

Coös County Commissioners
Regular Meeting
North Country Resource Center - Lancaster, NH
November 14, 2012

Present: Commissioners Bing Judd, Paul Grenier and Tom Brady; County Administrator Suzanne L. Collins; County Administrator/Director of Finance Jennifer Fish; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Superintendent Craig Hamelin; Nursing Home Administrator Louise Belanger; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris; Sheriff Gerry Marcou; Deputy Sheriff Keith Roberge; County Treasurer Fred King; Senator-Elect Jeff Woodburn; Diane Bennett, Coös County Conservation District (*arrived at 9:43*); US Fish & Wildlife Service Refuge Manager Paul Casey (*arrived at 9:45*); Commissioner-Elect Rick Samson (*arrived at 9:45*); Kris vonDohrmann; Haven Neil; Chris Hawkins; and members of the press.

Commissioner Judd opened the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

1. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2012 regular meeting and the November 7, 2012 budget work session. All approved 3-0.
2. The Board reviewed the Payrolls and Disbursements for the month of October 2012. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the Payrolls and Disbursements for the month of October 2012. All approved 3-0.
3. Hearing of the Public:
 - a. Senator-elect Jeff Woodburn thanked everyone for their support. He is ready to listen and to learn. He and Executive Councilor Ray Burton are working together to set up a tour of the North Country with the new State Representatives and members of the Executive Council for the early part of December.
 - b. County Treasurer Fred King reported that the request for proposals for Economic Impact Study has a closing date of November 15. North Country Council will review the applications and then request to meet with the Board of Commissioners.
4. Report of the County Administrator Suzanne L. Collins. The written report that was submitted to the Board in advance of the meeting was as follows:
 - a. The Community Development Advisory Committee approved the County's CDBG application for the Notre Dame Housing Project in Berlin. An advertisement for a CDBG administrator has been placed in The Union Leader and e-mailed to all the grant administrators on the CFDA (Community Development Finance Authority) approved list. Proposals are due December 4, 2012 in order to make a recommendation to the Board at its December meeting.
 - b. The Local Government Center has notified the County of its Guaranteed Maximum Rate increase for July 1, 2013. It is 7.5% for all plans except for Medi-comp coverage that shows a 4.8% increase. As Sue reported last month, this number is a starting point for budgetary planning purposes and will not be any higher when final rates are set in the spring. Jennifer and Sue met with Al Jones of The Interlocal Trust that provides Harvard Pilgrim health insurance programs to local governments at the Annual NH Association of Counties Conference. Mr. Jones will be working with Jennifer on providing a rate quote.

- c. Several Coös County employees received special awards presented by Commissioner Brady at the Annual Conference.

Laura Mills - Nursing Home Administrator of the Year;
Craig Hamelin - Superintendent of the Year;
Mike Holt, Dave LeBlanc, Kurt Melendy (Coös County Nursing Home Maintenance Department) - Team of the Year; and
Suzanne Collins - Profile Award for Government Service.

- d. Dana Masson, F.W. Cowan & Sons has indicated that he can complete the survey of the Administrator's house lot by the first part of December. John Trumbull has indicated that he will schedule the appraisal right after the survey is available. Everyone is working to complete this project by the end of the year.
- e. The deed from Coös County to Timothy Bailey for the 104 acre wood lot is still incomplete. He has remitted partial payments to Waystack Frizzell and indicated that he will have the balance of the funds by the end of the year.
- f. Sue requested a non-public session to discuss negotiations.

Report of the Unincorporated Places:

- a. On Monday, Sue met with Attorney Phil Waystack who reported that Merrimack Superior Court Judge McNamara issued his decision on the Andy Martin/Balsams View, LLC case on November 8, 2012. In summary, Judge McNamara found that Mr. Martin had no standing to bring the lawsuit.

Commissioner Grenier inquired if the County will be reimbursed for the legal fees. Sue replied that this was the intent. Attorney Waystack has stated that he is available to meet with the Board of Commissioners relating to this issue.

- b. The Revaluation of 50% of the County's Unincorporated Places is nearly complete for 2012. The second half of the project is scheduled for next spring/summer/fall at which time preliminary value letters will be sent to all property owners providing the opportunity to meet with the assessors either by phone or in person.
- c. The NH Department of Revenue has determined the utility values of the Granite Reliable Windpark. The value of the 7 wind park turbines and associated components in Dixville is \$46,107,655. The value of the 26 wind park turbines and associated components in Millsfield is \$171,381,204.

Sue stated that these values are 20 times more than originally projected. She suggested a meeting with the State's utility appraiser to discuss the values further. Commissioner Judd suggested that the County speak with Skip Sansoucy regarding the utility appraisals. Sue stated that the payment in lieu of tax with Granite Reliable Power was based on the preliminary figures.

Commissioner Judd asked about the status of the land use change tax for the wind turbine areas. Linda Harris replied that Mark Nieder was currently working on preparing the land use information. Commissioner Judd also added that he wanted the 5-mile pit issue in Success taken care of prior to the end of the year.

- d. Sue has attended two work sessions on the Colebrook Dispatch Center budget for 2013. At the initial session on October 16, the Colebrook Selectmen proposed to increase the annual charge to the non-core towns (Dixville, Millsfield, Wentworth Location and 9 others) from \$2,125 to \$4,500. This met with resistance from the non-core towns. At the second session on November 8, the core towns appeared to be in agreement that \$4,500 was definitely too high. The budgets for Dixville, Millsfield and Wentworth Location were prepared using the \$4,500 figure but it appears that the core towns aim to adjust that arbitrary amount to a number that more accurately reflects the level of service to these places. The meetings will continue in November and December.
5. Report of the Superintendent of Corrections Craig Hamelin. The written report that was submitted to the Board in advance of the meeting was as follows:

| | |
|---|--|
| TOTAL IN FACILITY | 39 |
| HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS | 28 |
| PRETRIAL | 11 |
| NH STATE PRISON INMATES | 2 |
| ELECTRONIC MONITORING PROGRAM | 0 |
| WORK RELEASE PROGRAM | 0 |
| OTHER COUNTY INMATES | 2 |
| HELD AT OTHER FACILITIES | 12 |
| HOC= HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS PT= PRETRIAL | CARROLL DOC: 1 PT MALE GRAFTON DOC: 1 HOC MALE, 1 PT MALE, 3 HOC FEMALE, 3 PT FEMALE ROCKINGHAM DOC: 1 PT MALE STRAFFORD DOC: 1 HOC MALE NHSP: 1 HOC MALE |
| AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION OCTOBER | 41 |
| MALE DAYS SERVED IN FACILITY OCTOBER | 1,256 |
| FEMALE DAYS SERVED OCTOBER | 158 (15 females) |
| TOTAL INMATES BOOKED OCTOBER | 32 |

- a. Congratulations to Officer Reno Gilbert for graduating from the 90th NHAC Corrections Academy on November 2. Graduation was held at the Primex facility in Concord NH. Superintendent Hamelin commended Officer Gilbert for a job well done, including receiving a nomination for Honor Graduate.
- b. Superintendent Hamelin also offered congratulations to Officer Lee Vogel, who was approved for certification by the NHAC Corrections Certification Board through reciprocity. His previous corrections certification and experience exceeded the requirements for NHAC certification.
- c. Securus Technologies, the inmate telephone system provider, has agreed to provide the facility with a state-of-the-art Video Visitation system to increase the inmates' ability to visit with family, friends and attorneys. Installed in the library, the Video Visitation kiosk will allow video visits to be scheduled up to 7 days a week by family and attorneys from home, office or community computers. With an agreement that the DOC assists with some of the installation, a package worth \$19,229, which includes equipment, software, licensing, training and maintenance was secured with no cost to taxpayers. Visitors will be charged by the minute for 20 or 40 minute sessions, which will also provide additional revenue to what is received from telephone calls.

- d. An updated Intergovernmental Agreement to house federal detainees has been delivered by the US Marshals for review and signature. Following notification that the transportation rate offered was unacceptable, the amount in the contract was amended from \$25 per hour to the original requested rate of \$28.14 per hour.

Commissioner Judd did not have a problem with the new agreement. Commissioner Grenier stated that he had read the agreement and had a few issues which he discussed with Superintendent Hamelin prior to the meeting. One of the problems was the language reads that once a detainee leaves the Department of Corrections, Coös County will be responsible for the detainee's prescription drugs for up to 7 days. Superintendent Hamelin replied that he did not foresee any issues with the meds as the doctor who would have to prescribe them, Dr. Soucy, is careful about prescribing anything. Commissioner Judd added that the agreement can be cancelled at any time with 30 days' notice. Commissioner Brady noted that he had not read the agreement and asked if a decision on the agreement could be tabled until the December 12 meeting. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to table action on the Intergovernmental Agreement until the December 12 meeting. All approved 3-0.

Commissioner Judd inquired if the 28-hour nursing position had been posted. Superintendent Hamelin reported that it was posted in-house with no interest. An ad will be placed in the local papers next week.

- 6. Report of the West Stewartstown Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills. The written report that was submitted to the Board in advance of the meeting was as follows:
 - a. Census: The census was 79. The average census for October was 80; occupancy for October was 82.1%. In October, there was one (1) admission, no discharges and two (2) deaths. There has been one (1) admission and one (1) death in November. Of the 79 residents, twenty-two (22) are Private Pay. Eight (8) residents are Vermont Medicaid. *Totals to date for 2012: thirty-eight (38) admissions, eleven (11) discharges and seventeen (17) deaths.*
 - b. Food Storage: For decades all food storage has been in the attic while the kitchen is in the basement. This was not very efficient and made for a great deal of extra work. Over the past few weeks a storage room in the basement has been remodeled and storage options for housekeeping and laundry were rearranged in order to move the food down to the basement. This will also cut down on the wear and tear of the older service elevator.
 - c. NHAC Annual Conference: Louise Belanger and Laura Mills make up the Education Committee for the NHA Affiliate. This year education was included on Social Media, Pharmacy and Falls, and Aromatherapy. Also offered was education on Issues for Managers, Medicaid and LTC, and the NH Retirement System. The venue was less than ideal this year, but the education was worthwhile. Laura was honored to receive the County Nursing Home Administrator of the Year Award. It was a total surprise.
 - d. New PASRR Requirements: PASRR determines whether or not a nursing home is the appropriate placement for those who are mentally ill or developmentally disabled. A new rule is requiring that all potential admissions get screened by PASRR prior to nursing home placement. This means more paperwork and a longer wait for potential admissions, especially if they do have a mental illness or developmental disability. Even if approved, this approval is not permanent. If the resident should improve while at the nursing home, they may be required

to be discharged back to the community in the future. Trainings will be scheduled in December on the new rule.

Louise Belanger noted that she attended a meeting regarding PASRR earlier this week and this issue is still up for debate as several entities state-wide are not in favor of this requirement.

e. Nursing Hours at Department of Corrections:

| 2011 | MINUTES | Hours | 2012 | Minutes | Hours |
|-----------|---------|-------|-----------|---------|-------|
| January | 3,907 | 65 | January | 2,206 | 37 |
| February | 4,035 | 67 | February | 2,168 | 36 |
| March | 3,930 | 66 | March | 2,801 | 47 |
| April | 4,427 | 74 | April | 2,454 | 41 |
| May | 4,280 | 71 | May | 2,180 | 36 |
| June | 4,446 | 74 | June | 2,811 | 47 |
| July | 4,529 | 75 | July | 988 | 16 |
| August | 4,307 | 72 | August | 864 | 14 |
| September | 4,358 | 73 | September | 1,126 | 19 |
| October | 4,086 | 68 | October | 1,101 | 18 |
| November | 1,750 | 29 | November | | |
| December | 1,711 | 29 | December | | |

CCNH nurses made three special trips over to the DOC to assess individual inmates for a total of 2.75 extra hours this month.

f. In response to Commissioner Brady's inquiry at the budget work session regarding laser thermometers in the dietary department, Laura reported the department uses probe thermometers.

7. 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 100. Thirteen (13) residents are Private Pay at this time, and one (1) is Medicaid pending. The average daily census for October was 99.5; year to date is 97.6. There was **1** admission in October and **0** deaths. Total year to date deaths is 20 and year to date admissions is 23.
- b. Survey: The surveyors entered the home for the annual Medicaid recertification survey on October 31 and exited on November 2. Louise was proud to report that the facility was Deficiency Free in Health Care. The surveyors were very complementary of the staff and all that is done at the home. During the exit interview, surveyors made a comment on the excellent quality of the Social Service Department resident notes, stating that the notes were some of the best they have seen. The Life Safety survey was completed on November 2. There was one issue related to inaccessible duct work from the kitchen hood in the Dietary Department. Access panels will need to be added every twelve feet. *Louise received a message from the Life Safety Surveyor after the meeting stating that he had reviewed the information provided and that the deficiency had been lifted. The Nursing Home was also deficiency free in Life Safety.*

Louise presented to the Board the letter to employees thanking them for a deficiency free survey. All regular employees and temps who worked during the survey will be receiving a \$25 bonus. The Board signed the letter.

- c. Boiler: During the routine yearly service appointment the technician noticed a leak in one of the 10 cast iron sections of the boiler. The maintenance department is following up on the issue and reviewing different repair options.

Commissioner Judd asked if Daniel Hebert, Inc. had been called. Louise reported that Mike Holt is waiting for a return call. Sue offered to call Mr. Hebert herself.

- d. New Hampshire Association of Counties Annual Conference: The Maintenance Department was presented the Coös County Team Award. The team was recognized for all of their hard work in the staff's mission to make the nursing home more "homelike". The work completed throughout the home consisted of painting the "Upper and Lower Villages"; removing and reconstructing smaller nurses' stations that resemble a hotel front desk; enlarging the Business Office making it more appealing and private when residents and families are addressing their needs; and, hanging enlarged photos of the local area for all to enjoy. The Nursing Home has a great Maintenance Team consisting of Mike Holt, Department Manager; David LeBlanc; and Kurt Melendy.
 - e. Laundry: One of the washing machines needed repairs to the bearings and motor. The washing machine was out of service for approximately one week.
 - f. Parking Lot: The nonfunctioning lamp pole in the center of the nursing home parking lot has been removed. This creates additional parking space and makes it easier to plow during the winter months.
 - g. On October 18, the facility staff responded accurately to a chemical reaction that occurred in the basement. Bill Madelina from the Berlin Fire Department was quoted saying "the staff did a phenomenal job handling the situation". Staff training on various types of situations is ongoing in Long Term Care and beneficial as noted in this incident. The residents were not affected by the incident; their normal daily routine continued.
8. Report of the Finance Director Jennifer Fish. There was no written report submitted to the Board.
- a. Jennifer reported that all changes have been made to the proposed budget based on last week's budget work session.
 - b. Jennifer reported that she is in the process of interviewing for the Director of Finance position.

Commissioner Grenier asked how many applications had been received and Jennifer replied five. She plans on interviewing two of the applicants.

Commissioner Judd asked to see the applications prior to hiring. He felt the Board should be able to provide some input in the process. Sue stated that she had advised Jennifer that she did not need to involve the Board as this person would be working under Jennifer's supervision. Commissioner Judd stated the Board should be involved as this is a high paying position required by the Delegation and the Board should be aware of what is going on. Commissioner Grenier stated that ultimately it is the Administrator's decision as to who gets the position. The Board does not need to micro-manage. Commissioner Brady added that the position was

created based on the request by the Delegation. He asked that Jennifer provide the Board with an update. Jennifer did not have a problem with providing that information and will email the resumes along with her recommendation.

- c. A member of the business office staff has accepted the Director of Housekeeping/Laundry position at the Nursing Hospital. She now has to also fill a position in the business office.

9. Other Business:

- a. Mr. King wanted it reflected in the minutes about the quality of service provided by both nursing homes. The Nursing Home in Berlin had a deficiency free survey and the West Stewartstown Nursing Hospital was listed as a five-star facility.
- b. Paul Casey reported that he had been appointed by his regional chief as the point of contact in regards to the economic impact analysis. Mr. King stated that the North Country Council was hired in order to keep the politics out of it. NCC will contact the refuge when they are ready to do so. The company selected will be holding hearings for public comment. Mr. King reported that he had recently received a letter stating that the federal government has reneged on the offer to pay a portion of the study. Mr. Casey noted that the letter states they are willing to fund their share but would like others to assist with the cost.
- c. Commissioner Grenier asked that at future meetings a packet which includes all of the reports provided at the meeting be available for Commissioner-Elect Samson until he is sworn into office in January.
- d. Commissioner Brady asked to publicly recognize the staff that works at both nursing homes and the individuals who received awards at the NH Association of Counties by placing an ad in the local papers. A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Grenier that an ad be placed in the local newspapers recognizing staff that works at both nursing homes and thanking them for their hard work. All approved 3-0.

Commissioner Grenier stated that it shows the public what kind of governmental entity the County operates. It's lean and mean; it has very good employees who bring a lot to the table. It's not just a career for some of the employees; they enjoy what they do. Coös County has always been a smooth running entity and it is a source of pride for him as a County Commissioner. It should be a source of pride for anyone who becomes a County Commissioner.

- e. Diane Bennett, Coös County Conservation District: Commissioner Judd announced that Mrs. Bennett will be retiring in 2013 after 28 years of service. The Board asked to meet with Mrs. Bennett to discuss the future of her position after she retires. Commissioner Judd asked if her position could be reduced to 28 hours per week or is she busy 40 hours per week. The individual hired may request medical insurance at a cost of \$20,000 which is currently not part of the budget. He asked if the federal government would be willing to fund 12 hours per week to keep the position at 40 hours. Diane replied that she is busy 40 hours per week and did not know about the federal government aspect. She presented three members of the District's Board of Supervisors: Haven Neil, Chris Hawkins and Kris vonDohrmann. Diane explained that these individuals will be the ones deciding what to do with her current position. The federal aspect will need to be presented to the National Resources Conservation Service. Diane provided a statement of her duties and added that her position is the only position that does the soil index for current use. In Diane's opinion, the new person may need more than 40 hours per

week at the beginning to acclimate to the job. Commissioner Grenier stated that he was a little leery about cutting down the position to 28 hours. Chances are a part-time person may use this position as a stepping stone and leave for a full-time position.

Mr. Haven Neil expressed that his greatest concern is the quality of the person that needs to be in this position. Diane has been administrator for 28 years and they have been fortunate to have had her. She understands the issues; she administers the farm bill program which brings in \$1million to Coös County per year. Diane is the glue that holds everything together. He continued that the Conservation District Board consists of unpaid volunteers appointed by the Governor and Council. The position is more than just a secretarial position.

Sue suggested instead of asking the federal government to fund the difference in hours would they consider paying for a health plan.

Kris vonDohrmann stated that the new person will have a lot to process. Diane is the front line person who reports to the Board. The individual will need to have self-starting capabilities. If the hours are cut, the position may not attract the candidate they want. Benefits such as health insurance and retirement are big. Kris agreed that individuals may use the part time position as a stepping stone. To the Commissioners \$20,000 - \$30,000 may be a lot but this position brings in \$1 million to the County each year.

Chris Hawkins commended Diane. The Board is currently polling the other districts in the State to see how they fund their office. As information comes in, it will be forwarded to the Commissioners. Commissioner Grenier asked if the operating budgets from the other districts could be obtained. Mr. Hawkins will follow up with the Board at the next meeting.

10. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to enter into nonpublic session per RSA 91-A:3 II (a) at 10:45 a.m. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to come out of nonpublic session at 10:56 a.m. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to enter into a non-meeting per RSA 91-A:2 I (b) at 10:56 a.m. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to come out of the non-meeting at 11:56 a.m. All approved 3-0.

The next regular monthly meeting will be held Wednesday, December 12 at 9:00 a.m. at the Coös County Nursing Home in Berlin.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to adjourn the meeting at 11:56 a.m. All approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas M. Brady, Clerk