

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING  
3855 Dartmouth College Highway  
North Haverhill, NH 03774  
May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018

PRESENT: Commissioners Lauer, Ahern and Piper, County Administrator Libby, Admin. Asst. Norcross.

OTHERS PRESENT: FM Kimball, RD Monahan, Atty. Saffo, NHA Labore, Supt. Oakes.

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

FM Kimball arrived and gave the following report.

1. Currently milking 83 cows. We are shipping 6,400 lbs. daily, averaging 77 lbs. per cow.
2. Price of milk went up some, now at \$16.66 per hundredweight.
3. Doing spring work like spreading manure, plowing and harrowing.
4. Got the seed potatoes, planting the week of May 14<sup>th</sup>.
5. Planted 1<sup>st</sup> crop of sweet corn.
6. Still dealing with this spring's rain and the high water that goes with it.
7. Only had two litters of piglets this spring.

Commissioner Ahern asked if FM Kimball has spoken to Mike Lunak about the potential for dairy beef on the farm. FM Kimball stated that he has lost a lot of space over the years; right now they are at max with the dairy herd and stated that they are there to produce milk not beef. He stated that he will speak with M. Lunak but wanted the Commissioners to know he is limited on buildings.

RD Monahan arrived and gave the following report:

**Grafton County Registry of Deeds  
Kelley J. Monahan Register  
Report to Commissioners  
May 8, 2018**

**April Revenue**

County Revenue 4/2009	\$ 71,971.93	State Revenue 4/2009	\$ 337,344.64
County Revenue 4/2010	\$ 70,431.27	State Revenue 4/2010	\$ 530,099.52
County Revenue 4/2011	\$ 58,015.41	State Revenue 4/2011	\$ 384,722.88
County Revenue 4/2012	\$ 73,460.07	State Revenue 4/2012	\$ 385,585.92
County Revenue 4/2013	\$ 77,814.70	State Revenue 4/2013	\$ 499,542.72
County Revenue 4/2014	\$ 57,883.71	State Revenue 4/2014	\$ 448,059.84
County Revenue 4/2015	\$ 70,858.98	State Revenue 4/2015	\$ 568,803.84
County Revenue 4/2016	\$ 68,255.49	State Revenue 4/2016	\$ 516,737.28
County Revenue 4/2017	\$ 66,255.42	State Revenue 4/2017	\$ 580,153.92
County Revenue 4/2018	\$ 77,677.17	State Revenue 4/2018	\$ 796,914.96

**Foreclosures**

2009 55 year to date  
2010 80 year to date  
2011 75 year to date  
2012 69 year to date  
2013 44 year to date  
2014 38 year to date  
2015 36 year to date  
2016 31 year to date  
2017 26 year to date  
2018 14 year to date

1. We had a very active month of April. There were 9 sales over \$500,000, including one at \$1,000,000, one at \$2,000,00.00 and one at \$3,500,000.00. I have provided copies of the April 20, 2018 article from the Valley News on the state of the real estate market in the Upper Valley by Business Writer, John Lippman, entitled In Upper Valley, Plenty of Buyers, but Few Sellers. Mr. Lippman had called me for information on how many sales there were, we had a good conversation, but I informed him that investing time in collecting data for him was not the function of this office, but in my opinion, the state of the real estate market in Grafton County is excellent.
2. HB 476 regarding Probate was sent to interim study. In my opinion, this is a very flawed bill. One issue that is unacceptable to me is the statement that Probate will be housed at the Registry of Deeds. When we begin to discuss the Master Plan update for Grafton County the space allocated for Probate should be a consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelley J. Monahan

Commissioner Lauer asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from the April 26<sup>th</sup> budget meeting and the May 1<sup>st</sup> meeting. Commissioner Lauer and Commissioner Piper had edits on each set.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Ahern moved to approve the minutes from the April 26<sup>th</sup> meeting as amended. Commissioner Piper seconded the motion and all were in favor.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Ahern moved to approve the minutes from the May 1<sup>st</sup> meeting as amended. Commissioner Piper seconded the motion and all were in favor.

The Commissioners signed check registers 62-63; 1178- 1182.

Atty. Saffo arrived and gave the following report:

**Office of the Grafton County Attorney  
Lara Saffo, County Attorney  
May 8th, 2018  
Report to the Commissioners**

The Mission of the Office of the Grafton County Attorney is to pursue justice and promote the safety and security of the County's citizens, thereby enhancing the quality of life in Grafton County. We will seek to achieve these goals by:

- Striving for just disposition of criminal cases through timely, efficient and effective prosecution.
- Ensuring that victims and witnesses of crimes are treated with respect, courtesy, and sensitivity as they cooperate with criminal prosecutions.
- Improving the criminal justice system by identifying areas of need and working collaboratively with other criminal justice agencies and the community to improve the criminal justice system.
- Encouraging and promoting crime prevention and early intervention initiatives.
- Identifying, promoting and implementing new and innovative approaches to solving crime problems.

***Justice must always question itself, just as society can exist only by means of the work it does on itself and on its institutions.***

Michel Foucault (1926-84), French philosopher. "Vous Êtes Dangereux," in *Libération* (Paris, 30 June 1983; repr. in Didier Eribon, Michel Foucault, 1989; tr. 1991).



**CONGRATULATIONS TO WAYNE FORTIER, 2018 RECIPIENT OF THE  
SERGEANT ROBERT E. BRUNO AWARD FOR INVESTIGATIVE EXCELLENCE and  
CONGRATULATIONS TO ERIC JAMES, 2018 UNSUNG HERO FOR THE GRAFTON AND  
SULLIVAN COUNTY CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER**

And congratulations to other nominees for the Sergeant Robert E Bruno Award for Investigative Excellence: Sgt Ryan Porter, Canaan Police Department, Detective Sergeant Stephen Cox, Littleton Police Department, Detective Frederick "Eric" James, Grafton County Sheriff's Department and Chief Wallace "Wally" Trott, Wentworth Police Department. In the words of a nominating member:

"Every one of these individuals it can be argued deserves this award based on their investigative skills, attention to detail, drive and compassion for those who have been victimized. I have had the privilege of working with four of the five nominees for decades combined. I have never known any of them to seek out personal recognition for their work, and all have always let their work product speak for itself. Going above and beyond their duty time and donating time to their community is an additional attribute that is just another part of their selfless personality.

If Character is defined as 'doing the right thing when no one is looking' each of these nominees has been blessed. In coming to my

decision on which nominee to recommend, I felt many of the criteria considered were equal with each nominee.”

-Sergeant Bret J. Beausoleil.

## **(2) STATISTICS**

### **Caseload at the Office of the Grafton County Attorney.**

*The dramatic increase in referrals to the Office of the Grafton County Attorney from law enforcement agencies has stabilized for the first five months of 2018 we will continue to closely monitor these numbers for your review and consideration.*

#### Data for the first seven weeks of the year:

January 1, 2018 to May 7, 2018	355
January 1, 2017 to May 7, 2017	373
January 1, 2016 to May 7, 2016	299
January 1, 2015 to May 7, 2015	270

#### Victim cases for 2018 (to date)

Of the 355 cases above, 157 had at least one victim. Many cases have more than one victim.

#### Felony first cases for 2018 (to date)

Of the referrals above, 97 were cases in which an arrest was made, and so we were subject to the expedited time frameworks associated with felony first. 45 of the 97 were individuals that were incarcerated so we had to be ready to file complaints, file probable cause affidavits, and represent the state in an arraignment within the next business day.

#### Year end data

From January 1, 2015 to November 20, 2015, the OGCA received 704 referrals.

From January 1, 2016 to November 20th, 2016, the OGCA received 836 referrals.

From January 1, 2017 to November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the OGCA received 883 referrals.

## **(1) Thank you to Maintenance**

We needed a new copier, as our old one was approaching a million copies. We researched new copiers but the one selected needed a new outlet. Richard and Jim not only worked to ensure we had the needed infrastructure, they also redesigned the entryway into our office to accommodate the new copier. This was a no cost reconfiguration, using panels. It was well done, and we appreciate their hard work.

## **(2) Copier contract**

We budgeted for a new copier as of July 1, 2017.

Obtaining the needed electricity took time, and we just now installed the new copier on May 1, 2018. Our budget line item reflects \$3,972, the full cost of the copier a year. It is a four year contract (that was approved last year).

My question: do you have a preference as to the following three options:

- (a) Use this year's budget line item to pay off the first year of the contract, so we have three years remaining
- (b) Use part of this year's budget line item to pay off a portion of the first year
- (c) Don't pay off anything, use May 1 as the starting point and know the contract extends ten months into a fourth year.

**(3) SPEECH WORTH WATCHING**

"How challenging is it to be a police officer today? Hon. Associate Justice William W. Bedsworth, Fourth District Court of Appeal, made a compelling case at the grand opening of new Criminal Justice Training Center (CJTC) at Golden West College in Huntington Beach, CA."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RpAkv-ja2y4>

Please watch this speech. It is well done.

**(4) LEGISLATION**

**SB 556 – bail reform**

I have sent a letter to all delegation members. After forwarding it to the police chiefs for their approval, I learned of a proposed amendment. I am reviewing the amendment and will update my concerns.

**(6) GRANTS IN THE OFFICE OF THE GRAFTON COUNTY ATTORNEY OR THAT WE BENEFIT FROM**

a. VAWA Grant

We received this grant, for \$30,000 towards the cost of a prosecutor to handle in part domestic violence and sexual assault cases. The year for the grant is June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016 – June 30, 2017. The reports have been submitted.

b. VOCA Grant

We received the grant is for \$50,000 towards our Victim Witness Program. It pays for some of the costs of a Victim Witness Coordinator and for a new program, in our case Circuit Court Prosecution services. We have the official paperwork and are accepting referrals. It has already proven beneficial. The reports have been submitted.

We received a supplemental VOCA grant in the amount of \$35,000 to make our circuit court victim witness coordinator full time. This will start on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

c. Haverhill Area Substance Abuse and Prevention Coalition

This prevention initiative is for the SAU 23 catchment area.

d. Partnership with UNH – Prevention Innovations Research Center Collaboration

We are participating in prevention initiatives for commuter college sexual assaults.

e. Sexual Assault Justice Initiative

As noted above, this is a DOJ grant that we will benefit from. The hiring committee hired the full time adult sexual assault investigator, and the grant has begun. The grant manager/prosecution consultant position is going to be advertised.

f. Human Trafficking Coalition

We are not directly receiving funding, but New Hampshire received a federal grant to combat Human Trafficking and we now have the ability to refer human trafficking cases to this entity.

**Outstanding Grant Requests**

There are two outstanding grants that Grafton County would benefit from:

- a. Department of Justice grant to include a child sexual assault investigator in Grafton County.
- b. Grafton County Roving Advocate grant  
This has been submitted. We hope to hear by September.

Supt. Oakes arrived to answer questions the Commissioners had regarding his budget and paving the parking lots. The Commissioners asked Supt. Oakes what the impact would be to his paving project if they were to cut it in half or if it were to be delayed another year. Supt. Oakes explained what areas of the parking lot are in need of repaving and showed the Commissioners the areas on a map of the complex. He stated that it could be pushed back another year but they are just kicking the can down the road and it may lead to more expensive repairs.

NHA Labore arrived to answer questions the Commissioners had regarding his budget. Commissioner Piper asked if in regards to the contract education with it being a lean year if NHA Labore feels this could be delayed another year. NHA Labore stated that this is in regards to decreasing the use of psychotropic drugs. His big concern is to make sure they position the nursing home to have their work being done to look at the antipsychotic usage going forward. In 2019 CMS will start to look at the percentage of psychotropic drugs and this will affect the nursing home's reimbursement rates. This training will help his staff to think outside of the box to different treatment opportunities. The training would be one (1) visit per month and would be a 50-60 minutes of training.

Commissioner Piper asked about the increase in the salary for the physician. She asked NHA Labore if he feels that another \$5,000 is needed this year. NHA Labore stated that he feels \$75,000-\$80,000 is the mark where they would like to be for that position. He stated that they need to have a physician on staff.

Loan Forgiveness – NHA Labore stated that he feels this hasn't had the impact that they had hoped. The Commissioners agreed to stop the program moving forward and finish the program with the (2) current employees that are receiving the reimbursement.

Commissioner Lauer stated that at the previous budget meeting the majority of the Board of Commissioners voted to eliminate the beautician services. She asked if the beautician has been notified. NHA Labore stated that she was informed and is ok with it. They will go back to the way they used to do it and inform the residents as they need a thirty (30) day notice.

CA Libby submitted the Superior Court Report for the month of April for the Commissioners to review.

CA Libby presented the NACo Prescription Drug Report for the month of April. There was a price savings of \$ 3,263.08 or 33.14% with a total of thirty nine (39) utilizers. The total life savings of the program is \$810,522.28.

CA Libby stated that she has received follow up from Robert Bonsignore in regards to the county potentially filing a lawsuit against the drug companies. The Commissioners agreed that they would like to pursue this but would like to ask some more questions. CA Libby stated that she will have R. Bonsignore come back to answer more questions from the Commissioners. The Commissioners all agreed that they would like a copy of the proposed contract. Commissioner Piper stated that at the last Officers Meeting of the NHAC, Executive Director Ron White gave detailed information about how the opioid crisis impacts counties financially; the information is helpful as it shows the extent of the cost.

**Employee Council – Mark Deem, Jason Mace, Anthony Stiles, Tiffany LaPoint.**

Commissioner Lauer stated that they promised they would talk about the funeral leave not impacting perfect attendance and the Commissioners agreed that they would change that. The other requests from the Employee Council they are unable to change this year.

M. Deem stated that the people were not happy with the reasoning from the Commissioners but they were appreciative of getting a detailed response. He stated that employees were quite upset and did the research to back up their concerns.

Commissioner Lauer stated that they put a freeze on new hires, they've pushed capital projects out another year and they put a freeze on social services funding. They have done all of this to get to the 1.5% COLA. Commissioner Lauer stated that the social service funding is down from what it once was as she knows that this is an area of contention with the employees. She stated that the employees are the only entity that has received a raise. A half a percent increase in the COLA is \$105,000 and she is not sure where they would find that to cut. Commissioner Lauer stated that this is the best that they can do this year.

CA Libby stated that the BDAS Grants are due in Concord on Thursday.

Commissioner Piper moved to approve the submission of the BDAS Grants for the DoC and Alternative Sentencing. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

**Commissioner Issues:**

Commissioner Piper stated that she attended the NHAC Executive Council meeting on Friday.

CA Libby will be at a meeting Monday with DHHS Commissioner Meyers and Deputy Commissioner Pristow to discuss the upcoming Pro Share payment and the relationship to the IDNs.

Budget Discussion:

Asphalt Paving – Commissioner Piper stated that she appreciated what Commissioner Ahern said to Supt. Oakes that it is a tight budget year; they are doing the best they can for the employees. It seems as if the project can be delayed given the other issues this year, primarily the health insurance. Commissioner Ahern stated that we should zero it out this year as Supt. Oakes mentioned mobilization up to \$20,000 to bring the equipment in different times. Commissioner Lauer stated that she would rather cut it all versus cutting it in half. The Commissioners all agreed to cut the paving this year.

Contract Services – Nursing Home – Commissioner Lauer stated that she is in favor of leaving this item in as they need to get training in place to address the new CMS regulations coming in 2019. Commissioner Piper stated that NHA Labore had said that some of these regulations come and go but there is no way to determine which regulations are going to be put into place. Commissioner Ahern stated that NHA Labore stated that he will get by if the Commissioners do not fund this request. Commissioner Lauer and Commissioner Piper both stated they do not recall NHA Labore stating that. Commissioner Lauer and Commissioner Piper were both in favor of funding that line item.

Contract Physician – This is the increase to gradually bring the salary up to \$75,000. Commissioner Lauer stated that she doesn't want to create problems for the next board but feels this isn't an item that will create too many issues. She is in favor of leaving this line item at \$65,000 this year. The other Commissioners agreed.

Commissioner Lauer stated that the Employee Council has requested a 2% COLA and that would cost \$104,000. Commissioner Ahern stated that the current practice does treat employees differently. Some employees get step increases and then max out and all employees receive COLAs. Commissioner Lauer stated that the purpose of the COLA is to keep the wage charts up to date. Commissioner Piper stated that she has seen or heard this issue come up by a Delegate at a Delegation meeting prior to her coming on the board that some employees who receive step increases and a COLA they may be getting a 5% increase. CA Libby noted that the wage charts have been in place for a long time. The Commissioners were all in agreement to give a 1.5% COLA to the employees.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Piper to approve an operating budget of \$44,189,110.00 for FY19 with \$26,244,241.00 or 4.65% to be raised by taxes. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion for discussion purposes.

**Discussion:** Commissioner Ahern states that he feels things could have been done differently but his main concern is the employees. He appreciates the other Commissioners listening to him. Commissioner Piper stated that she feels they worked very hard on this budget. There were many hard decisions that were made. Commissioner Lauer stated that she appreciates the input from everyone and all the hard work and patience by the Department Heads. She believes this is a budget that balances employees, taxpayers and the needs of the county. Commissioner Ahern stated that he will do everything he can to elect officials who will speak out against the rules and regulations that burden the county.



The Commissioners voted on the motion. Commissioner Lauer and Commissioner Piper were in favor. Commissioner Ahern was in opposition. With the vote being two (2) in favor and one (1) in opposition the motion passes.

12:02 PM with no further business the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Wendy A. Piper,  
Clerk