

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.

North Haverhill, NH 03774

Tuesday January 31, 2012

PRESENT: Commissioners Cryans, Omer C. Ahern Jr. and Raymond Burton, Director Clough and Secretary Martino.

9:00 AM Commissioner Cryans opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance led by **Drug Court Coordinator Bob Gasser**

DCC Gasser was present to request out of state travel so that he, Judge Vaughan, Atty. Bell and J. Stone (whose trip would be covered by a grant) can travel to Nashville, TN for the National Drug Court Conference from May 29 to June 1.

Commissioner Burton said that based on the success of Drug Court he would approve this travel.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the out of state travel for the aforementioned people to go to Tennessee for the Convention which was seconded by Commissioner Ahern.

DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Ahern said that although he is fully supportive of Drug Court and feels they do an incredible job, he is opposed to this travel and particularly disagrees with the choice of sending someone from the Atty's office since a request was just recently made to hire another person on a per diem basis because of the shortage in manpower. He stated that he didn't think the economy was well enough and just because there was money in the budget didn't mean that it had to be spent. He said he could agree to one person going but not everyone.

Commissioner Cryans disagreed and said that he feels the conferences are a very important part of Drug Court information and the reason the Drug Court is so successful is because of B. Gasser and his recognition as a leader.

There was some further discussion. Commissioner Ahern asked what the cost to the taxpayers would be and the reply was \$1750 per person for three people.

When the vote was taken, Commissioners Burton and Cryans were in favor and Commissioner Ahern was opposed.

DCC Gasser passed out some information to the Board on the 501(c)(3) which is connected to the Drug Court and discussed the amount of donations that have been received and some of the things the money has gone toward for participants.

There will be an event for Drug Court at Webster Place on the 4th of May and a Drug Court graduation on the 7th of May which is also the 5th anniversary of Drug Court.

DCC Gasser said that of the 24 Drug Court graduates only 4 have been arrested, indicating a recidivism rate of 16.5%.

Supt. Libby arrived.

Commissioner Burton asked what the cost was to keep an inmate in Jail and Supt. Libby said it was around \$35K. When asked the cost for a Drug Court participant, DCC Gasser said it was around \$12K

Supt. Libby recommended that the Commissioners accept the bid from W.B. Mason for office supplies for the new Jail, which was presented last week in the amount of \$6560.99.

Commissioner Ahern moved to accept the bid from W.B. Mason in the amount of \$6560.99 for office supplies which was seconded by Commissioner Ahern. All were in favor.

Bids were requested for Inmate Property Equipment for the new Jail and one bid was received.

HBD Inc., Pacific Concepts. \$4,850

Supt. Libby said he would like to look this bid over before making a recommendation.

Commissioner Cryans asked Supt. Libby if he was comfortable with the way everything was going and Supt. Libby replied that he was not. He said that he feels that the transition is not going as well as he had hoped and that he didn't know if the training would be complete before they move into the facility. He said that eliminating the transition team was a big mistake and that the removal of those three people who were handling the policies and procedures along with the training has him concerned. He said time was running short.

Commissioner Ahern suggested that he could postpone the opening and Supt. Libby said that would just create more costs and that he would find a way to handle it.

Commissioner Burton asked if there was anything the Board could do to help and Supt. Libby replied that there was not.

Commissioner Cryans asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes and if anyone had any changes. Commissioner Ahern made a few edits.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the minutes as amended which was seconded by Commissioner Ahern. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

In looking over the bills, Commissioner Ahern commented that if the County were to have a membership with the Farm Bureau that there may be some reductions on items purchased.

Director Clough informed the Commissioners that the December NACo Prescription Drug Plan saved participants \$9,176 or 27.6% (an average of \$18.35). There were 206 utilizers and over the period of inception there has been a savings of \$504,194.

Director Clough said that the NACo Board has approved a proposal for Counties to participate in revenue sharing with the RX program and that the County could receive \$1 per RX when the card is used which will not affect the program. There was some ambiguity about what that would mean to the participant however, which was not fully clear. Director Clough said if the County did participate in the revenue sharing it could mean approximately \$3000 a year.

Commissioner Cryans agreed that the information was a little vague regarding the impact to users and he didn't think it was worth jeopardizing their savings, saying he felt the program was good the way it was. Commissioner Ahern said he didn't want to take any money away from residents and agreed the program should be kept as is.

Director Clough presented a request for out of state travel from the Attorney's Office for the Victim Witness Director to attend the 2012 International Conference in San Diego, CA from April 2-4. The Conference provides information on domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking and is best if done in person. There will be a grant from the Dept. of Justice which will pay \$1500 of the trip which will only leave approximately \$135 of the total amount.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the out of state travel which was seconded by Commissioner Ahern

DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Ahern said that even though there is grant money available he still believes there are other methods to glean the information. He said that Victim Witness Dept. does a great job but he feels the information could be found in places other than at the conference.

When the vote was taken Commissioners Burton and Cryans were in favor and Commissioner Ahern was opposed.

An out of state travel request came from the Attorney's office for a 2012 Cyber Crime Conference to be held in Massachusetts from April 30 through May 2nd for an Asst. Attorney to attend. The cost would be approximately \$200 plus meals.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the out of state travel which was seconded by Commissioner Ahern.

DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Ahern reiterated that based on the recent request for a per diem Attorney because the office was understaffed he could not imagine how anyone could be spared to attend a conference. He said that with the economy the way it, it would not be prudent to approve this.

When the vote was taken, Commissioners Cryans and Burton were in favor and Commissioner Ahern was opposed.

Director Clough said that she is recommending that the County accept the previous proposal from auditors Melanson & Heath for auditing services for FY12 and FY13 in the amount of \$25,100 and \$25,700 respectively and then go out to bid again for services for FY14. Director Clough said she had a good experience with them and thought they made some very good recommendations.

Commissioner Ahern moved to accept the proposal from Melanson & Heath as presented by the Executive Director which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

Director Clough presented an educational assistance application from someone at the Sheriff's Dept. who would be taking a Criminology class.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the educational assistance which was seconded by Commissioner Ahern. All were in favor.

Director Clough informed the Commissioners that Craig Labore started yesterday as the new Nursing Home Administrator and that all the paperwork to release the interim people covering has been processed.

Director Clough said that the DOE has granted the County a 180 day extension on the biomass project which was spurred on with the help of Senator Shaheen's office. She said that the contract documents should be ready by the first of June.

In a discussion about the disposition of the old Jail, Director Clough said that in order to apply for a grant from the NH Preservation Alliance, the building would need to be listed on the State or National Register of Historical Places and she said she wasn't sure what that meant for the future and what could be done with the building.

Commissioner Burton suggested that the Board consider this and then take a vote on it next week. He said that he would like to have a feasibility study done which would take advantage of a grant through CDBG for \$12K.

Commissioner Ahern said he feels that he needs more information before he can make a decision. He suggested though that the County might want to stay away from the NH Alliance grants because of the strings attached to them. Director Clough said she would try to find what it meant to receive one of those grants.

Commissioner Burton asked for comments about last week's Jail meetings and Commissioner Cryans said that his opinion has not changed and still feels the building should come down. He said there were a lot of good ideas but he thinks the building will turn into a money pit. He said he wasn't opposed to a study but didn't think that would change his mind on the issue.

Commissioner Burton said there's no rush since it won't be vacated until June and they can wait to see what Director Clough finds out about the details of the grant.

Director Clough informed the Commissioners that the Jail project will be coming in

under budget.

The Executive Committee will be meeting on Friday the 24th in the month of February. Director Clough said that according to a request at their meeting, the committee would like the Commissioners to report on how they will be handling the budget as a result of the recommendations of the performance audit. There were some discussions about this and the consensus was that there are some items that could not feasibly dealt with without a lot more time to consider them. Director Clough said that she could put together a synopsis of the recommendations for the Commissioners to go over next week and talk about.

Director Clough also said that the Executive Committee wanted to hear from the Commissioners as to what their expectations are of the budget, noting that there was some discussion at the meeting that the Executive Committee may want to consider putting some restraints on the budget. Director Clough said that if there are restrictions to be considered, then the Dept. Heads need to know that before they get too deep into their budgets. There was also talk about having some kind of capital planning and Commissioner Cryans said he didn't think that would be affective. He added that the County has always tried to keep a consistent budget (no real highs and lows) and Grafton is one of the more moderate budgets of all the Counties per capita. He said that he feels they always try to do what's best for the residents and keep the 425+/- employees in mind as well.

Commissioner Ahern said he feels that it's important to educate the people on what is driving the budget and said that he encouraged Dept. Heads to note what sort of costs are out of their control, particularly statutes that are required.

COMMISSIONER ISSUES:

Commissioner Ahern said that Sara Smith from UNH might have some funding sources for the biomass.

Commissioner Ahern attended a meeting in Lebanon on hydroelectric power and will be attending the Farm & Forest expo on Saturday manning the Tree Farm System booth.

Commissioner Cryans attended the Hanover area chamber of commerce presentation for businesses that were over 50 years old, of which there were approximately 30. He said they also honored Brian Walsh by naming an internship after him.

11:10 AM With no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk