

Coös County Commissioners  
Special Meeting  
Coös County Courthouse - Lancaster, NH  
January 2, 2013

Present: Commissioners Tom Brady, Paul Grenier and Rick Samson; County Administrator Jennifer Fish; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Superintendent Craig Hamelin; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris; Sheriff Gerry Marcou; County Treasurer Fred King; County Attorney John McCormick; members of the press and public.

Commissioner Grenier opened the meeting at 9:28 a.m. He welcomed everyone and Commissioner Samson as the new District 3 County Commissioner. He also stated that he would be conducting the meeting as he currently was the Vice Chair.

Commissioner Grenier stated that item 3a. Decommissioning Fund Escrow Agreement needed to be added to the agenda. A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Samson to enter item 3a Decommissioning Fund Escrow Agreement between Granite Reliable Power, LLC and Coös County to the agenda. All approved 3-0.

County Treasurer Fred King presented to the Board a new 40-page document with up to date information on the Economic Impact Study. He will be providing the same document to the Delegation at their next quarterly meeting. There will be a copy available at the County Administrator's office for anyone who wishes to review the information. He announced that he has meetings set up with Senators Shaheen and Ayotte.

1. Election of Officers:

Prior to the election of officers, Commissioner Samson inquired about the duties of each officer. Commissioner Grenier replied that the Chair sets the agenda, is in charge of conducting meetings and items to be placed on the agenda must go through the Chair. The Vice Chair conducts the meetings in the absence of the Chair. The Clerk is responsible for the minutes of the meetings and signs them.

A motion was made by Commissioner Samson, seconded by Commissioner Grenier to nominate Thomas Brady as Chair.

Commissioner Samson stated that choosing between the two veteran commissioners for chair was tough and stated he did not want to appear to be taking sides. He nominated Commissioner Brady to balance the chairmanships between the Delegation and Commissioners as the Delegation Chair is a Democrat. The new slate of officers will be for a period of two years. A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Samson to cease the nominations for Chair. All approved 3-0.

The Board voted in the affirmative to accept the nomination of Thomas Brady as Chair.

A motion was made by Commissioner Samson, seconded by Commissioner Brady to nominate Paul Grenier as Vice Chair.

A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Samson to cease the nominations for Vice Chair. All approved 3-0.

The Board voted in the affirmative to accept the nomination of Paul Grenier as Vice Chair.

A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Grenier to nominate Rick Samson as Clerk.

A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Samson to cease the nominations for Clerk. All approved 3-0.

The Board voted in the affirmative to accept the nomination of Rick Samson as Clerk.

Commissioner Grenier announced the new slate of officers: Thomas Brady, Chair; Paul Grenier, Vice Chair; and Rick Samson, Clerk.

2. Procedures of Monthly Meetings:

Commissioner Grenier announced that Commissioner Brady would be taking over January 9 as Chair. Commissioner Brady read the following statement:

*First, I would like to thank Commissioner Grenier and Commissioner Sampson for placing their trust in me as Chair. This election of officers shows that partisan politics has no place in the Coös County Commission. We are a board of three members entrusted with a budget of well over \$30 million dollars. This requires each Commissioner to continually educate himself as to the operation of county government.*

*This year, Commissioner Grenier begins his 5<sup>th</sup> term, I begin my 4<sup>th</sup> term and we welcome Commissioner Samson as he begins his 1<sup>st</sup> term. When I was first elected in 2004, I was quite inexperienced in county government. I had served in the NH Legislature in the late 1980's and knew of the delegations role in the county budget. However, what I thought I knew of the duties of the Commission was quickly shown to be limited. Thanks to great staff, administrators and my fellow Commissioners I was able to get the answers to countless questions. Personally, I will be forever thankful to former county administrator Sue Collins and former Commission Chair Bing Judd. Each helped to guide me in my quest to understand the complicated issues we face at our meetings. Commissioner Judd was a truly fine Chair. His assistance was invaluable. I would like to extend an offer of the same level of assistance to Commissioner Sampson. I truly understand that today you are beginning a walk down a new path in your life. I expect there will be times when you need answers to questions so that you can better understand a particular issue or item. Do not hesitate to ask. Not only will Commissioner Grenier and I need you to be a responsible member of the Commission but the residents of Coös County will also. We must remember that our constituents deserve nothing less. As Commissioners, we must conduct ourselves in such a way as to gain the respect of all we have dealings with. While we may disagree on an issue, we do not have to be disagreeable.*

*County Commissioners adhere to a code of ethics. Commissioners act in meetings only. We have no authority on our own. A Commissioners' authority to act is limited to Commission meetings only. A Commissioner can never pretend to represent the Commission. As a Commission, we are responsible for setting the policies for the day to day operations, not to interact with staff on a day to day basis. If there is an issue a Commissioner believes needs to be addressed, his duty is to contact the Chair and ask for such to be on the agenda of the next meeting. The law forbids us from acting outside of publicly advertised meetings. Our meetings will be governed by Roberts Rules of Order.*

*The Chair will strongly adhere to Roberts Rules of Order. If one is not sure as to these rules, I suggest that you brush up on them. Members of the Commission and county staff wishing to speak will request to be recognized. If a member of the Commission has a follow up question he will ask the Chair to follow up. Most of all, Commissioners will treat staff, administrators and fellow Commissioners with respect and dignity. Anyone who violates this rule will be called back to order.*

*As stated earlier, each one of us in the Commission and in Administration has tremendous responsibilities. We can never forget the trust the taxpayers have placed in us. We must remember our dedicated staff. However, most of all we must always remember the elderly in our homes and our communities. I trust my*

*fellow commissioners join me in pledging to never forget the elderly. Coös County has long had a tradition of caring for our senior citizens. It is now our turn to do what we can to enhance their quality of life.*

*To all of us in county government, let us not forget that this is our moment in time. This is our moment to step up and accept the responsibility that has been placed in us. How each of us acts will determine what the residents of Coös County think of us. Make no mistake; I will do my best to make everyone proud of the Coös County Commission.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Samson, seconded by Commissioner Brady to operate the Commissioners' meetings under Roberts Rules of Order. All approved 3-0. A copy of the book was provided to Commissioner Samson as he did not have one.

Commissioner Grenier noted that the Commissioners are bound by a Code of Ethics (*a copy is on file*) state law RSA 28:1-b which states, "*All rights, authority and powers of the county commissioners shall be exercised only by a vote of a majority of the county commissioners*".

The Commissioners cannot enter county facilities and direct administrators to do something. He used as an example, if Commissioner Samson has any questions for the County Administrator, he is to contact the Chairman of the Board and the Chair will make arrangements. This was agreeable to everyone.

Commissioner Grenier also added that the room known as the Commissioners' office in West Stewartstown will be abolished. The room will be available for the Nursing Hospital to use. Commissioner Samson requested a tour of all county facilities. Commissioner Grenier replied that the new Chair will be able to set that up.

Commissioner Grenier stated that he holds dual offices in the county. He takes the code of ethics seriously. At a time where the state and federal offices are having issues; the local government needs to lead with high and ethical standards. A motion was made by Commissioner Samson, seconded by Commissioner Brady to accept the code of ethics. All approved 3-0.

Commissioner Brady announced that he was in the process of setting up a dual meeting between the Commissioners and Delegation on Friday, January 11 at 6 p.m. at the Nursing Home in Berlin. The meeting will provide a chance for everyone to start on the same page.

Commissioner Brady also added that the Board will show respect and expects the public to follow suit.

Commissioner Grenier asked that when a County Commissioner submits mileage reimbursement that the expense report be brought to the monthly meeting and signed-off by the Clerk.

Commissioner Brady asked the Sheriff if the deputies would be willing to transport any items that may require Board signatures. The Sheriff agreed as long as the deputies had the time.

3. NHAC Representatives - 5 seats:

Jennifer reported that this item was deferred from the December 19 meeting. Currently, County Treasurer Fred King is an officer and the seats are filled by Louise Belanger, Tom Brady and Laura Mills. Commissioner Grenier recommended that Jennifer hold a seat as the new County Administrator. County Attorney John McCormick offered to fill the last seat. A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Samson to add Jennifer Fish and John McCormick as representatives to the NHAC Executive Committee. All approved 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier noted for the record that the following individuals were members of the NHAC Executive Committee: Louise Belanger, Tom Brady, Jennifer Fish, John McCormick and Laura Mills. County Treasurer Fred King is an officer.

3a. Decommissioning Fund Escrow Agreement:

Commissioner Grenier provided a brief history of Granite Reliable Power, LLC. He added that one of the requirements of the agreement was that GRP would set up the decommissioning fund in a bank in New Hampshire at the County's approval. The document was negotiated between Jonathan Frizzell, legal counsel for Coös County and Mel Jiganti of Brookfield Renewable Energy Group. A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Samson to approve the Decommissioning Fund Escrow Agreement. All approved 3-0.

At this time, Commissioner Samson distributed a letter, dated December 14 (*a copy is on file*) which he read for the record.

*As the Coös County District 3 commissioner-elect, I am writing to express my views concerning my position.*

*I look forward to serving, cooperating and working with all the delegates and the other two commissioners representing our county.*

*I am willing to listen, learn and share the ideas of my constituents, fellow commissioners and the delegation. This approach will make our county government more effective, open and productive.*

*We have a responsibility not only to our taxpayers but to our employees as well. Treating each and every employee with respect, honesty and fairness is of the utmost importance to a successful operation and quality of work environment.*

*I look forward to serving and resolving the challenges ahead, both seen and unseen with a spirit of cooperation with all involved.*

County Attorney John McCormick reported that he had interviewed 8-9 highly educated candidates for the Assistant County Attorney position. He offered the position, contingent of Board approval, to Steve Murray of Carroll County. Attorney McCormick reported that he has worked with this individual before and will need limited guidance when starting this position. A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Samson to add item 3d. to the agenda – consideration of hiring a new Assistant County Attorney. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Samson to authorize County Attorney John McCormick to hire the services of Steven Murray as Assistant County Attorney.

Commissioner Brady asked if there was an existing salary schedule for this position. Attorney McCormick replied that he would like to update the salary schedule based on another county's schedule. Commissioner Grenier replied that he was not prepared to discuss salary schedules. Commissioner Brady noted that the proper resources should be given to the County Attorney to bring his office up to speed. All approved 3-0.

County Treasurer King inquired if he should attend the combined Commissioners' and Delegation meeting on January 11 to discuss the Economic Impact Study. Commissioner Brady replied that the purpose of the meeting is to have both parties get off to a good start and to understand each other's duties. Mr. King replied that he would report to the Delegation at their fourth quarter meeting. Jennifer distributed the updated Coös County Organizational Chart.

A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Samson to adjourn the meeting at 10:13 a.m. All approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas M. Brady, Clerk