

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.
North Haverhill, NH 03774
Tuesday November 01, 2011

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

OTHERS: H. Brown

Employee Council representatives Donna Wallis and Wanda Hubbard arrived along with the HR Director M. Simpson.

9:05 AM Commissioner Cryans opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Donna Wallis.

The Employee Council was approached regarding a subsequent negotiation of their benefits in that the Commissioners offered to unfreeze longevity for this fiscal year if the Employees would give up their perfect attendance bonus. The Employee Council had met and their response was they would like to keep the perfect attendance bonus and if funds were available to pay longevity, they requested it be done so at the same rate as the Union Employees.

Commissioner Cryans said that he was under the impression that the agreement was that the Employees could choose one or the other and tried to get a sense of what way the employees would like to go with this.

Commissioner Burton said that he found that an employee could get perfect attendance even if they have received FMLA and he didn't think that was right.

The Employee Council said that they were willing to refine the policy while working with the Benefits and Compensation Committee.

It was stated by the employees that the only reason that the Perfect Attendance is being put into questions is because the HR Director doesn't like it and that the employee benefits being discussed were negotiated between the employees and the Commissioners many years ago and seemed to work fine. The freezing of longevity was not a decision by the Commissioners but was put upon by the Delegation.

There was a discussion about the Benefits and Compensation Committee and what their function would be. It was noted that the main function of this committee would center around health insurance.

Commissioner Ahern thought that because there were people in his district that were having a difficult time financially, that all of the benefits in the policy manual needed to be addressed at some point.

There were a couple of other things that were tossed around but it was clear that the representatives of the Employee Council were not in a position to make any other decision on

behalf of the employees without going back to the full council for further discussion.

W. Hubbard noted that the benefits that are being discussed now as proposed by the Commissioners will be unavailable to any new employees, such as longevity.

The Commissioners did not feel that they could make any kind of motion for a decision and the Employee Council representatives did not feel there were in a position to make a choice between two benefits believing they should not have to forfeit any.

Director Clough was asked for her opinion and she stated that perfect attendance is flawed and might not be fair to all. She does however feel that longevity should be paid out if money is available in the budget.

Commissioner Cryans stated that time was of importance for a decision stressing that the employees need to work things out quickly. It was also noted that this issue has been on the table for over a month and was just brought to the Employee Council last week.

Corrections Superintendent Glenn Libby arrived to recommend an award of bid. Bids were received and opened for Radios & Equipment on the 18th of October. Supt. Libby recommended that the bid be awarded to Ossipee Mountain Electric in the amount of \$51,042.77. He said that the budgeted amount was \$75K and Ossipee was the lower of the two bidders. Commissioner Cryans asked if this is the company that the Sheriff's Dept. uses and Supt. Libby said it was.

Commissioner Ahern moved to accept the bid from Ossipee Mountain Electric (low bidder) in the amount of \$51,042.77 which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

Commissioner Cryans asked if everyone had read the minutes and if there were changes or edits. Commissioner Ahern had some changes.

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

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

Bids were solicited from employees for approximately 17.5 cords of mixed wood which were located in three piles across the road. Two employees bid on the wood.

Dennis MacLam \$ 17.50
Roland Lafond \$300.

Commissioner Ahern asked if the Forester Falkenham had participated in this and Director Clough said he had not.

Commissioner Ahern moved to reject both bids and was seconded by Commissioner Burton.

DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Ahern was concerned that there were limitations in the way of not being able to cut the wood on the property and Director Clough said that it is not allowed because of the liability. Commissioner Ahern said a waiver could be signed and a request for insurance of some type. He also suggested that the pile could be worked by inmates with hand saws then the wood could be offered out to people who are having a hard time getting through the winter. He said he was surprised the County Forester wasn't involved with this.

Commissioner Burton said he would have a concern about the liability of anyone cutting wood on the property and he too would like the Forester to weigh in on this. He said he would like to see this go back out to bid after being looked at by the Forester.

Commissioner Ahern said he would like to see the wood go back out to bid to the general public as well.

When the vote was taken, all were in favor.

Director Clough gave the Commissioners the September NACo Prescription Drug card update with a monthly savings of \$8,126 for an average of 30.12% and 217 users. The program has currently been in service for four years now and total savings are \$479,379.

Director Clough said she was contacted by Northern Community Investment Corporation (NCIC) to request that Grafton County serve as environmental review certification officer as they can not do this because they are not a governmental organization. The grant is a HUD grant in the amount of \$487,000 to be used as a revolving loan fund for small business. There will be no construction or renovation allowed under this grant.

Director Clough said the County, more specifically Commissioner Cryans, has acted in this capacity in the past. The County will simply keep the environmental review on the premises for review by the public should they want to see it. The said the grant is for money for loans.

Commissioner Cryans asked Commissioner Burton to explain a little of what the NCIC does. Commissioner Burton replied that the investment group was set up to create jobs and eliminate poverty. He was the chairman of their board for five years and said it is a lasting organization.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve having the County act as environmental officer which was seconded by Commissioner Ahern.

DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Ahern said he would like to review the package as he is concerned that the County is being asked to be a certifying officer for the environmental review. Director Clough said that the County's only role is to sign off on the paperwork which is all done by NCIC. Commissioner Cryans said he has done this before and would like to see their project get underway. Commissioner Burton said he would like to have NCIC call Mark Scarano and see

what he has for loans that may be in need of help.

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

Human Resource Director Mike Simpson returned with his report. *(see attached)
There was a discussion about looking at LGC for health insurance and Commissioner Ahern thought that they should get their legal issues under control before they are considered again. HRD Simpson said he wanted to be able to get all information available when considering decisions. Director Clough said that in order to get a quote from Anthem, you have to go through LGC because of their contract with one another. She said the County still has business with LGC at this point anyway.

HRD Simpson informed the Commissioners that the on-line tracking system is currently up and running and added that he has received six applications so far for the position of Nursing Home Administrator.

Commissioner Burton asked if the deferred compensation package that is available through the State has been offered to the employees yet and HRD Simpson said it had not and that he wanted to do a full analysis of it first.

Nursing Home Administrator Eileen Bolander arrived.

Commissioner Cryans began by thanking NHA Bolander for her years of services in the NH Association of Counties and also congratulated her for the Edna McKenna award that she received at the banquet. He also congratulated Director Clough for winning this year's Administrator of the Year award.

The full Board of Commissioners congratulated the both of them.

NHA Bolander said it was a great experience being with the NHACo and it was a big surprise winning the award.

NHA Bolander said that the census at the Nursing Home is 135, which is a full house. Medicare and Private pay residents are up, while Medicaid residents are down.

There is a new Medicare revalidation requirement from CMS for contract and license renewal which will cost \$500 and be good for five years. NHA Bolander said she sees this as a method to reduce the number of health care providers and there may be some fallout from this going forward.

FMLA's are on the increase and NHA Bolander said they are seeing more intermittent ones for stress. She said they are tracking them.

There was a discussion about the new Quality Indicator Survey which is now going to be yes or no answer questions.

NHA Bolander said there were about 350 children that participated in the Trick or Treat Street festivities.

11:08 AM ~ Commissioner Ahern moved to enter into non-public session for the purposes of discussing the consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation according to RSA 91-A:3, II (e). Commissioner Burton seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote, Commissioner Cryans called the roll. Commissioner Ahern “yes”; Commissioner Burton “yes” Commissioner Cryans “yes”; Commissioner Cryans stated that a majority of the board voted yes and will now go into non-public session.

11:15 AM ~ Commissioner Cryans declared that the meeting was back in public session.

Commissioner Ahern moved to seal the minutes from the non-public session which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

A meeting with Woodsville Water & Light Commissioners is being scheduled for the 8th of November.

A request for educational assistance was presented by Director Clough from someone at the Nursing Home who was working in the RN/BSN program.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the educational assistance which was seconded by Commissioner Ahern.

DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Ahern said he would be in favor, providing the college is accredited and that the employee provides the address information.

When the vote was taken, all were in favor.

Director Clough asked the Commissioners to sign the lease for the State’s Motorcycle Training Program which runs from January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2013. The fee paid to the County is \$150 each time they hold a class in the building.

Commissioner Ahern moved to approve the lease with the State which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

Director Clough then asked the Commissioners to grant authority for her to enter into the agreement with the State.

Commissioner Ahern moved to give Director Clough authority to enter into the agreement with the State which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

Commissioner Cryans signed a letter of authority for the Executive Director.

Director Clough began a discussion with the Board about a retirement dinner for NHA Bolander and whether or not the County can help provided some funding so that the meals that were offered to guest could be at a reasonable cost. She said that the County would need to fund approximately \$1000 which will leave the cost of meals at \$35 per person.

Commissioner Cryans said he feels it appropriate for the County to do something after a Department Head who has led one of the largest Departments is retiring after twelve years. Money would be taken from the Commissioners contingency fund.

Commissioner Cryans moved to take \$1000 from the Commissioners contingency fund to be used for the purpose of reducing the cost of meals per individuals for the retirement dinner for NHA Bolander, which was seconded by Commissioner Burton.

DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Ahern said he feels this is a totally inappropriate use of tax payer money and Commissioner Cryans rebutted that and said if there were some kind of party done here at the County they would incur costs anyway and he feels it would be a good use of money.

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

Director Clough said that she has a bit of a concern about an email that was received regarding information that was reported by some members of the Jail Study Committee and said that it appeared that they were critical of HP Cummings estimate that they had given to demolish/rehab the old Jail. She said HPC had given that estimate as a courtesy to the County and of course the County would put this out to bid if it came to that. She said there were a number of inaccuracies in the email and she just wanted that noted before the meeting at 12:00 PM.

COMMISSIONER ISSUES:

Commissioner Ahern attended another veteran homeless shelter meeting in Plymouth and still doesn't feel as though they are making a lot of progress. He said he would like the County to consider providing some land so a shelter can be built on County property.

Commissioner Burton commended the NHACo for the convention that was held in North Conway and that a number of Grafton County employees came away with awards.

Commissioner Burton had his ATV tour and made a lot of crossings on route 10

Commissioner Cryans said he and Commissioner Ahern attended the most recent Drug Court Graduation and this time parents spoke as well as two previous graduates which added a little something extra.

Commissioner Cryans offered congratulations on behalf of the Board to the following award winners at the NHACo conference.

County Attorney Lara Saffo ~ County Attorney of the Year
Office Manager Alison Farina ~ County Attorney Employee of the Year
Dee Boutin Farley ~ Nursing Home Employee of the Year
Executive Director Julie Clough ~ Administrator of the Year
Nursing Home Administrator Eileen Bolander ~ Enda J. McKenna Award, for public service

11:45 AM being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk

Grafton County Human Resources Report
 Mike Simpson, Human Resources Director
 January 18, 2011

1) **HR Activity Report** (1/5/11 to 1/14/11)

- *New Hires*

<u>Department</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Position(s)</u>
Nursing Home	3 Full-Time/1 Part-time	3 LNA/1 RN

- *Separations*

<u>Departments</u>	<u>#</u>
Corrections	1
Nursing Home	1

- *Leave of Absences*

<u>Department</u>	<u>#</u>
Nursing Home – Nursing	12 (5 are intermittent)
Nursing Home – Non-Nursing	6 (5 are intermittent)
All other Grafton Co. Departments	1

- *Current Openings*

<u>Positions</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Status</u>
RN/LPN (2 FT openings)	Nursing	Open to all applicants
Unit Secretary (3/5 status)	Medical Records	Internal applicants only
LNA (Full-Time)	Nursing	Internal applicants only

Summary – For the exception of RN/LPNs for Nursing Home, staffing at Grafton County looks good. A couple of past vacancies/postings were filled with internal candidates and pending external hires will fill the remaining openings. A couple of new LOAs, but still looks okay compared to the previous 12 months.

2) **HR Overview** – See attachment

3) **Legislation** – New Hampshire Senate is reviewing legislation to appeal the Evergreen Clause. If passed, it would stop the automatic continuation of the terms within an expired collective bargaining agreement.

4) **Compensation** – As I was last year, I would request once the Board of Commissioners starts having discussions regarding employee’s FY 2012 compensation that I am included in those conversations. I feel, as an employee advocate, I can help facilitate a fair win-win-win solution for the Delegation, our employees, and our taxpayers.

Even though I fully understand the current economic conditions and budgetary constraints of Grafton County, I am in favor of insuring our employees see an increase in their pay due to their cost of living expenses increasing and more importantly to retain staff. In my opinion, I do believe there are some positive signs for the economy turning around.

In my initial research, Society of Human Resources Management conducted a survey that found the median base salary for employees would increase at 2.8% for 2011.

5) **Internal HR Operations** – I completed performance evaluations for both HR team members. During this process, I also updated both of their job descriptions. The HR Director's job description hasn't been updated in over two years. I propose I draft any applicable changes to my job description with Executive Director, then present to Board of Commissioners for a future meeting.

HR Department made a minor procedural change on how we process applications, personnel files, and maintain records as it pertains to EEOC's voluntary self identification form.

I met with the new Register of Deeds to give her an orientation to the HR department as it relates to HR functions and processes at Grafton County.

6) **Benefits** – Entire HR Department is trying to be more proactive with all employees on assisting them with any issues folks may be having with Bioscrip. Travis Lowe from Nationwide will be here 1/20/11 to meet with employees who are either on or want to participate in our Deferred Compensation 457 Plan.

7) **Wellness** – On January 5th, we had Wellness Committee. The focus of the committee for the winter 2011 is to promote physical activity and cash incentives for employees and dependents who may be interested in quitting smoking. The committee is also looking at the possibility of Weight Watchers coming on site for interested employees. Future initiatives include nutrition including offering healthier food options in the dining room and stress management in-services.

8) **Upcoming meetings** –

January 19th – Joint Loss Meeting

January 21st – NH County HR affiliate meeting

January 25th and 26th – Primex In-services to all employees

January 25th – Wanda Hubbard attending LGC in-service

January 26th – Mike Simpson attending FMLA Compliance Update

January 27th – Julie and Mike participate in 2nd SAU/County initial planning meeting on possible partnership for Health Insurance in FY13.