

Coös County Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Coös County Nursing Hospital - W. Stewartstown, NH
October 13, 2011

Present: Commissioners Bing Judd, Paul Grenier and Tom Brady; County Administrator Suzanne L. Collins; Director of Finance Jennifer Fish; Nursing Hospital Administrator Laura Mills; Nursing Home Administrator Louise Belanger; Sheriff Gerry Marcou; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris; County Treasurer Fred King; Border Patrol Agent In Charge Paul Kuhn; Representative Gene Chandler; Max Makaitis, Economic Development CAP; and members of the press.

Commissioner Judd opened the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

1. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the minutes of the September 14, 2011 meeting. All approved 3-0.
2. The Board reviewed the Payrolls and Disbursements for the month of September 2011. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the Payrolls and Disbursements for the month of September 2011. All approved 3-0.
3. a. Representative Gene Chandler, on behalf of Congressman Bass, stated that he was at the meeting in response to a letter from the County Commissioners to Congressman Bass on the purchase of Coös County Unincorporated Places' lands by the Federal government. Commissioner Judd stated that the County is interested in future land easements. Commissioner Grenier added that some US Fish & Wildlife Refuge land ownership in the Unincorporated Places is a good thing but the amount to date is overkill. Every time land is purchased by the federal government, it is stated that the land will be for multi-use purposes but the reality is that it is difficult to use the land in traditional ways. The locals take a distant back seat. He is opposed to the federal government purchasing more land. The County needs the land for timber production. He supported the letter that was sent regarding the future of timber production in Coös County. Sheriff Marcou also added that hunting regulations from the federal government supersede the state laws. Commissioner Brady noted that when the Commissioners met with the Trust for Public Land at a previous meeting, it was asked if timber production would continue and the response was as long as it did not affect species. Sheriff Marcou added that the towns and unincorporated places should have first access to these areas when lands are for sale and they should decide how to manage the land. Representative Chandler asked if the Planning Board had taken a position on this issue. Commissioner Judd indicated the Board had. He requested a copy of the minutes. He continued that what is most important is timber harvesting and lands should be open to the public. Mr. King added that the Federal government does not pay any property taxes. Representative Chandler added that the PILT payment has been very limited and Sue stated he was correct. Representative Chandler stated he has met with several other towns and the issues are the same everywhere. He concluded by saying that he did not know if this would affect the current Plum Creek sale or not. Representative Chandler left the meeting at 6:17 p.m.
- b. U.S. Border Patrol Agent in Charge Paul Kuhn explained that he took over the Beecher Falls station in April. The failed past agreement on holding detainees at the Coös County Department of Corrections was the Border Patrol's fault. He has been working with Superintendent Hamelin on a temporary arrangement in which the Sheriff's department was not included due to lack of funding. However, the long-term arrangement does include the

Sheriff's Department. Mr. Kuhn reading from his handout (a copy is on file) explained the proposed process. Commissioner Grenier asked if there was any plan in place to protect the County if a lawsuit is filed against the County by a detainee. He also asked who will be responsible to keep track of all the paperwork involved. Superintendent Hamelin replied that the Department of Corrections will be processing these detainees as regular bookings and the Department also keeps their files. Agent Kuhn replied that he cannot guarantee anything as far as potential lawsuits go. Sue suggested that Primex³ review the contract. She also asked if this process was only temporary until the new Border Patrol headquarters is built in Canaan, VT. Agent Kuhn replied that this is long term as the new station will not be set up to house detainees. Commissioner Grenier stated that he was not against the agreement; he just wants the County to be protected. Agent Kuhn added that he would check on the issue. Superintendent Hamelin will also speak to affiliate superintendents who currently house federal detainees.

Agent Kuhn reiterated that the temporary contract which is currently being worked on has a fiscal year beginning October 1 and is currently being funded. The long-term contract includes Sheriff Marcou's department at \$50 per hour. Sheriff Marcou added that once this contract begins there will be a quick turnaround processing inmates out of the facility. Agent Kuhn also added that there is a clause in the contract that states the County can terminate at any time. He left the meeting at 6:45 pm.

- c. Max Makaitis, Tri-County CAP economic development agent, reported on positive long term economic development projects in Coös County:
- Burgess BioPower and co-locating businesses;
 - Federal Correctional Institution Berlin;
 - Groveton Mill;
 - Balsams Grand Resort;
 - Dummer 99 Mw Wind Farm;
 - Northern Loop Upgrade;
 - Northern Pass;
 - Coös County Bank Round Table Project;
 - CHP Plant in the Maynesboro Industrial Park;
 - Pellet Plant;
 - Route 110 Hotel (Jericho Park); and
 - Icy Gulch Restaurant and Meat Shop (Gorham).
- d. County Treasurer Fred King presented a proposal to operate the Colebrook rest area on behalf of the Colebrook Chamber of Commerce for a short period November 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012. He reported that the State will be closing the rest area October 31 and the Chamber will need to move its operations out. The Chamber is willing to operate the rest area and to keep its office in the building. He proposed that the State lease the rest area to the Chamber for \$1. He stated that the County has appropriated funds for economic development and asked that \$5,000 be used to operate the rest area for eight months until the new state fiscal year on July 1, 2012. The County would not need to get involved in running the rest area. The Chamber would be responsible in the long run. Commissioner Grenier stated that he was a firm believer of keeping both Colebrook and Shelburne rest areas open. However, there is no mention of the Shelburne rest area in this proposal. Mr. King replied that he had been informed that the Shelburne rest area would be taken care of by the City of Berlin. Commissioner Grenier stated that was not so. Commissioner Judd stated that he and Commissioner Brady met with DRED Commissioner Bald to discuss these rest areas.

Commissioner Brady asked if the Chamber will be putting any money into this proposal. Mr. King stated that the Chamber has no money but is willing to keep the place open to the public. Commissioner Brady added that the Chamber in his area is also hurting. He cannot support the Colebrook Chamber occupying the building for free. Commissioner Brady stated that a regional partnership could work. The rest areas will close for the winter and reopen for the summer season seven days per week. He cannot see how the County will be able to keep them open. He cannot support this proposal and the ball is back the State's court. Commissioner Grenier stated that the US Fish & Wildlife Service pays no property taxes. Why couldn't they help the locals by keeping these places open? Commissioner Judd noted that the State knew when the budget passed last summer that there would be no funds available for these facilities. The County should have been given more than 24 hours to accept a proposal. He cannot support this proposal. Commissioner Grenier stated that he came into this meeting not supporting this proposal but he could support a one-time \$5,000 appropriation. Commissioner Brady stated his area is complaining about the Chamber not offering any money.

3. 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 Bureau of Court Facilities submitted for Board approval an updated courthouse lease. The new 3-year lease reflects the new sheriff space and the adjusted common space. The County is leasing 3,693 square feet of space comprised of 2,052 square feet for the Registry of Deeds, 1,010 square feet of space for the Sheriff's Department and 631 square feet of common space on the first floor of the courthouse. Per square foot cost is \$8.29 from October 15, 2011 to September 30, 2012 with annual escalator to \$8.54/square foot for the second year and \$8.80/square foot in the third year. Once a determination has been made relative to County Attorney space the lease can be amended. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to accept the proposed three year lease. All approved 3-0. The lease was signed by all Board members.

Sue reported that Attorney Waystack has not heard yet from the County Attorney relative to the former probate registry space in the courthouse. Attorney Mekeel left a voice message with the Director of Finance requesting budget figures for rent and property taxes for his department's current office space. Commissioner Grenier stated that the County should proceed with the renovations on the new area in the courthouse. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to proceed with the renovation planning at the courthouse for the County Attorney's office area. All approved 3-0. Sue replied that the first step will be to obtain an estimate for reconfigured space and to forward the plan to the State for approval.

- b. The new telephone system is being installed in the W. Stewartstown complex and a meeting on the design of the Coös County Nursing Home system is scheduled for October 19. The replacement window project is being finalized for this year. That should take care of the major capital improvements for 2011 in both West Stewartstown and Berlin facilities.
- c. The Coös County water system has been experiencing bacteria problems since early summer. Representatives from Granite State Rural Water and the NH Department of Environmental Services have been on site on two occasions to help determine the cause of the bacteria in water samples. The problem surfaced shortly after the cows were shipped. It is at that time that daily water usage dropped to 14,000 gallons per day from 16,600 gallons per day. The water in the reservoir does not turn over fast enough (refresh itself) with the

decreased usage. DES recommended the immediate installation of a third circulator pump in the center of the reservoir. DES is requiring record drawings of the distribution system and historic construction details on the yard hydrants which may have to be eliminated if there are underground drain holes. Sue added that the circulator pumps have been started up at the reservoir and a test will be taken on Monday.

- d. The Town of Colebrook notified the County on September 29 that the Board would not sign the Recycling Center contract. Recycling containers were removed from the Colebrook Transfer Station on September 30. Superintendent Hamelin notified all Colebrook businesses that the cardboard service would cease effective the first Monday of October. The Town of Colebrook has requested a refund of \$5,184.51 (25% of the 2011 assessment of \$20,738). A meeting with the other participating towns was held October 12. The towns authorized the Recycling Center to pick up the cardboard at these businesses. Superintendent Hamelin contacted the businesses and spoke to 21 of 25 businesses. All were elated that the Recycling Center was offering this service at no cost. If the market drops, a pickup fee may have to be considered. The businesses asked when the service would begin and Superintendent Hamelin stated he needed to speak the Board first. Commissioner Grenier asked what was in it for the participating towns. Superintendent Hamelin replied that it will be a quicker turnaround time for marketing the cardboard. It will be a benefit to the other towns and the towns supported this at the meeting. Superintendent Hamelin will meet with the recycling center operator to discuss a schedule of pickups. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to authorize the refund of \$5,184.51 to the Town of Colebrook. All approved 3-0. All of the equipment that belonged to the Recycling Center has been picked up.
- e. On October 10 Jesse Carney notified Sue that he would not be providing snow plowing, sanding and snow removal services for the upcoming winter season. Ads will be placed in the two local papers seeking bids.
- f. In accordance with HB2 of the 2011 legislative session the NH Retirement System remitted \$4,237.86 to Coös County last week to help defray the additional cost of the employer share of Group II retirement for State Fiscal Year 2012. The funds were allocated to the Department of Corrections (\$3,305.56) and the Sheriff's Department (\$932.30) as credits against retirement expense. The additional cost of the Group II rate increase to the Department of Corrections for one year is approximately \$25,500 and the additional cost to the Sheriff's Department is approximately \$4,600.
- g. The initial negotiations sessions with AFSCME (Coös County Nursing Home Berlin) took place on September 16 and the initial session with the SEA (Coös County Department of Corrections) took place on October 6.
- h. County tax bills are ready to be mailed to the City, towns and unincorporated places on October 24.
- i. All county departments responsible for budgets are diligently at work preparing for the 2012 budget.
- j. Sue received a "bid" on the old county van formerly used by Coös County Nursing Hospital to be reviewed at the Commissioners meeting. The van has not been used for months and is no longer needed for resident transports. A motion was made by Commissioner Brady,

seconded by Commissioner Grenier to sell the van for \$500 to Jeanne Smith. All approved 3-0.

Report of the Unincorporated Places:

- a. Hurricane Irene caused significant storm damage to Success Pond Road. Although this is not a county road, the County has helped the Success Pond Camp Owners Association maintain the road on an annual basis. In lieu of making regular repairs to the road this year, the Association requested to use the appropriated funds to repair washouts. Berlin Fire Chief Trull assessed the road and determined that due to the washouts in many areas, the fire department would not be able to fill its obligation to provide emergency services. Sue requested a budget transfer in the amount of \$1,500 from the Success contingency funding to the roads line item. Total cost of repairs is \$4,000. Gravel will be provided at no cost by Dillon Logging. The Board signed the budget transfer.
 - b. The wind park tour scheduled for October 12 was cancelled at the request of Brookfield Power. Once construction is complete and there are fewer safety issues, Pip Decker will re-issue the invitation.
4. 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	28
PRETRIAL	8
STATE PRISON INMATES	3
ELECTRONIC MONITORING	1
WORK RELEASE	0
OTHER COUNTY INMATES	1
HELD AT OTHER FACILITIES	GRAFTON DOC: 1 PreTrial Female MERRIMACK DOC: 1 PreTrial Male ROCKINGHAM DOC: 1 House of Corrections Male NHSP: 3 House of Corrections Males

- a. Under the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) of 2003, Congress mandated that an annual National Inmate Survey of over 400 correctional facilities be conducted beginning in 2007. Coös County DOC was selected this year and the survey was completed by RTI International on October 4 and 5. Every inmate was required to meet with one of the two surveyors assigned to the facility.
- b. Superintendent Hamelin congratulated Officer Jeremie Marquis on successfully completing the 8 week Field Training Program on September 29. Following completion of this initial training, Officer Marquis was assigned to a position on Second Shift.
- c. Officer James Lesperance is attending the 86th NHAC Corrections Academy being held at the NH Police Standards and Training Council in Concord. The 5 week Corrections Academy is being held from October 3 to November 4.
- d. Superintendent Hamelin reported that the Jail Administrators Course which he attended September 12-16 at the National Institute of Corrections was extremely informative and very worthwhile training. It was fast-paced, focused and well organized training, as small groups of administrators from various sized agencies were put together to address similar challenges. The ability of The National Institute of Corrections to provide this extensive training at zero cost to local governments is an incredible resource.

- e. Superintendent Hamelin requested authorization to purchase 4 stackable/portable bunks through the Inmate Trust Fund for \$1,080. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to authorize the purchase of four stackable/portable bunks through the Inmate Trust Fund for \$1,080. All approved 3-0.
 - f. Superintendent Hamelin also presented a Memorandum of Understanding on a new video arraignment system. The first year will be free and preceding years may have fees up to \$1,000. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to authorize the Chair to sign the MOU. All approved 3-0.
5. 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 73. The average census for September was 74; occupancy for September was 76.5%. In September, there were five (5) admissions and four (4) deaths. Of the 74 residents, nineteen (19) are Private Pay; eleven (11) residents are Vermont Medicaid. There has been one (1) admission in October but also one (1) discharge. For the year to date, Coös County Nursing Hospital has had thirty-four (34) admissions, six (6) discharges and twenty-one (21) deaths.
 - b. Survey: The big news of course was SURVEY! Surveyors walked in about noon on Tuesday, September 20 and left at 1:40 on Thursday, September 22. They were very complimentary of the facility and staff and said the residents love the staff. The deficiency statement was received and the facility is deficiency-free for Quality of Care. Laura requested the Commissioners' approval for the \$25 Survey Bonus for staff. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to authorize the \$25 survey bonus. All approved 3-0.
 - c. Annual Flu Shots: Some residents have been immunized. The Flu clinics for the staff are being planned for October 19, 20 and 21.
 - d. Nursing Tuition Loan Program: Two staff members have inquired about applying for this program. The Commissioners had previously stated that any future requests for this program were to go directly to them in light of past issues. Laura directed these staff members to submit their requests directly to the Commissioners. Commissioner Judd stated that these requests would be discussed during non-public session.
 - e. Nursing Hours at Department of Corrections:

2010	MINUTES	Hours	2011	Minutes	Hours
January	3,821	64	January	3,907	65
February	3,678	61	February	4,035	67
March	3,474	58	March	3,930	66
April	3,350	56	April	4,427	74
May	3,031	51	May	4,280	71
June	3,048	51	June	4,446	74
July	2,509	42	July	4,529	75
August	4,013	67	August	4,307	72
September	3,895	65	September	4,358	73

- f. Diane Hobart, DNS has been working with the Department of Corrections on the 15 hour per week of nursing time approved at last month's meeting. The nurse who is interested in the hours has already committed to some hours at the nursing home for the month of October so there has been a delay. The position should be in place for November 1.
 - g. Laura had an issue for non-public, Section 91-A:3 II (c)
 - h. Laura presented a budget transfer request from RN salaries to LPN salaries in the amount of \$60,000. The Board signed the budget transfer.
6. Report of the Berlin Nursing Home Administrator Louise Belanger. The written report that was submitted to the Board in advance of the meeting is as follows:
- a. Census: The current census was 96; 23 residents are Private Pay at this time. The average daily census for September was 93.90. There were **3** deaths and **5** admissions. Year to date the average daily census is 96.4.
 - b. Snow removal: Louise presented 2 bids for the Commissioners to process. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded Commissioner Brady to award the bid to Landscaping with Styles. All approved 3-0. The other bid submitted was from Pools of Berlin.
 - c. Director of Quality/Staff Development: Connie Croteau, RN has been given the Director of Quality/Staff Development position. Connie has been employed with CCNH for 29 years and most recently was working as a Clinical Coordinator.
- Louise also presented a budget transfer for the payment of accrued time for the unexpected retirement of the Director of Quality/Staff Development. The Board signed the budget transfer in the amount of \$15,700.
- d. Survey: The survey team arrived for the annual survey on October 4 and exited on the 6. The Nursing Home was found **Deficiency free for Quality of Care**. The official letter verifying that the Nursing Home is deficiency free in Quality of Care was received and Louise requested the Commissioners permission to process the "Good Survey Bonus" of \$25 for staff. A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Judd to authorize the \$25 good survey bonus. All approved 2-0. Commissioner Grenier abstained.
 - e. Call Bell System: The call bell system has been malfunctioning but mostly not functioning at all. This started on Monday evening. Other resources for resident communication and safety were put into place; for example, hand held bells and frequent staff rounds. The amount of staff was increased on the resident units by having the Activity Department staff remain on the units and work with small groups. RF Technologies could not correct the issue remotely. A service technician arrived Wednesday, October 12 at 10:30 a.m.; he had to fly in from Ohio. At this time he is unsure if the problem is caused by faulty equipment or software issues.
 - f. Annual Flu Vaccines: Residents received their flu vaccine October 11; staff flu clinics are set for October 13 and 14.

- g. Employee Entrance: The entrance needed minor repairs which were completed by Pat Morency Construction. The employee entrance and the area in front of the facility garage have been sealed by the Maintenance Department. The entrance is no longer a safety issue for the employees when entering or exiting the building.
 - h. The Business Office expansion is underway although the arrival of the survey team delayed the process. On a positive note, the Coös County Mural at the main entrance to the facility will not be removed; the wall will remain as an interior wall to the expanded area. An opening to connect the original business office to the expansion will not affect the mural.
 - i. Louise thanked Commissioner Grenier for acknowledging one of the residents who attended the groundbreaking for the Berlin BioMass Plant. She also acknowledged Mike Holt as he went above and beyond with this resident during this special outing.
7. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to enter into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II (b) at 8:00 p.m. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to come out of non-public session at 9:20 p.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve both requests for tuition loan assistance at the Nursing Hospital with stipulations. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the 40 hour community program officer position at the Coös County Department of Corrections. All approved 3-0.

The Budget Work Session will be held in West Stewartstown on Wednesday, November 2 and the next regular monthly meeting will be held November 9 at the North Country Resource Center at 9:00 a.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. All approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas M. Brady, Clerk