

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

3855 Dartmouth College Hwy

North Haverhill, NH 03774

April 7<sup>th</sup> 2015

PRESENT: Commissioners Cryans, Richards and Lauer, Executive Director Julie Libby and Assistant S. Norcross.

OTHERS PRESENT: Employee Council- Tony Stiles & Donna Wallis, Cindy Swart, HSA Bishop, NHA Labore, Deb Naro – CADY, Regina Rice Barker - Valley Court Diversion, ASD Amero, Jay Apicello – RJ/CADY Plymouth, Stephen Lefebvre- Plymouth Police Chief, Atty. Saffo, Lyndsay Porreca – Valley Court Diversion and Robert Fillion

\*9:04 AM - Commissioner Richards moved to enter into non-public session for the purposes of discussing the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee according to RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Commissioner Lauer seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote, Commissioner Cryans called the roll. Commissioner Cryans “yes”; Commissioner Richards “yes”; Commissioner Lauer “yes” Commissioner Cryans stated that a majority of the board voted yes and would now go into non-public session.

\*9:16 AM Commissioner Cryans declared the meeting back in public session.

Commissioner Richards moved to permanently seal the minutes from the just completed non-public session in the event they could affect the reputation of someone other than those of the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Cryans seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Employee Council – Anthony Stiles & Donna Wallis

The Commissioners gave A. Stiles and D. Wallis their response to the counteroffer by the Employee Council. Commissioner Cryans explained that there is a large impact on the budget with these requests. He stated that they are willing to compromise and go with a 2% COLA as well as increasing the longevity from \$95 to \$100 a year. Commissioner Cryans explained that by doing that they cannot approve the Employee Council's request of a 3% lump sum payment for maxed out employees. He stated that they are going to stay with the 1.5% lump sum and it will be this year only because they cannot tell what the budget will look like next year.

Donna Wallis asked if the new holiday policy was going to move forward. ED Libby stated that they will work with the Employee Council on revising the policy and as of right now nothing will be done with it.

Anthony Stiles stated that he will get this proposal out to the Employee Council and tell them they need to come up with a response.

## Social Services Budget – Cindy Swart & Nancy Bishop

Commissioner Cryans thanked Cindy Swart for all her years of service to the County, as this is her last year with Social Services.

Lakes Region Community Services Council – C. Swart stated that they have been doing an excellent job with in home care and recommend funding them \$19,920.00.

Friendship House – C. Swart stated that this agency provides residential services and outpatient services in Bethlehem. There is no more state funding in anticipation for the shift to Medicaid funding. DHHS – BDAS will assist as clients enroll in Medicaid. There is no more federal grant money to fund DUI treatment. From now on until the next big change all revenue will come from Medicaid, clients on a sliding fee scale with County support, or possibly Drug Court.

Outpatient Program – services have been in decline for several years. Recommending \$6,000 and keeping a close eye next year to their service statistics.

Residential Inpatient Treatment – C. Swart is recommending \$5,000 in funding.

### Headrest

Crisis/Suicide Hotline – C. Swart explained that the program budget is \$151,760; the cost is \$18.98 per call. The program is funded primarily by municipalities and Grafton County. This is a safety net program preventing numerous possibly catastrophic and expensive outcomes. She recommends the requested level funding of \$24,000 but wonders if Grafton County tax payers are shouldering more than their share of the load.

Pathways – C. Swart stated that that PathWays provides a full range of services from residential to case management to developmentally disabled people in nine (9) southwestern Grafton County Municipalities. In FY14 agency wide sixty four (64) adult clients were assisted with 5678 hours of career, job finding and/or maintaining at a cost of \$26 per hour. She recommends funding the full request of \$25,000 for employment services.

Bridge House – C. Swart stated that this is the only homeless shelter the County funds. They always serve veterans no matter how full and they give preference to Grafton County HOC and often provides housing for those leaving Grafton County HOC.

North Country Transit – C. Swart stated that they have cut their hours to 8-4 and are unable to provide the transportation to as many people with new hours but they have also increased volunteer door to door service. She is recommending \$3,000.

Commissioner Lauer stated the Diana Love Center is receiving \$40,000 and served fewer than 200 clients. She stated that is almost a red flag. C. Swart explained to Commissioner Lauer that if she wants to find out about this center that, she recommends going to spend a day on home

visiting because it is an eye opener. These people really spend time trying to model parenting and encourage ways of bonding. It is really intensive work.

Commissioner Cryans asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from the March 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the minutes from the March 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. Commissioner Cryans seconded the motion and all were in favor. Commissioner Richards abstained.

The Commissioners signed check registers 1154-1160.

ED Libby gave the Commissioners the GCDoC Superior Court Report for the month of March for their review.

NHA Labore arrived and gave the following report:

Grafton County Nursing Home  
Commissioner's Report  
April 7, 2015

Census:

Medicare: 6  
Medicaid: 83  
Private: 30  
Total: 119

Year-To-Date Numbers:

Admissions (YTD) 17  
Discharges (YTD) 1  
Deaths (YTD) 19

Other Topics:

- 1) Budget: LNA Preceptor Program
  - NHA Labore apologized that he did not include this in his original budget presentation. He stated that he is looking to implement a new LNA training program. He explained that right now a new LNA goes through two (2) full days of in classroom training then they start right out on the floor. It is a very quick overview of how the floor works. With this new training program a newly hired LNA would be shadowing an employee to learn all the aspects of the job. They would have a checklist to make sure all bases are covered. It is a more involved orientation. The preceptor will receive a \$2.00/hour stipend while they are training the new employee. The orientation will not go any longer than four (4) weeks. New students that are hired right out of school would be the employees who take the four (4) weeks of training because they need more training verses

someone who has experience in the setting. The budget impact is \$50,000 or a 2.8% increase from the original LNA budget that was presented. The hope is that this program will help the retention rate.

2) Construction Update

- NHA Labore stated that the fire marshal's office came out to look at the chases that had been compromised. His suggestion was rather than to try and build up the exterior walls they could install a sprinkler inside those chases. The sprinklers would be installed upstairs so that the water will run down the entire chase. This is the cheapest and quickest alternative to solving this problem. The Maple Unit will be able to be occupied while these sprinklers are being installed upstairs. NHA Labore stated that since they have met with Tim Estes, the owner of Estes and Gallup, the project is now moving at a much quicker rate and the crew size has increased, overall everyone is much happier.

3) SB 8 Hearing: April 8<sup>th</sup> at 10am

- NHA Labore stated that SB 8 that Senator Forrester put in place to reinstate the \$7 million that was taken out by Health and Human Services. The hearing is tomorrow at 10:00am.

4) Medicaid Rate Appeal Hearing

- Sixty (60) nursing homes filed an appeal which was within our rights to do when the state lowered their Medicaid rates. They went before the Administrative Appeals Unit with the state to state their case as to why they think the rate calculation was done in error. As a result in an effort to make the process run smoother the Health Care Association has set up a system where all the nursing homes that filed an appeal are going to be represented in one (1) hearing. That is being done by Devine Millimet & Branch out of Manchester. There are costs associated with that and at tomorrow's Executive Committee meeting a request is going to be put forward to fund the nursing homes approximately \$2,000, which shows up to be about \$200 per facility in the counties for our portions of the legal expense for the representation.

5) State Budget

- The Department of Health and Human Services has gone away from the original plan of keeping rates set through the department and they are proposing that the nursing homes negotiate with the managed care organizations on July 1<sup>st</sup> for rate reimbursement. This goes against everything that they were told was going to be taking place in the first year.

6) Medicaid Managed Care Update

- NHA Labore had a meeting with representatives from New Hampshire Healthy Families last Wednesday. One question NHA Labore asked was how they envision the rate negotiation process taking place. They had no idea that Commissioner Toumpas was going to propose this, they found out when we

found out about it. Everyone is trying to figure out what is going on. There is a Governor's Commission meeting this Thursday and he will share any answers to their questions that he may get. NHA Labore also stated that he was just made aware that Commissioner Toumpas has submitted his letter of resignation.

7) Director of Nursing Search

- NHA Labore stated that they had their first interview last week. They had several people apply but they are not meeting the experience requirements. He stated that the interview went well and now they are waiting to the next round in the process. They have sent out another round of advertisements in last weekend's paper so they are hoping some more resumes come in.

8) A/R Update

- NHA Labore stated that in February they collected \$ 726,000. They have collected \$7,300 on outstanding items from 2012. They had to return a credit to the state for 2013 billing in the amount of \$7,000. He stated a lot of that credit was when the state had implemented the new Medicaid Management Information System and it came with some billing challenges. They had given us overpayments so we have returned that. They have now decided that the nursing home has paid them too much so they owe us money again. They have collected \$49,000 from 2014.

ED Libby stated that the Conservation District Spring Cookout will be held at Windy Ridge on May 14<sup>th</sup> at 4:00pm.

Director Andross has submitted an overnight training request for seven (7) employees to attend the New Hampshire Emergency Dispatch Association 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Training Conference held at the Red Jacket in Conway, NH from April 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>. The approximate cost will be \$1,403 which is included in the Dispatch training budget.

Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the out of state travel request for Dispatch.  
Commissioner Richards seconded the motion and all were in favor.

ED Libby gave the Commissioners a flyer regarding an Open House for the Pellet Boiler at the Tullando Farm.

ED Libby stated that Dispatch received a letter from the Groton Select Board stating that they are moving forward with changing services and are providing a ninety (90) day notice that effective July 1<sup>st</sup> they will no longer be utilizing Grafton County Dispatch services. Sheriff Dutile and Director Andross have reached out to them to see if there are any issues that they would like to discuss.

There is a Commissioners Council meeting April 17<sup>th</sup> at 1:30PM and at 2:30PM Commissioner Toumpas will make a presentation on Medicaid Managed Care.

The Governor and Council breakfast and Executive Committee Meeting will be held tomorrow morning at Common Man.

Restorative Justice Meeting – ASD Amero, Rep. Cooney, Atty. Saffo, Deb Naro – Executive Director of CADY, Regina Rice Barker, Jay Apicelli, Stephen Lefebvre, Lyndsay Porreca

Commissioner Cryans stated that this meeting is intended to discuss some of the upcoming changes to the Juvenile Diversion budget for FY16. He stated that they will listen to everyone's point of views and requested that everyone save any comments until the end.

ASD Amero stated that when she first took the position her goal was to look at the numbers and clients being served in all programs. Valley Court Diversion receives \$40,000 in funding per year and CADY receives \$80,000 in funding per year. She explained that what she is doing in all the programs is collecting data on the amount of people served. When they started collecting data from Valley Court Diversion and CADY they were having issues on with how to report clients. At first it came in with all clients served to date and ASD Amero stated to clarify she would send out emails and talked about reporting only on new referrals coming in. Then it was reporting on people eighteen (18) and younger and in school and making sure they were clients in Grafton County. They were trying to get a very clear number of clients being served. ASD Amero stated that the programs are all very effective and are being run very well but she is focusing on the accountability and the amount that is budgeted per person with these programs.

D. Naro introduced herself as the Executive Director of CADY in Plymouth. She stated that she wanted to correct the record. She explained that it has been brought to her attention that ASD Amero had spoken to one of the Delegation members and said CADY is diverting Grafton County funds to support other programs and that is false information. She discussed the budget and handed out packets that broke down where the funding for CADY in Plymouth is being used.

D. Naro stated that the \$40,000 funding level was unanimously voted on by the delegation on 2013 and at that time CADY was pending closure. She explained that if ASD Amero's budget recommendation of fee for service of \$250 per client or a \$20,000 flat fee is implemented the doors will close. It would result in an 85% cut to the program; she explained that they have fixed costs to the program.

D. Naro explained that where Restorative Justice is very different from Diversion is Restorative Justice is a very complex program to administer. Staff members do not only meet with the youth once or twice, it is extremely difficult. There is an independent evaluation done each year by the Community Health Institute and they have consistently pointed to stellar outcomes. The three goals to restorative justice are; to hold youth accountable, restore the community and make amends to the victim, protect the community by breaking the cycle of crime and preventing escalation of high level crime. They are working with the youth, their parents, the victims, the school, the police departments and the community. She stated that their time allocation averages out to be seventy-five (75) hours per youth. An average stay in the program is 4.1 months. D. Naro stated that if you multiply seventy-five (75) hours by twenty-nine (29) dollars that is a

very conservative estimate of costs. It comes out to \$2,200 per youth. Last year there were thirty – five (35) referrals made by the schools, the police departments and the courts. Of that thirty – five (35) they accepted twenty – seven (27) referrals and declined eight (8). She stated that of those twenty –seven (27), eleven (11) were from the North Country and sixteen (16) were from the Plymouth area.

D. Naro stated that to date 116 youth have successfully completed the program and turned their lives around. The recidivism rate is at 7% compared to 45% for juvenile justice. She stated that she understands there is some concern about the low numbers in the North Country. J. Apicelli processed eleven (11) youth but has been working to build a new infrastructure and building new relationships with the police departments, courts and the schools. She stated that it is time consuming and expensive for the North Country part of the program due to the geographic location of the North Country and if administering that portion of the program out of Grafton County is something ASD Amero wants to do that might make sense.

CADY cannot accept a fee for service in the upcoming budget cycle or a \$250 per referral that would result in an 85% cut in the current allocation and they cannot implement the program under that funding. D. Naro stated that they have worked very hard with these programs and instead of getting a thank you she feels as though they are being marginalized.

R. Rice Barker introduced herself and stated that she is the Executive Director from Valley Court Diversion. She stated that she is extremely passionate about their programs and feels that they do very important work in the Upper Valley and have been very successful in lower Grafton County. She stated what this is coming down to is numbers. The numbers that are being reported for FY14 is twenty – five (25). They counted one (1) by one (1) and had forty – six (46) referrals in 2014. She stated she believes that there is miscommunication; she doesn't believe it is on purpose but they are so involved in court diversion and restorative justice that semantics get in the way of who's being served and whether they are being served appropriately. This year's counting of youth who are eighteen (18), still in high school who have gone through panels or alcohol screening classes is sixty – nine (69). They like to keep these kids local because there are many resources in the local area that they can tap into, a lot of community support. She stated that there are many kids/parents who are very grateful for this opportunity. They do a very good job in supporting these kids and R. Rice Barker stated that she doesn't believe they have failed any kids, if they have it is very minimal.

Lyndsay Porreca introduced herself and stated that she is from Valley Court Diversion and she coordinates the programs. She stated that she has never turned anyone down who has been referred to the program and in her eighteen (18) months being employed with Valley Court Diversion they have had two (2) kids not complete the program.

J. Apicelli from CADY in Plymouth stated that what they try to do a lot of is not only the education piece but they do a lot of supervision as well. They see these kids every week or every other week during school or afterschool to check in on them. Restorative Justice is much more than paying a fine and doing community service. It is victim centered and community based that

there are a lot of layers with bringing that kid in to say that it is not just them, it is causing a lot of harm to the community. There are many services that are being provided by this program.

Rep. Cooney stated that she has been on the board of CADY for a long time. Restorative Justice requires this infrastructure that they have been talking about with the volunteers, the connections with the schools, the victims, the families. It is a like a school with fixed costs for the infrastructure. They haven't talked much about the hundreds of hours that the volunteers have spent being involved with these kids. They don't come from model families and they need this help. Having a flat rate of a certain amount per kid will not work with this kind of system.

Plymouth Police Chief Stephen Lefebvre stated that his focus is on community health and safety. If a child goes through the regular Juvenile Justice Program the recidivism rate is at about 45%. These programs being discussed today have a recidivism rate of 7%. These programs work under the current model and funding right now. He stated his fear is that if it is changed they are going to revert back to the 45%. He stated that when he refers a kid to these programs he does not see them again, it works. He stated that his argument is that the program is working; if it is not broke leave it alone.

D. Naro stated that she would like plenty of notice if these funding cuts are going to take place.

ED Libby stated she wants to convey that the County took a step last year in hiring Lucille Amero as the Alternative Sentencing Director to try and manage these programs because they are important, no one is trying to de value them. ED Libby stated that what is important and what they need the agencies we work with to understand is that if ASD Amero needs information from them, they need to give the information to her freely and clearly so everyone is understanding it so there is no miscommunication. We need to all try and work together to make these programs successful because that is what everyone in this room wants but at the end of the day we also need to be accountable to the taxpayers.

Commissioner Cryans stated that he does not want any hard feelings because circumstances like this can become personalized and he does not want that to happen. He thanked everyone for taking the time to attend today's meeting.

\*12:07 AM - Commissioner Richards moved to enter into non-public session for the purposes of discussing 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 Cryans called the roll. Commissioner Cryans "yes"; Commissioner Richards "yes"; Commissioner Lauer "yes" Commissioner Cryans stated that a majority of the board voted yes and would now go into non-public session.

\*12:23 AM Commissioner Cryans declared the meeting back in public session.



Commissioner Richards moved to permanently seal the minutes from the just completed non-public session in the event they could affect the reputation of someone other than those of the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Cryans seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Bob Fillion stated that he is looking at the decision making process and stated that he did not see today where the Commissioners made any decisions at this meeting. Commissioner Cryans explained that with the meeting they just had regarding the Restorative Justice program, they are asking the Commissioners for more funding in their upcoming budget for FY16. He stated that the Commissioners have to decide whether or not to fund the two (2) programs more money. He stated that they will be discussing the budget starting this Thursday.

B. Fillion asked how they get the media involved. He stated that he never sees reports of the meetings in the local media. Commissioner Lauer stated that their meeting minutes are all posted on the county's website. Commissioner Cryans stated that typically the media only attends two (2) meetings throughout the year which are the Commissioners' Public Hearing on their proposed budget and the Delegation vote on the budget.

B. Fillion stated that he had previously had questions about a website listed as the Official Grafton County Website that had inaccurate information on it. He made an inquiry about it and now it is no longer on the internet. ED Libby stated that the website Mr. Fillion was looking at was not the County and we had nothing to do with it.

Commissioner Cryans and Commissioner Lauer attended the GCSCC annual meeting yesterday.

Commissioner Cryans stated that he met with Congresswoman Kuster at the DRTC and went on a tour.

ED Libby gave the Commissioners a copy of the budget with all the current budgets as presented by the department heads. It includes the 2% COLA for everyone, the 1.5% onetime payment for maxed out employees and the \$5.00 increase per year to the longevity. She asked the Commissioners to look over the budget and come up with any questions they may have for Thursday.

10:50 With no further business the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Linda D. Lauer, Clerk