

Coös County Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Coös County Nursing Home - Berlin, NH
December 17, 2014

Present: Commissioners Tom Brady, Paul Grenier and Rick Samson; County Administrator Jennifer Fish; Director of Finance Carrie Klebe; Nursing Home Administrator Louise Belanger; Superintendent Craig Hamelin; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris; Chief Deputy Keith Roberge; County Treasurer Fred King; John Scarinza, Chair of the Coös County Planning Board; Sue Collins, Representative Wayne Moynihan; Representative Yvonne Thomas and members of the press and public.

1. Commissioner Brady opened the Commissioners' meeting at 9:07 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. He asked everyone to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of the Agenda:

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to amend the agenda as follows: item 12e Status of Coös County Taxes to item 6c and item 13c Granite Reliable Wind Park to item 6d. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the agenda as amended. All approved 3-0.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the November 12, 2014, meeting:

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2014, meeting. All approved 3-0.

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 November 2014 and to authorize the Treasurer, during the month of December, to meet all payroll obligations and pay all other obligations due during the month. All approved 3-0.

5. Correspondence:

Jennifer reported that the Board had received a thank you from the Colebrook Food Pantry.

6. Hearing of the Public:

- a. Tom Lopizzo and Mike Davey, EEI (Energy Efficient Investments) provided a report to the Board that indicated the cost of upgrades to the two nursing homes. *(A copy of the report is on file.)*

Commissioner Grenier stated that he would support obtaining further information. Mr. Lopizzo stated that the cost of the next phase would be \$2,500 per facility which is waived if EEI is completes the projects. Commissioner Grenier replied if the fee were reduced to \$2,499 per facility, the bid process would not be required. Mr. Lopizzo agreed to the \$2,499 fee per facility. Commissioner Grenier stated that the Delegation would need to approve the \$4,998 appropriation from the facility fund.

Mr. Lopizzo stated that he would email Jennifer a copy of another facilities' report for the Board's review.

- b. John Scarinza, Coös County Planning Board Chair reported that Tara Bamford, North Country Council, continues to work on the Subdivision Regulations and Site Plan Review. The next Planning Board meeting has been scheduled for January 14. Once the Planning Board is comfortable with the updated regulations a public hearing will be held to discuss the changes.

Mr. Scarinza reported that the current contract with North Country Council expires on December 31, 2014. A three-month extension was requested with no additional cost. The Board signed the three-month contract extension with North Country Council.

Mr. Scarinza continued that the next step will be to review the zoning ordinances and the master plan. Ms. Bamford estimated a cost of \$6,000 for one year. The line item in the budget for this project is \$5,000; additional funds may be requested.

Commissioner Grenier inquired on the status of a Zoning Board of Adjustments. He did not think that a Board should be put in place while the zoning ordinances were being revised. Mr. Scarinza stated that ZBA would be needed mostly for new construction. Older buildings would mostly likely request amendments or appeals. Mr. Scarinza stated that Coös County should have a ZBA in place. Commissioner Brady and Commissioner Samson both agreed that a ZBA should be in place. Mr. Scarinza added that he would research the makeup of a ZBA and will report back to the Commissioners. Commissioner Samson suggested advertising in the local newspapers and approve recommendations for the Delegation at the February meeting. Commissioner Grenier added that the individuals should have zoning board experience.

- c. Status of Coös County Taxes: County Treasurer Fred King reported that the County Taxes were due on December 17. Prior to the start of the meeting five towns had not paid. These towns had until the end of the day.
- d. Granite Reliable Windpark: County Treasurer King reported that the costs that triggered property taxes in Millsfield were legal fees. Commissioner Grenier stated that \$31,000 in contracted services (Millsfield's portion of the Sansoucy wind park appraisal) and \$25,978 in legal services were items that were not budgeted and were the primary cause.

Sue Collins provided a brief explanation on the wind park. The Board of Commissioners did due diligence at the time as there were no other wind parks online. Sue spoke with individuals at the wind park in New York and obtained a valuation figure. Based on that information, she suggested a figure of \$150 million to Mr. Dickman and Mr. Petell from the DRA which they reduced to \$113 million. In 2013, the DRA assessed the wind park at \$228 million. During the hearings, the Commissioners requested the information on how the State determined the assessment figure. The State refused the request as the information was confidential. In 2013, the Commissioners used the entire Millsfield surplus to keep the property taxes at zero. She added that there could be property taxes again in the future until the surplus is replenished.

Paula Sweatt, resident of Millsfield, asked if the wording on HB1598 was retroactive to 2013 in order to get funds back from the State. Sue replied that HB1598 was retroactive to April 1, 2014. Commissioner Grenier noted that during the hearings with the DRA, several individuals

were indignant that Millsfield did not have property taxes. These individuals could not understand the concept of no property taxes. Mrs. Sweatt also asked if the Decommissioning Fund amount of \$875,000 would be sufficient. Commissioner Grenier replied that there is a reopener clause to discuss the PILT and Decommissioning Fund every 10 years. The amount of the PILT and the Decommissioning Fund will be discussed again.

Mrs. Sweatt asked if it would be possible to have meetings in the future with the residents of the Unincorporated Places to discuss the goings on. The Board was agreeable with the request.

Joe Martin, Millsfield camp owner, asked how the assessment on his camp was made. Jennifer replied that a revaluation of all of the Unincorporated Places was completed in 2013. The assessing firm of Commerford, Nieder, Perkins notified all of the property owners of their assessments and had the opportunity to meet with them.

Commissioner Samson noted that taxpayers may file for abatement. He did note that camps on waterfront will be taxed higher.

Commissioner Samson stated that he has had issues with the wind park assessment since day one. The decommissioning agreement is also an issue for him. In his opinion the current funds will not cover the dismantling of one wind turbine.

Commissioner Samson stated that he has met with the Millsfield residents on a few occasions and has tried to defend them as they are in his district. He read a short paragraph from the Commissioners' handbook: *County Commissioners should always demonstrate courtesy to other commissioners, county employees and the public. A commissioner should demonstrate integrity and encourage confidence in county government.*

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:

COUNTY

- a. Jennifer received the notice on December 5 that the maximum not to exceed renewal rate for the health insurance will be 9.6%. An estimate of 10% was used for the FY 2015 Budget.
- b. Jennifer received a request from the Lancaster Food Pantry.

A motion was made by Commissioner Samson, seconded by Commissioner Grenier to donate \$3,000 to the Lancaster Food Pantry. All approved 3-0.

UNINCORPORATED PLACES

- a. The 2015 FY PILT funding has been included in the National Defense Authorization Act. The FY NDAA does not include funding for the Secure Rural Schools. Millsfield is the only UP that currently receives SRS funding.
- b. The tax bills were mailed to Unincorporated Places on December 9, 2014.
- c. The Coös County Planning Board meeting will be on January 14 in Berlin to continue working on updating Site Plan and Land Subdivision regulations.

8. 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:

TOTAL IN FACILITY	40
HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS	28
PRETRIAL	12
NH STATE PRISON INMATES	1
OTHER COUNTY INMATES	0
ELECTRONIC MONITORING PROGRAM	1
WORK RELEASE PROGRAM	0
HELD AT OTHER FACILITIES	15
HOC= HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS PT= PRETRIAL	GRAFTON DOC: 1 HOC MALE, 4 HOC FEMALE, 6 PT FEM. MERRIMACK DOC: 1 HOC MALE SULLIVAN DOC: 1 HOC MALE NHSP: 1 HOC MALE, 1 HOC FEMALE
AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION NOVEMBER	46
MALE DAYS SERVED IN FACILITY NOVEMBER	1373
FEMALE DAYS SERVED NOVEMBER	295 (13 females)
TOTAL INMATES BOOKED NOVEMBER	25
TOTAL INMATES RELEASED NOVEMBER	26

- a. Congratulations to Officer Anthony Havalotti who was among 16 cadets who graduated from the 97th NHAC Corrections Academy on November 7. Officer Havalotti has been assigned to Third Shift.
 - b. Sergeant Ben Champagne successfully completed the Primex³ Supervisors' Academy which was held December 2 - 5 at the Primex³ facility in Concord.
 - c. On November 18, Superintendent Hamelin attended the monthly Police Standards and Training Council meeting. He addressed with the Council the need for Coös County cadets to have the ability to stay in their facility and requested the relationship continue. The Council unanimously voted that they would support Coös County, and provided there is space in their facility, continue to authorize bed space at no charge.
 - d. Officer Garrett Rella submitted his resignation, effective December 17. He has been hired by the NH State Police and will begin their academy on January 5. The Department of Corrections staff wished Garrett the best of luck in his new career and thanked him for his outstanding service to the Department of Corrections.
 - c. Bertina Jondro RN, resigned from the Medical Department after serving many years for Coös County, both at the Nursing Hospital and in Corrections. The Department of Corrections also wished Bertina the best of luck and appreciated her dedication throughout the years.
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 77. Occupancy for the month of November was 83.2%. In November, there were two (2) admissions and three (3) deaths. There have been two (2) admissions in December. Of the 77 residents, twelve (12) are Private Pay and eight (8) residents are Vermont Medicaid.

Totals for 2014: Twenty-eight (28) admissions, five (5) discharges, and twenty (20) deaths.

- b. Medicaid Rate: The Nursing Hospital received its preliminary Medicaid Rate for January 1, 2015. It is \$152.18, a decrease of \$6.48 from the current rate of \$158.66. Almost all of the nursing homes in the state saw a decrease in rates by an average of 2.97%. There also was an increase in the budget neutrality factor of 4.13%.

Commissioner Grenier stated that the reduction in the Medicaid rate was a painful decrease. A debate needs to be held in Concord regarding the decrease as it is painful for the whole County. The budget neutrality factor also needs to be looked at. The Commissioners agreed that the issue should be brought to the attention of the Delegation and the New Hampshire Association of Counties.

- c. Annual Survey: The Nursing Hospital was surveyed from November 18-20. The survey went very well. The deficiency statement from the survey was received on December 8. The Nursing Hospital received a total of four (4) deficiencies: one that is always receive for the waived rooms; one for Infection Control for improper cleaning of a glucometer; one for not meeting the acceptable professional standards of appropriate parameters for acetaminophen (the order must include a warning not to exceed 3000mg of acetaminophen in a 24 hour period and four Tylenol orders did not include the warning.); and, the fourth was for Storage of Drugs & Biologicals - an insulin vial had been inadvertently left in the medication cupboard rather than the refrigerator. These were minor deficiencies and much praise was received from the surveyors for having happy residents and a great staff.
- d. NH Medicaid: Meetings continue around the state for Phase 2 (now Step 2 of Phase I) of Medicaid managed care for the nursing homes.
- e. Pharmacy: The Nursing Hospital is in the process of changing pharmacies from Omnicare to Pharmerica on January 1. It is expected to see better pricing and more services.
- f. Nursing Hours at the Department of Corrections:

2013	MINUTES	Hours	2014	Minutes	Hours
January	267	4	January	22	<0.5
February	534	9	February	37	<1
March	632	11	March	31	0.5
April	846	14	April		0
May	670	11	May	175	3
June	361	6	June	70	1.2
July	383	6	July	22	<.5
August	388	6	August	219	3.5
September	359	6	September	0	0
October	263	4	October	32	0.5
November		2	November	62	1

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

- a. Census: The current census was 95 and 12 residents were Private Pay. Six (6) residents were Medicaid pending. The average daily census for November was 91.3. The Nursing Home had 3 admissions in November and 3 deaths.

Year to Date Totals: Admissions 34, deaths 33 and 1 discharge home. (Total deaths in 2013 was 27, and admissions 22)

- b. Medicaid Rate: The Nursing Home's preliminary Medicaid rate to begin on January 1, 2015 will be \$152.81. The rate is a decrease of \$1.84 from the current rate of \$154.65.
- c. Professional Photo Opportunity: Mr. Normand Labonville, a local photographer, was at the Nursing Home on December 5 to photograph residents and their families. Employees were also given the opportunity to have photos taken with their families. The photos were taken in the sunroom, in front of the decorated Christmas tree. The event was enjoyed by all participants.
- d. New Entrance Canopy/Parking Lot Update: The project is essentially complete. The damaged ceiling panels just prior to the entrance doors were replaced December 9. The materials were not available in November as originally planned.
- e. The interior door at the main entrance has been replaced. The exterior door will be replaced when available. Many compliments have been received on the entire front entrance project.

At the meeting, Louise reported that the funds for the exterior door would need to be encumbered at the end of the year. She reported that the trucking company delivering the doors was in an accident and the doors were damaged.

Commissioner Brady also reported that camera systems that would work well for the nursing homes were available at Sam's Club. He requested authorization to travel to Concord and purchase the systems. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to authorize Commissioner Brady to purchase the necessary surveillance equipment for both nursing homes. All approved 3-0.

- f. Power Outage *Update*: Schneider Electric coordinated their visit with PSNH for December 11. The electricity to the facility will have to be disconnected at the street pole, prior to work being done.
- g. Disaster Exercise: A disaster exercise was completed on December 2. The exercise was based on an armed intruder looking for narcotics. The staff did an excellent job responding to different situations that were encountered. The disaster exercise led to changes in the facility's Intruder Alert policy and procedure. The changes to the policy will help employees should an actual event occur.

- h. A Marine Corps Reserve “Toys for Tots” collection box was placed in the employee dining room for those interested in giving a toy. A large number of toys and several gift cards were donated. The gifts will be picked up on December 18 by a representative of the Marine Corps Reserve.

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. At the November meeting, Carrie proposed the Anti-Fraud Policy for the Board’s review. Since the last meeting, information was provided by the County’s Auditors, Melanson Heath regarding a service called Red Flag Reporting. Carrie provided the information on Red Flag Reporting for the Board’s review. It could coincide with the Anti-Fraud Policy in the future.

Commissioner Grenier suggested implementing both and inquired on the cost. Carrie replied the cost would be \$3,500 per year. The Board asked to review the Red Flag Reporting information and discuss the information at the next meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to implement the Anti-Fraud Policy. All approved 3-0.

- b. Carrie reported that she had bids to open for the GASB Statement 45, Accounting and Financial Reporting by Employers for Post-Employment Benefits Other than Pensions. Statement 45 requires governments to account for other post-employment benefits (OPEB), primarily healthcare, on an accrual basis rather than on a pay-as-you-go basis. The actuary’s work should calculate the OPEB liability as of December 31, 2014 and forward. The provisions of GASB 45 need to be completed before the Auditors will issue the 2014 Financial Statements without any violations.

At the meeting, the Board authorized the Finance Director to open and review all bids and to provide a report to the Board at the January 14 meeting.

- c. The total amount drawn on the County’s Tax Anticipation Note for 2014 was \$5,500,000. This has been the County’s lowest amount borrowed in 10 years.
- d. The Delegation authorized Coös County Treasurer to borrow during the calendar year 2015 in anticipation of taxes. Carrie requested authorization from the Commissioners to solicit banks in Coös County for bids.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to authorize the County’s Finance Director to solicit bids from banks in Coös County on a not to exceed \$10,000,000 line of credit. All approved 3-0.

- e. Carrie provided a new lease for the Coös County Courthouse for 2015 thru 2018 for the Commissioners to review and approve. The Board signed the new courthouse lease.
- f. The Auditors, Melanson Heath will be in West Stewartstown on January 12 & 13 to do preliminary work for the 2014 Audit.

12. Other Business:

- a. Budget Transfers: The following budget transfers were presented for the Board's approval:

Coös County Nursing Hospital:

To:	01-05141-0900 Health Information Longevity	\$700.00	
From:	01-05140-0900 Nursing Longevity		\$700.00
To:	01-05141-0100 Health Information Director Salary	\$2,700.00	
From:	01-05140-0400 Nursing LNA Salaries		\$2,700.00
To:	01-05100-6800 Communications	\$1,300.00	
From:	01-05100-700 Administration Education & Conferences		\$1,300.00
To:	01-05140-0500 Nursing MNA Salaries	\$5,000.00	
From:	01-05140-0400 Nursing LNA Salaries		\$5,000.00
To:	01-05100-7500 Bad Debts	\$10,000.00	
From:	01-05100-2000 Legal Services		\$5,000.00
From:	01-05100-0900 Nursing Longevity		\$5,000.00

Coös County Nursing Home:

To:	02-05640-0800 Nursing In Lieu of Health	\$1,000.00	
From:	02-05640-1200 Nursing Health Insurance		\$1,000.00
To:	02-05640-8200 Nursing Equip. Repair/Maint. Contracts	\$5,300.00	
From:	02-05640-1200 Nursing Health Insurance		\$5,300.00
To:	02-05650-6100 Plant Operations Electricity	\$3,300.00	
From:	02-05650-6500 Plant Operations Fuel		\$3,300.00

Department of Corrections:

To:	03-06100-5600 Prisoners: Other Institutions	\$30,000.00	
From:	03-06100-1200 Health Insurance		\$30,000.00
To:	03-06100-5600 Prisoners: Other Institutions	\$12,000.00	
From:	03-06100-0400 Correctional Officers Salaries		\$12,000.00
To:	03-06100-0700 Medical Services Nurses	\$17,250.00	
From:	03-06100-0400 Correctional Officers Salaries		\$17,250.00
To:	03-06100-1900 Training Supplies & Expenses	\$2,300.00	
From:	03-06100-2600 Psych/Rehab/Anger Programs		\$2,300.00
To:	03-06100-6800 Communications	\$1,265.00	
From:	03-06100-6500 Fuel		\$1,265.00
To:	03-06100-8100 Building Repairs/Maintenance	\$1,500.00	
From:	03-06100-8200 Equip. Repairs/Maint. Contracts		\$1,500.00

To:	03-06100-9900 Retiree Benefits	\$1,029.00	
From:	03-06100-6100 Electricity		\$1,029.00

Sheriff's Department:

To:	03-04140-3500 Dues and Fees	\$2,000.00	
From:	03-04140-3700 Gasoline		\$2,000.00

- b. Coös County Employee Survey: Commissioner Samson requested that an additional sentence be added to the survey: *If you leave County Employment, would you consider returning to the County for employment? If so, why; if not, why.* The Board agreed with the request. The survey will be given to all employees with a self-addressed envelope to Commissioner Grenier.
- c. 2015 Public Hearing Follow Up: Commissioner Brady stated that the public hearing went well. He was pleased that the new representatives asked questions to try to understand County Government.

The Commissioners asked that Jennifer research other health insurance plans for the February meeting. Jennifer will contact NHIT for rates. Commissioner Grenier added that it is the Commissioners' responsibility to find the \$1.2 deficit. The Board could meet a week later in February or even have a second meeting in February.

- d. 2014 County Report bids: Jennifer presented two bids to the Board. A breakdown of the bids will be prepared for the January meeting.

13. Unincorporated Places:

- a. Summary of Property Taxes 2014: Linda Harris provided the Board with a summary of property tax commitments for 2014. The combined total for all commitments was \$330,464.

14. Any other public input:

Paula Sweatt thanked the Board. She asked if meetings could be held once a quarter in Errol possibly in the evening. The Board also suggested inviting the Delegation and asked Jennifer to schedule a meeting in April.

Commissioner Samson made a motion to appropriate funds to purchase a sound system which he withdrew per Commissioner Brady's request.

Commissioner Brady asked Jennifer to obtain prices for a sound system which could be used at meetings. Edith Tucker suggested borrowing the Cooperative Extension's system for the January meeting. It is a portable system.

Chief Deputy Roberge reported that the Sheriff's Department picked up seven IEAs last week.

A special meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 7, 2015 at the Coös County Courthouse following the swearing in of County Officials.

The next regular monthly meeting will be held Wednesday January 14, 2015, at 9:00 a.m. at the North Country Resource Center in Lancaster, NH.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Samson to adjourn the meeting at 12:06 p.m. All approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Samson, Clerk