

Coös County Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Coös County Nursing Home - Berlin, NH  
August 8, 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; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris; Sheriff Gerry Marcou; County Treasurer Fred King and members of the press. Nursing Home Administrator Louise Belanger was excused.

Commissioner Judd opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

1. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the minutes of the July 18, 2012 meeting. All approved 3-0.
2. The Board reviewed the Payrolls and Disbursements for the month of July 2012. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the Payrolls and Disbursements for the month of July 2012. All approved 3-0.
3. Hearing of the Public:
  - Mr. Fred King provided an update from last month's Commissioners' meeting regarding the possibility of a study of the economic impact on Coös County of the Umbagog Refuge's expansion. Mr. King met with Jeff Hayes of the North Country Council. The Council is willing to participate in preparing the request for proposal (RFP) for a study. They spoke of funding and the North Country Council may be able to obtain a match from the State of NH. Mr. King met with the Commissioners of Oxford County Maine as there are issues with the Umbagog Refuge in the Upton area. Mr. King believed that the federal government should also share with the cost of this study. Mr. King will contact the Board with information at a later date. Mr. King also reported that John Scarinza, Chair of the Coös County Planning Board, will be contacting the UNH Cooperative Extension to see if they would provide some assistance in the study.

Based on a motion made at last month's meeting, Mr. King wrote and mailed a letter on behalf of the Coös County Commissioners to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Headquarters in Massachusetts requesting "cooperating agency" status under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). *A copy of the letter is on file.* Mr. King also asked if the agency would assist in paying for the economic study.

Commissioner Judd thanked Mr. King for the work he has done.

- Sheriff Marcou presented a request to hire a temporary secretary four hours per week to learn the current secretary's job. This would provide office coverage when the secretary is out of the office. The Sheriff proposed hiring the Victim/Witness secretary. She currently works 16 hours per week and this would not affect benefits. Sue stated that she completed an analysis of the Sheriff's budget and there are funds available. A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Grenier to approve hiring the Victim/Witness secretary four hours per week for the Sheriff's Department. All approved 3-0.

The Sheriff reported that the cameras (6) for the cruisers were received and installed.

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. AFSCME Council 93 Staff Representative Michael Blair served notice of AFSCME's intent to negotiate a successor agreement for certain employees of Coös County Nursing Home. Sue proposed the following as the County Bargaining Unit: Suzanne Collins, Jennifer Fish, Louise Belanger and Helen Couture. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the proposed bargaining unit. All approved 3-0.
  - b. SEA Staff Representative Chris Long served notice of its intent to negotiate a successor agreement for certain employees of the Coös County Department of Corrections. Sue proposed the following as the County Bargaining Unit: Suzanne Collins, Jennifer Fish, Julie Brunault and Commissioner Judd. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the proposed bargaining unit. All approved 3-0.
  - c. State County Finance Committee met on July 24, 2012.
    - The information relative to Medicaid Managed Care (and the lack of specific details) is very daunting. For long term care the plan is to begin formal meetings with Medicaid providers by the end of September. The entire Medicaid Managed Care program may be stalled until the lawsuit against the State filed by several hospitals relative to Disproportionate Share Payments is resolved. Some hospitals are adamant that they will not negotiate contracts with the Managed Care Organizations (MCO) until the lawsuit is resolved. Many physician practices are associated with hospitals which further exacerbates the ability of MCO's to negotiate Medicaid contracts.
    - Representatives of the Department of Health & Human Services provided Balancing Incentive Program details. This is a \$26.5M 3-year grant from the federal government. New Hampshire is the first state to receive approval for this funding with a goal of "rebalancing total Medicaid long term care" spending. The State aims to reach a point where 50% of Medicaid for long term care is spent in Home & Community Based Care and 50% is spent for institutional care. The State is developing its new "No Wrong Door" program whereby a transparent system exists for folks to apply for Medicaid. ServiceLink and community health services will continue to be major players in the network. The bottom line is that one person will work with an applicant for Medicaid to advise the applicant on the best programs available. There will be an emphasis on community based services. The NHAC is looking into impacts of this grant on the Medicaid cap and whether counties should receive some benefit from the increase in Medicaid's federal share from 50% to 52%.
    - There was some good news shared at the meeting. Another \$15,147,235 in ProShare funds will be distributed by mid-August. Coös County expects an additional \$1,503,830. The distribution was approved by the Joint Legislative Fiscal Committee and awaits Governor & Council approval on August 8.
  - d. On July 20, Laura Mills, Louise Belanger, Jennifer Fish and Sue met with Primex<sup>3</sup> Risk Management Consultant Dave Witham to follow-up on each nursing facility's workers' comp claims by reviewing the benchmarks set by each nursing home in an effort to promote safety in the workplace and reduce claims. Dave presented statistics on claims that show considerable improvement in the County's workers' compensation performance across the board. Everyone agreed that this improvement must be sustained over many years for the County to see some serious reductions to workers' compensation premiums.

Sue also reported that the workers' comp expenses will be less than budgeted due to the premium holiday. The Secretary of State and the Primex<sup>3</sup> Risk Pool have an agreement to lower Primex's huge unencumbered fund balances back to the communities. The County stopped paying workers' comp bills in July due to the three month holiday.

- e. Economic Development Applications for Round II were mailed to all the towns on July 23 with a due date of August 6. There is \$10,000 available. ***(Communities funded in Round I include Berlin, Colebrook, Gorham, Jefferson, Lancaster, Northumberland, Shelburne).***
- Town of Pittsburg: \$5,000 to update and enhance the Town website in order to attract more people to Pittsburg for vacation time and enjoyment of the town which boosts the local economy.
  - Town of Carroll: \$4,730 to perform an energy audit of the town hall building envelope and heating system and develop an understanding of priorities and benchmark goals towards potential energy savings resulting in less financial burden on the taxpayer. Energy Audit proposal prepared by GDS Associates Inc. of Manchester.
  - Town of Stewartstown: \$5,000 to provide information about, directions to, and clean/repair tombstones at the North Hill Cemetery (Metallak Burial Site); this will enhance tourism.
  - Town of Jefferson (second application submitted in Round I): \$3,000 to create and develop small area maps and print pad maps.
  - Town of Colebrook (second application submitted in Round I): \$5,000 to provide certified independent appraisals prior to acquiring three separate and privately owned properties for the creation of a town park and area information booth in the center of downtown Colebrook.
  - Town of Lancaster: \$2,000 to help fund the update and redesign of the public library's website. The William D. Weeks website is approximately 5 years old and incompatible with new technology and with Lancaster's updated website made possible by Round I funding.

Sue added that Larry Enman, Selectman from Errol, dropped off an application at the office after the deadline. The request was for a generator to provide a backup for the town's water system in order to run businesses on Main Street when there is a power failure. Mr. Enman was aware that the application was late.

Commissioner Judd noted that he would recuse himself from voting as the Town of Pittsburg was included in Round II. He added that some of the applications did not pertain to economic development and others were awarded in the first round. The Board reviewed the applications for the Towns of Carroll and Stewartstown.

A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Grenier to approve the Town of Pittsburg's application of \$5,000 to update and enhance the Town website in order to attract more people to Pittsburg for vacation time and enjoyment of the town which will boost the local economy. All approved 2-0. Commissioner Judd abstained.

Commission Brady stated that the Towns of Carroll and Stewartstown were the only two towns that had not received funding. Commissioner Grenier suggested that \$2,500 be awarded to each. A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Grenier to appropriate \$2,500 to the Town of Carroll and \$2,500 to the Town of Stewartstown. All approved 2-0.

Sue noted that each town that received funds was informed by letter that a report indicating what goals were met with the funding are due by the end of September. Commissioner Brady reported that the Town of Jefferson held meetings with different businesses regarding the update of the town's website. Notchnet from Littleton, NH was selected and will be compiling information to update the Town of Jefferson's website. He added that the map project will take longer in preparation.

*Report of the Unincorporated Places:*

- a. Dixville - Request for Budget Transfer of \$2,500 from Contingency Fund to Planning Board Professional Services to cover legal services incurred on behalf of the Coös County Planning Board in the lawsuit filed by Andy Martin against Balsams View, Tillotson Corporation among others. The Board signed the budget transfer. Sue noted that the attorney seeks to dismiss the lawsuit and seeks to recover all legal fees incurred.

Sue presented a Primex<sup>3</sup> Member Ballot for Election of Trustee for Board approval. She explained that Primex<sup>3</sup> entered into a Risk Pool Practices Agreement with the New Hampshire Secretary of State. One of the provisions of the Agreement is Primex<sup>3</sup>'s commitment to fill one of the vacant Board of Trustee seats by a vote of the members. The nominee for this seat is Stephen Bartlett, Business Administrator for the Portsmouth NH School District. Any participating municipality has received this information. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the nomination of Stephen Bartlett. All approved 3-0.

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	27
PRETRIAL	11
<b>TOTAL IN FACILITY</b>	<b>38</b>
NH STATE PRISON INMATES	2
ELECTRONIC MONITORING PROGRAM	1
WORK RELEASE PROGRAM	0
OTHER COUNTY INMATES	1
HELD AT OTHER FACILITIES	15 BELKNAP DOC: 1 PT FEMALE CARROLL DOC: 1 PT MALE GRAFTON DOC: 1 PT MALE, 1 HOC MALE, 4 HOC FEMALE, 3 PT FEMALE HILLSBOROUGH DOC: 1 PT MALE ROCKINGHAM DOC: 1 PT MALE STRAFFORD DOC: 1 PT MALE NHSP-SECURE PSYCH: 1 PT MALE
AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION JULY	40
MALE DAYS SERVED IN FACILITY JULY	1,228
FEMALE DAYS SERVED JULY	282 (14 females)
TOTAL INMATES BOOKED JULY	46

- a. There was a 66% decrease in time spent at the DOC by Nursing Hospital staff in July due to having Don Gilbert RN on board for medication pass coverage. Nursing Hospital staff logged 16 hours of time at the DOC in July compared to 47 hours in June. Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills confirmed that this has been a significant relief on her staff.

- b. Staff members are preparing for another substantial upgrade to the department's operation. Swanson Commissary Services will be on-site during the week of September 10 for software install and interface with the inmate phone and jail management systems. Training is also scheduled for key staff members who work with inmate accounts. Some advantages that Swanson Commissary will provide include increased staff efficiency over in-facility commissaries, better product choice and pricing for inmates, and state of the art software which manages inmate accounts and provides many convenience options for inmates and their families.
- c. The application for a formal Intergovernmental Agency Agreement to house federal prisoners, which was submitted June 20, has not been processed yet. The current temporary agreement expires on August 20, at which time federal prisoners could not be accepted. Superintendent Hamelin requested an extension to the temporary housing agreement in anticipation of its expiration, which has been granted. A facility inspection by the U.S. Marshal's office, also conducted in 2011, is scheduled for August 9.
- d. All positions are currently filled in the Department for the first time in a few years. Two officers are currently in the Field Training Program and upon successful completion each shift will be fully staffed. Three officers will still require certification by completing an NHAC Corrections Academy.

Superintendent Hamelin thanked the Board for the discussion held at last month's meeting pertaining to the Recycling Center Operator. It was well received and greatly appreciated.

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 78. The average census for July was 79; occupancy for July was 81.5%. In July there were two (2) admissions, one (1) discharge and one (1) death. There have been two (2) discharges in August and two (2) admissions are planned later in the week. Of the 78 residents, nineteen (19) are Private Pay and nine (9) are Vermont Medicaid. The totals for 2012: twenty-nine (29) admissions, nine (9) discharges and eleven (11) deaths.
- b. Nurse Staffing: With a 40 hour RN going out on FMLA and several of LPNs returning to school at the end of August, Laura requested approval to hire a contract nurse to cover for 8 weeks on the 3-11 shift, September 4-November 3.

Commissioner Judd questioned why RNs are needed as the cost is higher than LPNs. Laura explained that an RN is required in the building during off-shifts. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Judd to approve the request to hire a contract nurse at \$40/hour for eight weeks (9/4/12 through 11/3/12). All approved 2-0.  
*Commissioner Brady stepped out of the meeting, momentarily.*

- c. Survey Window: The Nursing Hospital survey window opened June 22.
- d. Renovations: The renovations continue on Third Floor South but are currently on hold as the painter is on vacation. The work on the bathroom on Two North had stalled but is moving forward again and Room 233 remains out of commission. Numerous emergent plumbing issues this month have kept the Maintenance staff very busy.

The window project has finished for this year.

e. LNA Class: The LNA class started on July 30 with 6 students.

f. 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		
September	4,358	73	September		
October	4,086	68	October		
November	1,750	29	November		
December	1,711	29	December		

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

7. Report of the Berlin Nursing Home Administrator Louise Belanger. There was no report as Louise was on vacation.

Jennifer did provide census information: The current census was 98. Thirteen (13) residents are Private Pay and 5 are Medicaid pending.

8. Report of the Finance Director Jennifer Fish. There was no written report submitted to the Board.

Jennifer reported that the Medicaid Auditor has completed field work at the Nursing Hospital. The final report will be provided by the State soon.

9. Other Business:

a. Fuel Oil Bids:

- The sealed bids for LP gas in Berlin (17,000 gallons) were as follows:

Irving	1.694	Fixed
Amerigas	1.759	Net 30 days
Pyrofax	1.67	Net 30 days
Pyrofax	1.59	Prebuy

Commissioner Judd asked if the County could afford to prepay and Jennifer replied yes. Commissioner Grenier asked who the current vendor is and Jennifer replied Pyrofax. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the Pyrofax bid of \$1.59 per gallon, prebuy, for 17,000 gallons. All approved 3-0.

- #2 Fuel Oil:

Bidder	W. Stewartstown Bulk Deliveries 36,000 Gallons	Berlin Bulk Deliveries 37,500 Gallons	W. Stewartstown Pedal Truck Deliveries
Pre-Buy			
Lewis Oil / Styles	3.2570	3.2570	
P&L Cote, Inc.	3.1690	3.1690	
C. Bean Transport	-	-	3.2990
C.N. Brown	3.2289	3.2147	3.3289

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the P&L Cote, Inc. bid of \$3.1690 per gallon for both facilities, pre-buy. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the C. Bean Transport bid of \$3.2990 per gallon for pedal truck deliveries. All approved 3-0.

- LP Gas - Nursing Hospital in W. Stewartstown (21,000 gallons):

C.N. Brown – net 30 days	1.6522
Ameri-Gas – prepaid in full	1.7500

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the CN Brown LP gas bid of \$1.6522 per gallon. All approved 3-0.

b. Review and Options for County House - Sue presented three proposals to the Board:

1. Subdivide and sell the property:
  - Current housing market in Stewartstown is poor;
  - Water is part of county system;
  - Property line would have to exclude county cemetery;
  - A similar property in value on Route #3 in Stewartstown constructed in 1993 was originally listed for \$239,000; now priced at \$159,000 and on the market at this low price for 10 months;
  - A similar property in value on Fort Hill Road in Stewartstown constructed in 1995 currently listed for \$259,000. It has been on the market for at least three years.
  - Selling the property will add this parcel to the Stewartstown property tax rolls.
2. Rent the property:
  - On July 18, 2012, Sue contacted Paul Kuhn, Agent in Charge of Border Patrol Operations, asking if any agent would be interested in renting the house. Rental consideration of a similar property in Stewartstown is \$800 not including heat and utilities. This could provide up to \$9,600 rental income.
3. Use the property for county government purposes:
  - With major changes to Medicaid (Medicaid Managed Care) that is forecast to require additional clerical staff, use of the house for County office operations such as County Administrator/Unincorporated Places Administrator, Director of Finance, Administrative Assistant/UP Tax Collector, Payroll, Accounts Payable, Commissioners' office space and meeting space. There is ample parking and moving those functions out of the Nursing Hospital would relieve the current crunch for office space and parking.

Office space at the Nursing Hospital is at a premium and moving the above functions off site would create better working conditions for Nursing Hospital operations:

- Dietary Manager and Assistant Dietary Manager share an office;
- Laundry/Housekeeping Director's office is located in a storage area;
- MDS Coordinator and Clinical Coordinator are located on the third floor sun porch making it inaccessible for resident use;
- Director of Nursing, QA (who also serves as Assistant Director of Nursing) and Scheduling Coordinator would benefit from proximity to one another in office space – the current offices occupied by County Administrator, Director of Finance, Commissioners could be used as a centralized location for the Nursing Department;
- Activities Department needs more space.

Sue added that there is a lot of confusion among staff as to who is in charge. This would separate the County operations from the Nursing Hospital. Jennifer supported the idea of moving the County operations and agreed with Sue's comment. Commissioner Judd stated that he was not in favor of selling the house. His suggestion was to wait and see what will happen with Medicaid Managed Care. Maybe the County could rent the house temporarily (6-12 months) with the option that the renters would have to move if the County offices are moved to that location. Commissioner Grenier was not opposed to moving the County Administration functions offsite. Commissioner Judd was in favor of the move. Commissioner Brady asked if floor plans could be drawn up of the current office locations, the house with a proposed floor plan and the nursing hospital with a proposed floor plan. He also asked if the house was handicap-accessible. Sue replied that access is available on the first floor. Sue estimated that the house could be renovated with \$15,000 - \$20,000. The Board was in agreement that Sue should present this proposal to the Delegation at the August 10 meeting.

10. Unincorporated Places:

- a. MS1 extension: The Board signed the MS1 extension request provided by Linda Harris.
- b. NH 911 Conversions - Odell: Linda Harris presented an address conversion submittal form from the State of NH Department of Safety, Division of Emergency Services. Linda explained that some instances several camps share one driveway. This request designates a road name for a cluster of camps. The Board signed the form.
- c. Applications for Reimbursement to Towns and Cities - Federal and State Forest Lands: The Board signed the applications for each Unincorporated Place.

11. Other Public Input:

Edith Tucker asked if the Delegation and Commissioners were to proceed with Option 3 of Sue's list of proposals for the County Administrator's house, how would that affect the cost of paying off the bond of the nursing hospital or paying the County Administration expenses at the nursing hospital. Sue stated that the bond issue on the Nursing Hospital addition has nothing to do with the Unincorporated Places. Currently the operating budget of the Unincorporated Places includes \$2,500 to pay Coös County Nursing Hospital for utilities. If the County offices were moved to the house, the Unincorporated Places share of operating expenses would be built into their budgets. Commissioner Judd stated that there are no figures available as this was just a proposal.



11. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to enter into nonpublic session per Section 91-A:3 II (a) (g) at 10:30 a.m. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to come out of nonpublic session at 11:15 a.m. All approved 3-0.

Jennifer was notified that the LP gas bid from Pyrofax had gone up five cents. The new rate was \$1.64 for prebuy and \$1.72 for thirty days. The Pyrofax bid was still the lowest bid. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the new bid of \$1.64 prebuy, for 17,000 gallons. All approved 3-0.

The Board signed a letter of employment for Jennifer Fish as County Administrator. Sue presented the new salary schedule based on \$95,000 salary starting January 1, 2013. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the proposed salary schedule that does not include housing. All approved 3-0.

Commissioner Judd added that Jennifer will continue as temporary Chief Financial Officer (CFO) while she is training for this new position. Jennifer does not want to train someone for Finance while she is training with Sue. Commissioner Grenier asked when the CFO position will be posted and Jennifer replied January 1. She would like to wait until after the budget public hearing. Commissioner Judd also suggested that the CFO position could be part-time.

The next regular monthly meeting will be held September 12 at 10:00 a.m. in the Libby Room at the Mt. Washington Summit Road Company, 942 NH Route 16, Green's Grant, NH

A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Grenier to adjourn the meeting at 11:23 a.m. All approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas M. Brady, Clerk