

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
Administration Building
North Haverhill, NH 03774
January 25, 2022

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Judith Hall – Master Gardener Coordinator, DoC Supt. Elliott, Alternative Sentencing Director DePalo, Tracey Secula – Grant Administrator, Belknap Economic Development Council - Justin Slattery, Wentworth Economic Development Corporation - Denise Roy Palmer and Grafton Regional Development Corporation - Anne-Duncan Cooley, Northern Community Investment Corporation - Aimee Quimby, Women's Rural Entrepreneurial Network - Scarlett Moberly

Commissioner Piper called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Judith Hull – Master Gardener Coordinator

Judith Hull met with the Commissioners to discuss the Memorial Garden. She stated that they are in desperate need of a master gardener to lead the project. She tried to recruit a replacement and did not have luck after the previous Master Gardener finished but the Master Gardeners remained committed to the garden even without a leader. J. Hull noted that the pandemic has had an impact on the gardens because they could not go out and gather until late in the season, the pandemic has also caused a reluctance for people to get together.

She explained that this project has the Commissioners as the community partner. Without a master gardener to lead the project, the community partners take over. She feels these gardens are important to the county. In the summer of 2021, she went to the Master Gardener for the state to have them come and look at the Memorial Garden. After their meeting, she was able to commit four (4) Master Gardeners to maintain the garden. They have proposed to revamp the gardens for easier maintenance. She explained that many projects have committed volunteers from the community. She stated that she does not know if this project has ever tried to recruit volunteers, but they would like to do so and get more outreach to the greater Haverhill area.

J. Hull reported that she was able to get one (1) of the Master Gardeners to commit to taking a big piece of this project in the spring and revamp the garden. She stated \$1,500-\$2,000 would be the cost for permanent edging, which would eliminate the need for maintenance and less work for the Master Gardeners. The cost of new planting would be roughly \$5,000 for a starting number. She explained that in order to take care of the Memorial Gardens they are taking a multifaceted approach but they do not have a Master Gardener to oversee the project. Her job description is being revised with the possibility of becoming the liaison for the Memorial Gardens.

Commissioner Lauer stated that she views the garden as being a wonderful asset to the county, specifically for the nursing home residents and their families. She questioned if the Alternative Sentencing participants could use this as a means of community service. She also suggested Bernie Marvin doing an article in the Bridge Weekly as another means of outreach for volunteers. Commissioner Ahern suggested Rotary Clubs and the Grafton County Farm Bureau for possible funding sources for the Memorial Garden.

J. Hull further discussed the garden and trainings that they are having for Master Gardeners with the Commissioners and answered questions. The Commissioners thanked J. Hull for coming in to speak with them.

Supt. Elliott arrived and gave the following report: (* see attached)

1. Supt. Elliott reported that they would be picking up the meat from the FarmDoc project that they had processed. They will be receiving fifteen (15) 60 lb. boxes of meat tomorrow. He noted that this is over \$1.00/lb. less than what they would pay through Sysco.
2. Supt. Elliott stated that Coos County had a Drug Court participant who was not participating. They asked if Grafton could take the inmate from Coos Drug Court. He stated that they transferred the inmate and he is half way through the treatment phase of the FIRRM Program. Supt. Elliott asked permission to transfer the inmate from Coos County to Grafton County. The Commissioners signed off on the administrative transfer paperwork.
3. Supt. Elliott presented a Letter of Commendation to Officer Martin Mekina for his actions that resulted in saving the life of an inmate who was attempting to commit suicide. Captain Kendall, Lt. Cremona, Lt. Allaire and Sgt. Clark attended for the presentation.

Alternative Sentencing Director DePalo arrived and gave the following report (* see attached)

Batterer's Intervention Program – AS Director DePalo stated that they do not have any Batterer's Intervention programs in Grafton County. She stated that they have completed all of the requirements minus the safety protocol, which was approved yesterday with the ARPA request. She explained that they will start first with a 40 week program then see if they need more time or not. The cost is \$25 for each session and \$100 for the assessment for a total of \$1,100 per person that completes the program. She stated that this program would run out of the current building, she and Nicole are training to complete it. This program would not cost the county anything and would create revenue from referrals. Participants that are referred can get a mental health evaluation as well. Commissioner Piper asked if Director DePalo felt that her staff had the time to be able to take on this project. AS Director DePalo stated that, she feels as though they do. She stated that they would monitor the program for a year to see how referrals go. The groups are once a week for two (2) hours. If it is something that really works, she stated that they may look at training one of their case managers to run the program as well.

Commissioner Piper requested to go into nonpublic session.

MOTION: * 2:15 PM Commissioner Ahern moved to enter into non-public session for the purposes of the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted according to RSA 91-A: 3, II (a) 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.

* 2:35 PM Commissioner Piper declared the meeting back in public session.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer 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 Ahern 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.

Agenda Items:

1. Commissioner Piper asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from the January 18th meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the minutes from the January 18th meeting. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

2. CA Libby stated that FY21 Audit is complete and they are able finish the Annual Report.

3. CA Libby submitted a CDGB Drawdown - BEDC 2020 CV for Commissioner Piper to sign.

4. Mask Mandate – Commissioner Piper stated that the issue of a mask mandate for the Administration Building came up at the Executive Committee meeting because she mistakenly stated that there was a mask mandate for the building when, in fact, that mandate only applies to employees. The question was then brought up as to whether or not the Commissioners want to implement a mandate for the public as well. Commissioner Ahern stated that he has constituents concerned with what they are doing at the County Complex with mask and vaccine mandates. Commissioner Piper stated that they do not have to make any changes to the current policy. CA Libby stated that if any one department wants to make masks required to enter they can do so. The Commissioners further discussed it and agreed to leave the policy as is and not make any changes.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to leave the mask mandate as is for employees only. Commissioner Piper seconded the motion. Commissioner Lauer “yes”, Commissioner Ahern “no”, Commissioner Piper “yes”. With the vote being two (2) in favor and one (1) in opposition the motion passes.

Grant Administrator Kaela Tavares arrived for the Regional Development Corporation Business Technical Assistance (TA) application public hearing.

3:12 PM Commissioner Piper opened the public hearing.

Commissioner Piper noted that handouts about the public hearings are available to the public, including a document that was posted on the website prior to the public hearings. She then asked Kaela Tavares to introduce the project.

K. Tavares stated that Community Development Block Grant funds are available to municipalities through the NH Community Development Finance Authority. Annually, up to \$500,000 is available for economic development projects, up to \$500,000 for public facility projects, up to \$500,000 for housing projects, and up to \$350,000 for emergency activities. Up to \$25,000 is available for planning activities per planning study. All projects must directly benefit low and moderate income persons. The public hearings will hear public comment on the following:

This proposed Economic Development for Regional Development Corporation Business Technical Assistance (TA) application to the Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA) is for up to \$300,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the 2022 federal fiscal year funding. The Business TA funds will be provided to the NH Alliance of Regional Development Corporations (NHARDC) on behalf of its 10 member entities.

There will be two parts to the funds available to the regional development corporations (RDCs). Each of the 10 RDCs can request up to \$19,000 in reimbursement for staff time spent providing technical assistance (TA) to businesses in their region (\$190,000 in the aggregate).

The second part of the funding will consist of a "pool" of funds for consultant services in the amount up to \$94,000. As an RDC identifies a business TA need that they cannot provide within their own staff they may acquire the services of a consultant to provide the TA. Consultant proposals will be approved by NHCDFR on a case-by-case basis.

Providing these TA services expands the activity level of the RDCs beyond just their lending activities. While the specific businesses and their needs can't be identified at this time (the activity won't begin until July 1, 2022) past experience has shown that most of the businesses served are small, frequently located on "Main St" and can include start-ups that form the backbone of their local economy, especially in the more rural communities served by the RDCs. The additional funds available to the RDCs to pay for consultants on behalf of individual businesses will allow the RDCs to offer more services, with expertise that is not available within their own staff, with the goal of moving businesses "up a notch" in their ability to expand their business and become more profitable. As businesses become more successful and profitable, they expand and hire more employees---and this is the ultimate goal of this CDBG project.

In exchange for funds to reimburse for staff-provided TA each RDC is committed to working with businesses to document the creation of at least one job, filled by a low and moderate income

(LMI) person, plus additional job creation for any TA funds requested above \$19,000. Any consultant funds utilized will also create at least one LMI job per \$20,000 utilized.

North Country Council is seeking to write and administer this grant for the total combined fees of up to \$16,000 including grant writing of \$4,000 and \$12,000 for administration.

This project conforms with Grafton County's 2021 Housing and Community Development Plan's Goal #5: Seek to strengthen employment opportunities for all residents by supporting job retention and creation effort.

Commissioner Piper asked if there were any comments from the public. There were none.

3:20 PM Commissioner Piper closed public hearing #1.

3:21 PM Commissioner Piper opened public hearing #2.

Commissioner Piper asked K. Tavares to introduce the Residential Relocation and Assistance Plan for this project.

RARA Plan

K. Tavares stated that this Residential Antidisplacement and Relocation Assistance Plan is standard language which provides a procedure in cases where there is residential or business displacement due to a project using CDBG funds. It must be adopted for each CDBG project. For this project, no displacement or relocation is anticipated but the plan must be adopted in the unlikely chance that displacement takes place.

Commissioner Piper asked if there were any comments from the public. There were none.

3:22 PM Commissioner Piper closed the public hearing.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to approve submittal of a CDBG application on behalf of the Alliance of Regional Development Corporations. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to adopt the Residential Anti-displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan for the project. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to authorize the Chair of the County Commissioners to submit the application and execute any and all documents necessary to effectuate the potential CDBG contract and any amendments thereto. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

MOTION: Commissioner Ahern moved to have the North Country Council write and administer the grant on behalf of Grafton County. Commissioner Lauer seconded the motion and all were in favor.

3:30 PM Commissioner Piper stated that they would now hold a public hearing on the 2021-2022 CDBG Microenterprise Technical Assistant Grant. This meeting is available both in person and by virtual link as stated on the Grafton County website and in the published notice.

Tracey Secula of Lakes Region Planning Commission introduced herself as the Grant Administrator for the 2021-22 CDBG Microenterprise Technical Assistant Grant.

The purpose of this hearing is to provide a status update to the Grafton County Commissioners and gather public comment about the project's performance. The update to be heard includes a progress review of the 2021-22 CDBG Microenterprise Technical Assistance Program including program activities, expected timeline to completion, project results to date, and a budget summary. There is a handout of the summary data for this project available to the Commissioners and the public.

1. Project's progress and expected timeframe to completion - The County was awarded funds with G&C approval occurring on 9/15/2021 for \$385,000 for the purpose of assisting three organizations to provide microenterprise training and technical assistance activities through June 30, 2022. This offers over a nine-month window for these three organizations to provide these services. The first organization is:

A. Belknap Economic Development Council with a program award amount of \$225,000 which included a partnership of 4 agencies (known as the QUADS): 1. Belknap Economic Development Council (BEDC), 2. Coos Economic Development Corporation (CEDC), 3. Grafton Regional Development Corporation (GRDC), 4. Wentworth Economic Development Corporation (WEDCO);

B. Northern Community Investment Corporation (NCIC) with a program award of \$62,500; and

C. Women's Rural Entrepreneurial Network (WREN) with a program award of \$62,500,

All with the purpose of providing training and technical assistance to low- and moderate-income microenterprises (businesses with 5 or fewer employees).

2. Results to date and projected totals – The semi-annual reporting covered September 2021 through the end of December 2021 in which 72 low- and moderate-income recipients received benefits. The project calls for up to 140 recipients to be served. This means over 51% of the LMI have been served. There are an additional 68 lmi beneficiaries that can still be assisted by this award.

3. **Funds expended, balance of funds available, and budget expectations to completion** - The project has accrued \$180,000 in claims through 12/31/2021. There is a balance of \$205,000 (47% of project balance has been utilized). The next claim process will be mid-March and the final one will occur by mid-July. It is expected that the three organizations will utilize all these funds as of right now, by the program end date of June 30, 2022.

4. **Agency Introductions/Stories** – I would now like to turn it over to our subrecipients (via zoom) to introduce themselves and have them talk about their services or a special story. The agencies and representatives are as follows:

T. Secula introduced each agency in order listed below for those who are in attendance:

- 1) **BEDC – Partnership of 4 Agencies “QUADS”**: Belknap Economic Development Council (BEDC) with Justin Slattery, Coos Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) with Lise Howson (not able to attend due to conflict in schedule), Wentworth Economic Development Corporation (WEDCO) with Denise Roy Palmer and Grafton Regional Development Corporation (GRDC) with Anne-Duncan Cooley
- 2) **Northern Community Investment Corporation (NCIC)** with Aimee Quimby
- 3) **Women’s Rural Entrepreneurial Network (WREN)** with Pam Sullivan and/or Scarlett Moberly

Each of the agencies took a few moments to discuss success stories with the Commissioners.

5. **Questions/Comments** - Open it up for any input from the public.

Commissioner Piper asked if there were any comments from the public. There were none.

3:44 PM Commissioner Piper closed the Mid-Grant Public Hearing on the 2021-2022 CDBG Microenterprise Technical Assistant Grant

Commissioner Issues:

1. Commissioner Lauer stated that she attended the UNH Cooperative Extension Meeting.
2. Commissioner Ahern stated that he has been doing his TV program, “Just Omer,” and he mentioned the openings at the Nursing home. He noted that he left a message for the County Forester Jim Frohn about putting in Christmas trees in the area they discussed as a possible location. He stated that he is also looking forward to hearing about FM Nelson and G. Libby’s tour of the milk processing plant in VT
3. Commissioner Piper stated that she and Commissioner Ahern attended the Executive Committee meeting. She stated that they had a discussion about the 2022 NHAC Conference. The location has been changed. It is now at the Sheraton Harborside in Portsmouth, because they will give the NHAC until June to cancel if they have to due to Covid without any penalty. The NHAC and hosting county are looking to get everyone together again. She noted that K. Horgan gave a presentation on broadband.

4:00PM Microenterprise Technical Assistance 2022-2023 Grant Application for Grant Submission and the Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Plan (RARA)

Commissioner Piper stated that today we are here for two public hearings that were advertised in the Union Leader on 1/10/2022 and on the County’s website and is available via virtual attendance as well as in person. The first Public Hearing is for the 2022 CDBG Microenterprise Technical Assistance and Training Grant Submission. She turned it over to the Grant Administrator.

Tracey Secula of Lakes Region Planning Commission, Grant Administrator, explained that Community Development Block Grant funds are available to municipalities for economic development, public facility and housing rehabilitation projects as well as feasibility studies that primarily benefit low- and moderate-income persons. The purpose of this public hearing is to solicit the views of citizens on this CDBG funding opportunity; furnish the citizens with information concerning the amount of funds available and to indicate the range of community development activities which may be undertaken under the Community Development Act.

There are several Handouts available to everyone here: The first is a summary of the CDBG Project Funding Categories.

CDBG funds are awarded on a competitive basis in New Hampshire and may be used for housing, public facilities, and economic development which have primary benefit to low- and moderate-income persons. A community or County can apply for up to \$500,000 a year for housing projects, up to \$500,000 for public facilities, up to \$500,000 a year for economic development projects, up to \$500,000 for microenterprise program and up to \$500,000 a year in emergency funds. Planning grants are available for up to \$25,000.

The proposal to be considered by the Commissioners is a CDBG Micro Enterprise grant to be submitted by Grafton County on behalf of several potential multiple organizations statewide including BEDC (Belknap Economic Development Corporation), WEDCO (Wentworth Economic Development Corporation), GRDC (Grafton Regional Development Corporation), Coos Economic Development Council (CEDC), WREN (Women’s Rural Entrepreneurial Network) and NCIC (Northern Community Investment Corporation). The grant, for up to \$500,000, would be used to provide training and technical assistance, direct grants, down payment assistance and loan servicing to qualifying micro enterprises. The second handout is the Project Summary for this Current Funding Opportunity which includes a breakdown of the specific beneficiary services possible.

*Technical Assistance, Business Skills and Training (TAT): Based on \$2,500 of services per beneficiary per year. Can receive assistance for up to 3 program years and up to \$5,000 from 2 different providers for different services. Total up to \$15,000 (2.5/yr*3yrs*2providers)

* Technical Assistance, Business Skills and Training for Businesses in an Economic Revitalization Zone (ERZ): Based on up to \$3,500 of services per beneficiary per year. Max TAT per beneficiary is: \$7,000 from 2 different providers for different services = total is \$21,000 (3.5/yr*3yrs*2providers)

*Capital Improvements/Machinery/Equipment: Up to \$5,000 in direct-grant assistance for business capital improvements and/or machinery/equipment purchases;

*Down-Payment Assistance: Up to \$10,000 in direct-grant assistance for a down payment for commercial property/real estate that is directly related to the business;

*Loan Support: \$2,500 in loan support within one program year (provider helps a client prepare/apply for a loan from the service provider/partner micro-program lender or other lender)

Appx \$32,500 (reg TA)- \$40,000(ERZ)

To qualify, a business must be in NH and have 5 or less employees and be low-to moderate-income (LMI). The third handout is an example of the Family Income Verification Form that is required to be completed by the business owner as a first step to qualification. This is the one for Grafton County. A beneficiary completes one based on where they live by County FIVF.

Potential Applicants Statewide: It is anticipated that up to 10 separate entities will apply for funding under three counties: Grafton, Cheshire and Sullivan. Because a county can only apply for up to \$500,000 a year, Grafton County will provide funds to entities in the northern half of the state. It is expected that Cheshire and Sullivan Counties will apply to provide funds to entities in the mid to southern parts of the state. Due to an expansion of program elements that allow for additional assistance to beneficiaries and because there is an application cap of \$500,000 per County, it is possible that there will be some County/Subrecipient modifications.

Grafton County Applications: The current Grafton County subrecipients are still assessing the new opportunities to determine what they would be able to apply for and how this would correlate to their financial application request. It is possible that if all existing subrecipients expand their offerings, they could well exceed the \$500,000 CAP. Thus, there may need to be some changes with who the County is partnering with from a subrecipient standpoint.

Timeframe: The anticipated timeframe for funding opportunity is as follows:

*Funding Opportunity Grant Application Deadline: 2/22/2022 at 4pm

*Review of Applications/Virtual Site Visits: March 2022

*Community Development Advisory Council (CDAC) Decision: April 7, 2022

*Contracts/CDFR Board/G&C Process: May-June 2022

*New Program Year Begins: July 1, 2022 and ends June 30, 2023

Commissioner Piper asked if there were any questions from the public. There were none.

4:08 Commissioner Piper closed public hearing #1

4:08PM Commissioner Piper opened Public Hearing #2

Commissioner Piper stated that the next topic is the Public Hearing to review and adopt the Grafton County's Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Plan (RARA). She turned it over to the Grant Administrator.

Tracey Secula explained that If any displacement takes place because of this project, the Uniform Relocation Act must be followed, which requires that any displaced household or business in a project using any federal funds must be found comparable housing in a comparable neighborhood at a comparable price. There will be no displacement because of this project. Under the certification section of the application, the County will certify that the Residential Anti-displacement & Relocation (RARA) plan is in place, and if it is discovered that this specific project does displace persons or households, a displacement implementation plan must be submitted to CDFR prior to obligating or expending funds.

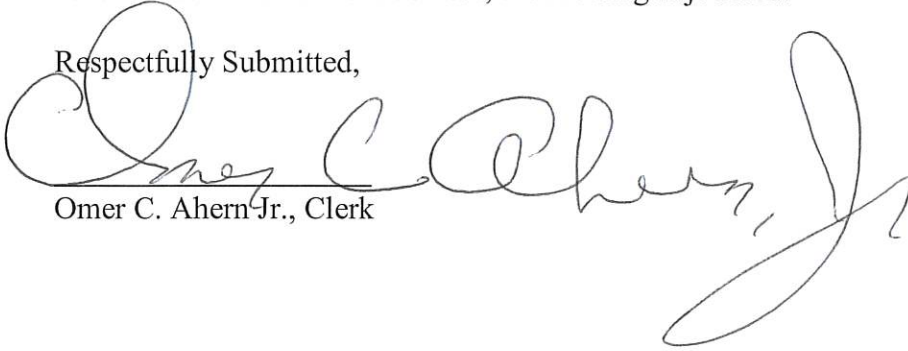
4:10 Commissioner Piper closed the public hearing

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to support submission of a 2022 CDBG Micro Enterprise grant to provide funds to multiple entities throughout the state for the purposes of providing training and technical assistance to micro-enterprises and to authorize the Chair to sign, submit and execute any documents that may be necessary to effectuate the CDBG application and contract. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to adopt the Grafton County Anti-displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan for this project. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

4:20 PM With no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Omer C. Ahern Jr.", written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned to the right of the typed name.

Omer C. Ahern Jr., Clerk



January 25, 2022

Commissioners Report

1. Population: In House: 44 F Unit: 12
 E Unit: 6
 D Unit: 8
 C Unit: 10
 Intake: 8

Out of Facility: 30

Total population: 74

Intakes since 7/1/21: 465 Male: 314 Female: 151

2. Community Corrections Report:

- a) Electronic Monitoring: 7
- b) Daily Work Release: 0
- c) Pre-Trial Services: 17– 1 on GPS monitoring

d) Operation Impact:

Sgt. Harness delivered presentations to Woodsville Elementary, Canaan Elementary and Whitefield Elementary. In addition, she worked inside the jail and assisted community corrections with residence checks.

e) Community Work Detail:

Sergeant Griffin has been assisting on the farm, covering jail shifts and doing residence checks with the community corrections team.

f) Transports: For the month of December staff conducted 8 transports.

- 0 transport to a treatment facility.
- 0 medical transports for inmate medical needs/doctor's appointments.
- 8 courtesy rides home for inmates being released that could not find a ride for themselves.

FIRRM Program

4 current participants

Level 1 – 2

Level 2 – 2

Level 3 - 0

Programs Department Report:

For the month of December, the Programs Department provided various services to 8 different inmates for approximately 120 hours. These services include SUD groups, individual counseling and HISET. The majority of these hours came from the following services broken down below.

Individual Counseling: 22 total hours

Female – 4 hours

Male – 18 hours

SUD Treatment Groups: 97 total hours

Female – 6 hours

Male – 91 hours

Medical /Mental Health Report: For the month of December there were five psychiatric clinic days with a total of 42 patient encounters.

General

Administrative transfer pursuant to RSA 30-B:21

Letter of Commendation

Are there any Commissioner concerns?