

Coös County Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Meeting held remotely in accordance with the  
Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04,  
June 10, 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 # 886 8298 8436, or by clicking on the following website address: [www.zoom.us/join](http://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](http://www.cooscountynh.us)

If anybody has a problem, please call 246-3321 Ext. 1262 or email at: [jennifer.fish@cooscountynh.us](mailto: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 also 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; Captain Keith Roberge; HR Coordinator Julie Brunault; Representative Erin Hennessey; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris.

Commissioner Brady opened the Commissioners' meeting at 9:06 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. 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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2. Approval of the Minutes from the May 29, 2020, special meeting, as presented: The minutes of the May 29, 2020, special meeting were approved at the June 5, 2020 special meeting.

3. 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 May and to authorize the Treasurer, during the month June, 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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4. Correspondence: There was no correspondence.

5. Hearing of the Public:

- a. Commissioner Grenier reported that after the June 5 meeting he had contacted Scott Mason to have a discussion on the funds earmarked for Coös County. He provided him with the history of the house to date. He also mentioned that the Board had a placeholder in the budget to renovate the house for county offices contingent on grant funding. The grant funding was unsuccessful and the Board removed the placeholder from the proposed budget in February. At the March budget meeting the Delegation reinstated the placeholder for the house due to COVID19.

The CDC guidelines require an isolation room for COVID19. The senior staff and commissioners have come to the realization that funds should be used for the purpose of renovating the house into office space for nonessential county employees.

Representative Hennessey asked if the Board was asking for additional funding. Commissioner Grenier replied that it would be helpful to advocate CARE Act funding plus shortfall of allowable costs in order to move nonessential employees and set up an isolation room.

Representative Hennessey asked if the payroll taxes were being funded. Commissioner Grenier replied that a supplemental budget was held for the cost of payroll taxes. Commissioner Grenier asked Laura Mills to email the CDC guidelines regarding the isolation unit to Representative Hennessey.

6. Report of the County Administrator Jennifer Fish. A report was not submitted to the Board prior to the meeting.

- a. The County Administrator reported that she was waiting for an updated proposal for the demolition of the reservoir and sprinkler system. She did not think that there would be sufficient funds.

Superintendent Champagne asked if there was an update on the repairs of the parking lot by Sicard. Ms. Fish replied that it was part of the final list. Commissioner Grenier stated that all items on the punch list must be completed before final payment.

- b. A Planning Board meeting is scheduled for June 17, 2020.

7. *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:

<b>TOTAL IN FACILITY</b>	<b>19</b>
HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS	7
PRETRIAL	12
NH STATE PRISON INMATES	2
OTHER COUNTY INMATES	2
ELECTRONIC MONITORING PROGRAM	0
WORK RELEASE PROGRAM	0
FURLOUGH	0
HELD AT OTHER FACILITIES HOC= HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS PT= PRETRIAL	GRAFTON DOC: 1 HOC FEMALE, 1 PT FEMALE HILLSBOROUGH DOC: 1 PT MALE
AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION MAY	20
MALE DAYS SERVED IN FACILITY MAY	620
FEMALE DAYS SERVED MAY	71 (6 females)
FEDERAL INMATE DAYS SERVED MAY	0
TOTAL INMATES BOOKED MAY	16
TOTAL INMATES RELEASED MAY	21

- a. Superintendent Champagne reported that he had previously emailed the loan proposals in the amount \$105,303 for the 2021 Freightliner-Recycling truck to the Board of Commissioners for review. Three bids were received:

Union Bank	1.75%
Northway Bank	1.85%
Passumpsic Bank	1.57%

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to award the loan to Passumpsic Bank in the amount of \$105,303 at a fixed rate of 1.57% with term of two years. The motion was approved by roll call.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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- b. The Department of Corrections received its Microsoft Surface Pro tablet and it has been forwarded to SNS for set up.
- c. On May 30, 2020 at approximately 8:27 p.m., Charles Merrow 43 of Lancaster, NH, an inmate at the Coös County Correctional Facility was discovered hanging in a cell. Correctional officers began emergency medical treatment which continued until 45<sup>th</sup> Parallel EMS personnel arrived at 8:36 p.m. Emergency personnel attempted life saving measures until 9:02, at which time he was pronounced dead. Mr. Merrow was being held at the Coös County Department of Corrections on an order of preventative detention issued by the Coös County Superior Court. New Hampshire State Police and corrections officials are investigating. An autopsy will be scheduled.

Commissioner Samson asked the Chair if the Delegation had been notified of the incident. Commissioner Brady replied that he had not. Commissioner Samson asked if an “in-person” nonpublic session would be held to discuss the incident. Commissioner Brady replied that the

matter is under police investigation and could not be discussed. Commissioner Grenier stated that if the state police report is made public the incident cannot be discussed in nonpublic.

- d. Superintendent Champagne inquired about the status of the First Responder COVID-19 Stipend Program. The County Administrator reported that she had spoken with Representative Moynihan regarding a supplemental budget. She was waiting for an answer.
- e. A Non-Public Session was requested under RSA 91-A:3, II (a) & RSA 91-A:3, II (g).

8. 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 80. Occupancy for the month of May was 93.8% based on a bed count of 85. In May, there was one (1) admission, no discharges and one (1) death. One (1) admission was being worked on.

Of the 80 residents, sixteen (16) were Private Pay and eleven (11) residents were Vermont Medicaid. Due to COVID, the Medicaid Pending for Vermont has been “temporarily approved” and will be looked at more closely once the State of Emergency has ended.  
Totals for 2020: Eleven (11) admissions, ten (10) deaths, and one (1) discharge.

- b. Staffing: The Nursing Department has 152 hours open for RN/LPN (3.8 FTE). Two contract LPNs are covering some of the hours. There are 532 open LNA hours (13.3 FTE). One 32 hour LNA is out on Workers Comp. Three contract LNAs, many temps and many current staff, taking advantage of the incentive pay for picking up additional hours, are covering some of the open hours. Two additional contract LNAs are being looked at. The facility is also working on implementing the Temporary Health Partners.
- c. LNA Classes: The 4<sup>th</sup> High School LNA Class is in the process of being completed. All four students in the first half passed their exams and are now LNAs. The second group of four will test on June 8. *At the meeting, Ms. Mills announced that the four students had passed their Boards and were now LNAs.*
- d. IT: Staff continues working through many IT issues with SNS.
- e. Facility Issues:
  - The work on switching the sprinkler system over to W. Stewartstown water is on hold.
  - The nursing hospital is set up to have an isolation unit in the Family Room for an initial COVID, if there is one, to possibly prevent further spread to others.
  - Work is almost complete on closing in the old Employee Entrance area.
- f. QAPI: Staff continues to make progress on QAPI Plan. Staff continues to work on the PIPs for SBAR and Communication and for making the admissions process smoother. COVID preparations have also been included into the process.
- g. Request to Donate Time: Ms. Mills presented a request for employees to donate time to a co-worker. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to

allow the donation of time for a nursing hospital employee. The motion was approved by roll call.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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- h. Family/Resident/Staff Concerns: One Ombudsman Report was filed in May.
- i. COVID-19: The Nursing Hospital continues to be closed to visitors except under very specific circumstances. The Nursing Hospital remains at an elevated level of alert. Letters are mailed out weekly to families to keep them informed of the status.

Ms. Mills continues to hold open meetings with staff every Wednesday afternoon to share new information and answer any questions and concerns they may have. Information for the EAP is provided as well. The Facebook page is working well to keep resident families, friends and staff connected and informed.

Acquiring some PPE and disinfecting supplies continues to be a challenge, but staff is seeing some light at the end of that tunnel. The Nursing Hospital received 8,000 more masks and 2,000 gowns.

All residents were tested on May 23, 2020 and all were negative. A date has not been given to begin the surveillance testing of 10% of our resident every 10 days. Staff testing was held on June 3, 2020. One hundred seventy-seven (177) employees were tested. That total included eight (8) from Corrections, the Physician's Assistant, and five (5) contract nurses. Six (6) employees had already made arrangements to test elsewhere. Five (5) temps did not test as they do not intend to work until after the pandemic is over, but will test if they change their minds and decide to work. One employee refused the day of testing but was tested the following day. Only three (3) employees were unable to attend on Wednesday but will be tested prior to their next shift to work. Surveillance testing of all staff will begin in the next two weeks.

The Nursing Hospital has been receiving the stipends from the Long Term Care Stabilization Program regularly. The program also added contract staff to the eligible list beginning the week of May 17. The names will be submitted as soon as the completed W9s are received so the county is not responsible for the taxes on those stipends.

The nursing hospital received its four iPADS and an iPad Mini.

- j. Committee Reports:
  - NHAC Executive Committee: attending the regular Zoom Meetings.
  - NHAC Nursing Home Affiliate: meeting weekly via conference call and Zoom during the Covid-19 Pandemic.
  - Workforce Development: the next meeting will be a Zoom Meeting on June 9.
  - UCVH Board of Directors: attended the May 28 meeting via Zoom Meeting.
- k. Nursing Hours at the Department of Corrections:

	2019	2020
	Minutes	Minutes
January	59	2
February	5	69
March	53	155
April	1	41
May	1	55

I. Ms. Mills requested non-public sessions under RSA 91-A:3 II (a), (c), and (e).

9. 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 90; Private Pay 17; Medicaid Pending 2; SNF: 3 and Hospice 1. Average daily census for April was 89.9; Admissions 5; Deaths 3; Discharges 3. Year to date average daily census 93.
- b. Nursing Shortage: Open positions remain the same for both: RN/LPN 14.2 FTEs; LNA open positions have increased to 27.5 FTEs. Agency contracts fill some of the open hours. Two employees have completed the on-line training for Temporary Health Worker, one in Dietary Department and one Unit Aide. LNA Program: the Nursing Home is currently advertising for students and have five signed up so far with another completing an application for employment today.
- c. QAPI: Process improvement projects, to include: COVID-19 IC Focused Survey Pending; Family Communication; Weight Loss; State Mandated Reports – one; Medications; Exit Interviews; Music and Memory Program; Wheelchairs; Antibiotic Stewardship; Care Planning; Employee Retention; Dementia Training.
- d. COVID-19: DHHS Health Alert #17 was focused on individuals <21 years old and does not currently pertain to resident population. An isolation wing has been established with a census of one (1) for quarantine following a procedure. The nursing home continues to order PPE/cleaning supplies first through regular vendors, however, supplies such as masks are at an increased cost price and still not able to “place in cart” for purchase; gowns have been ordered, but still pending processing only able to receive 25 - the nursing home did receive a large quantity from the State supply; booties and head coverings have still not arrived – ordered on April 15. Gloves are being received weekly, in a supply for what our average use was prior to COVID-19. The nursing home continues to limit outside employment. Weekly communication is being sent via email and/or letters to keep families informed of the status. On 5/22/20, 100% of residents were tested and on 6/3/20 100% of employees, contracted staff and rounding providers were tested – all were negative.
- e. Residents: The nursing home continues with hands on deck approach, business office staff are taking turns to make safety rounds and spending time with residents as needed, all departments are helping to staff the entrance/screening. Families and medical providers are utilizing video conferencing to keep connected with residents. Residents are completing a Resident Survey individually with the results forwarded to the Resident Council President and Vice President for review of issues that need to be resolved. The gardens are planted and the water fountains are flowing. Residents helped to plant the raised gardens and flower pots and continue to help with

the maintenance and care of the plants. Therapeutic music with Angela Brown via FaceTime is offered on Tuesday and Thursday, she provides outside interaction, stress relief, healing, calming, and one on one interaction. Cook outs are being held once a month for residents to enjoy at lunch time in their rooms.

- f. Budget/Financials/Payroll: The next payroll teleconference with Carrie via Zoom is on 6/12/2020 at 10am for 2-year lookback of weighted OT and BMSI software updates. The nursing home has received three CARES Act payments: On 4/17/20 received \$102,450.10; on 4/24/20 received \$74,457.24; and, on 5/22/20 received \$300,000; On 5/3/20 Vicky, Lynn and Carrie held a teleconference to complete the revenue portion of the CARES Act requirement in order for the nursing home to be eligible for future CARES Act funding. NH Employment Security for LTCs payments expanded on 5/17/20 to allow contract workers the frontline caregiver incentive. Medicaid Case Mix Index: 1.0145, rate pending; preliminary Medicaid Rate is \$182.94 + 3.1%. (January 2020 was \$174.07 + 3.1% = 179.47). April 2020 Medicaid Arrears is \$146,857.44.
  - g. Dietary Department Food Steamer/Kettle: The kettle is pending an electrician to connect wiring.
  - h. Request for Non-Public: One concern to discuss, per Title VI, Chapter 91-A:3 II (c).
  - i. Building Repairs/Maintenance: Scheduled for paving on 5/22/2020; will be moving smoking area and waste container to the Cates Hill parking lot that week. Running of cable for IT upgrade - fiberoptic cable anticipated sometime before October. Company still needs to negotiate with Eversource to attach cable on their poles. "Jim" is scheduled this Thursday to tour building to get set up to run new computer cable through the building. Fence repairs are ongoing – parts have been ordered.
  - j. Meetings/Committee Reports:
    - NHAC Nursing Home Affiliate, DHHS, and AV Workgroup: weekly meetings.
    - Executive Committee: attended in May.
    - AVH Extended Care Meeting: teleconference in March, next meeting June 16 at 10 am.
    - NHAC HR Affiliate: Danielle Rioux attending, requesting teleconference, connected via email.
    - NHAC Billing Affiliate: Vicky Nason and Jane Ryan last attended September 2019; cancelled in January 2020 as well as April 2020. Next meeting TBD.
    - North Country Health Care Workforce Meeting: attended in May via Zoom.
10. 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 Director of Finance reported that she had forwarded to the Board the report provided by the North Country Health Care Consortium in regards to IDN 7 funding for Coos County. A representative from the IDN should be joining the July meeting.
  - b. On May 15, the annual payments were received for the Unincorporated Places lands under the administration of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The total amount to be received will be \$6,596. The share of the payment for Cambridge is \$5,206 and Wentworth Location is \$2,402.

- c. On May 28, the payments from the State of NH for the reimbursement of Forest Land in the Unincorporated Places were received. The amounts received were \$29.00 for Dixville, \$59.89 for Wentworth Location and \$1,570.35 for Odell.
  - d. As of June 5, the county had drawn \$2,500,000 from the Tax Anticipation Note line of credit. As of June 12, 2019, the county had drawn \$4,300,000.
  - e. The Finance Director reported that remote work for the finance department is going well. Team members Rose and Michele are working a mix of home and at the WSNH, due to check stock for payroll and accounts payable. The Director of Finance is completely working from home. The department has been working on procedures to make this possible and she felt it is going well, working thru the hiccups. As of this week, each employee has a County cell phone so they can be reached for work at home or in the office. She felt this was more appropriate than using home/personal phones for county work.
  - f. The department 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. The Finance Director was hoping to have updated policies and procedures for the meeting, but with the extra work for payroll to process all the Long Term Care Stabilization payments to employees, the extra time to work on this project has been minimal. Staff will keep working on this and hope to have an update soon.
  - g. Vachon Clukay & Company PC are still working with staff on the financials for the 2019 Financial Audit.
  - h. The North Country Council Commissioner meeting is scheduled for June 24.
  - i. New Hampshire Association of Counties: The Director of Finance is now attending the monthly Executive Committee Meetings and weekly legislative meetings via Zoom.com. She reported that she finds these meetings helpful, especially with all the grants and funding and guidelines that keep changing.
  - j. NH Government Finance Officers Association: the next meeting is slated for week of June 15.
  - k. In regards to the issue with Bangor Savings Bank and Passumpsic Bank not being in compliance with the NH State Statute, the county is waiting for the Senate to take action on this bill. In the meantime, the county continues to use both of these banks for County deposits.
11. 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: 5/01/2020 – 5/31/2020

a. New Hires: 13

Department:	#	Positions
Nursing Hospital	12 (TEMPS)	1 RN, 2 LPN, 2 DA, 5 LNA, 1 HSKP, 1
Main		
County	1 (FT)	Correctional Officer



b. Separations: 5

Department:	#	
Nursing Home	2 (1 FT, 1 PT )	2 LNA's
Nursing Hospital	1 (1 FT)	Maintenance
County	2 (2 FT)	Correctional Officer, CCCD Adm.

c. Change in Status: 1

Department:	#	
Nursing Hospital	1 (FT)	RN

d. Reasons for separation/ Change of status:

- 2 new employment
- 2 terminated attendance & punctuality
- 1 resigned
- 1 retirement

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

Nursing Home	7
Nursing Hospital	3

f. Carolyn McQuiston retired on May 31, 2020, after 30 years of employment with Coös County. Her commitment and dedication to Coös County was greatly appreciated. Ms. McQuiston agreed to remain on temp status in order to train the new employee.

g. On May 29, 2020, interviews for the Coös County District Administrator position were held resulting in a conditional offer of employment offered to Whitney Lewis. Whitney accepted the position and will begin on July 6, 2020.

h. The county is finalizing the open enrollment period for health insurance, dental and vision, AFLAC, New York Life, and the Flexible Saving. The deadline is June 30, 2020.

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

13. Other Business:

a. Budget Transfers: The following budget transfer was approved by the Board:

To:	01-05140-2300 Contract Nurses	200,000.00	
From:	01-05140-1200 Health Insurance		200,000.00

b. GOFERR Grant: The County Administrator reported that she had submitted the first submission on June 1. There has been no feedback.

14. Unincorporated Places:

a. Approval of Timber Tax Warrants: Atkinson/Gilmanton Academy Grant, Dix Grant, Dixville, Millsfield, Success. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the timber warrants for the following Unincorporated Places:

Atkinson & Gilmanton Academy Grant	4,360.00
Dix Grant	77,741.00
Dixville	52,728.00
Millsfield	15,595.00
Success	13,920.00

The motion was approved by roll call.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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- b. Discussion/Action on the 2019 Abatement Requests: Linda Harris reported that she had emailed to the Board the recommendations from the assessor at Commerford Nieder Perkins in regards to the abatement requests received March 1, 2020. The assessor recommended granting the abatement requests to:

Mark & Rachel Eastman / Success  
M&R Cyr Success Camp Family Trust / Success  
Bayroot LLC / Millsfield Pond

Linda Harris reported that she would prepare the abatements/refunds for the Board's approval prior to July 1. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to grant the abatement recommendations from Commerford Nieder Perkins to:

Mark & Rachel Eastman / Success  
M&R Cyr Success Camp Family Trust / Success  
Bayroot LLC / Millsfield Pond

The motion was approved by roll call.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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- c. Discussion/Action on Planning Board Reappointments: Regular Members Edwin Mellett and Rick Tillotson / Alternate Mark Frank. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to recommend to the Delegation the reappointments of regular members Edwin Mellet and Rick Tillotson and alternate Mark Frank to the Planning Board. The motion was approved by roll call.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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15. Any Other Public Input: There was no other public input.

16. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to enter into nonpublic session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a) (c) (e) (g) at 10:09 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 nonpublic session at 10:42 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 indefinitely. The motion was approved by roll call 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier	Yes	Commissioner Samson	Yes	Commissioner Brady	Yes
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The July 8, 2020 meeting will be held remotely beginning at 9:00 a.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to adjourn the meeting at 10:51 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