

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
Administration Building
North Haverhill, NH 03774
December 14th 2021

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

OTHERS PRESENT: County Attorney Hornick, Farm Manager Nelson, HR Director Clough

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

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

Commissioner Piper asked for a moment of silence in memory of Wayne Fortier.

County Attorney Hornick arrived and gave a brief update on her office.

Atty. Hornick reported that her office is now fully staffed. Ashley Belyea has come over from Alternative Sentencing to fill the Victim Witness Coordinator position. She noted that she has also hired an Assistant County Attorney.

Atty. Hornick submitted forms for the appointments of Assistant County Attorneys for the Commissioners to sign.

Agenda Items:

Commissioner Piper asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from the December 7th meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the minutes from December 7th. 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.

Farm Manager Nelson arrived and gave the following report: (* see attached)

Commissioner Ahern asked about the rules and regulations regarding the classification of inmates and if there is any opportunity to work within those classifications to allow more inmates the opportunity to work on the farm. FM Nelson reported that he has talked to Supt. Elliott a couple of times and feels like Supt. Elliott has given him everything that he has

available to him. He noted that Supt. Elliott has given him inmates he never thought were a possibility.

FM Nelson stated that he wondered if there was a way to work from the top down and asked the Commissioners if they could reach out to State Representatives. He questioned if there was a possibility of house inmates from other counties who would be able to work on the farm. Commissioner Piper stated that she has heard Supt. Elliott talk about whom he would and would not allow working on the farm and it sounds as though he has made any concession he has. She suggested that rather than asking the Farm Manager to speak with Superintendent Elliott again, maybe Commissioner Ahern should reach out to Senator Guida or Representatives regarding the issue. FM Nelson stated that he is not looking to change policy but looking to other counties to find inmates to house here at Grafton County.

CA Libby stated that the problem that Supt. Elliott has indicated is that right now there are 45 in house, the majority are pretrial, and that means that he cannot send pre-trial inmates out to work unless he has their permission. Typically, pretrial inmates have not been out on the farm to work. CA Libby explained that if this were a direction that the Board agrees on, it would be up to Supt. Elliott to see if other counties had inmates that they could transfer to come here and work. She stated that she has a meeting with Supt. Elliott on Friday and she will discuss this with him. Commissioner Lauer asked FM Nelson to think about how many employees he would have to hire to run the farm operation as is right now with no inmates.

Farm & Forest Day Discussion – CA Libby stated that the former County Administrator had discussed with her the possibility of hosting the event next June. She explained that there is no money budgeted to hold this event this fiscal year. She asked the Commissioners if this is something the Board would like her to figure out how to make work this fiscal year or wait until June of 2023. FM Nelson stated that he has no problem waiting until June in 2023 in hopes that the pandemic may settle down by then and more people may feel comfortable coming. Commissioner Lauer agreed, noting that there is a lot going on right now and it may be better to wait another year. Commissioner Piper and Commissioner Ahern agreed as well.

HR Director Clough arrived to discuss the Covid Guidelines with the Commissioners

HR Director Clough stated that the Commissioners need to discuss the Covid Guidelines that were adopted two (2) weeks ago. She explained that in that time they have had rapid changing situations at the County. Right now there are ten (10) positive employees at the Nursing Home and in speaking with NHA Labore, they have an even split in terms of breakthrough cases. They are trying to be fair across the board but they need to look at the situation they are in and where they are going. The Delta variant is much more aggressive in how it spreads and when they originally wrote these guidelines in August, they were not in this situation. They did not make many changes in the guidelines from August to two (2) weeks ago when they were adopted. HR Director Clough stated that they need to be supportive of all situations that are occurring, and recognize the fact that vaccinated individuals are exposing unvaccinated and vice versa. She feels the Commissioners need to remove the guidelines they put in place and in her recommendation is a campus wide mask mandate. In speaking with NHA Labore, whose knowledge she respects, he felt that they might not need as many quarantine requirements if they

have a mask mandate where people are reducing the risk. HR Director Clough went on to state that she also feels that they need a “Covid bank” in place for employee pay, as they had in the beginning of the pandemic. The positivity rate at the County Complex and area is high and they need to be fair across the board for all situations. She explained that employees would be paid out of a separate bank of money and this could be budgeted two (2) ways; out of the payroll lines or use of ARPA funds. She stated that she would be discussing this with the department heads and possibly putting a proposal together for the next round of ARPA requests.

Commissioner Lauer stated that she would support the Covid pay and a mask mandate. Commissioner Ahern stated that he would support everyone being treated the same way. Commissioner Lauer stated that if the County were going to be paying the expenses for Covid, it would be appropriate for them to do the best they can in lowering transmission. Commissioner Piper stated that she would support the mask mandate as well, She stated that her concerns have been for the health of the residents and staff and supporting the workforce by preventing transmission.

HR Director Clough stated that the guidelines have been confusing for people and she has been struggling how to recognize every situation. She feels Covid pay is the right thing to do. She explained that Covid pay would be 14 days of pay provided for employees that are out due to Covid related reasons. If employees exhausted that leave then they would fall back to the established policies that are in the Employee Handbook and the Collective Bargaining Agreement. She further discussed the Covid Pay with the Commissioners and answered questions.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to implement a campus wide mandatory mask policy anytime you are within 6 feet of another individual. Commissioner Ahern seconded. 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.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to implement a COVID pay policy in which employees are paid 14 days for COVID related leave. 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.

Commissioner Lauer requested that the employees be told the Commissioners understand this is a fluid situation and changes happen frequently. Commissioner Piper stated that they are trying their best to protect the employees and their workforce.

MOTION: * 10:37 AM 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.

* 11:04 AM 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.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to offer the agreement terms as discussed in the nonpublic session. 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. CA Libby submitted a drawdown request for NCIC for Commissioner Piper to sign.
2. CA Libby informed the Commissioners that they need to complete Supt. Elliott’s evaluation. Commissioner Piper stated that they would finish it next week.
3. CA Libby reported tax collections are coming in nicely and are due Friday. Investment letters have been sent to the banks and the Treasurer will meet with the Commissioners next Tuesday with her recommendations.
4. CA Libby that the Commissioners typically have not met the week between Christmas and New Year’s and asked if they planned to do the same this year. The Commissioners agreed to not meet on December 28th.

MOTION: * 11:12 AM 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.

* 11:31 AM 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.

MOTION: * 11:32 AM 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.

* 12:01 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.

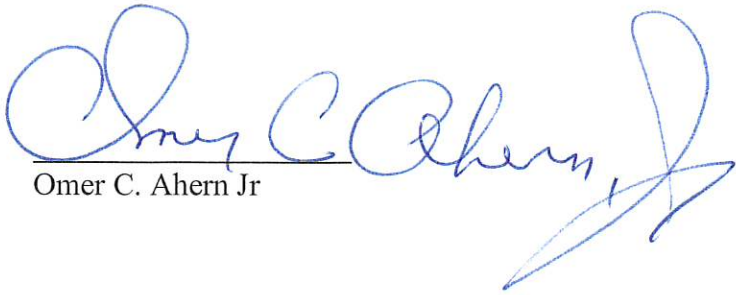
CA Libby stated that it is common practice that when someone is filling multiple roles, they are compensated for both roles. She explained that she is at the max step on the wage scale for Finance Director and she requested to go to the max step for County Administrator while she is filling this role.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved that the Acting County Administrator salary be placed at the max step where she was previously. 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.

Commissioner Piper asked how these new outside contracts would be moving forward, specifically SNS. CA Libby reported that she has reached out to the three (3) contacts at SNS and will be meeting with them to be brought back up to date on what is going on around the campus and the upcoming infrastructure project.

12:15 PM With no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,


Omer C. Ahern Jr

December 2021 Farm Report

1. There are 79 cows averaging 80 pounds of milk per day. We are shipping around 6,500 pounds of milk every other day. The butter fat is 4.23% and the protein is 3.16%. Grafton County Farm received \$20.21 per hundred weight for November milk.
2. The inmate who helps with milking will be released on December 16th. Sergeant Griffin does not have any inmates to help.
3. The Herdsman, _____ has been out of work with Covid. Hoping to see him ease back into work in the next couple days.
4. The boar is in a pen with 5 sows.
5. Sand is stockpiled for winter free stall bedding.
6. Kevin Knapp has completed a in frame engine rebuild on the 6220 John Deere.
7. I have reached out to the Coop Food Stores of Lebanon, NH in hopes of selling potatoes. We currently have more than 800 (50 pound) bags in storage.

Respectfully Submitted,

Grant Nelson

Farm Manager