

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING  
3855 Dartmouth College Highway  
North Haverhill, NH 03774  
February 16<sup>th</sup> 2021

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Maintenance Supt. Oakes

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

Commissioner Lauer participated electronically according to RSA 91-A: 2 with the reason being she was unable to attend the meeting in person. Electronic participation was at her request. It was noted that all votes must be taken by a roll call.

**Supt. Oakes arrived and gave the following report:**

**COMPLEX**

**Building Automation System Project**

Due to continuing Covid-19 related call outs and quarantines, Alliance Building Automation (ABA) employees have been unable to keep many of their NH customer's projects on schedule, including ours. Since we last met, they've been on site once to do some server follow up work but the brunt of the project still remains to be executed. My staff have completed 98% of our portion of the project, and we are in a holding pattern waiting for ABA to return to our site to resume work. They are scheduled to return on Thursday 2/18/21.

**Elevators – Courthouse & Administrative Buildings**

When we last met, I informed you I discovered the Administration Building and Courthouse elevators are not wired into circuits covered by their respective generators. Since then, I hired Royal Electric to do a power analysis of each elevator and existing electric panels covered by those respective generators, to determine the elevator amperage loads and existing panel's capacities to accept those loads. At both locations the generators are large enough to support these new elevator loads, assuming we were to add them.

Administrative Elevator - The elevator amperage load is small enough to put on an existing electrical panel that is covered by the generator. At this juncture we are investigating the cost to move the elevator circuit to its selected new location.

Courthouse Elevator - The elevator's amperage load exceeds the capacity of the courthouse's existing generator covered electrical panels. That aside, there is no way of getting the elevator circuit to those panel locations due to an unavailability of unused electrical conduits.

Additionally, due to asbestos laden areas throughout the entire courthouse, there is no way of running new conduits from the basement to the existing locations without getting into a major asbestos abatement project. Lastly, the only way of putting the elevator on the generator is by adding a third Automatic Transfer Switch and new electrical panel in the main electrical room in the basement. With all this said, I'm not sure this is worth pursuing right now based on the potential outcome of the Architectural & Engineering Assessment. I recommend a wait & see approach in regard to this one location.

**Sprinkler Systems** – Hampshire Fire Protection was on site and completed our quarterly inspections and tests. All systems throughout the complex are in good working order.

#### **COURTHOUSE**

**Preventative Maintenance (PM)** – Performed various PM tasks throughout.

#### **Architectural & Engineering (A&E) Assessment Project**

Thus far, this project is on track, and I anticipate it will be completed on schedule. To date, the A&E team met with all the various office/department heads, including state entities, to view their spaces and hear their input about existing spaces and to determine what their future needs will be for the next 15-years. My staff and I met with them also to discuss existing issues and gave them full access to inspect all elements of the building's architecture, mechanical, electrical and structural conditions. I also gave them blueprints, specifications, various studies, including hazardous material studies and all relevant asbestos abatement records. I have a few more prints and documents to send them, but overall, they have the majority of information needed to complete their analysis and provide a recommendation.

**Sewage Pumps** – While studying the possibility of putting the elevator on the generator, I started thinking about other critical equipment, in relationship to generator coverage, and thus I thought of the sewage pump circuits for this building. Inspection revealed they did not meet electrical code due to the way they are wired, but additionally they are not covered by the generator either.

**Domestic Hot Water** – We replaced the electric domestic hot water tank because the old one failed from a corrosion hole that formed in the tank wall. The old tank was 23-years old, thus the county got its money's worth from this tank.

#### **NURSING HOME**

**Preventative Maintenance (PM)** – Performed various PM tasks throughout

#### **Sprinkler System**

**Dry System Leaks** - Hampshire Fire Protection replaced three sections of pipe on the dry systems. Since completing that work, we've since discovered two more leaks, which we



temporarily patched until their next scheduled visit. As this system grows older leaks will become more prolific and so will the cost of repairing them.

Quick Response Heads – Virtually all the sprinkler heads in the building are of the quick response type, which are due a 20-year test or replacement. The test method encompasses destructive testing a representative sample and if any fail then all of them require replacement. To understand the magnitude of this one point, there is roughly 700 – 800 quick response heads throughout the nursing home. We are looking at a significant expense for the nursing home building in FY22.

**Backflow Device Testing** - The boiler makeup water backflow device failed at its 2<sup>nd</sup> check valve. We installed a rebuild kit and retested the device. The device passed test after being rebuilt.

**Laundry** – The new dryers ordered through Yankee Equipment Systems, LLC are due into them on March 12<sup>th</sup> and will be delivered to us shortly after. In the interim we purchased all the necessary items to pipe the gas lines, run new ductwork, install air pressure controls and install new circuit breakers.

**Kitchen** – Upper steamer chattered during heating...replaced contactors to eliminate the issue.

**Kitchenettes** – Dietary staff kept cleaving off lower cupboard handles with carts on Meadow and Granite. Replaced protruding handles with recessed ones.

**Lighting** – Converted numerous light fixtures from ballasted fluorescents to low energy non-ballasted LED ones.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING

**Preventative Maintenance (PM)** – Performed various PM tasks throughout.

**Generator** – Extended emergency generator circuits to new desk locations in three offices.

#### Dept. of Corrections

**Preventative Maintenance (PM)** – Performed various PM tasks throughout

**Showers** – In previous meetings I informed you that 12 shower locations experienced bubbles in the epoxy painted walls. Somehow water had migrated into the walls to cause this effect. To correct it, the epoxy paint and underlying epoxy base materials have to be removed to expose the bare concrete walls to allow the moisture to evaporate from the walls before we recoat and repaint the walls. Thus far the shower project has moved slowly for two reasons. First, it has taken a while to figure out what equipment and processes work best to remove the tough

epoxy layers. Secondly, due to noise concerns, Chris Kendall has restricted our worktime in the shower space we are currently working, to a window of time between 3 – 5 PM. Kyle Belyea, the person I have assigned to this project, said he finally has a process down and his speed is increasing. Because it is such a labor-intensive process, it will take us months to complete the 11 other showers needing similar repairs.

## **HVAC**

- ABA accessed the Building Automation System (BAS) remotely to review the smoke control and freeze-stat issues affecting many of the air handlers. They were unable to see what they needed using that process, so they will be on site Wednesday, 2/16, to troubleshoot these issues further. To exacerbate the problem further we've discovered more prolific issues with the smoke control systems since ABA upgraded each building's JACE software as part of the BAS project taking place at the nursing home and Administration Building. At this juncture we are not sure whether the latest issues are tied to the JACE software upgrade or the replacement of the BAS server or something else. I will know more on 2/16.
- Air handler ERU-C1 supply fan motor squealing...replaced bad bearings
- Air handler ERU-A1 freeze-stat does not work...replaced freeze-stat
- Air handler AHU-H1 coil freeze protection pump making excessive noise...ordered new pump

**Security** – Had several doors throughout that either wouldn't lock or indicated they were not locked when they were locked. In some cases we replaced the locks and in others we replaced door position switches or relays to correct those problems.

**Laundry** – Small washer rear drum seal leaking. Requested quote from Daniels Equipment Co. for new seal and possibly new rear bearing.

## **MAINT/FARM BUILDING**

**Preventative Maintenance (PM)** – Performed various PM tasks throughout

## **FARM**

Nothing to report

## **BIOMASS PLANT**

**Preventative Maintenance (PM)** – Performed various PM tasks throughout.

**Chip Bin** – Auger shear bolt broke...replaced shear bolt.

#### ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING BUILDING

**Preventative Maintenance (PM)** – Performed various PM tasks throughout

#### VEHICLES & EQUIPMENT

**Preventative Maintenance (PM)** – Performed various PM tasks on various vehicles and equipment

#### OTHER

Nothing to report

Commissioner Ahern asked Supt. Oakes if the other courthouses in the state belonged to the counties or the state. He noted that Merrimack County built a new courthouse and he would like to know whether the county or state paid for it. FD Libby stated that she would look into that for him.

Woodsville Water & Light – FD Libby stated that Commissioner Ahern had requested an update on the situation with Woodsville Water & Light as legislation was put into place during his last term that would allow them to shop the free market for electricity. FD Libby stated that the right to know request that was submitted to WW&L went on for roughly a year and a half and involved legal counsel. She stated that the County was unable to obtain the specific information that was requested as WW&L stated that they could not break down the information that the county was asking for. The county shifted gears and worked with someone to go out to bid for electric prices. FD Libby stated that the county worked with Maureen Callahan from USource and she put their electric supply out to bid in December 2019. A number of vendors contacted her but not one (1) of them was willing to submit a bid. She was told that because the County was the only customer of WW&L that was able to do this, it was not cost effective for any of them to bid due to the amount of work that these companies would have to do to partner with WW&L.

The Commissioners requested to go into nonpublic session to further discuss the Woodsville Water and Light topic.

**MOTION:** \* 10:40 AM Commissioner Ahern 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 according to RSA 91-A: 3, II (c) Commissioner Lauer 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.



\* 11:04 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.

Commissioner Piper asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from the February 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Ahern moved to approve the minutes from the February 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. Commissioner Lauer seconded the motion. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Lauer “yes”, Commissioner Ahern “yes”, Commissioner Piper “yes”. With the vote being three (3) in favor and none in opposition the motion passes.

The Commissioners signed check registers: 1156-1160; 1166.

FD Libby submitted the NACo Prescription Drug Report for the month of January to the Commissioners. There was a total price savings of \$3,067.22, which was an average of 35.51% with 27 utilizers. She stated the total life savings of the program is \$883,124.89.

Re-Appointment of Upper Valley Lake Sunapee RPC Rep – Commissioner Piper stated that they received a letter from Upper Valley Lake Sunapee RPC stating that the current Grafton County Representative’s term is expiring and asked if the Commissioners wanted to reappoint Patricia Higgins. She stated that she reached out to P. Higgins and P. Higgins is happy to be reappointed but she expressed some frustration that she was never oriented to the committee and therefore does not know what her role is. She has asked the Grafton County Commissioners to clearly state what her responsibilities are, as a liaison between Grafton County and the Planning Committee. FD Libby stated that the Commissioners would need to define what they expect from P. Higgins and if they would like her to submit a report to the Commissioners every so often. The Commissioners further discussed it and agreed that they would like to receive an orientation packet from UVLSRPC so they can be made aware of what the expectations are of P. Higgins.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Ahern moved to reappoint Patricia Higgins as the Grafton County Representative to the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee RPC. Commissioner Lauer seconded the motion. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Lauer “yes”, Commissioner Ahern “yes”, Commissioner Piper “yes”. With the vote being three (3) in favor and none in opposition the motion passes.

Updated Travel Guidance – FD Libby discussed the changes to the travel guidance with the Commissioners stating that the main changes are to the quarantine requirements. She stated that employees do not need to quarantine after close contact exposure to a person with COVID19 nor after travel outside of New England if they are fourteen (14) days out from the second dose of the Covid vaccine or if the employee is within 90 days of a prior SARS-CoV-2 infection that was

diagnosed by PCR or antigen testing.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Ahern moved to adopt the revised Grafton County Employee Travel Guidance Policy dated February 16, 2021. Commissioner Lauer seconded the motion. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Lauer “yes”, Commissioner Ahern “yes”, Commissioner Piper “yes”. With the vote being three (3) in favor and none in opposition the motion passes.

CA Libby submitted the Professional Service Agreement for the Lakes Region Planning (CDBG) for Commissioner Piper to sign.

Budget Meeting Schedule – CA Libby handed out a copy of the Commissioners’ budget meeting schedule and noted that their first budget meeting will be on March 11<sup>th</sup> and go through April 22<sup>nd</sup>. She noted that the Employee Council will be meeting with the Commissioners March 2<sup>nd</sup> to do their initial requests.

County Cap – Governor’s Proposed Budget – CA Libby stated that the Governor presented his proposed budget on Friday. She stated that right now the net Cap is \$121,923,933.00 for FY21. The proposed Cap for FY22 is \$143,912,885.00. Based on the current percentages for FY21 that would be a \$1.4 million increase in the Grafton County budget for FY22. She stated that between the increase in the retirement system and proposed Cap increase they are looking at roughly a \$2 million increase in their budget from the State of New Hampshire. Commissioner Lauer stated that the State County Finance Committee has a meeting scheduled for tomorrow morning.

CDFA Close-out Paperwork – Micro 2019 – CA Libby submitted the closeout paperwork for Commissioner Piper to sign.

Livermore Manifest – Conway Fire – FD Libby stated that Grafton County has an agreement with the Conway Fire Department where they respond to any motor vehicle accidents on Rte. 112 between Lincoln and where Grafton County’s responsibility ends in Livermore. This is paid annually, and this bill was for \$1,000 and has been paid. She submitted the manifest to be signed by the Commissioners.

Request for use of Courthouse Parking Lot – FD Libby stated that she was contacted regarding the COVID Vaccine clinic that is supposed to take place at the Horse Meadow Senior Center. She stated that they are having a much larger turnout than expected and they are asking if it is possible to use the Courthouse parking lot on February 24<sup>th</sup> for the day. FD Libby stated that she has concerns with this as there is the possibility that they will be having Jury Selection that week at the Courthouse and they will need the parking lot. She noted that she wants to be a team player and help them, but they will not be able to have 400 vehicles there throughout the day for vaccines if Jury Selection is happening. FD Libby stated that she will reach back out to them to talk to them and possibly suggest looking to the Haverhill Middle School parking lot as Wednesdays are typically remote learning days.

CA Libby stated that the Federal Coronavirus State and Local Recovery Funding that the government is working on includes \$65.1 billion in direct county allocations. She stated that if this bill is passed, as it is currently, Grafton County’s estimated allocation is \$17.588 million.

She will keep the Commissioners informed as she knows more.

FD Libby reminded the Commissioners that the Farm Committee would be meeting next Tuesday the 23<sup>rd</sup> at 1:00PM.

FD Libby stated that the Commissioners needed to appoint CA Dorsett to NHAC Executive Committee.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Lauer moved to appoint County Administrator Dorsett to the NHAC Executive Committee. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Lauer “yes”, Commissioner Ahern “yes”, Commissioner Piper “yes”. With the vote being three (3) in favor and none in opposition the motion passes.

### **Commissioner Issues:**

Commissioner Lauer stated that she would be attending the State County Finance meeting tomorrow where they will be discussing the impact of the increased Cap.

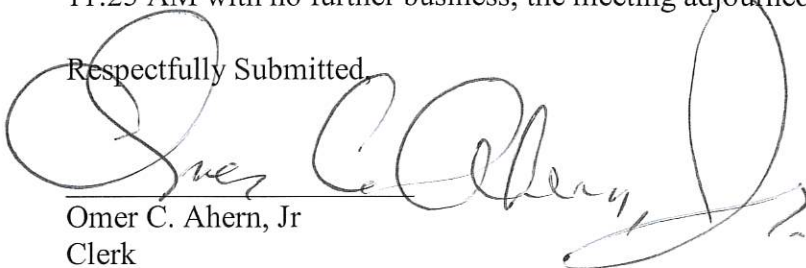
Commissioner Piper stated that she participated in the Legislative call on Friday and they received an update on the Governor’s budget. Right now, it is \$13.3 billion in spending which is just over the current biennium. They were told that revenues remain flat and she noted the Governor is proposing \$150 million in tax cuts.

FD Libby stated that she sent out an email to the other County Administrators to find out what counties own their courthouses. She will have that list for the Commissioners next week but noted that it is almost split down the middle.

Commissioner Ahern stated that he is still gathering information for the FarmDOC. There is a Federal Northeastern Dairy Promotion Program, which is located in Vermont, and he will be meeting with someone from the Vermont Department of Agriculture who is in charge of the schedule of the North Eastern Program to help dairy farmers. He wants to talk to her about his FarmDOC proposal. Commissioner Ahern stated that he will also be sitting in on the Sullivan County Commissioners’ meeting this afternoon because he has asked them about the inground root cellar that was built in 1956.

11:25 AM with no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Omer C. Ahern, Jr.", is written over the typed name and title.

Omer C. Ahern, Jr  
Clerk