

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
3855 Dartmouth College Highway
North Haverhill, NH 03774
January 6, 2021

PRESENT: Commissioners Lauer, Piper, Ahern, County Administrator Libby and Administrative Assistant Norcross

OTHERS PRESENT: HR Director Clough, Nursing Home Administrator Labore, Bill Darcy – NH Electric Coop

Commissioner Lauer called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Commissioners were sworn-in prior to the meeting for the 2021/2022 term. The first order of business was the reorganization of the Board.

Commissioner Ahern nominated Commissioner Piper as the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Piper seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Commissioner Piper nominated Commissioner Lauer as the Vice Chairman of the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Commissioner Piper nominated Commissioner Ahern as the Clerk of the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Commissioner Ahern stated that he appreciates the service former Commissioner Morris gave to the County.

Commissioner Piper asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from the December 22nd and December 29th meetings.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the minutes from the December 22nd meeting. Commissioner Piper seconded the motion and all were in favor. Commissioner Ahern abstained.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the minutes from the December 29th meeting. Commissioner Piper seconded the motion and all were in favor. Commissioner Ahern abstained.

The Commissioners signed check register 1132.

Reappointment of Department Heads – CA Libby stated that every two (2) years as a ceremonial procedure the Board of Commissioners reappoint the eight (8) appointed department heads. There are no contractual obligations by this reappointment as all employees are protected by RSA 28:10-a. The appointed department heads are as follows:

Grafton County Appointed Department Heads
January 6, 2021 - January 4, 2023

POSITION	EMPLOYEE
County Administrator	Julie L Libby
Department of Corrections Superintendent	Thomas C Elliott, Jr.
Nursing Home Administrator	Craig J Labore
Human Resource Director	Karen J Clough
Maintenance Superintendent	James C Oakes
Information Technology Manager	Brent L Ruggles
Farm Manager	Grant W Nelson
Alternative Sentencing Director	Renee E DePalo

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to reappoint the department heads as listed. Commissioner Piper seconded the motion.

Commissioner Ahern stated that he knows most of the department heads but there are two (2) he does not know: the Farm Manager and Alternative Sentencing Director. He stated that it feels inappropriate for him to vote on it at this time but noted that it is nothing personal.

The Commissioners voted on the motion and all were in favor. Commissioner Ahern abstained.

HR Director Clough arrived and gave the following report:

HR Activity Report (12/02/2020-01/05/2021)

- New Hires**

Department	#	Position(s)
Nursing Home	8 (2 FT, 5 PT, 1 Per Diem)	2 FT RN's, 1 Per Diem LNA, 4 PT Dietary Aide's
HR	1 (1 FT)	1 PT Housekeeper
Maintenance	1 (1 FT)	1 FT HR Generalist
		1 FT Custodian

- Separations**

Departments	#	
Nursing Home	3 (3 FT)	1 RN, 1 LNA, 1 Laundry Aide
DOC	4 (3 FT, 1 PT)	3 FT CO's, 1 PT Cook
Registry of Deeds	1 (1 FT)	1 FT Imaging Tech
County Attorney's	1 (1 FT)	1 FT Asst. County Atty.
Sheriff's Dept.	1 (1 PT)	1 PT Special Deputy

Reasons:

Resigned personal reasons/no reason given- 2
Resigned / not enough hours - 1

Resigned to accept other employment - 3
Termination – 1
Retirement – 3

- **Status Changes/ dept transfers: 1 Per Diem LNA to FT LPN, 1 FT LNA to FT MNA**

Active Leave of Absences as of January 5, 2021

Department	#	
Nursing Home – Nursing	14	(12 are intermittent, 8 for self, 6 for family)
Nursing Home – Non-Nursing	5	(3 are intermittent, 2 for family, 3 for self)
DOC	3	(0 intermittent, 3 self)
Farm	1	(0 intermittent, 1 self)
Sheriff's Dept.	1	(1 intermittent family)
TOTAL:	24	

Scheduled to orient 01/06

1 PT Unit Secretary

Current Jobs posted/advertised

LNA's (16.55 FTE's vacant)
RN/LPN (9.15 FTE's vacant combined)
CO's
PT/FT Dietary Aide
PT/FT Housekeeper/Laundry Aide
Assistant DON
Social Service Asst.

The Commissioners asked HR Director Clough if there was an update on the County Administrator position. HR Director Clough stated that an offer has been made and accepted. The estimated start date for the new County Administrator will be February 8th or 15th. He needs to firm that date up after he talks to his board.

NHAC Executive Committee Appointments – CA Libby stated that per the bylaws, each Board of Commissioners is to appoint five (5) members to the Executive Committee following the general election. In the new bylaws of the association, any officers of the association are included in the five (5)-member team. Prior to the changes Commissioner Piper was not counted as part of the five (5) and now she is. CA Libby stated that it is likely the new County Administrator would eventually be a member. She did talk with the DoC Supt. and HR Director and both of them said it is not dire for them to remain on the committee. CA Libby stated that she would like to remain on the committee. Commissioner Piper stated that she would like for the appointments on the Executive Committee to attend the Executive Committee meetings. Commissioner Ahern asked about the requirements of the Committee. Commissioner Piper explained the requirements, noting that they meet once a month and what it is the Committee does. Commissioner Ahern stated that if Commissioner Piper feels he would be valuable to the Committee then he would become a member. The Commissioners further discussed the committee members.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to appoint Commissioner Piper, Commissioner Ahern, Nursing Home Administrator Labore, County Administrator Libby and the new County Administrator to the NHAC Executive Committee. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Tax Collections – CA Libby stated that Enfield wire transferred their tax payment on Friday. She noted that the County has never received their check and it has not been returned to Enfield as of yet. Investment money is at Mascoma Savings Bank; Treasurer Hill was signing today for TD Bank and Bank of New Hampshire and the rest of the money is at Woodsville Guaranty Savings Bank.

Federal Mileage Rate- CA Libby stated that the new federal mileage rate for 2021 is .56. She noted that the County typically adopts the federal rate each year.

MOTION: Commissioner Ahern moved to adopt the federal mileage rate of .56 for 2021. Commissioner Lauer seconded the motion and all were in favor.

CA Libby stated that she has talked to Supt. Elliott about the COVID positive staff members. They are working on setting a date to have the mobile testing unit on site to conduct tests for the facility. There will be a press release going out hopefully today. She will keep the Commissioners informed, as she knows more. The Nursing Home just completed their round of testing of all residents and staff and they should start to receive results tonight or tomorrow.

CA Libby explained that when they do CDBG grants they are now required to put out an RFP for grant writing services. They sent out the RFP for the NH Alliance of Regional Development Corporations Business Technical Assistance Grant and received one (1) RFP from Pat Garvin who has administered the grant for them for roughly eight (8) or so years. The RFP was for \$4,000. CA Libby stated that she would recommend the Commissioners select P. Garvin based on her experience and knowledge. She noted that P. Garvin would be paid if the grant is approved and the payment comes out of the grant.

MOTION: Commissioner Ahern moved to accept Pat Garvin's proposal of \$4,000. Commissioner Lauer seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Housing and Community Development Plan – CA Libby stated that this has to be ready to be adopted next Tuesday. Commissioner Ahern stated that he has read it over and his only concern is getting the county involved with projects that really are not appropriate. He asked if this is putting a burden on taxpayers. He stated that he is not sure the County should be handling economic development; this is something for local control. CA Libby explained that this does not add any more responsibilities to the county from what they do now. The County is a pass-through agency. This plan is not saying that County Government is going to get into daycares; it says that they as a county government, they support and sponsor these types of things for CDBG funding. The County is very well known across the state for sponsoring CDBG and has a reputation of being very good with sponsoring them but she stated that it is not a requirement. Commissioner Piper stated that they are agreeing to the goals of CDFA, a state entity, in order to benefit their constituents. CA Libby stated that this current board customized this plan for Grafton County three (3) years ago. Commissioner Piper stated that they will continue this discussion after they meet with NHA Labore.

NHA Labore arrived and gave the following report:

Grafton County Nursing Home
Commissioners' Report:
January 6, 2021

Census:

Medicare: 4
Medicaid: 77
VA: 1
Hospice: 0
Private: 22
Total: 104

FY '21 Budgeted Census:

Medicare: 4
Medicaid: 94 (Daily rate= \$198.33)
VA: 2
Private: 23

Year-To-Date Numbers:

2020 YTD Numbers

Admissions: 30
Deceased Residents: 38
Discharges: 8

Other Topics:

1) COVID-19 Update

- Positive Case Update – NHA Labore stated that another five (5) staff members tested positive but still no residents at this point. Resident and staff testing was conducted Monday and Tuesday and they are waiting for results. He stated that will pass along the results to the Commissioners when he receives them.
- Future Testing – NHA Labore stated that regardless of how the results come back they are on a two (2) week cycle of testing.
- Vaccination Update – NHA Labore stated that they had their vaccination clinic December 22nd. They vaccinated 89 residents, 87% of the population, and 92 staff members or 47%. He explained that he chose not to make the vaccine mandatory. He didn't want to make this a big brother program because there are some fears around it and by doing this it created less tension in the building. He noted that because of how their date fell with it being right before Christmas, there was a lot of fear about side effects and people did not want to get it right before Christmas. He believes on January 12th the staff number getting the vaccine will increase. His new goal is 70% staff vaccination. He feels the resident numbers will increase as well and if they hit that goal that will give them a good shield in the nursing home. Commissioner Ahern stated that he personally appreciates NHA Labore making it voluntary and not mandatory. Commissioner Lauer stated that she agrees with that decision, she understands and respects people's ability to make their own decisions. NHA Labore

stated that the only side effect noted was a sore arm. January 12th is the next vaccination clinic. Those who received their 1st dose on December 22nd will get their second on the 12th and the last clinic will be February 2nd for those who get the first dose on January 12th.

- Annual State Survey Preparation – NHA Labore stated that the window opened in September. They are starting the preparation process. He noted that there is the potential, because of the positive Covid tests, that they may get an infection control survey as well.

2) Commissioner Memo Request: Dryer Purchase Authorization – CA Libby stated that the Commissioners need to rescind the motion from their August 18th meeting when they warded the bid to Daniel's Equipment.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to rescind the vote to purchase the dryers from Daniel's Equipment at their August 18, 2020 meeting. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

NHA Labore stated that these dryers were planned purchases through their capital budget to replace current equipment, which is well past their useful life expectancy. The Board of Commissioners approved a quote offered by Daniels Equipment Company, in August for the purchase of two Unimac dryers. He stated that the Commissioners are aware that it was discovered after the order was placed that these dryers would not fit in their laundry, not leaving enough clearance between the back of the dryer and the gas lines behind them in order to meet current gas codes. Daniels did not have an appropriate solution that would not result in significant renovations to their laundry area or decreasing the size of their dryers, which would create less efficiency in their operation. He stated that therefore they solicited a quote from Yankee Equipment Systems, which is the other commercial large equipment dealer in the area. The quote of \$21,120.00 is below what they had budgeted in the capital budget. Commissioner Ahern stated that it appears they indicated the reason they are buying them now is that the present machines are well past their useful life expectancy. This does not say the dryers are not functioning. NHA Labore stated that yes, the dryers are functional, but they are 27 years old and parts are not readily available if something were to happen. Commissioner Ahern stated that his question would be to know how long this quote would be good for and how easy it is to install the dryers should they purchase them but not install them right away. He explained that he is trying to extend the useful life of all of their equipment. NHA Labore stated that he does not know where they would store two (2) dryers of this size on the complex. Having these installed by the company, which is a part of the purchase process, makes things easy. The dryers are still operating but when they are looking at purchasing these, they should purchase the new dryers, have them installed and "thank" the current dryers for working for 27 years. Commissioner Ahern asked if they should talk to Supt. Oakes about any possible opportunity if someone wants to buy them. NHA Labore stated that parts for them are hard to come by but that would be a question for Supt. Oakes. He noted that part of the agreement with Yankee Equipment is for them to take the old dryers. Commissioner Piper stated that this is saving them from having to get rid of them and paying someone to do so.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to purchase two (2) Milnor 120 gas dryers from Yankee Equipment Systems for \$21,120. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

3) Commissioner Memo Request: Establishment of a Lien on Real Property – NHA Labore requested to go into nonpublic session.

MOTION: * 11:09 AM Commissioner Lauer moved to enter into non-public session for the purposes of matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant. RSA 91-A: 3, II (c) Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Lauer “yes”; Commissioner Ahern “yes” Commissioner Piper “yes” Commissioner Piper stated that a majority of the board voted “yes” and would now go into non-public session.

* 11:16 AM Commissioner Piper declared the meeting back in public session.

MOTION: Commissioner Ahern moved to permanently seal the minutes from the just completed non-public session because they could affect the reputation of someone other than those of the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Lauer seconded the motion. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Lauer “yes” Commissioner Ahern “yes” Commissioner Piper “yes”. Commissioner Piper stated that a majority of the board voted “yes” and the motion passes.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to establish a lien on real property as requested by Nursing Home Administrator Labore in regards to a nursing home resident. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Existing Conditions Report – Steve Whitman – CA Libby stated that S. Whitman would be here January 19th to review this report in detail and she has given a copy of this report to the Commissioners to review before that meeting.

Social Services Request – FY2022. CA Libby handed out a spreadsheet of the agency requests for the next fiscal year. She asked the Commissioners how they would like to proceed with reviewing the applications. The Commissioners discussed it and Commissioner Piper stated that she would go through them and report to the Commissioners with what she would recommend.

March Meeting Schedule – CA Libby stated that she is working on the March meeting schedule. They will be meeting on Thursdays in March and April to work on the budget and asked the Commissioners to let her know if they have any scheduling conflicts.

Housing and Community Development Plan – Commissioner Ahern asked if there is going to be any net expense to the county. CA Libby stated that there is no additional expense. The Commissioners finalized any edits they had.

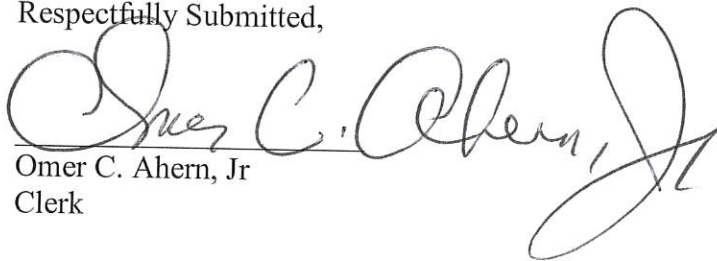
Commissioner Issues:

Commissioner Ahern stated that he had read an article in the Laconia Daily Sun regarding new legislation for an Ombudsman in Nursing Homes. He stated that he is concerned about another governmental requirement being put on them. He stated that he would bring in the article from the Laconia Daily Sun next week to discuss the bill with the Commissioners.

Commissioner Piper stated that she is on the State County Finance Committee where they are discussing the FMAP issue. They meet on January 29th where each side is going to start with a 30- minute presentation on their perspective. She stated that they met yesterday to gather information to present at that meeting.

12:07 PM with no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



Omer C. Ahern, Jr.
Clerk