

Coös County Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Coös County Courthouse - Lancaster, NH
April 20, 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; Superintendent Craig Hamelin; Chief Deputy Keith Roberge; Administrative Assistant Linda Harris; County Treasurer Fred King; Farm Manager Patrick Giroux and members of the press.

Commissioner Judd opened the meeting at 9:02 a.m. He read a note from an employee at the Coös County Nursing Home thanking the Commissioners for the 50 cent raise.

1. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2011 meeting. All approved 3-0.
2. The Board reviewed the Payrolls and Disbursements for the month of March 2011. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the Payrolls and Disbursements for the month of March 2011. All approved 3-0.
3. Hearing of the Public: None.
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 made a counterproposal for the Commissioners consideration for the 2011 Collective Bargaining Agreement which Sue asked to discuss in nonpublic session.
 - b. Meetings with Primex³ to discuss a new deductible health insurance plan with non-union County employees were scheduled for April 21 in W. Stewartstown and April 28 in Berlin. These meetings have been cancelled due to 2 new developments:
 - Primex³ CEO Ty Gagne and Member Services Consultant Rick Alpers scheduled an emergency meeting with Sue for 9 AM on April 18. They delivered the County's new rates with the same 14.74% increase as well as notice that Primex³ will be discontinuing its health insurance business by June 30, 2012;
 - Local Government Center (LCG) Member Services Consultant Tom LoPizzo contacted Sue two weeks ago to state that LGC's guaranteed maximum rates for the Coös County quote sent in February had been lowered to 12.5%. The plans are not 100% the same as far as benefits are concerned, Sue prepared information for the Board to consider.

Sue recommended that the Board reverse its prior motion to enroll with Primex³ for 2011-2012 health insurance with the exception of SEA covered positions and to approve LCG HealthTrust as health insurance provider for Coös County employees with the exception of SEA covered employees. She also requested further discussion in nonpublic session regarding the LGC proposal. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to reverse the Board's previous motion to keep the health insurance with Primex³. All approved 3-0.

- c. Sue contacted Sarah Lineberry at the Bureau of Court Facilities requesting a new rental document as the current lease expired on September 30, 2010 and the County Attorney has relocated. No word or lease has been received yet.
- d. Sue received and reviewed the Commercial Lease Agreement for the County Attorney space in the former Lancaster National Bank building, One Middle Street, Lancaster. The terms of the rental agreement include a month to month rental beginning April 1 at a monthly cost of \$1,500 that includes the offices on the west side of the third floor, the reception area outside the offices and the joint use of the kitchen area with any future tenants. The lease document has been reviewed by Primex³ and property/liability insurance has been obtained for this location as well as a Certificate of Insurance. Coös County is responsible for electricity and the account has been established. If a future tenant moves in, then the electricity charge will be based on the average of the prior three months. Twice a year the County will be obligated to pay 1/3 of the real estate taxes due to the Town of Lancaster. Quotes for rubbish removal and janitorial services are in the hands of the County Attorney which were provided at the meeting. Parking is a first come, first served basis in the parking lot adjacent to the building. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the commercial month to month lease between Passumpsic Bank and Coös County. All approved 3-0. Commissioner Judd signed the lease with reservation.

Sue also presented two bids for janitorial services for the County Attorney's office area. The first bid from Thompson Mill Properties was for \$50/week and the second bid from Dirt Busters Cleaning was \$100/ week. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the Thompson Mills bid of \$50/week for janitorial services. All approved 3-0.

- e. Currently in the Legislature, there are 3 versions of a Medicaid Managed Care Program. How this will affect counties and payments to nursing homes is still undetermined. A representative from Medicaid plans to attend the next NHAC Executive Committee meeting to describe its effect on county nursing homes. The Governor's recommendation to divert millions in MQIP funds was pulled out of HB2 by Senate Finance so that it can be considered separately. Representatives from the NH Health Care Association have met with Senate Finance Chairman Chuck Morse to urge the Senate to do away with this diversion of Medicaid funding from nursing homes. There are still a number of bills relative to the NH Retirement System. Depending on which version passes will determine any impact on Coös County government operations and budget.
- f. Jennifer and Sue prepared the **Management Discussion & Analysis (MD&A)** for the annual financial statements. The document was sent to the Board with the agenda. Added levels of review and control for government audits have delayed the final audit. Mason & Rich, P.A. finished the financial statements which are in the process of being reviewed by an accounting firm in Massachusetts. Once the review is completed, it is hoped that Ron Beaulieu & Company will be able to complete the audit for 2010. Jennifer has been notified by Beaulieu & Company that auditing test work on the financial statements of the major enterprise funds (the nursing homes) is complete and it can be anticipated that the auditor's opinion will be unqualified. Sue added that an unqualified opinion was good as the concerns voiced by Melanson Heath during the performance audit were unsubstantiated by this new audit firm. Commissioner Grenier asked that a copy of the audit information be provided to the Delegation.

- g. At the beginning of April Sue prepared an analysis of NH County Medicaid Funding based on materials provided to her by the 11 county nursing homes. Based on 2010 information, county homes lost over \$24 million in the Medicaid program in 2010. A home-by-home spreadsheet was provided at the meeting. This information was requested by Betsy Miller, NHAC Executive Director, in order to support her lobbying efforts on behalf of counties in the Senate as it deliberates on the next state budget.
- f. The County has been working with Hampshire Vanguard Technology Associates (HVTa) to acquire high speed Internet access at the County Complex in W. Stewartstown. HVTa has proposed to provide 1 Mbps high speed access by installing a T1 line in the facility. This T1 will serve the facility's purposes and also be used by HVTa to offer high speed Internet access to certain locations in W. Stewartstown. This service is essential both to the Department of Corrections as changes are made to the video arraignment system with the Courts and to the Nursing Hospital as e-pharmacy and electronic medical records are deployed. The cost will be \$540/month in months 1-6, \$400 a month from month 7 through year 2 and \$350 a month in year 3 and beyond. David Leveille and Sue have reviewed the proposal, asked for some concessions, received them; and both enthusiastically recommended moving forward with this new service. Not only will Internet access improve tremendously, it will save a considerable amount of money on the video arraignment ISDN lines that cost approximately \$480 per month. Sue recommended a 3-Year Agreement with HVTa for high speed Internet access for Coös County W. Stewartstown. Superintendent Hamelin agreed and added that high speed internet will open a whole window of opportunity for the Department of Corrections. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to engage Hampshire Vanguard Technology Associates (HVTa) for high speed internet services. All approved 3-0.
- g. The Recycling Center towns met in W. Stewartstown on April 14 to review proposals received on the purchase of a recycling truck with lift. The towns voted to purchase a 2012 International Model 4300M7 truck with HP Fairfield hook lift for \$81,797. The towns had authorized withdrawing \$50,000 from the Recycling Center Equipment Fund in 2010; the towns had authorized withdrawing \$17,500 from the Recycling Center Equipment Fund in 2011. This leaves a balance of \$14,297 and the towns authorized borrowing with repayment to be made in 2012. Sue recommended that Coös County loan the \$14,297 to the Coös County Recycling Center at a rate of 2% for one year. Commissioner Grenier voiced concern and asked if the Town of Colebrook would be signing a two or three year agreement. Commissioner Judd stated that the Town of Colebrook would not be going into the recycling business as it could not afford it. Commissioner Grenier supported the purchase as long as the Town of Colebrook remained part of the Recycling Center. Sue stated that she had personnel issues that needed to be discussed in nonpublic. Commissioner Judd stated that a vote would be taken afterwards.

Report of the County Farm:

- a. Ads for the sale of the dairy herd were placed in newspapers throughout the County as well as St. Johnsbury, VT. Advertisements also appeared in the NH Weekly Market Bulletin and in a publication called Country Folks – both the New England and Eastern US editions. This ad brought in a lot of interest from Pennsylvania and New York. Sue also prepared an RFP for the lease of county lands which was advertised in Coös County.
- b. Bids were received until 4 PM Tuesday on the dairy herd. Sue spoke with John Peila of Lancaster, PA on 4/19/2011 about his proposal to auction the herd in PA. He stated that since the meeting 3 weeks ago, prices for quality dairy cows such as the County's has

increased. Sue has provided the Board with reference checks on this individual conducted on March 30.

The Board proceeded with the opening of the bids. The bids read as follows:

• Ken Beerwort - Knowlton, Québec	\$145,015
• Northeast Kingdom Sales, Inc. - Barton, VT	135,000
• Baskin Livestock - Batavia, NY	133,500
• Towne & Sons Livestock - Morrisville, VT	129,300
• Ethan E. Wing, M.E.A.G. Associates, LLC - Farmington, ME	107,052
• Rick Flint - Milan, NH	\$600/heifer \$800/cow

Sue asked Farm Manager Pat Giroux his opinion of the bids. He replied that he felt that the bids were low and had hoped for higher prices. He had projected \$165,000+.

Commissioner Judd asked about the proposal in Pennsylvania. Pat replied that trucking and the auction commission costs would need to be deducted from the gross proposal.

Commissioner Judd asked if the County should look into auctioning directly from the farm. Pat seemed to think that the County could get a higher price by auction. An auction would also make it possible to liquidate the items in the barn. He could weed out the cows for beef and keep the best for dairy. Commissioner Grenier stated that sometimes cash in hand is better. Auctions are unpredictable and Pat agreed that if the auction is held on a rainy day, less bidders show up. Commissioner Brady also agreed. County Treasurer Fred King agreed that it was best to have cash in hand. Commissioner Judd relented and agreed on the high bid. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to accept the high bid of \$145,015 for the herd from Ken Beerwort of Knowlton, Quebec, with regret. All approved 3-0.

- c. Sue received two proposals for leasing the fields; one proposal for leasing the land, buildings and equipment. Proposals were received until 4 PM Tuesday. Sue reported that she had also received a letter from the Selectmen of Stewartstown.

Sue read the letter from the Town of Stewartstown Selectmen who requested an extension as they had a proposal in the works. The Selectmen's plan is to focus on: agriculture, history and heritage, tourism and education. Commissioner Judd agreed that the Town should be given the time to come up with a plan. Sue read the proposals:

- Scott Deblois would lease 115 acres at \$10 an acre for a three-year agreement;
- Santa's Tree Farm would lease 138 acres for five years at \$2,500 a year. The proposal would create agricultural education and include a corn maze; and
- NH Institute for Agriculture and Forestry would lease the land, buildings and equipment for \$1 in 2011; \$500 in 2012; \$750 in 2013; and \$1,000 in 2014. Sue stated that this proposal was lengthy and she had not had time to review it.

Sue recommended delaying this decision until the May meeting. This would give the Stewartstown Selectmen time needed to submit their proposal. Commissioner Judd was not pleased with any of the proposals. Mr. King noted that if the area is leased it would mean non-county people underfoot. A new organization will ultimately cost money. It is time to shrink county government and he suggested selling the land, get it back on the tax role and let the private sector take care of it. Commissioner Judd agreed that the Board should wait until the May meeting to discuss this issue further. It will also give the Board a chance to review the proposals. Sue asked if she could give the Town of Stewartstown a deadline of

May 15 and the Board agreed. Commissioner Brady stated that there was no need to rush on this decision. Sue suggested that she and Commissioner Judd attend a future Selectmen's meeting to discuss the property tax exemption status of the County's lands in Stewartstown if the County no longer has a working farm.

Report of the Unincorporated Places:

- a. The Coös County Planning Board held a meeting on April 13 and heard a presentation by the Community Forest Collaborative. Minutes of that meeting were provided to the Board of Commissioners as the Board considers perhaps adopting of a policy on future land acquisitions by the federal government in Coös County and the possibility of exploring further the concept of a county forest.
- b. Also present at the Planning Board meeting was Pip Decker from Brookfield Power. Pip provided an update on the wind park construction as follows:

Construction has begun and two goals recommended by the Commissioners and Planning Board for the project are being addressed:

Hire Local: All land clearing was done in February and March by local contractors AB Logging of Lancaster and Hicks Logging of Jefferson. RMT is currently meeting with local contractors for some of the future work. Isaacson Steel will be fabricating steel needed for the project and AJ Coleman of Conway will be pouring the foundations.

Assure Safety: RMT has prepared a safety plan and has met with local EMT personnel. For the public's safety, Dummer Pond Road will be open at times and closed at times depending on project construction. There will be a website and an 800 number that the public can access to get information about road closings.

Sue reported that she will be on vacation from April 24 to May 4 returning to work on May 5.

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	16
PRETRIAL	14
STATE PRISON INMATES	4
ELECTRONIC MONITORING	1
WORK RELEASE	0
OTHER COUNTY INMATES	2
INMATES AT OTHER FACILITIES	BELKNAP DOC: 1 HOC MALE CARROLL DOC: 2 HOC FEMALE ROCKINGHAM DOC: 1 PT MALE NHSP: 2 PT M, 1 HOC M

- a. Officer Wayne Washburn started employment on April 5. He is currently in the 8 week Field Training Program. Once training is complete he will fill a Second Shift vacancy.
- b. Trisha Auger of Securus Technologies and Jim Snyder of Archonix Public Safety Systems were at the facility on April 4 to demonstrate their products. Securus provides inmate telephone systems and interfaces with Archonix' jail management software. Both parties will return April 26 to continue demonstration of the systems. There was positive feedback

from supervisors who were present and from Systems Administrator David Leveille who attended as well. The current provider, DSI-ITI, has been notified that Coös County is shopping around and will not accept an automatic renewal of the contract, which expires on June 21, 2011.

- c. Rich Neilson of DHHS Division for Juvenile Justice Services conducted a site visit on March 15 to ensure compliance with the *Core Requirements of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 2002*. It was found that Coös County is once again in full compliance for the previous year by not admitting anyone under 17 for criminal related charges and anyone under 18 for violation level offenses.
 - d. On March 18, Tom Hardy of Hampshire Vanguard Technology Associates met with Sue Collins, Systems Administrator David Leveille, Corporal Rick Dube and Superintendent Hamelin regarding a proposal to provide dedicated high-speed internet service to the complex.
 - e. Two Taser Cams have been purchased, which will now provide complete audio/video capture any time the Tasers are turned on. Before they are put into use, the policy will be revised to include operation and preservation of recorded events. Officer Brian Cross will attend the Taser Instructor Course on April 21 and 22 in Dalton, NH.
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 65. The average census for March was 64; occupancy for March was 66%. In March there were two (2) admissions and six (6) deaths. Since the beginning of April there have been four (4) more admissions but also two (2) more deaths. Of the 65 residents, eleven (11) are Private Pay. Four (4) of Private Pay residents are from Vermont and six (6) residents are Vermont Medicaid.
 - b. Nurse Staffing: Nurse staffing on the night shift continues to be an issue. One nurse has been hired but there is still a 40 hour position open.
 - c. LNA of the Year: Nomination forms went out in the paychecks and must be returned by April 21.
 - d. Code Alert Wireless Nurse Call: There continues to be issues with the nurse call system draining batteries at an alarming rate. The replacement parts have not been installed and continue to sit in Laura's office. According to RF Technologies this will not repair the problem completely so they are waiting for a software upgrade that should be ready this month. They will then come and overhaul the entire system.
 - e. Maple Syrup: Dennis Sweatt tapped the maple trees on the lawn again this year. It was a good year and with an impressive amount of syrup. Some has been used by the Activities and Dietary Departments for the residents; some was given to the volunteers as gifts and the rest will be raffled off by Resident Council.
 - f. Survey: The nursing hospital's survey window opens May 8, 2011. State Surveyors could arrive anytime between May 8 and November 8, 2011.

- g. Painting: Serge Dionne continues to paint. First floor has almost been completed with only two rooms left to paint. He has now moved to touch up painting the door casings and doors on the second and third floors again so all looks good when survey comes in.
- h. Fire System: Simplex was at the facility last week testing all of the smoke detector heads.

The Nursing Hospital received notice last week that the US Customs in Beecher Falls, VT will no longer be taking fire calls. Starting May 1 the Corrections Department will call the Colebrook Communication Center to have the fire department dispatched to the facility. This may result in the need for the Nursing Hospital to update the waiver it received from CMS in 2002. Since the local fire departments are volunteers and not staffed 24/7, the Nursing Hospital received a waiver to not be hard wired into a fire department. The waiver includes the process of Corrections notifying Customs. This now must be updated to specify the Colebrook Communication Center.

- i. Nursing Hours at HOC:

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		
May	3,031	51	May		
June	3,048	51	June		
July	2,509	42	July		
August	4,013	67	August		
September	3,895	65	September		
October	3,784	63	October		
November	3,699	62	November		
December	3,460	58	December		

The inmate that was requiring extra time has been released so we may see a decrease in nurse time next month.

- j. Laura had issues for non-public, Section 91-A:3 II (c) & (e).
7. 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 98. 14 residents were Private Pay. The average daily census for March was 97.7. There were 6 deaths and 5 admissions in March.
 - b. Dietary Department: The position for Assistant Dietary Manager has been accepted by Keith Couture, he will start mid-May. Keith has 20 years' experience at a local restaurant where he is currently working as the head chef, managing all operations of the kitchen and staff.
 - c. Maintenance:
 - PSNH has placed a light on the telephone pole at the facility entrance; the light is 1,000 watt and is very bright at the entrance and middle of the parking lot. The facility will be

charged \$80 per month for the light; this charge may be less than the cost of the parking lot lights that are currently not working. The parking lot needed additional lighting near the garage area and south end of the parking lot. A light will be mounted at the peak of the garage which will ensure a safe, well-lit parking lot. The light should be mounted this week. It has also been brought to staff's attention that the parking lot light pole is over 30 years old, besides needing to be rewired the lights may need to be changed and possible maintenance to the pole. Louise requested permission to remove the pole and lights. It will be expensive to repair and the Maintenance Department has voiced a concern regarding the inconvenience with the pole during the winter months when dealing with snow removal. The Board authorized Louise's request to remove the pole and lights.

- The old van did not pass inspection, the frame is badly rusted in an area from the front bumper working its way back to the suspension. The area is approximately two feet in length. This would be too costly to repair. During the inspection, Plant Manager Mike Holt was told it is not worth repairing. Attempts have been made to sell this van in the past with no buyers. The engine and transmission are still good, it only has 41,000 miles. It was suggested to sell the van for parts. P&L Auto Parts, Ride-Away and Patsy's were contacted for estimates. Ride-Away and Patsy's have requested pictures of the van and the rusted area, both commented on possibly selling the van for the Nursing Home. The pictures were sent out and Louise is waiting on prices for the van. At the meeting, Louise reported that Ride-Away has offered \$1,000 for the van but the van needs to be driven to Londonderry. She was still waiting on information from Patsy's.
 - Painting of the 2nd and 3rd floor hallways continues. Appropriate State forms are being completed to enable minor renovations to the Nurses' Stations on each floor. The forms are also being completed to allow for the Business Office renovations.
- d. Code Alert: The nurse call system pull cord face plates were replaced in all bathrooms and tub rooms. The replacement of the face plates was done by the company to provide easier operation for the resident. Apparently the company has been replacing the face plates in other nursing homes as well.
- e. Louise requested non-public per RSA 91-A: 3 II (a) & (c)
8. Other Business:
- a. Salary Schedules 2011: Sue presented the new salary schedules for the Board's signatures. The new schedules include a 50 cent raise for all county employees except for the members of AFSCME and the addition of two new positions: Superintendent of Corrections and Director of Finance. The Board signed the salary schedules.
 - b. Employee Entrance with Paving - request to waive bid: Sue explained that the new employee entrance still needs retaining walls and paving. Since this is a continuation of the existing project she requested that the bid process be waived and recommended Boudle Construction complete the project. The cost is estimated at \$9,000. Sue suggested that the entry way be paved instead of using brick pavers. Commissioner Judd asked that Boudle Construction provide a revised proposal to include paving instead of brick pavers. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to waive the bid process and have Boudle Construction complete the project. All approved 3-0.
 - c. Windows - request to waive bid: Sue requested that the bid process also be waived on this project and go with the previous contractor. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier,

seconded by Commissioner Brady to waive the bid process for the window project. All approved 3-0. Sue will meet with the contractor and prioritize which windows need to be replaced first in phase 2 of the window replacement project.

- d. Cooperative Extension Request for Use of Encumbered Funds. Commissioner Judd stated that he had reviewed the information and did not like the request. Commissioner Grenier did not think that the request was unreasonable. This is a team issue and he was not opposed to it. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to approve the Cooperative Extension request to use funds encumbered in 2008 for the purchase of a sander for the parking lot in lieu of roof repairs which had been 100% funded by the State. All approved 3-0.

9. Unincorporated Places:

- a. Update on 2010 Property Taxes for Dixville and Wentworth Location: Linda Harris presented to the Board a list of outstanding property taxes. As of March 31, 2011, total outstanding in Dixville was \$289.10 and Wentworth Location was \$1,140.10. Tax liens are scheduled for May 3, 2011.

10. Any other public input:

Chief Deputy Keith Roberge reported that the Canadian police and the US law enforcement along the border would be meeting on April 22. They are currently working on a brochure which would be given to people crossing the borders. This brochure would highlight the different laws for each country.

He also stated that the US Marshal would be sending a contract for review pertaining to holding federal inmates picked up by the Border Patrol at the Coös facility. Superintendent Hamelin stated that no one has contacted him and several issues have to be worked on.

- 11. A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to enter into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II (a) (c) (e) (g) at 11:00 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 12:53 p.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner Grenier, seconded by Commissioner Brady to accept Sue's recommendation that Coös County loan \$14,297 to the Coös County Recycling Center at a rate of 2% for one year. All approved 3-0.

The next regular monthly meeting will be held May 18, 2011 at the Coös County Nursing Home in Berlin at 9:00 a.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner Brady, seconded by Commissioner Grenier to adjourn the meeting at 12:55 p.m. All approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas M. Brady, Clerk