

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
Administration Building
North Haverhill, NH 03774
February 14, 2024

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

OTHERS: Supt. Oakes, Sheriff Stiegler, County Attorney Hornick, Alex Nuti-de Biasi – Journal Opinion

Commissioner Piper called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM and began with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Commissioner Ahern.

Maintenance Supt. Oakes arrived to discuss the Administration Building Boiler Project

Supt. Oakes explained that VHV looked at the boiler in the administration building. He stated that he could not order the parts needed to fix the boiler due to extended lead times into 2025. The quote to replace the boiler is \$82,000. He stated that he had contacted other vendors for a second quote. Alliance Mechanical has not returned his calls, and ARC Mechanical from Bradford, VT, stated there may not be a crack as originally stated. It may be a seal that needs to be replaced. He is waiting for a call back from ARC Mechanical with a quote to disassemble the boiler to find out if it is a seal or if the boiler needs to be replaced. He noted that he has not heard back. He explained that he finds that you are not a priority on their list unless you have a contract with these companies for preventative maintenance. Supt. Oakes stated that if the biomass plant goes down again, one (1) of the two (2) boilers needed to heat this building is also down. He reported that the one (1) boiler that does work recently had a burner issue and stopped working on a Thursday night, and the building was in the low 60s Friday morning as there was no heat overnight in the building. He explained that if that were to have happened over the weekend with very low temps, they would have had an issue with freezing in the Administration Building. He stated that the Administration Building must have two (2) operational boilers.

Supt. Oakes explained that to replace this, he needs to shut down the entire building, which must be done during warm weather. If he waits to purchase this in July through the budget process, it will take 12-15 weeks to get these parts, and then it is the heating season when he has to shut everything down to replace it. He is requesting authorization for up to \$82,000 using ARPA interest money. He is hoping it is far less than that amount if ARC Mechanical finds that it is a seal that needs to be replaced.

Commissioner Ahern stated that new technology is concerning him. He asked how they cannot be dependent on it. Supt. Oakes stated that the part of this boiler that is faulty is many years old. He stated that he understands Commissioner Ahern's concerns, but it is not an issue he can solve and it is not relevant to the problem that is being experienced with this boiler.

Commissioner McLeod stated that her concern with using ARPA interest money is that there is more flexibility in those funds for other items. She asked if there is the potential to do this

project under Supt. Oakes' capital budget instead of another budget project. Supt. Oakes stated that he has money in his capital budget, but it is to replace the roof on the Alternative Sentencing Building and Gazebo.

CA Libby stated that the County has money available to replace this boiler and the ability not to impact the FY24 budget. She understands the Commissioners do not want to use this money for planned items, but this is an emergency, and they have the funds to use that will not impact the budget.

MOTION: Commissioner Ahern moved to preauthorize up to \$82,000 to be spent to replace or repair the boiler. There was not a second.

Commissioner McLeod stated that the Commissioners could be updated on this issue weekly regarding the company coming to look at it. Commissioner Piper stated that if there is no deadline to spend the ARPA interest money, she would like to wait and see what happens.

Commissioner Ahern asked what would happen if the Maintenance Department did not have a source of money to look at the boiler. Supt. Oakes stated that this repair is imperative.

The Commissioners discussed the possibility of using the \$40,000 that Supt. Oakes has in his capital budget for this boiler rather than using ARPA interest money, noting that the roof replacement was not critical. Commissioner Piper stated that before she makes a motion, she wants to know whether the ARPA interest money can be used when the roof needs to be replaced. CA Libby stated that if the Commissioners wanted to use the ARPA interest money for the roof, they could make that motion.

MOTION: Commissioner McLeod moved that the maintenance capital budget approved for the roof be used to repair or replace the boiler. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Supt. Oakes reported that he asked HR Director Clough to look at the Licensed HVAC position pay grade. He explained that the position is currently a Grade 13, and based on HR Director Clough's analysis, it could be moved to a Grade 14. Supt. Oakes stated that because of the current vacancy, he can cover the increase in cost and upgrade this position in his current budget. He is requesting that the Commissioners upgrade the position to help with recruiting. He noted that this would have a domino effect with some of the other licensed positions, and he plans to have HR Director Clough do a wage analysis of the other licensed positions. If increases are necessary, he will ask for it in the budget. The Commissioners discussed Supt. Oakes' request and Commissioner Piper stated she supports increasing the HVAC position salary to help with recruitment. However, she does not know if she supports the other licensed positions as it is not a critical need right now. Supt. Oakes stated that he thinks it should be looked at and analyzed.

MOTION: Commissioner McLeod moved to upgrade the HVAC position from a Grade 13 to a Grade 14. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

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

County Attorney Hornick arrived and gave the following update on her office:

Atty. Hornick reviewed the current caseload with the Commissioners. She reported that Circuit Court prosecutors are taking on some of the early cases as a part of doing away with Felonies First, which takes a lot off of her staff.

Atty. Hornick requested to go into a nonpublic session to discuss a personnel matter.

MOTION: * 3:09 PM 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 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 said “yes,” Commissioner McLeod said “yes,” and Commissioner Piper said “yes,” and Commissioner Piper stated that a majority of the board voted “yes” and would now go into non-public session.

*3:37 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 said, “Yes,” Commissioner Piper said, “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 February 6th meeting. Commissioner Piper and Commissioner Ahern had a couple of small clarification edits.

MOTION: Commissioner Ahern moved to approve the minutes from the February 6, 2024, meeting as amended. Commissioner McLeod seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

2. The Commissioners signed check registers: 1112; 1120-1121

3. Public Hearing Business TA Grant – 2/27/24 – CA Libby requested to move the February 27th meeting to 2:00 pm to accommodate another public hearing. The Commissioners all agreed to move the meeting.

4. Federal Mileage Rate Increase – CA Libby stated that the federal mileage rate increased to .67 cents and noted that the County has always paid the same as the federal rate therefore she requested the Commissioners approve the increase.

MOTION: Commissioner McLeod moved to increase the mileage rate to .67 cents in accordance with the federal mileage rate. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

5. March 5th Courthouse Meeting – CA Libby stated that there will be a meeting at 10:00 am with Commissioner Arlinghaus, Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts Diane Martin, and Executive Councilors Kenney and Warmington. She noted that there will be a tour of the Courthouse as well.

6. Motorcycle Rider Training Lease – CA Libby explained that the County has an agreement for the Use of Premises with the New Hampshire Department of Safety. The agreement expired December 31st, and they want to renew it for the summer of 2024 and 2025. The cost is \$200 per class, and they hold up to twenty (20) classes yearly.

MOTION: Commissioner McLeod moved to approve the new Use of Premise agreement and give CA Libby authority to enter into the agreement with the Department of Safety. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

7. Court System Lease Amendment – CA Libby explained that the Court System had a two (2) year lease with the option of a one (1) year extension. She reported that the Court System is exercising its right to the one (1) year extension. The lease will now be through June 30th, 2025, for \$331,572.55 for the year.

MOTION: Commissioner Ahern moved to accept the amendment for the lease agreement and allow CA Libby to execute the document. Commissioner McLeod seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

8. Financial Policy Review - CA Libby stated that Asst. CA Burbank has been working on developing these financial policies. She explained that the County should have these financial policies in place, and NTIA requires many of these policies to be in place, and therefore, it has streamlined the process. CA Libby reviewed the following policies with the Commissioners and answered questions.

- Record Retention
- Fraud, Waste & Abuse
- Credit Card
- Cash Disbursement
-

MOTION: Commissioner McLeod moved to approve the four (4) Financial Policies. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Commissioner Issues:

1. Commissioner Piper stated that she had a request from Rep. Stringham regarding another round of ARPA funding for nonprofits. She stated that she feels this should be put on the agenda

next week to show the nonprofits and the Executive Committee that they are having the conversation. Commissioner Ahern requested that farmers who were affected by COVID be added to that list. CA Libby noted that having a requirement for funding to show the direct effects of COVID is becoming more difficult as businesses and nonprofits have recovered from the pandemic, which is something the Commissioners need to consider.


2. Commissioner Piper attended the NACo conference and attended a session put on by the Rural Action Caucus. She stated that there are many support grants available through the USDA. They are investing in building local and regional food systems. She will look further into it and forward the information to the Commissioners.

3. Commissioner Piper stated that the Commissioners received an email from Register Monahan. The email included a picture of an employee's vehicle parked in a handicap spot. Register Monahan brought the handicapped parking situation to the Commissioners' attention, and they agreed to make some changes. Commissioner Piper stated that this is concerning. Commissioner McLeod noted that there should also be signs on those spots, not just the painted signs on the ground. The Commissioners discussed the issue and agreed to send an email to address the situation.

4. CA Libby stated that the Commissioners were served with a summons and a civil action for a lawsuit that has been filed against them by Sheriff Jeff Stiegler. CA Libby stated that Sheriff Stiegler alleges that the Commissioners overstepped their authority and violated his rights as the Sheriff. This incident involved disciplinary action taken by the Sheriff, on a former employee who was not a deputy sheriff. RSA 28-10-a and County policy indicates that the Commissioners have that authority. CA Libby said the County will retain legal counsel for its defense.

4:34 PM With no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



Martha S. McLeod, Clerk



Grafton County Sheriff's Department Operations Division

Monthly Report

January 2024

Statistics

-Transport:

- Court Transports: 14 Prisoner Transports: 45
- CSO movements from jail to court: 21
- Juvenile Transports: 0
- Involuntary Emergency Admissions (IEA): 4

-Arrest:

-Arrest on warrant, Superior or Civil Warrant, Instate Warrant, EBW, GCSO cases and on view arrest(complaint generated by this agency)

Total Arrest: 24

-Civil:

(CSI inforsevr cannot differentiate types of civil service, In Hand, Abode or Non Est)

Total Monthly Civil Service: 153

-Warrants:

-Total # of Active Warrants:	Criminal= 397
	Civil = 20
	Total 417

-Motor Vehicle Activity

-Motor Vehicle Stops: 6

-Fleet Mileage

- Total Miles Driven: 20,217

Grafton County Sheriff's Department Investigative Services Division Activity



JANUARY 2024

In addition to pre-existing cases and investigations the Grafton County Investigative and Computer Forensic Units had the following activity for the month of January 2024. The Investigative Services Division is feeling the impact of staffing shortages resulting in having to limit the services as a regional resource to support the Operation's Division in extraditions, warrant services, and other responsibilities. The majority of investigative work conducted was on active and previously reported matters. We hope as vacant positions may be filled, we are able to once again offer extended investigative services to the agencies and communities in our region.

As the Part-Time Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Investigator, I have had a chance to try and dispose of, or refer to other jurisdictions a number of cases that otherwise have back-logged while triaging cases as they are referred for investigation. In the month of January, one (1) new CyberTipline Report was taken in while working on the backlog of approximately 10 other Cyber Tips that are in various stages of investigation. Each of these CyberTipline Reports in reference to the possession, distribution, or manufacture of child sexual abuse material (CSAM). Four investigative search warrants were applied for and granted on behalf of these ICAC investigations, these investigations still open. The tedious examination of evidence continues in a number of cases.

New Investigations:

Possession of Child Sexual Abuse Images (1)

Narcotics Investigations (2)

Assault Investigations (1)

Assist Other Police Agencies (6)

Evidence or Property obtained to include electronics or storage medium for review, examination, delivered or taken into the Computer Forensic Unit (CFU).

Communication Devices (Cell Phone): (8)

Camera / Video Equipment (1)

Electronic Equipment (USB): (4)

Electronic Equipment (tablets, computers, laptops, other) (23)

Electronic Equipment No Sub Category (14)

The Investigative Services Division continues to try and learn and manage cases using CSI, our acquired records management system (RMS) often finding this platform and it's capabilities less than desirable or efficient for criminal case management and reporting of events. We will continue to try and remain patient with this technology but often feel the frustration like many agencies who have adopted this platform.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lieutenant Frederic James

ICAC Assistance

Police Chief <chiefofpolice@lisbonnh.org>

Mon 1/22/2024 3:23 PM

To: Jeff Stiegler <jstiegler@grafftoncountynh.gov>

You don't often get email from chiefofpolice@lisbonnh.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Sheriff Steigler,

I just wanted to formally thank you for the assistance that your agency provided on Thursday January 18, 2024. Without their expertise and effort we would not have been able to execute the search warrant in the efficient and safe manner that we did. I applaud you and them for the hard work and dedication. Thank you and take care!

-Derek Sullivan

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