of Finances, Administration and Facilities, to transfer the Coös County Extension Office employees to UNH employees. The effective date will be April 20, 2020, this will ensure no lapse in benefit coverage for the employees.
- i. Open enrollment for all benefits will begin in a few weeks. This year all benefit enrollments will be done remotely with vendors.

13. Commissioners' Committee Reports: There were no committee reports.

14. Other Business:

- a. Budget Transfers: The following line item budget transfers were presented to the Board.

Coös County Nursing Hospital:

To:	01-05140-2300 Contract Nursing	\$200,000.00	
From:	01-05140-1200 Nursing Health Insurance		\$200,000.00

Coös County Nursing Home:

To:	02-05640-2300 Contract Nursing	600,000.00	
From:	02-05640-0200 RN Salaries		600,000.00

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the line item budget transfers for the Nursing Hospital and Nursing Home. The motion was approved by roll call 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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15. Unincorporated Places: There was no business to discuss.

16. Any Other Public Input:

- a. Superintendent Champagne brought up his previous request that the Department of Corrections non-union employees receive the same weekend shift differentials as the union employees. Commissioner Grenier replied that the request would be discussed at the next meeting.
- b. Sheriff Brian Valerino reported that the Sheriff's Department is continuing its patrols and residents will continue to see the Sheriff's Department. Anyone needing assistance may contact the Sheriff's Office.

The Sheriff also noted that once the stay at home order is lifted the department will be inundated with transports.

17. Prior to entering non-public session, Commissioner Grenier stated that the Superintendent's non-meeting request could not be granted as collective bargaining agreement was in place. He stated that the discussion would be held under RSA 91-A:3, II (a).

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to enter into non-public sessions per RSA 91-A:3, II (c) and RSA 91-A:3, 2(a) at 10:30 a.m. The motion was approved by roll call 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to come out of non-public sessions at 11:00 a.m. The motion was approved by roll call 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to seal the minutes of all non-public sessions indefinitely. The motion was approved by roll call 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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The May meeting is currently scheduled to be held May 13, 2020 at the North Country Resource Center in Lancaster, NH beginning at 9:00 a.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to adjourn the meeting at 11:13 a.m. The motion was approved by roll call 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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Respectfully submitted,

Commissioner Rick Samson, Clerk