

Coös County Commissioners  
Regular Meeting  
Coös County Nursing Home – Berlin, NH  
September 14, 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; John Scarinza, Planning Board Chairman; J.T. Horn and Rodger Krussman, Trust for Public Land (*arrived at 9:40*); Chuck Henderson, Special Assistant to Senator Shaheen (*arrived at 9:40*); 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 August 10, 2011 meeting. All approved 3-0.
2. The Board reviewed the Payrolls and Disbursements for the month of August 2011. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the Payrolls and Disbursements for the month of August 2011. All approved 3-0.
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 State of NH budget this year included no funds for court diversion programs; therefore, there will be no Incentive Fund grant applications or any Incentive Funds Committee meetings. Current grantees were to be notified by the NH Department of Health & Human Services.
  - b. The internet access (HVTA) installation that will enable the residents of West Stewartstown village to subscribe to high speed service from equipment installed on the nursing hospital cupola was completed on September 2.
  - c. On September 2, 2011 Attorney Phil Waystack, County Attorney Bob Mekeel and Daniel Hebert met at the Coös County Courthouse to review and discuss the Probate space. Sue noted at the meeting that Attorney Waystack would be providing her with more information by the end of the day Wednesday.
  - d. A meeting with Goulet Communications was held on August 18 to finalize details of a new phone system. The original quote amount was \$36,878; final quotation was \$33,900. Order has been placed for the new system. Next up is the telephone system at Coös County Nursing Home - Berlin.
  - e. Negotiations begin September 16 with AFSCME and September 21 with the SEA.
  - f. The Town of Colebrook still has not notified the County about whether or not the Selectmen will sign the Recycling Center contract. The Public Works Director has asked RCAP Solutions - a Massachusetts firm - to analyze the revenues and expenses for the past 10 years. Sue provided 10 years of appropriation budgets and actual expenses, revenue budgets and actual receipts as well as a detailed explanation of the funding methodology for the

participating towns. Sue also had a lengthy discussion about all of the information provided with RCAP's solid waste management specialist.

- g. Activities at the Coös County Farm Corn Maize begin September 17. Sue plans on keeping a watchful eye in case any logistical issues arise. Sue attended the advisory board meeting on September 13 and provided an update at the Commissioners' meeting. Mr. Santamaria has had a very successful corn crop and there are hundreds of pumpkins ready for harvest.

Mr. King inquired if Santamaria's property-liability insurance had been verified and Sue replied that it was approved by Primex<sup>3</sup>.

- h. Sue added that Commissioner Judd had previously obtained the Board members' signatures on a letter of support for a grant application as requested by North Country Council. However, grant writers requested that the letter be amended with an additional sentence. Sue requested Commissioners' signatures on a new letter.
- i. Sue presented to the Board a request from Donna Lane, CDBG Consultant, for approval of a date extension for the Dean Brook Village project. The original date of completion is slated for June 2012; due to the late start in the construction the request is to modify the completion date to December 2012. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the request for the December 2012 extension. All approved 3-0.

*Report of the Unincorporated Places:*

- a. The Coös County Planning Board will be meeting on September 15, 2011 for a preliminary consultation on a Plum Creek subdivision that is part of the Androscoggin Headwaters Conservation Project. Sue notified Chuck Henderson of Senator Shaheen's office of the meeting as he asked to be notified. It appears that the parcel that will be discussed includes the Greenough Pond and Little Greenough Pond. As originally described by the Trust of Public Land this 938 acres would be a fee sale to NH Fish & Game using Forest Legacy funds. This area has been identified as one of the "Jewels" of New Hampshire fisheries by NH Fish & Game.
- b. Annually Coös County must make a determination to accept funds under the Secure Rural Schools & Community Self-Determination Act. The annual agreement letter to the NH Department of Education must be approved and signed by the Chairman. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner to approve the acceptance of National Forest Reserve Funds and to authorize the Chair to sign the agreement. All approved 3-0. Chairman Judd signed the agreement.
- c. Sue also requested the Board's approval and signature on a contract with North Country Education Services for an autism spectrum consultant. The cost is \$879 per day. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the contract with North Country Education Services. All approved 3-0.
- d. Sue provided an update from Pip Decker on the wind turbines project. The first turbine is complete on the Fish Brook string. He has asked if the Commissioners and Planning Board Members would be available for a tour on October 24 or 25. Commissioner Judd stated that he had spoken with Pip and let him know that he would be out of town at that time. The tour will be held on Wednesday, October 12 at 10 a.m. Sue also mentioned certain roads that will be closed during hunting season to ensure the safety of the workers.

Sue will be on vacation from Thursday, September 22 to Sunday, October 2.

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	27
PRETRIAL	17
STATE PRISON INMATES	4
ELECTRONIC MONITORING	1
WORK RELEASE	0
OTHER COUNTY INMATES	1
HELD AT OTHER FACILITIES	CARROLL DOC: 1 HOC FEMALE GRAFTON DOC: 1 HOC FEMALE MERRIMACK DOC: 1 PT MALE ROCKINGHAM DOC: 1 PT MALE, 1 HOC MALE NHSP: 1 PT MALE, 4 HOC MALE

- a. Superintendent Hamelin was absent from this month's Commissioners' Meeting due to his training at the National Institute of Corrections in Denver, CO. The Jail Administrators Course he attended ran from September 12 through September 16.
- b. A temporary one-year agreement was received from the United States Marshals Service which would allow federal prisoners to be held at the facility for brief periods, normally under 72 hours. The rate allowance would be \$80 per prisoner day. Border Patrol Major Paul Kuhn continues to appeal for the ability to utilize the facility for short term holds while further transportation is arranged for detainees. Major Kuhn has requested to speak with the Commissioners at the next scheduled Commissioners' Meeting.

Commissioner Judd asked if the Sheriff had any comments. Sheriff Marcou stated that as he understood it Strafford County will be transporting the detainees. He added that he would discuss issues further at the October meeting. Mr. King asked if the feds were responsible for payment and Commissioner Judd replied yes. This is on a trial basis only. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to accept the trial agreement with the United States Marshal Service which would allow federal prisoners to be held at the facility for brief periods, normally under 72 hours. The rate allowance would be \$80 per prisoner day for the period of one year unless the trial period was terminated. All approved 3-0.

- c. On August 11 a meeting was held to discuss the increased nursing hours required at the Department of Corrections, which takes nursing home staff away from resident care. There has been a steady increase in the inmate population this year, as well as increased medical care required for the inmates. This is occurring in all correctional facilities. During the meeting Laura Mills, Diane Hobart, Evelyn Early and Superintendent Hamelin discussed some ideas such as having a 16 hour nursing position added to Corrections to handle a portion of evening and weekend medication passes and medical duties. This discussion continued later in the meeting.
- d. Installation is complete for the updated video arraignment system which utilizes the T1 internet service installed recently. The digital system, now located in the Processing Room, is no larger than a laptop. Once a few more successful video arraignments are completed for testing, the old video system and costly ISDN lines will be disconnected.

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 75. The average census for August was 71; occupancy for August was 73.2%. In August there were four (4) admissions (including one (1) respite), three (3) deaths and one (1) discharge (the respite.) Of the 75 residents, seventeen (17) are private pay and twelve (12) residents are Vermont Medicaid. There have been three (3) more admissions in September and the Social Services Director has had fifteen (15) additional inquiries. Things are looking up.

Year to date, Coös County Nursing Hospital has had thirty-three (33) admissions, five (5) discharges and seventeen (17) deaths.

- b. Sprinklers: When testing was performed on the new sprinkler system, some issues were noted. Eastern Sprinkler was here for several days flushing the system and working on the problems.
- c. Contract LPN: There have been no nurses interested in the 40 hour 11-7 position. The contract LPN has been extended for another 13 weeks. This will cover the nursing hospital through Christmas.
- d. New Windows: Pride Builders has returned to replace the next round of windows.
- e. Survey: No surveyors yet.
- f. Hurricane Irene: To the residents in W. Stewartstown Hurricane Irene appeared to be no more than any other summer storm. The corn maze was threatened with the rising river water, but seems to have made it through relatively unscathed.
- g. 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	<b>4,307</b>	<b>72</b>
September	3,895	65	September		
October	3,784	63	October		
November	3,699	62	November		
December	3,460	58	December		

The inmate population remains up and med passes continue to average about 2 hours each evening. On the weekends, Corrections is taking several hours of nurse time away from the residents on first floor during the day as well. One inmate alone took up 4 hours and 46 minutes of CCNH nurse time this month.

Diane Hobart and Laura met with Superintendent Craig Hamelin and Corrections Medical Services Coordinator Evelyn Early to discuss nurse needs at Corrections. Laura presented a proposal for the remainder of this year. The proposed position would be to hire a “temp” RN to work up to 15 hours per week, to include every other weekend 7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. and three evenings per week 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. The nursing hospital would continue to provide coverage 4 evenings per week and daytime coverage every other weekend at about 10½ hours per week. Commissioner Grenier inquired about the cost and Laura replied that she did not have the figures as they were part of the Corrections budget. Sue estimated about \$5,000 to \$6,000 for the remainder of this year. Commissioner Grenier stated that this needs to be addressed based on the fact that the nurse from the nursing hospital is pulled away from taking care of the residents. Commissioner Judd agreed to a trial period for the remainder of the year. The position will need to be discussed further during the budget process. All agreed that the nursing hospital residents are top priority. Commissioner Judd asked if the current corrections nurse would increase her hours. Laura replied that the hours are remaining as-is for this year and her hours will need to be discussed further during budget season.

- h. Laura presented budget transfers for the Board’s signatures to cover the contract LPN and for unforeseen expenses in the building repairs line item.
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 93. 18 residents are private pay. The average daily census for August was 94.8. There were 5 deaths and 3 admissions. The year to date average daily census is 96.7.
  - b. Sue Hickey RN, Director of Quality/Staff Development, has resigned effective October 14. Sue will be retiring and moving out of the area. Sue has been employed with CCNH for 35 years. The position was advertised in the local papers and interviews have been conducted.
  - c. Annual Family Picnic: 265 people attended including residents, guests and employees. The weather was perfect, the event went smoothly and enjoyed by all.
  - d. Dietary: Patrick McQueen, City Manager, completed a kitchen inspection on August 31. Mr. McQueen stated that inspections will be completed yearly at a cost of \$10.
  - e. Avitar Associates of New England: The firm completed a data verification assessment of the facility on September 12. The City of Berlin has contracted Avitar Associates of New England, Inc. to verify assessment data on the facility for accuracy. This process will help maintain an accurate database, which when needed, will maintain fair equitable assessments for the City of Berlin.
  - f. Family Support Group: The Nursing Home has started a Family Support Group. The first meeting was held on September 13. It was hosted by the Social Services Director and the Nursing Home Administrator.
  - g. Survey: The survey window opened July 19.
  - h. On August 2, four (4) surveyors arrived to review facility generated self- reports (this was not the annual survey). On August 18, Louise received the results of the survey; the

Nursing Home was given 4 deficiencies in 2 areas. The deficiencies involved the lack of proof (fax verification) that the Nursing Home Administrator and other officials were immediately made aware of a reportable incident in accordance to state laws. Fax verification reports will now be printed on all correspondence. Forms have been updated to include the dates and times that the facility Administrator and Director of Nursing are notified. The other deficiencies related to age related wear and tear of lift equipment. Primex<sup>3</sup> had originally apportioned \$4,700 to be used by CCNH-Berlin to purchase 3 mechanical lifts. The money was due to be available earlier in the year, however, unforeseen matters at Primex<sup>3</sup> has left the nursing home without the money to purchase lifts. At this time, Louise requested that the Nursing Home be allowed to purchase 3 mechanical lifts at a cost of \$4,184.88 by using money that had been encumbered. The amount of funds encumbered was \$8,600 that was allocated for electronic medication administration software, which is no longer available as budgeted. The software provider has been purchased by a larger company which has increased the cost of the software and contracts. The increase in cost is substantial; other vendors are being reviewed and will be addressed in future budgets. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the purchase of three mechanical lifts at a cost of \$4,184.88. All approved 3-0.

Commissioner Judd noted that he had visited the third floor of the nursing home to look at the renovations done by the Maintenance Department. They were commended on a job well done.

i. Request for non-public session, Section 91-A: 3 II (b).

7. Hearing of the Public:

a. J.T. Horn - Trust for Public Land - Androscoggin Headwaters Project (*A copy of Mr. Horn's presentation is on file*): Mr. Horn stated that his presentation was to inform the Commissioners of the details of the federal acquisition of land in the Unincorporated Places. The Commissioners' letter sent to Senator Shaheen's office requesting a moratorium on the purchase of lands by the federal government was a surprise. He presented a colored map that showed planned phases of land acquisition in Cambridge, Errol and Wentworth Location. Mr. Horn stated that the Umbagog Fish and Wildlife Refuge has a new management plan which designates 73,000 acres in the refuge through acquisition over the next 15 years. Mr. King noted that the Refuge could change its mind and increase the acreage in their management plan from time to time.

Mr. Horn stated that Phase V consists of 938 acres and contains Greenough Pond and Little Greenough Pond, which are two of only three ponds in NH that sustain native, non-stocked brook trout populations. This parcel will be acquired in fee utilizing state and private funds and conveyed to NH Department of Fish and Game to be managed for fisheries protection. Mr. King replied that Fish & Game does not have the funds to manage these lands. It is easy for the federal government to buy land but some state departments do not have the funds to manage the land after title is conveyed to them. He continued that Coös County has the highest poverty level in the State. The purchase of these lands by the federal government makes no sense. He is the biggest opponent in Coös County on the matter of federal land purchases that lock up timber harvesting that people depend on for jobs. Commissioner Judd asked what will happen to the camp leases on these lands. Mr. Horn replied that Fish & Game will continue the leases with a sunset clause. Commissioner Brady asked about the wood cutting in the area. Mr. Horn replied that it will be based on the wildlife in the area. Commissioner Brady added that these lands have been existence for a long time and do not

need protection. He asked how the woodworkers are supposed to survive if these lands are locked up. Commissioner Judd stated that Fish & Game will not do anything when it comes to managing the lands. Mr. King added that the County Commissioners as the Unincorporated Places Selectmen should have been notified prior to these acquisitions. Sue added that the Commissioners are not opposed to government ownership but to federal ownership. They would like local control by using the community forest model. The decisions on whether or not to cut wood should be made locally. Mr. King added that the sentiment on the Commissioners' request for a 5-year moratorium is to give the natives a chance to come up with a plan on how the land needs to be protected. If Senator Shaheen wants to spend money on buying land, it should be done in the southern part of the State. Commissioner Judd added that the people in the area should have a say. Mr. Horn stated that the private landowner (Plum Creek) has entered into an agreement with TPL. He has heard the opposition loud and clear and will pass the word on. Commissioner Judd thanked Mr. Horn for his presentation. Mr. Horn added that if the County is interested in a working forest, the Trust for Public Land is willing to help. Edith Tucker asked what the expected acquisition price is for the Phase V lands and Mr. Horn replied \$3 million.

- b. John Scarinza, Planning Board Chair, reported that he had spoken with the County Forester at the UNH Cooperative Extension office. They will be setting up three facilitation days around the County to obtain public local input on their vision for the future of the forest industry and how it relates to the economy. He stressed that it will be important to obtain local groups involved in the Colebrook/Pittsburg area to attend one of these sessions. Edith Tucker suggested partnering with the New Hampshire Timberlands Owners Association. Mr. Scarinza has spoken with them and they will assist in getting the word out.

Mr. Scarinza inquired on the process of applying for a grant as he thought of submitting a grant application for Tillotson funds for the map work in the Unincorporated Places. Commissioner Grenier explained that the request had to be brought to the Board for approval.

## 8. Other Business:

- a. Economic Development Funds: Mr. King requested that some of the funds budgeted be used for the rest areas in Colebrook and Shelburne. These rest areas need to remain open as they are located on important highway links. Commissioner Brady reported that he, Representative Richardson and DRED Commissioner George Bald have met and their main objective is that the rest areas must remain open. The County could get involved and keep them permanently open. He has been informed that the cost to run each rest area per year is about \$25,000. They are hoping to organize a meeting in the next couple of weeks and would like to reach an agreement between the County, DRED and the Chambers of Commerce in Colebrook and Shelburne. If the County is serious about managing the rest areas, there are possibilities to make revenue. There are ways to take in revenue to defray the costs. The County would also have to budget funds for both rest areas in future budgets. Commissioner Grenier stated that the decision was twofold: first was the immediate deadline of October 31; and the second was to obtain Delegation approval for the appropriation of money for the next year. Mr. King noted that the State could lease the rest areas to the County and Chambers. This way the State would remain the landowner and the rest areas would be managed by the County and Chambers. As landlord, the State would be responsible for capital improvements. Commissioner Brady will set up a meeting with Commissioner Bald to occur in the next two weeks.

- b. Santa's Tree Farm - Proposal for Use of Farm Buildings: Commissioner Brady asked if this item could be deferred until the October meeting or later.
- c. Sheriff Marcou reported that his department would be moving to its new location in the courthouse on Thursday.

9. Unincorporated Places:

Jennifer Fish presented a budget transfer to cover tax map maintenance costs in Millsfield. The Board signed the transfer.

10. 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 11:23 a.m. All approved 3-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to come out of non-public session at 11:50 a.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve a new Use of Alcohol Policy for both nursing homes. All approved 3-0.

The next regular monthly meeting will be held October 13 at the Coös County Nursing Hospital in W. Stewartstown at 6:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to adjourn the meeting at 11:54 a.m. All approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas M. Brady, Clerk