

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING  
Administration Building  
North Haverhill, NH 03774  
December 7<sup>th</sup> 2021

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Sheriff Stiegler, Nursing Home Administrator Labore, HR Director Clough, Register of Deeds Monahan

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

**Sheriff Stiegler arrived and gave the following report (\* see attached)**

Sheriff Stiegler requested to go into nonpublic session.

**MOTION:** \* 9:20 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.

\* 9:26 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.

Sherriff Stiegler presented an Injury Prevention Center (IPC) Micro Grant Award notice and requested approval of acceptance of the funds. Discussion ensued.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Lauer moved to accept the IPC micro grant for \$1,999.33. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Commissioner Piper asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from the November 30<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the minutes from November 30<sup>th</sup> meeting. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

**NHA Labore arrived and gave the following report: (\*see attached)**

1) Recent Positive Cases – NHA Labore reported there are four active COVID cases among staff but there are currently no residents who have tested positive. They are having response testing today for willing residents and all staff.

2) CMS Mandatory Vaccination Pause – NHA Labore reported that staff members are appreciative of the vote the board made to pause the mandate.

- Contractor Exemption – NHA Labore stated that he wanted to address one aspect of the vaccine policy. He explained that he re-read the full release from CMS and there is a provision within the regulation for contractors, specifically in instances for a one-time contractor, for example Stanley Elevator coming to fix an elevator. Within the regulation, they are allowed to screen the person in, especially if they are not going out onto the floor. He stated that the policy that was adopted by the Commissioners talked about specifically contractors being included. NHA Labore asked the Commissioners if they feel comfortable in allowing him to create a provision to the policy for these one-time cases or if there should be a revote on the policy. The Commissioners discussed the request and agreed to allow NHA Labore to amend the Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Policy to address these one-time contractor vendor visits.

3) Resuming Admissions – NHA Labore reported that none of the updated guidance from the CDC and Department of Public Health state the need to pause admissions during an outbreak. He feels as though they are in a position to resume admissions. He stated that he would like to work with folks they have been keeping in touch with and triage the more serious cases. Commissioner Lauer stated that if they can be confident that the Nursing Home can resume admissions and still provide care if the vaccine mandate comes back, she trusts NHA Labore's decision.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Lauer moved to resume admissions at the Nursing Home as recommended by NHA Labore. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

CA Dorsett asked NHA Labore about the State's nursing strike force. NHA Labore explained the concept involved the State developing the task force to provide staff necessary to assist nursing care facilities increase intake and reduce backlog of long-term care patients waiting in hospitals.

**HR Director Clough arrived and gave the following report: (\* see attached)**

Wage Study Update – HR Director Clough reported that the Wage Study is on schedule. They have started focus groups this week with employees that are taking place today and tomorrow. Employees have also filled out position analysis forms. They are looking around beginning to mid-February for a completion date.

HR Director Clough stated that a company came in and filmed recruitment videos for the Nursing Home and DoC. These videos will be linked to their job postings and will include employee testimonials.

COVID Guidelines for Grafton County – HR Director Clough stated that she sent the Commission approved guidelines out to Department heads on Friday. One department head wanted her to follow up with the Commissioners regarding a concern that exemptions are not considered in the COVID Guidelines for Grafton County policy. She stated that she met with the department head and explained what exceptions/accommodations are for and when they apply. She explained that exemptions are considered under the Mandatory COVID-19 policy when there is a requirement as a condition of employment for a position and there is a medical or religious reason as to why you cannot meet those requirements for the position. The mandatory vaccine policy is a requirement for a position to keep your job. However, she said the COVID Guidelines for Grafton County policy is not a requirement to keep your job. The policy provides guidelines on quarantine requirements after exposure or illness, and where an employee is paid from, earned time or extended sick leave, depending on their vaccination status. The department head felt this was not fair and she stated that she would bring this to the board. Commissioner Piper stated that she is happy with the policy that has been passed and HR Director's guidance on it. The exemption is not intended to apply to pay status and she sees this as a different issue than the vaccine mandate exemptions. HR Director Clough stated that this is a contentious issue and knew the guidelines were not going to make everyone happy. It benefits unvaccinated COVID exposed employees as they now get paid five days out of their extended sick leave bank rather than all of it being earned time, which is what has been happening. Commissioner Lauer and Commissioner Piper agreed that the policy is fine as is. Commissioner Ahern stated that the Department Head can come speak to them. He asked if this includes natural immunity from having COVID. CA Dorsett stated that this follows CDC guidelines, which state vaccinated or unvaccinated.

### **Agenda Items:**

1. Department of Corrections (DoC) Facility Inspection Report – CA Dorsett submitted the DoC Facility Inspection Report for the Commissioners to review and Commissioner Piper to sign.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the DOC Facility Inspection Report. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

2. Holiday Schedule 2022 – CA Dorsett described that each year in December the Commissioners recognize the holiday schedule for the coming year and submitted the following 2022 Holiday Schedule for the Commissioners review in accordance with the employee handbook and collective bargaining agreement.

Grafton County  
2022 Holiday Schedule

New Years Day Observed by Admin Offices	Friday	December 31, 2021	*
New Years Day	Saturday	January 1, 2022	
Martin Luther King Jr./Civil Right's Day	Monday	January 17, 2022	
President's Day	Monday	February 21, 2022	
Memorial Day	Monday	May 30, 2022	
Independence Day	Monday	July 4, 2022	
Labor Day	Monday	September 5, 2022	
Columbus Day	Monday	October 10, 2022	
Election Day	Tuesday	November 8, 2022	**
Veterans' Day	Friday	November 11, 2022	
Thanksgiving	Thursday	November 24, 2022	
Day after Thanksgiving	Friday	November 25, 2022	***
Christmas Day	Sunday	December 25, 2022	
Observed by Administrative Offices	Monday	December 26, 2022	****

\*Administrative Offices Observation of New Year's Day

\*\*Floating Holiday for all Employees

\*\*\*Day after Thanksgiving is a Floating Holiday for UE Bargaining Unit Members

\*\*\*\*Administrative Offices Observation of Christmas

24/7 Departments will observe actual holiday on 01/01/22 and 12/25/22

**MOTION:** Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the 2022 Holiday Schedule as presented. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

3. Broadband Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – CA Dorsett reported that the County is conducting a high-level broadband design for the middle mile project utilizing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) approved funds. He explained that early in their process he had stressed that many Grafton municipalities lack the resources, time and/or technical expertise to rapidly accomplish the needed steps to move from the middle mile to the last mile in each of their communities. To assist those municipalities, Grafton County applied for a \$25,000 CDBG through the Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA). The grant match was approved ARPA funds, to be purposed with conducting the first step for municipalities, a high-level design of each's connection to the middle mile and last mile to each home. The grant application has been approved, and the grant contract has now been issued. He answered questions from the Commissioners and requested that they approve the CDBG agreement.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the grant agreement and authorize Commissioner Piper to execute the agreement in accordance with NHRSA 31:95-b. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

4. CA Dorsett submitted a Belknap Economic Development COVID Micro Grant drawdown request for \$31,014.44 for Commissioner Piper to sign.

## **County Forest Fire Plan Presentation - Jim Frohn, John Neely, Rebecca DiGirolomo, Bob Bale**

Forester Frohn stated that he had discussed the possibility of conducting some prescribed burns in order to secure oak regeneration and to maintain certain habitat types. He has been in discussion with Rebecca DiGirolomo, Strafford and Belknap County Forester; John Neely, Assistant Fire Management Officer on the White Mountain National Forest; and Bob Bale, Wildland Fire Specialist at Fire4People. He stated that there are upcoming grant opportunities that would provide funding to write a fire management plan and conduct burns. He also noted that in addition to forestry and ecological benefits, prescribed burns could provide training opportunities for local fire departments and possibly correctional facility residents. Consulting foresters and landowners would also find them of interest. If implemented, he stated that they would plan to conduct a number of educational workshops for resource professionals and the public. The grant applications are due January 14, but there would be a four-year window to get the work done.

The group discussed their plans with the Commissioners and answered various questions. The Commissioners agreed that this is a great opportunity for Grafton County, increasing marking value of their timber, using their property for education purposes as well as reduce the fire risk. The Commissioners agreed to apply for a grant opportunity. R. DiGirolomo stated that they would apply for the grant thought UNH Extension and Grafton County would be listed as a partner in support on the grant application. The Commissioners thanked everyone for coming and their work on this project.

### **Agenda Items:**

1. Opioid Settlement Update – CA Dorsett requested to go into nonpublic session.

**MOTION:** \* 11:14 AM Commissioner Lauer moved to enter into non-public session for the purposes of, consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation which has been threatened in writing or filed against the public body or any subdivision thereof, or against any member thereof because of his or her membership in such public body, until the claim or litigation has been fully adjudicated or otherwise settled. Any application filed for tax abatement, pursuant to law, with anybody or board shall not constitute a threatened or filed litigation against any public body for the purposes of this subparagraph according to RSA 91-A: 3, II (e) Commissioner Ahern 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.

\* 11:26 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.

2. CA Dorsett stated that in regards to the second round of ARPA requests, he would like to request an extra meeting to discuss the department head requests with the Commissioners, rather than trying to discuss them during a regular Commissioner meeting. The Commissioners agreed and will meet on January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

3. CA Dorsett said at a recent department head meeting he discussed conducting a county visioning and goal setting process and learned that a process was started prior to the COVID-19 pandemic by Primex in 2019. He indicated he met with Primex and reported that they are willing to come back and start the goal setting process again. He stated that he would be restarting this process with the workgroup originally involved and the original working document would be sent out to the group.

**MOTION:** \* 11:37 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.

\* 12:03 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.

### **Commissioner Issues**

1. Commissioner Piper reported that she attended the Executive Committee meeting on Friday and the Executive Committee renewed the DuPont Group and Rumford Management contracts but did not renew the White Birch contract because that is for the conference. In regards to next year’s conference, the officers were worried that folks would not come to the conference and would have to hold another hybrid or zoom conference. As the president of the NHAC, she received many complaints about the sessions offered by zoom and hybrid. They had decided to hold it at the Double Tree and the decision at the last Executive Committee was to hold webinars over the course of the year and hold a one (1) night reception. Commissioner Piper reported that they are working on more options as well.

2. Commissioner Piper attended Rockingham County's employee recognition dinner.

3. Commissioner Lauer stated that she would be attending an event at the Swiftwater Way Station as a County Commissioner representative. She also noted that the Maintenance Department did a wonderful job with the Christmas decorations around the complex.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Omer C. Ahern Jr." with a horizontal line underneath the signature.

Omer C. Ahern Jr.

# GRAFTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

## November 2021

- Prisoner Transports: 36
- CSO movement from jail to Court: 8
- Involuntary Emergency Admission (IEA): 15
- Arrests: 24
  - Arrest on a warrant, superior or civil, instate wanted, and on sight arrest
- Civil: 103 Total
  - 56 Abode
  - 37 In hand
  - 8 Non est
  - 2 Cancelled
- Motor Vehicle Stops: 4
- Total # Active Warrants: 398 Total
  - 371 Criminal
  - 27 Civil
- Total Miles Driven: 21,245



# Grafton County Nursing Home Commissioner's Report: December 07, 2021

## Census

Medicare: 2  
Medicaid: 80  
VA: 1  
Hospice: 0  
Private: 18  
Total: 100

## FY '22 Budgeted Census:

Medicare: 3  
Medicaid: 89 (Daily rate= \$212.62)  
VA: 1  
Hospice: 0  
Private: 22  
Budgeted Census: 114

## Monthly Admissions/Discharges

Admissions: 0  
Deceased Residents: 4  
Discharges: 0

## Other Topics:

- 1) Recent Positive Cases
- 2) CMS Mandatory Vaccination Pause
  - Contractor Exemption
- 3) Resuming Admissions

Grafton County Human Resources Report  
 Karen Clough, Human Resources Director  
 December 7, 2021

**HR Activity Report (09/01/2021-12/07/2021)**

• ***New Hires***

<u>Department</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Position(s)</u>
Nursing Home	13 (7 PT, 4 FT, 2 Per Diem)	1 PT Housekeeper, 5 PT Dietary Aide, 2 FT RN, 2 Per Diem LNA's , 2 FT LNA, 1 PT Unit Aide
Sheriff's Dept.	1 (1 PT)	1 PT Court Security Officer
DOC	3 (3 FT)	2 FT CO's, 1 FT Cook
County Atty.	2 (2 FT)	2 FT Asst. County Atty's

***Separations***

<u>Departments</u>	<u>#</u>	<u></u>
Nursing Home	16 (7 PD, 4 PT, 5 FT )	5 PD LNA, 1 PD LPN, 1 PD RN, 3 FT LNA, 2 PT Dietary Aides, 1 FT Dietary Aides, 1 PT Unit Secretary, 1 PT Housekeeper, 1 FT Admin/Billing Specialist
Sheriff's Dept	1 (1 PT)	1 PT Deputy
DOC	5 (5 FT)	2 FT CO's, 1 FT Comm Corrections CO, 1 FT Sergeant, 1 FT Cook
County Atty's Office	1 (1FT)	1 Victim Witness Asst.
Commissioners' Office	1 (1 FT)	1 FT Payroll Coordinator

***Reasons:***

- Resigned personal reasons/no reason- 6
- Termination – 2
- Career change -
- New job – 5
- Relocated – 3
- School – 2
- Retirement – 3
- Not Reappointed -
- Not meeting Per Diem / Part Time Requirements - 3

- ***Status Changes/ dept transfers: 1 FT RN to Staff Development Director, 1 part time Dietary Aide to FT Unit Aide, 1 PT Housekeeper to FT Unit Aide, 1 FT Dietary Aide to FT Unit Aide, 1 FT RN to per diem, 1 per diem LNA to FT, 1 FT LNA to FT Billing Specialist, 1 FT Case Manager AS to FT Victim Witness Coordinator CA, 1 per diem LNA to FT MNA***

***Active Leave of Absences as of September 3 - present***

<u>Department</u>	<u>#</u>	<u></u>
Nursing Home – Nursing	13	(11 are intermittent, 10 for self, 3 for family)
Nursing Home – Non-Nursing	3	(2 are intermittent, 2 for family, 1 for self)
DOC	3	(2 intermittent, 3 self)
Maintenance	1	(1 intermittent family)
Sheriff's Dept/Dispatch.	3	(2 intermittent, 2 family, 1 self)
County Atty's Office	1	(1 self)
HR Department	1	(1 intermittent, family)
Alternative Sentencing	1	(1 self)
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>26</b>	

**Scheduled to orient**

(2) Case Managers Alternative Sentencing

**Current Jobs posted/advertised**

LNA's (15.05 FTE's vacant)

RN/LPN (13.95 FTE's vacant combined)

RN Per Diem DOC

CO's (9 FTE's vacant)

PT Housekeeper

Evening Clinical Asst.

Maintenance Assistant

Dietary Aide

Payroll Coordinator

OTHER BUSINESS – Wage study update, Recruitment videos started, COVID guidelines