

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
Administration Building
North Haverhill, NH 03774
April 11th 2023

PRESENT: Commissioners Piper, Commissioner Ahern and McLeod, County Administrator Libby and Administrative Assistant Norcross

OTHERS: Interim Farm Manager White, Supt. Oakes, County Attorney Hornick

Commissioner Piper called the meeting to order at 3:21 PM began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Interim FM White then submitted the following bid waiver request:

2/24/23 – Commissioners approved the purchase of a 1990 John Deere 4455 Tractor from United Ag & Turf, the price of the tractor was \$48,890 and we were receiving \$11,000 for a net cost of \$37,890.00.

This tractor ended up needing a significant amount of work that was not disclosed at the time the agreement was made to purchase. It was going to require an investment of significant additional monies. Since that time, the deal has been canceled and Grafton County will no longer be purchasing that tractor.

I have found a tractor that I feel is a suitable replacement for the tractor that we are down from losing the JD 7520 last summer. This tractor is in Newport, VT. It is a 1989 John Deere 4255. Myself and farm employee Gordon Huntington have looked at the tractor and believe that it is in good shape and will meet our needs.

The cost of the tractor is \$55,950. United Ag & Turf is still going to buy the JD 7520 from us for \$11,000, which will offset the price of this and bring the net cost to \$44,950, which is \$7,060 over what you had originally approved for me to spend. The funds to pay for this tractor will come from unexpended funds within the farm budget.

I would request that you waive the competitive bidding process and allow me to purchase the above referenced tractor from Shattuck Motors, in Newport, VT, for the price of \$55,950.00.

MOTION: Commissioner Ahern moved to waive the bidding process and purchase the 1989 John Deere 4255 tractor from Shattuck Motors in Newport, VT for the price of \$55,950.00. Commissioners McLeod seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Woodsville Water & Light Meeting Discussion – Supt. Oakes

Commissioner Piper stated she spoke with CA Libby about their meeting tonight with WW&L and for the sake of best presenting their case, she would like to have CA Libby present the case

and state the County's concerns. She believes CA Libby has the most comprehensive knowledge of the situation. She stated that this is a different group of people from WW&L than who they met with previously and they have indicated a willingness to listen. Commissioner Piper stated that she thought they should ask CA Libby to advance the general concerns and when specific items come up such as the hydrant fees, Supt. Oakes can speak to those as he has the extensive knowledge. The Commissioners reviewed their talking points and questions for the WW&L Commissioners.

Commissioner Ahern stated that what Woodsville Water and Light is doing he considers tyranny and the County needs to stand up to them. CA Libby stated that she is unsure of what the tyranny is. She stated that WW&L has a rate structure and the County pays for what we use and send to them. The difference between the County and their other customers is the County owns the infrastructure and the others do not. Commissioner Piper stated that maybe they could have some leverage on rate structure for the County because of the fact that they own the infrastructure.

Commissioner Piper stated that it is important that they are all on the same page and she is not sure that they are. This is an information gathering conversation with WW&L. CA Libby stated that they need to be transparent and if the County's plan is to move away from the water and put in our own system, they should be telling WW&L that right now because the County is one of their major customers.

County Attorney Hornick arrived and requested to go into nonpublic session.

MOTION: *4:11 PM Commissioner Ahern moved to enter into non-public session for the purposes of matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant according to RSA 91-A: 3, II (c). Commissioner McLeod seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Ahern "yes", Commissioner McLeod "yes" Commissioner Piper "yes" Commissioner Piper stated that a majority of the board voted "yes" and would now go into non-public session.

*4:56 PM Commissioner Piper declared the meeting back in public session.

MOTION: Commissioner Ahern 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 McLeod seconded the motion. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Ahern "yes" Commissioner McLeod "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 March 30th and April 4th meetings. Commissioner Piper had a couple of edits.

MOTION: Commissioner McLeod moved to approve the minutes from the March 30th budget meeting as amended. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

MOTION: Commissioner McLeod moved to approve the minutes from the April 4th meeting as amended. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

2. The Commissioners signed check registers 1123 & 1136-1137.

3. Appropriation Transfers – CA Libby reviewed a list of appropriation transfers totaling \$1,998,123.00 with the Commissioners. She stated that the largest transfer was \$1,750,000 into the Contract Nursing line item.

MOTION: Commissioner McLeod moved to approve the list of appropriation transfers totaling \$1,998,123.00. Commissioners Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

4. Public Hearing Date – CA Libby stated that the Commissioners would need to hold a public hearing for the housing project in Ashland through the Lakes Region Community Developers. She noted that these public hearings need to be held in the afternoon and therefore the Commissioners need to set a date to have an afternoon meeting. The Commissioners agreed on May 16th at 3:00pm.

5. Master Gardener Request – CA Libby stated that the Master Gardeners are requesting \$1,500-\$2,000 to complete the plans to upgrade the Memorial Garden. She stated that if this is something the Commissioners want to do, she is sure the money is in the budget somewhere to pay for it.

MOTION: Commissioner Ahern moved to fund \$2,000 to the Master Gardener Program. Commissioner McLeod seconded the motion and all were in favor.

6. CA Libby stated that the Register of Deeds has submitted an ARPA funding request to the Commissioners asking them to forward to the Executive Committee. The Commissioners stated that there is not an open ARPA funding window currently ,but they will keep this and take it up with the next round of funding.

Commissioner Issues:

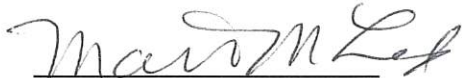
1. Commissioner Ahern reported that he attended the tour at the Nursing Home with Elizabeth Burke from Rep. Kuster's Office and Ellen Flaherty from Dartmouth Health.

2. Commissioners McLeod stated that she had a constituent with questions regarding applying at the nursing home. She stated that she contacted the Nursing Home and they were very helpful.

3. Commissioner Piper stated that the Assistant County Administrator hiring committee conducted three (3) interviews today and they will meet on Thursday to further discuss their impressions and results of the interviews and will think about the next steps.

5:16 PM with no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Martha S. McLeod".

Martha S. McLeod, Clerk

April 2023 Farm Report

1. There are currently 53 cows milking, averaging 81 pounds per cow. We produced 119,063 pounds of milk for the month of March. Components were 4.39% butterfat and 3.22% protein. The milk pay price in January was \$23.15 for Grafton County Farm.
2. The first group of piglets are being sold this weekend. There are 2 more litters almost ready to sell. There are 2 sows due this weekend and more later this spring.
3. We hired Pete Blanchard this month for the full time farm position. Have a good crew and with our inmate help should be good for crop season.
4. Tom Beaudry took soil samples and we have plans on going for where crops and vegetables will be going this year.
5. The John Deere 6415 is back in service. The John Deere 4455 that we were looking at needs more work than expected. It was enough that we are not getting this tractor and are looking at other possibilities.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ben White

Interim Farm Manager