

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
3855 Dartmouth College Highway
North Haverhill, NH 03774
September 7, 2021

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

OTHERS PRESENT: HR Director Clough, Supt. Elliott, Nursing Home Administrator Labore

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

Tom Elliott & Karen Clough – Referral Bonus

Supt. Elliott stated that the Department of Corrections currently has ten (10) positions open. He would like to create a referral bonus for employees who refer Correctional Officers and a sign on bonus for new Correctional Officers. He would like to offer \$500 up front and \$500 after six (6) months of continuous employments. If that new hire was referred by a current employee, that employee would also receive the \$500 up front and \$500 after six (6) months. He stated that because they are down ten (10) positions right now he has the money in his budget to cover these bonuses. Commissioner Lauer stated that this is a necessary step as they have had trouble attracting Correctional Officers.

Commissioner Ahern asked if Supt. Elliott felt the vaccine requirements or the fear of possible vaccine mandates if you work for the government could be the reason for the staffing shortage. Supt. Elliott stated that as of right now he is not seeing people leave because of that but knows that with current employees the possibility of a vaccine mandate is a big concern and if it becomes mandated he will lose more staff.

MOTION: Commissioner Ahern moved to implement the sign on bonus and referral bonus as proposed by Supt. Elliott. Commissioner Lauer seconded the motion and all were in favor.

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

1. HR Director Clough stated that there would be a job fair onsite this weekend and they would be doing interviews on the spot. It will be held from 9am-11am in the UNH Extension Conference Room.
2. Nursing Home Referral Bonus – HR Director Clough explained that the Nursing Home has had a referral bonus in place since 2017 but they are looking to update it and make it more enticing. The current bonus is only for LNAs and Nursing positions. She stated that she would like to add dietary as well as part time housekeeping and dietary aid positions. These are the positions they are having the hardest time filling. She has never seen them not be able to fill a full time dietary position and right now, there are three (3) open positions. Right now, the referall

bonus is \$750 for a full time position. She stated that she and NHA Labore would like to propose a \$1,000 referral for full time employees; \$500 at the time of hire and \$500 at six (6) months and a part time referral of \$750; \$250 upon hire and \$500 at six (6) months. Commissioner Lauer stated that in looking at the numbers, this is a good proactive move. She has heard that if the vaccine mandate comes out, the Nursing Home will lose dietary staff. She stated that either they will lose employees or put the burden on the taxpayers to make up for lost federal funds. HR Director Clough stated that the long-term care mandate will have unintended consequences. In the medical field, it will not matter where you move because it is only a matter of time before it is mandated everywhere. It is the housekeepers and dietary aids that they will lose. She noted that at first she feels the vaccine mandates will have some consequences on staffing but long term she does not feel that it will in corrections and nursing.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the recommendation as presented by HR Director Clough to change the Referral Bonus at the Nursing Home. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Commissioner Ahern asked what happens to the Nursing Home if/when vaccines become mandatory. He would like the Commissioners to consider that the Nursing Home and HR investigate what would happen if vaccines become mandatory and the Nursing Home loses staff members. Commissioner Lauer stated that they would have to look at the options such as shutting down a unit. HR Director Clough noted that she believes new guidelines are coming out this month. Commissioner Lauer stated that our staff and procedures did a fantastic job at keeping the residents safe.

Updated COVID Policies - HR Director Clough stated that they would be putting more guidelines back in place at the county. They have had roughly eight (8) employees in the past three (3) weeks test positive for Covid. She stated that there have been many questions from employees on what the guidelines are and how they are being paid. She stated that she has been working with CA Dorsett on updated guidelines. They gave the Commissioners copies of the policy as it stands right now and noted that it is not final. HR Director noted that the revised guidelines do not include the Nursing Home as they have their own policies in place for long-term care. She noted that the updated policy as written now does differentiate between vaccinated and non-vaccinated in terms of how the employees would be paid for being out. Vaccinated employees would be paid out of COVID pay and unvaccinated would use their own accrued time. The Commissioners discussed the policy and HR Director Clough answered questions. HR Director Clough stated that she and CA Dorsett would continue to work on finalizing the policy.

MOTION: * 10:28 AM Commissioner Ahern moved to enter into non-public session per RSA 91-A: 3, II (c) 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. Commissioner Lauer seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Ahern "yes"; Commissioner Piper "yes";

Commissioner Lauer “yes”. Commissioner Piper stated that a majority of the board voted “yes” and would now go into non-public session.

* 10:33 AM 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 Lauer seconded the motion. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Ahern “yes” Commissioner Piper “yes”; Commissioner Lauer “yes”. Commissioner Piper stated that a majority of the board voted “yes” and would now return to public session.

The Commissioners opened RFPs for the Pay and Classification Audit. Three (3) RFP’s were received as follows:

PayPoint HR LLC – \$49,750.00

Municipal Resources - \$51,600

CMA Career Management Associates - \$24,765.00

HR Director Clough stated that she would need time to review the proposals and would return with a recommendation next week.

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

1) Resident Dining Room Tables and Chairs Purchase Request

- NHA Labore explained that this purchase was originally planned for the FY21 budget, but he was unable to finalize the purchase due to managing the COVID process in the Nursing Home and coordinating an appropriate time for delivery with the Maintenance Department. The budgeted amount for this project in FY21 was \$27,975.64. This request will finish the replacement of the resident unit dining tables as well as begin a phased replacement of the dining room chairs on the resident units. He noted that the updated quote is \$2,257.35 lower than what was approved in the FY21 capital budget request.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to waive competitive bidding and accept the quote from Direct Supply of \$25,718.29 based on compatibility with existing furniture. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

COVID-19 Update

- CMS Mandatory Vaccination Discussion – NHA Labore stated that 76.5% of Nursing Home staff are vaccinated. He believes that it is in Grafton County’s best interest to start being very selective in the admission process. They are experiencing staffing struggles already. He does not want to overextend the current staff in the event that they lose 24% of the work force due to a vaccine mandate. NHA Labore stated that he

feels it is best to pause admissions until they know where they are, once he learns what the CMS language will be. Commissioner Lauer asked NHA Labore if he knew where the majority of the unvaccinated employees are. He stated that majority of unvaccinated employees are nursing staff. Commissioner Lauer stated that holding off on admissions for a few weeks is very wise. NHA Labore noted that there is one potential admission out there they are waiting on and if it goes through then they would admit this one (1) individual.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to temporarily suspend Nursing Home admissions until they receive updated CMS guidelines. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

NHA Labore stated that as an association he would like them to raise their voices. They are heading into a bad time; there is a backlog that is forming because Nursing Homes are hesitant in admissions. He hopes that Nursing Homes are not pressured from the state to start admitting because they will not have enough staff. The association should be standing up to the state and there should be some financial assistance. There has to be some consideration given for funding to help the nursing homes.

Agenda Items:

1. Commissioner Piper asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from the August 24th meeting. Commissioner Piper had a few edits.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the minutes from August 24th as amended. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

2. CDFA Authorization to Submit Claims – CA Dorsett stated that Commissioner Piper had signed the document on the 24th but it still needs Commissioner Lauer and Commissioner Ahern’s signatures.

3. Conservation District Letter of support – CA Dorsett stated that the Commissioners received a request from Pam Gilbert for a letter of support for a grant that the Conservation District is applying for in the River Water Shed.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to approve letter of support for the Conservation district for the grant application. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

4. The Commissioners signed check registers 1022; 1025-1028, 2021-08.20.202.

5. Professional Services Agreement – CA Dorsett submitted the agreement for the Mid-State Daycare for Commissioner Piper to sign.

6. CA Dorsett presented the MS-1 Form for Livermore for the Commissioners to sign.

7. CA Dorsett stated that he had a Farmdoc meeting with NHA Labore and his kitchen staff, Supt. Elliott and FM Nelson to go over Farmdoc and establish what they can initially

accomplish. He stated that they are working on a preliminary plan of things to accomplish this year.

Commissioner Issues:

1. Commissioner Lauer attended the North Country Scenic Byways committee meeting. She stated that she also attended Lt. Vannamee's Retirement Party and noted that the three (3) Commissioners were at the Cooperative Extension meeting in Plymouth, where they toured the new UNH & Master Gardener sponsored garden at the Pemi Youth Center.
2. Commissioner Ahern stated that he met an ex-marine in Wentworth, who is traveling around the country swimming in rivers. There is an article in the Journal Opinion and he gave a copy of the article to the Commissioners.
3. Commissioner Piper stated that she gave the proposal and presentation by Steve Curtis regarding the use of partially spent nuclear fuel to Howard Shaffer, a retired nuclear engineer in Enfield, who is very involved in discussions on nuclear energy. He responded to Commissioner Piper with a letter for the Commissioners. The letter describes what partially spent fuel is and details the political opposition.
4. Broadband Community Meetings – CA Dorsett stated that few signed up for the Listening Session in Lebanon and noted that the Broadband Committee may be eliminating this session for now. He stated that tonight they have their first session in North Haverhill and then another on September 9th in Campton.
5. Commissioner Piper requested a nonpublic session.

MOTION: * 11:16AM 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) & 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 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.

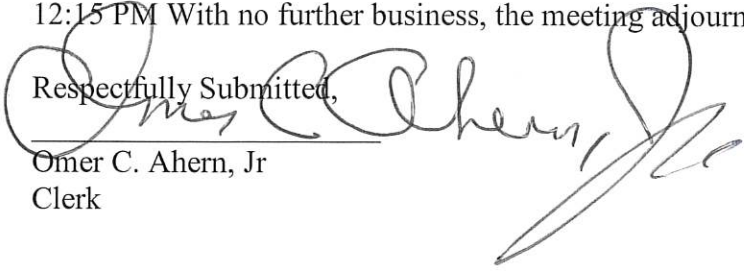
* 11:51 AM Commissioner Piper declared the meeting back in public session.

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 Lauer 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.

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

Respectfully Submitted,


Omer C. Ahern, Jr
Clerk

Grafton County Nursing Home Commissioner's Report: September 7, 2021

Census

Medicare: 2
Medicaid: 79
VA: 2
Hospice: 0
Private: 22
Total: 105

FY '22 Budgeted Census:

Medicare: 3
Medicaid: 89 (Daily rate= \$208.33)
VA: 1
Hospice: 0
Private: 22
Budgeted Census: 114

Monthly Admissions/Discharges

Admissions: 1
Deceased Residents: 4
Discharges: 0

Other Topics:

- 1) Resident Dining Room Tables and Chairs Purchase Request
- 2) COVID-19 Update:
 - CMS Mandatory Vaccination Discussion

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

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

• ***New Hires***

<u>Department</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Position(s)</u>
Nursing Home	9 (3 PT, 2 FT, 4 Per Diem)	2 PT Housekeeper, 1 PT Dietary Aide, 1 Per Diem RN, 3 Per Diem LNA's , 1 FT LNA, 1 FT Unit Aide
Sheriff's Dept.	1 (1 FT)	1 FT Deputy

Separations

<u>Departments</u>	<u>#</u>	<u></u>
Nursing Home	11 (1 PD, 5 PT, 5 FT)	1 PD LNA, 1 FT Staff Development Director, 1 FT LNA, 1 FT RN, 5 PT Dietary Aides, 2 FT Dietary Aides
Deeds	1 (1 FT)	Records Clerk
Sheriff's Dept	2 (2 PT)	1 PT Bailiff, 1 PT Deputy
DOC	3 (3 FT)	3 FT CO's
County Atty's Office	1 (1FT)	1 Asst. County Atty.

Reasons:

- Resigned personal reasons/no reason- 4
- Termination –
- Career change -
- Dissatisfaction-
- New job – 9
- Relocated –
- School –
- Retirement –
- Not Reappointed - 1
- Not meeting Per Diem / Part Time Requirements - 3

- ***Status Changes/ dept transfers: 2 FT LNA's to per diem, 1 FT LPN to per diem, 1 per diem LNA to per diem LPN, 1 FT CO to PT, one PT CO to FT, 1 per diem LNA to FT***

Active Leave of Absences as of September 3, 2021

<u>Department</u>	<u>#</u>	<u></u>
Nursing Home – Nursing	16	(13 are intermittent, 11 for self, 5 for family)
Nursing Home – Non-Nursing	6	(4 are intermittent, 3 for family, 3 for self)
DOC	7	(3 intermittent, 5 self)
Maintenance	2	(1 intermittent self, family)
Sheriff's Dept/Dispatch.	3	(2 intermittent, 3 family)
County Atty's Office	1	(1 intermittent self)
Cmsrs. Office	1	(1 intermittent, self)
TOTAL:	36	

Scheduled to orient 09/15

1 FT LNA
1 Part time Housekeeper
1 Per Diem LNA

Current Jobs posted/advertised

LNA's (18.15 FTE's vacant)
RN/LPN (14.05 FTE's vacant combined)
CO's (9 FTE's vacant)
PT Housekeeper
RN House Supervisor
Maintenance Assistant
Dietary Aide (2 FT)
Staff Development Director
Payroll Coordinator
Asst. County Attorney
Cook – DOC

OTHER BUSINESS – Referral bonus policy, wage study RFP's