

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING  
Administration Building  
North Haverhill, NH 03774  
May 3, 2022

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

OTHERS PRESENT: HR Director Clough, Nursing Home Administrator Labore, Alternative  
Sentencing Director DePalo

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

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

HR Director Clough noted that four (4) LNAs have gone from fulltime to per diem, a number of  
them went to a travel agency and have asked to come back to the Nursing Home as travelers. She  
stated that she, NHA Labore and the Director of Nursing have decided that if someone leaves  
Grafton County to go to a travel agency, that they will not hire them back as a traveler.

CA Libby asked if there are resources available to the County through traveling agencies to fill  
these vacancies. HR Director Clough stated that the bigger question is what companies are out  
there that provide staffing services that the County could afford. Commissioner Ahern stated that  
Plymouth Regional High School has a health science program that they can look into and asked  
if we have made contact with Plymouth Regional High School. HR Director Clough stated that  
she has not but NHA Labore may have.

Benefits Fair/Employment Appreciation Day – HR Director Clough stated that they would be  
holding this event on May 26<sup>th</sup>. There will be a food truck at the complex and employees who  
attend the benefits fair will receive a coupon for lunch.

Yoga Classes – HR Director Clough explained that employees are stressed and the County is  
looking for ways to help. Wellness is going to pay for 6 weeks of yoga classes in the afternoon.  
She stated that they realize that the 3pm-11pm and 11pm-7am shifts may not be able to take  
advantage of those classes and if there is enough interest in those off shifts, they will work to put  
together classes for those shifts as well. She noted that they are working on putting together a  
financial workshop for employees as well.

NHA Labore arrived. He discussed the climate of the Nursing Home and described it as “frosty.”  
He explained that there was a lack of understanding initially regarding the wage scale, combined  
with COVID fatigue, and lack of staff. The wage scale was printed, and given to everyone and  
that created confusion. CA Libby stated that employees at the Nursing Home are coming off the  
ARPA bonuses and some were hoping that the wage adjustments would offset not having those  
bonuses. NHA Labore stated that he believes things will level out. HR Director Clough stated  
that the wage study process did not go the way they hoped it would, but she feels the wage study

did what they wanted to do. The employees are upset that they are not getting upfront what they wanted. She noted the employees need to figure in the cost of what this is going to be to implement. Leadership knows that there will always be a group of employees who will be negative, which always speaks louder than the positive. The Employee Council and Union Representatives are very good to work with and they work hard to get accurate information out there.

CA Libby requested to go into nonpublic to discuss Union negotiations.

**MOTION:** \* 9:32 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.

\* 9:51 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.

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

NHA Labore reported that he paused admissions for a week or so due to the environment in the building. He did not want to add more pressure on the staff. He stated that things are leveling out right now and he knows the need for Nursing Homes is out there. There is a waitlist of 35 but the staff is not there to fill those beds.

NHA Labore explained that the Nursing Home’s Health Information Department has a pending retirement for one of the Unit Secretaries. This position is budgeted for twenty-five hours per week. There is also a vacant twenty-five hour Unit Secretary position within the department. The Director of Health Information Management would like to combine these two positions and create a single forty-hour position, which will manage Health Information needs for two nursing units; there is currently one forty hour position that manages two resident units (Profile and Granite).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Lauer moved to combine the Nursing Home Health Information Department’s two (2) part time Unit Secretary positions into one (1) and

reduce the hours by ten (10) per week. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

**AS Director DePalo arrived via Zoom**

She provided the attached summary of options the Commissioners have for their mental health case management and reviewed it with them. The Commissioners discussed the options and were all in agreement that they feel the best option for Grafton County is to bring all mental health case management in house.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Ahern moved to terminate the contract with Lakes Region Mental Health effective June 30<sup>th</sup> 2022 and bring all case management cases back in house under the in-house Mental Health Case Manager. Commissioner Lauer seconded the motion and all were in favor.

**Agenda Items:**

1. Commissioner Piper asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from the April 19<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup> meetings.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the April 19<sup>th</sup> minutes as amended. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the April 21<sup>st</sup> minutes as amended. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Commissioner Piper had a question regarding the Broadband discussion in the April 26<sup>th</sup> minutes and stated that she was unsure as to what NHEC documents the minutes were referring to and wanted to clarify the statement about NHEC's not wanting to work with the Broadband Committee. The Commissioners discussed it and agreed that based on the NHEC PowerPoint presentation and discussion, the Commissioners believe there is a lack of clarity as to whether the NHEC wishes to work with the Broadband Committee as an Internet Service Provider. The Commissioners made the edit to the minutes to reflect that statement.

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

2. CA Libby submitted the DoC inspection letter for Commissioner Piper to sign.

3. Dispatch Bid Waiver – CA Libby submitted a bid waiver request from Director Andross for the console redundancy and upgrade. In order to ensure compatibility with the existing infrastructure and in-progress upgrades, Director Andross is requesting to waive the bid requirement and purchase services from Motorola. The project is 100% federal Homeland Security funding.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Lauer moved to waive the bidding process and award the project to Motorola for grand-funded amount of \$196,963.10. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

4. The Commissioners signed Check Registers: 1157; 1159-1161 and 2022-40.29.2022.

5. CA Libby submitted the following CDBG Paperwork for Commissioner Piper to sign:

- Drawdown request of \$2,500 for the Microcredit CDBG
- Addendum to Professional Services Agreement – Donna Lane
- Business & Employment Commitment Agreement btw Mid-State Health and Grafton County – CDBG
- Subrecipient Agreement btw Grafton County and Mid-State Health – CDBG

#### 9. Budget Discussion

CA Libby gave the Commissioners a spreadsheet that outlined where they were with the budget with the changes the Commissioners have made. She stated that the increase in the amount to be raised by taxes is 7.02%. She then gave the Commissioners another spreadsheet outlining items that she reviewed in the budget as possible items that could be funded through ARPA, which totaled \$1,761,163.00 and would bring the amount to be raised by taxes down to a .49% increase.

CA Libby stated that she wants to make sure that if the Commissioners choose to fund items in the budget out of ARPA that it is clearly explained what the total budget is and that these expenses will go back into the budget in the future.

Commissioner Piper stated that she would only support one new position this year. She would be open to 2, but she is not open to the HR position. She explained that she is sympathetic to the HR position, but one of the main arguments for the position was to have someone to focus on recruitment. The Commissioners just implemented a new wage chart and are spending a lot of money to implement it. Regarding the Maintenance position, she noted that they have higher paid maintenance staff doing lesser skilled tasks and that Supt. Oakes has stated he will be retiring in several years and needs to train accordingly for his replacement. However, perhaps they do not need to do that this year. Commissioner Piper noted that she read from NACo (National Association of Counties) that some counties are using ARPA money for Social Service funding. CA Libby stated that she could look at putting some of the smaller items back into the budget and funding the entire social service budget through ARPA.

Commissioner Lauer stated that she supports the HR position. The biggest issue the County is having is recruitment and retention and this position is meant to help address that. She stated that she is also mindful of the fact that they are pushing some of these items to next year, but next year's budget will not include a \$700,000 Nursing Home bond payment and that will help offset costs. Commissioner Ahern stated that he is not in favor of a new HR position. CA Libby stated that they have given HR a great tool to work with in the wage study and having a person dedicated to using those tools to try to alleviate these problems, especially doing it with a minimal tax increase, she thinks is something worth considering. She stated that there are other items in the budget that they can look at funding through ARPA. She stated that this theory

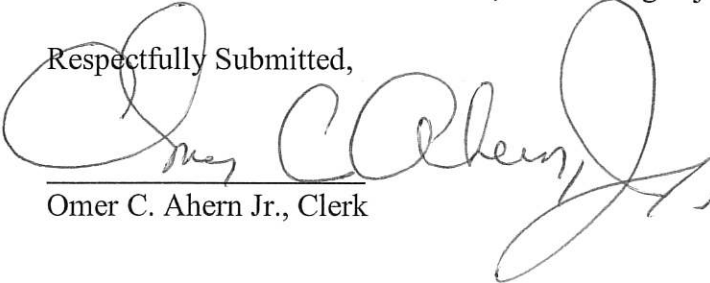
scares her because she wants this presented in a way that shows what the true expenses are. This is taking \$2 million out of their expense budget and artificially lowering it for this year. She explained that these items are being funded through revenue loss replacement through ARPA. The revenue is down \$800,000 due to COVID.

Commissioner Lauer stated that she does not like to artificially lower the budget but given the inflation rate this year for the taxpayers, she would support getting the tax increase as close to 0 as possible but also noting that some towns will still see an increase based on their equalized valuation.

Commissioner Piper stated that they all have an issue with artificially lowering the budget but it is because of the circumstances that they are in. Commissioner Lauer stated that they need to be completely transparent that they are artificially lowering the tax increase this year.

11:19 AM with no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Omer C. Ahern Jr.", written in black ink. The signature is positioned to the right of the typed name and is partially overlapping it.

Omer C. Ahern Jr., Clerk

Grafton County Human Resources Report  
 Karen Clough, Human Resources Director  
 May 3, 2022

**HR Activity Report (04/04/22-05/03/2022)**

- ***New Hires***

<u>Department</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Position(s)</u>
Nursing Home	3 (1PT, 2 FT)	1 FT Housekeeper, 1 FT Unit Aide 1 Per Diem LNA
DOC	2 (2 PT)	1 PT CO, 1 spare Night Watchman

***Separations***

<u>Departments</u>	<u>#</u>	
Nursing Home	6 (4 FT, 1 PT, 1 PD)	2 FT Unit Aide, 1 PT Dietary Aide 2 FT LNA, 1 PD RN
DOC	1 (1 FT)	1 FT CO's
Sheriff's Dept	1 (1 PT)	1 Bailiff
Maintenance	1 (1 FT)	1 Custodian

***Reasons:***

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

- ***Status Changes/ dept transfers: 4 FT LNA to per diem, 1 FT Deputy to PT, 1 FT Dietary Aide to PT***

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***Active Leave of Absences as of April 4 - present***

<u>Department</u>	<u>#</u>	
Nursing Home – Nursing	12	(9 are intermittent, 8 for self, 4 for family)
Nursing Home – Non-Nursing	3	(3 are intermittent, 3 for family)
DOC	4	(2 intermittent, 3 self, 1 family)
Sheriff's Dept/Dispatch.	1	(1 intermittent, 1 family)
County Atty's Office	2	(2 intermittent, 2 self)
HR Department	1	(1 intermittent,family)
Alternative Sentencing	1	(1 intermittent family)

**TOTAL: 24**

**May 9<sup>th</sup> scheduled orientation**

Alternative Sentencing Case Manager

# Grafton County Nursing Home Commissioner's Report: May 3, 2022

## Census

Medicare: 2  
Medicaid: 69  
VA: 2  
Hospice: 0  
Private: 20  
Total: 93

## 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: 4  
Deceased Residents: 5  
Discharges: 0

## Other Topics:

- 1) Commissioner Memorandum Request
  - Health Information Unit Secretary Position
- 2) State Survey Window Open

# Mental Health Case Management

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Grafton County has been running Mental Health Court since 2011. Since the inception Grafton County has contracted services with the three area mental health centers to provide 2.5 days per week of case management to our participants. In 2021, during the midst of the pandemic, two of the three mental health agencies made the tough decision to terminate contracts due to the employment shortage and inability to meet contact requirements. Due to this loss, Grafton County made the decision to hire an internal case manager to cover the needs of the participants, this has been working out very well for the staff and those we serve.

Currently Grafton County still maintains one contract with Lakes Region Mental Health to provide 2.5 days per week of case management to our participants. At this time, Mental Health Court has a total of 15 participants throughout the entire county. The internal case manager can successfully manage up to 30 participants spread across the county in her 40 hour work week. LRMHC currently sees 3 of those 15 participants and per their records in a 6-month time frame, provided 13 hours of case management. This is around 2 hours per month which does not meet the need for the 2.5 days outlined in our current contract.

Grafton County pays \$29,000 to LRMHC for 2.5 days of case management per week, \$23,000 out of Grafton County Social Services budget and they are able to bill state insurances for the case management provided. LRMHC declined to provide financials.

At this time there are three options for the Commissioners to review moving forward.

1. We maintain the contract as it is currently written; 2.5 days of case management per week to participants for a total of \$29,000 annually. I would recommend if this option is chosen we request documentation of services provided and a timesheet of sorts to account for the money being spent.
2. We switch our current contract, effective 6/30/22 to a fee-for-service model, utilizing NH Medicaid's case management rate of \$24.19 per 15 minutes, not to exceed \$29,000 annually. This option would require documentation of services provided and the provider would essentially "bill" us for the services rendered.
3. We terminate our current contract, effective 6/30/22 and bring all case management services in house, provided by our Mental Health Court case manager. This would save the county \$29,000 annually, we would still provide funding through Social Service funds to LRMHC. Staff have no concerns with this option and would continue a positive relationship with LRMHC on-going to continue to meet county needs.