

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONER MEETING
3855 Dartmouth College Highway
North Haverhill, NH 03774
May 5th 2020

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Maintenance Supt. Oakes

Commissioner Lauer called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and read the following statement:

As Chair of the Grafton County Commissioners, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is a physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting. In accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means:

We are utilizing Lifesize for this electronic meeting. All members of the Commission have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through attending at the physical location.

b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting:

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting. The meeting notice is also provided on the website of the Commission at www.co.grafton.nh.us.

Please note that all votes that are being taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law.

Commissioner Lauer called the roll. Commissioner Lauer stated "yes" and there is no one in the room with her during this meeting. Commissioner Piper stated "yes" and there is no one in the room with her during this meeting. Commissioner Morris stated "yes" and there is no one in the room with her during this meeting.

Supt. Oakes arrived to open bids for 5000 gallons of Off Road Diesel for FY21. Two (2) bids were received as follows:

Thompson Fuels -5,100 gallons at \$2.129/gallon

Dead River – 5000 gallons at \$1.6616/gallon

Supt. Oakes recommended the Commissioner select Dead River's bid of \$1.6616/gallon for 5,000 gallons. He stated that the letter does not specify a date that the bid is good but he will contact Dead River and if anything changes he will notify the Commissioners.

MOTION: Commissioner Piper moved to accept Dead River's bid of \$1.6616/gallon for 5,000 gallons of off road diesel. Commissioner Morris seconded the motion. Commissioner Lauer called the roll. Commissioner Piper "yes", Commissioner Morris "yes", Commissioner Lauer "yes". Commissioner Lauer stated that the majority of the board voted "yes" and the motion passes.

Commissioner Lauer asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from the April 30th Budget meeting. Commissioner Piper had a few grammatical edits.

MOTION: Commissioner Piper moved to approve the minutes from the April 23rd Budget meeting as amended. Commissioner Morris seconded the motion. Commissioner Lauer called the roll. Commissioner Piper "yes", Commissioner Morris "yes", Commissioner Lauer "yes". Commissioner Lauer stated that the majority of the board voted "yes" and the motion passes.

CA Libby sent the Commissioners the check register that is in need of approval which is 49-50; 1161,1163-116.

MOTION: Commissioner Morris moved to approve the check registers. Commissioner Piper seconded the motion. Commissioner Lauer called the roll. Commissioner Piper "yes", Commissioner Morris "yes", Commissioner Lauer "yes". Commissioner Lauer stated that the majority of the board voted "yes" and the motion passes.

The NHAC forwarded a letter that Congressman Pappas' office has put together to be sent to House Leadership in support of funding for local governments in future CARES funding. NHAC would like to know if the Commissioners would like to sign on to the letter. The Commissioners were all in agreement to sign off on the letter.

MOTION: Commissioner Piper moved to sign on to the letters. Commissioner Morris seconded the motion. Commissioner Lauer called the roll. Commissioner Piper "yes", Commissioner Morris "yes", Commissioner Lauer "yes". Commissioner Lauer stated that the majority of the board voted "yes" and the motion passes.

GOFERR Committee – CA Libby stated that \$40 million has been allocated to local government. \$32 million will go to municipalities and \$8 million will be going to the Counties. Grafton County will be receiving \$537,653 and this is a population based allocation. \$2.1 million will be going to the different municipalities within Grafton County. There is 23-page grant agreement and the highlight is that it can be used only for expenses, it cannot be used to offset revenue losses. It's a reimbursement so Grafton County is eligible for up to \$537,000. There are three (3) dates to submit for reimbursement. The first date is June 1st for March to April 30th expenses. The second is July 15th for May 1st – June 30th expenses and in September they will need to estimate costs going forward from September and at that point they will look at additional allocations. The next CARES Act that is being worked on they are hoping to have monies to cover lost revenues for counties.

CA Libby noted that \$350,000 in stimulus payments directly from the CARES Act has come to the Nursing Home. She stated that this is very helpful as the Nursing Home is where they are losing the most amount of money.

CA Libby stated that she needs everyone on the same page and needs direct guidance from the Commissioners regarding the stipend payments at the Nursing Home. CA Libby submitted the first payment request when they got approved for the program. She submitted everyone on the form and got it kicked back saying to remove all directors. She responded that their title is directors but they are working managers. They are not what you would consider a high level director. They were told their titles are director therefore they are not eligible. She felt it was important to get what they could right now. CA Libby stated that they removed seven (7) employees that had the title Director. The inconsistency is the biggest problem to her. They wanted to kick out the Assistant Activities Director who is a front line worker. She works with residents everyday but was told they are not eligible because her title had director. CA Libby stated that she changed the title of that position. Commissioner Piper stated that it seems to her that the one thing that has remained consistent is that anyone who is eligible for this stipend has to have direct resident contact and therefore these positions with the title of Director who are having direct contact should fall into that category. CA Libby stated that the Social Services Director is sitting with residents while they FaceTime families. She stated that she feels the state underestimated what this is going to cost and now they are back pedaling trying to kick out as many people as they can. Commissioner Piper stated that she hates to have the Grafton County tax payers make up this difference. CA Libby stated that they need to make a decision to either exclude all management even if they are direct contact or we are including everyone and have Grafton County pick up the cost for the seven (7) employees that are being kicked out. Commissioner Lauer stated that this is through June 30th which means it won't impact county tax payers in the next fiscal year as this is coming out of this year's funds. That won't impact tax payers except for the fact that left over funds won't go to the reserve. Commissioner Piper asked how much the cost would be to cover the employees who are not eligible according to the state and where money would come from. CA Libby stated that it would be max \$22,000 and they have funds available in the Social Services Director line as that position was vacant for nine (9) months of the year. Commissioner Piper stated that then this was okay with her. The Commissioners further discussed the issue and were in agreement to pay for the seven (7) employees.

Future Commissioner Meetings – CA Libby stated that she is leaving it up to the Commissioners as to what they feel comfortable doing. Commissioner Piper stated that she would love to get back to in person meetings and get back to some sense of normalcy. She is comfortable with social distancing. Commissioner Lauer and Commissioner Morris both stated that they are fine either way and think it is time to get back to regular meetings. CA Libby stated that they are still doing telework for employees and have everyone staggered in and out of the office. The Commissioners discussed it and agreed to come back to regular meetings next week.

Public Hearing – CA Libby suggested pushing back the Commissioners' Public Hearing date to June 1st and have the Executive Committee start their budget meetings on either the Friday the 5th or Monday the 8th. They could then have full Delegation Vote on June 29th. She stated that they can do a public meeting and zoom meeting for those who are not comfortable coming into the meeting. The Commissioners agreed to that proposal and CA Libby will talk to Rep. Sykes.

CA Libby stated that they will be having a virtual Delegation and Executive Committee meeting via Zoom on May 18th.

CA Libby stated that they also need a plan for reopening their buildings as they are currently closed to the public. She stated that with some retail stores starting to open back up she questions whether they should be staying closed to the public. She stated that they can discuss this further after they have some time to think about it.

Broadband – CA Libby stated that she participated in a three (3) hour Zoom meeting with the Carroll County Broadband Committee which is made of all the towns within Carroll County who have come together to form a committee, Michelle Moren from North Country Council, Nick Coates from Bristol as well as several experts in the field. They are looking to see if there is a way to get Coos, Grafton and Carroll Counties to work together to get broadband to the North Country as there is strength in numbers. Everyone would like to have a physical meeting with all nine (9) County Commissioners involved to discuss these details. She wanted to let the Commissioners know the discussions are happening and they will be hearing more about it. The world right now is so dependent on internet and it is really bringing forward the issues of lack of broadband in rural areas. Commissioner Piper stated that this sounds like a really good opportunity. Commissioner Lauer agreed and stated that this last month has really shown the issues of the lack of broadband.

Commissioner Piper stated that she was on the Friday NHAC call and that she had written a letter to the editor of the Valley News, talking about the impact of the Coronavirus on county government and steps they were taking in response.

9:47 AM With no further business the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MMorris', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Marcia Morris,
Clerk