

Coös County Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Libby Room - Mt. Washington Summit Road Company
Green's Grant, NH
September 12, 2012

Present: Commissioners Bing Judd, Paul Grenier and Tom Brady; County Administrator Suzanne L. Collins; Director of Finance Jennifer Fish; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Superintendent Craig Hamelin; Nursing Home Administrator Louise Belanger; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris; County Treasurer Fred King; Deputy Registrar Sally Pelletier; US Fish & Wildlife Service Refuge Manager Paul Casey and members of the press.

Commissioner Judd opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. Commissioner Judd took a moment to inform everyone that though results were not final, it appeared that he lost his primary bid and that he would not be Commissioner as of January 1. He thanked everyone for their support over the past 15 years. Commissioner Brady added that Commissioner Judd has made his eight years as a Commissioner enjoyable.

1. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2012 meeting. All approved 3-0.
2. The Board reviewed the Payrolls and Disbursements for the month of August 2012. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the Payrolls and Disbursements for the month of August 2012. All approved 3-0.
3. Hearing of the Public:
 - a. County Treasurer Fred King presented to the Board a draft Proposal from the North Country Council for an economic impact analysis of the proposed expansion of the Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge. Mr. King noted that North Country Council is a neutral organization and is ideal to put this proposal out to bid. The scope of work listed in the proposal included:
 - Write the RFP according to federal procurement standards;
 - Solicit RFP responses;
 - Advertise RFP;
 - Review and score RFP's;
 - Start negotiating scope of services (i.e. draft scope of work, timeframe, deliverables);
 - Assist County in contracting for services including scope, timeframe, deliverables, etc. (not part of the current agreement);
 - Complete contract administration and oversight (not part of the current agreement); and
 - Implement recommendations (not part of the current agreement).

Mr. King asked the Board to formalize their acceptance of the proposal by signing the contract. When the original Lake Umbagog project came online there was a finding of no significant impact and the study of the environmental and socio-economic effects of the proposal was shown to represent no negative impact on the quality of human environment. Mr. King questioned if the human environment included jobs. It is time to review that study. Commissioner Judd asked Sue Collins if the funds to pay for this proposal would come from the unincorporated places that border the national forest or all of the unincorporated places. Sue replied that it was an issue that needed to be discussed. If the study is about US government ownership of land in Coös County, it affects a lot of unincorporated places. If the

study is about the US Fish & Wildlife Service Refuge it would consist only of Cambridge, Second College Grant and Wentworth Location. Sue deferred the question to Mr. King. Mr. King replied that it should encompass all of the federal lands in Coös County. He suggested taking money out of the Cambridge and Wentworth Location contingency funds. Commissioner Judd stated that he was in favor of all the unincorporated places. Mr. King stated that this will be an expensive process. He plans to go to the Trust for Public Land who indicated that it would participate with the funding but would not cover all costs. The USFWS has an obligation under NEPA law and might help with the cost. Mr. King intends to speak to the State (DRED) and to the Society of the Protection of NH Forests. Commissioner Brady and Commissioner Grenier were in favor of a county-wide economic impact study. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady for the county-wide study. All approved 3-0. The proposal was signed by the Board members.

Mr. King reported that as Vice Chair of the Planning Board he will appear at Merrimack Superior Court on Monday, September 17 for the hearing in the case of Andy Martin v. Lawrence Spellman, et al (The Balsams).

Mr. King also added that Jennifer Fish would be presenting the Investment Policy Reauthorization on his behalf. There were no changes to the policy.

Sue reported that she had audited the property tax files of both Cambridge and Wentworth Location to determine all property transactions related to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Refuge at Umbagog. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife recently made a Revenue Sharing Payment of \$5,453 on a total of 1,710.14 acres (55.5 acres in Cambridge and 1,654.64 acres in Wentworth Location). The payment amounts to \$3.19 per acre. Sue received a call from the Attorney who is preparing the deed for the Plum Creek lands that will be sold in September to the USFWS. The sale is for 4,532 acres in Cambridge. Sue distributed spreadsheets to the Board.

Mr. King thanked Commissioner Judd for all of his years of service to Coös County.

Paul Casey asked if the County would be interested in setting up a working group to address the tax issue in the unincorporated places. This group would go over these properties and revenue sharing. Mr. King recommended that it should be dealt with through the study. Mr. King left the meeting.

- b. Paul Casey of the Umbagog Fish & Wildlife Refuge stated that he had three issues to discuss with the Board: the road erosion issue in Little Berlin (Wentworth Location), discussion of the revenue sharing and provide an update and discussion on the land exchange for ATV access in Errol.
 - The road erosion in Little Berlin: this road is a right of way for 20 camps of which the Refuge owns two. The road is located on land of the US Fish & Wildlife Service and citizens have asked the USFWS to help mitigate the road problems. Mr. Casey summarized three preliminary proposals for road repairs with estimated costs:
 - Option 1 - initial concept using concrete block mats \$1,558,000;
 - Option 2 - install pvc sheet pile in two (2) phases \$1,042, 912; and
 - Option 3 - relocate existing road and stabilize bank \$825,836.
 - A fourth option is currently being worked on that would entail moving the road behind the camps.

Mr. Casey asked if the County would be interested in participating with the cost of repairing the road. Sue stated that Wentworth Location is the worst place to ask for money. Last year, there was a deficit. Commissioner Grenier stated that if revenue sharing is fully funded maybe funds could be used for that purpose. Mr. Casey added that he is looking at all aspects of funding.

- Land transfer with State of NH: Mr. Casey reported that the USFWS staff and the state have met and put together an exchange agreement that is now ready to undergo legal review. Because Big Island State Forest was purchased with LCHIP funds, the State cannot give up fee ownership. Instead, the State will give the refuge a super easement that will turn management of the property over to the refuge.

Mr. Casey continued that during this process the regional office received a letter from the Commission asking for a four-year moratorium on any expansion of the refuge. He was blindsided by the letter. Since Big Island State Forest is not within the acquisition boundary of the refuge the USFWS will have to pay the state to compensate for the acreage difference as it is considered a land acquisition. The regional office asked Mr. Casey why he was spending time on the land exchange in light of the Commissioners' request for a moratorium. Sue stated that Mr. Casey and the service were splitting hairs. She continued that both parcels are not on the tax rolls. Sue also added that the Commissioners have requested a moratorium but it has not been confirmed. Mr. Casey replied that he did not believe that any more land acquisitions would be approved based on that letter. Commissioner Grenier agreed with Ms. Collins that the land swap did not qualify as a land acquisition. The letter was referring to large land acquisitions, not a 100-acre swap. Commissioner Brady asked what the schedule will be for the exchange of the land. Mr. Casey replied that the agreement has to go through legal review. Once the review is finished, he plans to seek a transitional permit that would allow the trail to be used while the transaction is finalized. Commissioner Judd hopes this would go through by spring. This trail is a major economic development initiative. Commissioner Brady asked how the issue could be resolved. Mr. Casey requested a letter from the Board stating it is working with the refuge on this particular project and supports the land acquisition involved. A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Grenier to have the County Administrator draft a letter stating that Coös County and the Wildlife Refuge are working together on this particular project and the Board supports this land exchange. All approved 3-0. Sue asked Mr. Casey to email her the language needed in regards to the land exchange.

Commissioner Grenier inquired if Mr. Casey could arrange for his regional director to attend a Commissioners' meeting. Mr. Casey replied that it would be difficult but a meeting with the Chief would be easier. Commissioner Judd stated that the Mr. Casey's Chief was welcome to attend either the October or November meeting. Commissioner Grenier asked that future correspondence to the Regional Office also be "cc" to Mr. Casey.

Mr. Casey stated that the Umbagog Wildlife Service expansion is complete in the Unincorporated Places. Sue asked if they would purchase any other camps in Little Berlin. He replied that if they are for sale, it was likely the USFWS would buy them. Sue inquired about the balance of the Plum Creek lands. Mr. Casey stated that Plum Creek would sell a forest legacy easement to the State of NH on the balance of its lands.

Mr. Casey concluded by saying that he would like to announce at Saturday's meeting that the Coös County will be moving forward with an economic impact study and will defer

further tax analysis until the study is complete. The Board agreed. Mr. Casey left the meeting.

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 deed for the parcel of County land approved for sale to Timothy Bailey is ready for signatures. An error was detected on the Stewartstown tax maps and Sue stated she will meet with the Stewartstown tax collector to request a correction of the town tax maps: Lot 15, Range 5 is actually Lot 16, Range 5. The deed references are correct. The Board signed all documents pertaining to the transfer.
 - b. Regarding the Administrator's House, Sue received the following proposals/estimates:

Appraisal

- Androscoggin Appraisals, Peggy Gallus, Berlin, NH \$475
unless there are easements and other complex situations that need to be explored.
- Trumbull & Associates, Inc., John Trumbull, Lancaster, NH \$700

Survey

- F.W. Cowan & Sons, Dana Masson, Canaan, Vt. \$1,400 to create a triangular shaped 5-acre lot between County Farm Road and US Route 3 taking in the existing house.

Sue will present this information to the Delegation at the next meeting.

- c. UNH Cooperative Extension has submitted for Commissioners' approval a renewal of its 6-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The last MOU was signed in September 2006. A review of the new language reveals a few changes:
 - Item I.B. states that UNH Cooperative extension will employ and provide administration and supervision of each **Extension staff member** assigned to the Extension program within the county. The previous language only mentioned **Extension professional staff members**.
 - Item I. C. states that UNH will provide a share of the personnel and operating costs of County Extension staff versus the previous language that states that UNH will provide a share of the salaries of County Extension professional staff and all fringe benefits.
 - Item I. D. changes the format in which resources will be made available from publications etc. to "web-based and other electronic information resources in support of Extension programs in the county."

Sue contacted Office Administrator Larry Barker to provide additional information and the final re-extension report. Sue did not receive the information prior to the meeting and suggested waiting for Mr. Barker's comments and answers. The MOU will need to be approved by the Commissioners and the Delegation. Commissioner Judd will sign on behalf of the Board once all issues are clarified.

- d. On September 7, the NHAC Executive Board voted that effective July 1, 2012, the 10 New Hampshire counties would cease paying the State of NH for the expenses of the Department of Health & Human Services rate setting bureau. The State has been notified of the decision by unanimous vote. Counties have paid this cost since the late 1980's. There is nothing in state law that requires this payment and the NHAC Board concluded that the counties have no

liability for the expenses of state employees working at DHHS in the rate setting bureau. The Coös County budget for this expense for 2012 is \$18,000 for the calendar year.

- e. Labor negotiations begin with AFSCME on September 11, 2012. Sue requested a non-public session to speak with the Board about negotiations.
- f. Labor negotiations will begin with the SEA on October 11, 2012.

Report of the Unincorporated Places:

- a. The Hearing in the case of Andy Martin v. Lawrence Spellman, et al. (The Balsams) is scheduled in Merrimack Superior Court on September 17, 2012. Attorney Phil Waystack and Planning Board Vice-Chair Fred King will appear for the Coös County Planning Board. Parties have requested dismissal of the case as well as requesting that the Court award legal fees.
- b. Attorney Jonathan Frizzell continues to work with the Attorney for Brookfield Renewable Power on the decommissioning fund which must be established by year-end. The original negotiations had taken place with Granite Reliable Wind Park. Brookfield committed to establish a letter of credit as financial assurance as well as a decommissioning fund which during the next 10 years will amount to \$844,033 unless future decommissioning estimates raise or lower that amount (the estimate was last updated on 05/24/2010).
- c. Sue audited the property tax files of both Cambridge and Wentworth Location to determine all property transactions related to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Refuge at Umbagog. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife recently made a Revenue Sharing Payment of \$5,453 on a total of 1,710.14 acres (55.5 acres in Cambridge and 1,654.64 acres in Wentworth Location). The payment amounts to \$3.19 per acre. Sue received a call from the Attorney who is preparing the deed for the Plum Creek lands that will be sold in September to the USFWS. The sale is for 4,532 acres in Cambridge. A spreadsheet with all the transactions was distributed at the meeting.
- d. Annually Coös County must make a determination to accept funds under the Secure Rural Schools & Community Self-Determination Act or the 25% Payments (National Forest Reserve). The annual agreement letter to the NH Department of Education must be signed by the Chairman. As was the practice in the past, the funding will be used for school tuition for students from the Unincorporated Places. A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Grenier to approve the annual agreement letter to the NH Department of Education. All approved 3-0. Commissioner Judd signed the letter.
- e. Sue distributed a copy of a letter received from the 45th Parallel Emergency Services thanking the Board for the funds awarded to them.

Sue will be away on vacation from September 21 to October 2.

- 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:

HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS	23
PRETRIAL	9
TOTAL IN FACILITY	32
NH STATE PRISON INMATES	2
ELECTRONIC MONITORING PROGRAM	1

WORK RELEASE PROGRAM	0
OTHER COUNTY INMATES	1
HELD AT OTHER FACILITIES HOC= HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS PT= PRETRIAL	11 CARROLL DOC: 1 PT MALE GRAFTON DOC: 1 HOC MALE, 2 HOC FEMALE, 2 PT FEMALE HILLSBOROUGH DOC: 1 PT MALE ROCKINGHAM DOC: 1 PT MALE STRAFFORD DOC: 1 PT MALE NHSP: 2 HOC MALE
AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION AUGUST	37
MALE DAYS SERVED IN FACILITY AUGUST	1,138
FEMALE DAYS SERVED AUGUST	141 (8 females)
TOTAL INMATES BOOKED AUGUST	32

- a. A painting project on the exterior of the facility has been completed. Over a few weeks, the outside crew inmates scraped and painted all of the eaves, trim, doors and window frames. All windows were cleaned and a few maple trees were trimmed back which were touching the roof and eaves. While the staging was up, the roof, woodwork and eaves were inspected and the condition was found to be outstanding. A design idea for an official sign to be mounted outside the main Corrections entrance has been submitted to the NH State Prison Sign Shop.
 - b. Various other internal and external painting projects are in progress, including the complete painting of the Control Center, four pretrial cell blocks, and the sealing and recoating of two pretrial shower areas. The Recycling Center buildings are in the process of being completely painted, as well as receiving much needed trim repair. The Recycling Center storage building, which had a dirt floor, has a new concrete floor which was poured on August 16.
 - c. Increased costs for the housing of female inmates remain a concern. The amount budgeted for housing has been expended due to the unforeseen increase in female incarcerations this year. A request for budget line item transfers have been submitted after completing an analysis of the department's budget with the County Administrator and Director of Finance. Female housing for July was \$8,080 a mere 9% drop from June. The housing bill for August has not been received yet.
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 today was 79. The average census for August was 78; occupancy for August was 80.8%. In August, there were four (4) admissions, three (3) discharges and two (2) deaths. There has been one (1) admission and one (1) death in September. Of the 79 residents, twenty-one (21) are Private Pay and nine (9) residents are Vermont Medicaid. The totals for 2012: Thirty-four (34) admissions, ten (10) discharges and fourteen (14) deaths.
 - b. Nurse Staffing: The contract nurse started on September 6. She will be covering the 3-11 shift until November 1.
 - c. Survey: The Surveyors arrived at 12:20 on Tuesday, August 28 and exited at 12:30 on Thursday, August 30. It was a very good survey; the team was relaxed and very complimentary of staff and all they do here. The surveyors did leave with three areas of "concern". One of the concerns was, as always, the waived rooms. The waiver runs out on December 31, 2012.

The Survey Team asked a number of questions about the waived rooms, interviewed staff about the waived rooms and requested information on the square footage of each waived room. Laura is not confident that the State will renew the waiver on December 31. It is something the facility will need to prepare for as thirteen of the rooms are waived. Laura tries not to use the waived beds if not necessary; however, four of the waived beds are currently being used and these residents would need to be moved to other rooms in the facility. The deficiency statement is expected in another week or so.

- d. LNA Class: The LNA class graduated six students on September 5. All six passed their boards on Saturday, September 8.

- 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		
October	4,086	68	October		
November	1,750	29	November		
December	1,711	29	December		

- f. Nursing hours provided to the Department of Corrections are down. The CCNH nurses made five special visits to the DOC to assess individual inmates. These extra visits accounted for a total of about 2 hours of the 14 hours noted above.

- g. Laura had an issue for non-public, Section 91-A:3 II (a).

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 97. Twelve (12) residents are private pay and six (6) are Medicaid pending. The average daily census for August was 98.4; year to date is 97.36. There were **2** admissions in August and **2** deaths. The year to date death total is 19 and year to date admission total is 20.
- b. Survey: The survey window is open.
- c. Annual Family Picnic: The picnic was held on August 17. The weather, food and entertainment were great. Approximately 153 guests attended with a grand total 224 including residents. This year's theme was "The Old West".
- d. Restaurant License: The annual Dietary Department inspection was completed on August 15 by Patrick MacQueen, City Manager. The nursing home restaurant license was renewed.

- e. Maintenance: The oil lines to the generator have been changed. Mike Holt was concerned regarding the condition of these original oil lines, he wanted to be proactive and prevent an issue from occurring.
 - f. Call Bell System: RF Technologies was in to change the 3rd floor gateway. The gateway was running only on batteries; it would no longer recognize regular voltage. The batteries needed to be changed every 6 hours prior to replacing the unit. No problems have been noted since the replacement of the gateway.
 - g. AFSCME: Negotiations officially began on September 11.
 - h. Louise presented a budget transfer for the Board's approval.
8. Report of the Finance Director Jennifer Fish. There was no written report submitted to the Board.
- a. Jennifer presented the investment policy for the Board's approval. She explained that nothing had changed since last year. Commissioner Judd signed the investment policy.
9. Other Business:
- a. Brookside Apartments - Potential CDBG request: Commissioner Grenier reported that he did not have any information to provide at this time.
 - b. Commissioner Grenier stated that he was sad to see Commissioner Judd lose in the primary. When he became commissioner he was told that Commissioner Judd was a "larger than life" figure who was gruff and tough. Commissioner Judd has a big heart for the elderly and made it his mission to protect the older generation. That is the legacy he is leaving behind.
10. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to enter into nonpublic session per RSA 91-A:3 II (a) & RSA 91-A:2 I (b) at 11:30 a.m. All approved 3-0. The Commissioners took the following action in non-public session:
- a. A Coös County Nursing Hospital employee was terminated.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to come out of nonpublic session at 12:15 p.m. All approved 3-0.

The next regular monthly meeting will tentatively be held October 10 at 9:00 a.m. at the Coös County Nursing Home in Berlin. *The meeting will be held at the North Country Resource Center (DRED Building) in Lancaster on Wednesday, October 10 at 9:00 a.m.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Grenier to adjourn the meeting at 12:15 p.m. All approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas M. Brady, Clerk