

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING  
Administration Building  
North Haverhill, NH 03774  
October 10, 2023

PRESENT: Commissioners Piper, Ahern, McLeod, County Administrator (CA) Libby, Assistant County Administrator Burbank, Administrative Assistant Norcross.

OTHERS: County Attorney Hornick

Commissioner Piper called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**County Attorney Hornick gave the following update on the County Attorney's Office:**

1. Atty. Hornick reviewed a list of open cases and the types of cases they have been seeing in the Attorney's Office in the last few weeks. She thanked the Commissioners for their ARPA funding for the three (3) year attorney position. She noted that they are in year one (1) and have (2) more years, but she plans at the end of the 3 years to request this position full time, with the anticipation of felonies first going away.

2. Atty. Hornick reported that the Robert Bruno Award will be presented at the Annual North Country Foundation Dinner on November 10<sup>th</sup>. This is an award named after Detective Sgt. Robert Bruno, who passed away. He was one of the founders of the Child Advocacy Center and was one of the best investigators to have on a child sexual assault case. She stated that former Grafton County Attorney Lara Saffo started this award, and every year Sgt. Bruno's wife and children meet with a committee to discuss nominations from Coos County and Grafton County. Atty. Hornick stated that someone from the Grafton County Sheriff's Department will be receiving the Bruno Award at this year's dinner.

3. Atty. Hornick reported that she attended the New Hampshire Drug Court Conference. She discussed the various sessions she attended at the conference and answered questions from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Ahern expressed concerns about the quality of the Attorney's Office set up. He stated that he is unsure if having staff in various buildings is the best set up for them. He stated that he is very concerned about making sure the Attorney's Office has the proper setting and what they need to be successful, adding that the County Attorney needs to be pushing for the County to build a new Courthouse.

Commissioner Piper asked for an update on the courthouse project. CA Libby stated that the Commissioners need to decide on how they would like to proceed with the Courthouse. Commissioner Ahern stated that the Commissioners need to get the discussion back on the table and move it forward. Commissioner Piper stated that they all need to review the Courthouse plans and get back on task with this discussion. Commissioner Ahern added that if the County were to start moving forward the State of New Hampshire may rethink their decision of not wanting to commit to renting from the County if a new courthouse were to be built. CA Libby explained that she does not think that the State of New Hampshire does not want to be in North Haverhill. She stated that the County has not been able to speak to people who are able to make those decisions. The Commissioners further discussed the topic and agreed to put this on a future agenda for further discussion.

## **Agenda Items:**

1. Commissioner Piper asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from the October 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Ahern moved to approve the minutes from the October 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Commissioner McLeod seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

2. The Commissioners signed check register 1049.

3. The Commissioners reviewed the DoC Superior Court Report for the month of September.

4. Memo for Consideration – Register Monahan – The Commissioners received a request from Register Monahan to close the Registry of Deeds Office on December 26<sup>th</sup>. The memo explains that most of the other registries are located in courthouse buildings and generally must follow the scheduling set by the court. Being situated in a County Administration Building, the Grafton County Register of Deeds has more control over their schedule and request cooperation from the Board of Commissioners to acknowledge this request for the benefit of employee morale. In the memo, Register Monahan stated that they would like a decision made as soon as possible to allow this information to be posted to both websites; Grafton County, their official website at NHdeeds.org. and at the front counter.

**MOTION:** Commissioner McLeod moved to close the Register of Deeds Office on December 26<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion.

Discussion: Commissioner Ahern stated the attorneys who do title searches can do that online now. Even though the Register of Deeds Office would be closed on the 26<sup>th</sup>, the title searches can be done online. He stated that he is in favor of this request and believes it is in the best interest of all concerned.

The Commissioners voted on the motion, and all were in favor.

5. Annual Report Dedication – Commissioner McLeod stated that she likes the idea of the dedication going to an organization that has been involved with a large issue happening within the County. Commissioner Ahern noted that likes the idea of each Commissioner dedicating the Annual Report to someone in their district. The Commissioners further discussed the dedication and agreed to dedicate the Annual Report to a nonprofit organization.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Ahern moved that the Annual Report Dedication be given to nonprofit organization within the County. Commissioner McLeod seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

6. CA Libby requested a nonpublic session

**MOTION:** \* 11:28 AM Commissioner Ahern moved to enter into a 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.

\*12:10 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.

7. CA Libby reminded the Commissioners that next week’s meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> will start at 2:00pm.

**MOTION:** \* 12:21 PM Commissioner Ahern moved to enter into a 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 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.

\*1:00 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.

1:00 PM With no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



Martha S. McLeod, Clerk