

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Administration Building

North Haverhill, NH 03774

April 15th, 2025

PRESENT: Commissioners Piper, McLeod – via Teams, Hedberg, County Administrator Libby, and Assistant County Administrator Elsholz, Administrative Assistant Norcross

OTHERS: Sheriff Myers, Maintenance Supt. Oakes, Anne Duncan Cooley, Michelle Beaudin, Nick De Mayo – via Teams, Omer C. Ahern, Jr. – via Teams

Commissioner McLeod called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM

Commissioner McLeod joined electronically, according to RSA 91-A: 2, with the reason being she was unable to attend the meeting in person. Electronic participation was at her request. It was noted that a roll call must take all votes.

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

Commissioner Hedberg stated that they are looking at the budget and capital budgets. The Commissioners had a question regarding the cruisers. Because the Sheriff's Department is currently down deputies, the Commissioners wondered if they would be able to cut a cruiser. She asked if there are some cruisers that have lower mileage because they do not have the number of deputies using them. Sheriff Myers stated that they have three (3) older cruisers that are for part time deputies. She reported that they may be able to drop a car off the capital request, as they are looking into grants for K9s, which one of their deputies is interested in doing.

Sheriff Myers reported that their new Deputy started yesterday, and they have given a conditional offer to another Deputy and are hoping he will start mid may. She noted that the administrative positions are both filled as well. She has invited four (4) applicants back for oral boards for the remaining two (2) open Deputy positions.

Agenda Items:

Commissioner McLeod stated that she has not had time to read the minutes and asked that those not be approved yet.

The Commissioners signed check registers 1138-1142; 2025-04.11.2025.

Maintenance Supt. Oakes arrived and gave the following report (*see attached)

MOTION: Commissioner Hedberg moved to waive the bidding process and authorize the purchase of an OEM heat exchanger from Power & Process, Inc in the amount of \$10,234.00. Commissioner Piper seconded the motion. Commissioner McLeod called the roll. Commissioner Piper “yes”, Commissioner Hedberg “yes”, Commissioner McLeod “yes”. With the vote being three (3) in favor and none in opposition the motion passes.

Commissioner McLeod stated that O. Ahern Jr. would like to speak about slightly used nuclear fuel with Supt. Oakes and asked if Supt. Oakes would call him after the meeting to get that information. Supt. Oakes stated that he will call O. Ahern Jr.

Agenda Items:

1. Appropriation Transfers – CA Libby stated that there is nothing of any significance in this list. They are all small standard transfers, totaling \$111,247.00.

MOTION: Commissioner Piper moved to approve the appropriation transfers totaling \$111,247.00. Commissioner Hedberg seconded the motion. Commissioner McLeod called the roll. Commissioner Piper “yes”, Commissioner Hedberg “yes”, Commissioner McLeod “yes”. With the vote being three (3) in favor and none in opposition the motion passes.

2. CDBG Drawdowns – Commissioner McLeod gave CA Libby permission to use her signature stamps for the following drawdown requests:

- WEDCO - \$30,203.58
- BEDC - \$1,884.20
- WREN - \$56,271.60
- CEDC - \$87,362.80
- GRDC - \$54,716.62

Grafton Regional Development Corporation – Anne Duncan Cooley, Michelle Beaudin

A. Duncan Cooley & M. Beaudin gave their quarterly update.

A. Duncan Cooley stated that there has been a strong demand for microenterprise and lending programs and noted that this is the first time ever that they have a waiting list for the microenterprise program. She reported that the grants program is fully deployed at this point.

A. Duncan Cooley stated that she received an email from CDFA saying that at the federal level, the house subcommittee is looking at reauthorizing the CDBG program. CDFA is soliciting input from GRDC for anything that could enhance the program. She stated that if the county has any input or suggestions, to let her know. A. Duncan Cooley noted that they have not heard issues with continued funding. They are proceeding with the assumption that things are moving ahead.

M. Beaudin gave an update on the micro-enterprise grants. She stated that two (2) rounds of equipment grants have been completed and that they have given out around \$38,000. She discussed the various pieces of equipment they have provided for businesses. She stated that there is competition for these grants now. She noted that SBDC has increased their advising hours that as well.

A. Duncan Cooley also reported that the lending program is almost fully deployed and noted that they are seeing employee purchases of existing businesses.

They continue to have a waiting list for DRTC, which is the Lebanon business incubator.

A. Duncan Cooley stated that there is a group of people looking at the workforce and pooled funds to look at increasing wages for childcare workers to make it a more attractive career. The group wants to get together again and have further discussion.

She stated that they are also getting closer to a pilot program for financing accessory dwelling units.

A. Duncan Cooley thanked the County for their ongoing support. Commissioner Piper stated that the organization has grown and become very robust. GRDC has always provided outcomes, and she is happy to support their organization.

Agenda Items:

1. CA Libby stated that she will be on vacation April 29th – May 7th. April 29th is a 5th Tuesday and she proposed there not be a meeting. The Commissioners agreed.

2. Budget Discussion – CA Libby stated that she had been very busy working on the budget since last Thursday and provided the Commissioners with information.

She explained that with the changes made last week, the overall increase in expenses is 3.2%. The budget is on target with the world they are living in and stated that their problem becomes the surplus. There is an automatic 10% increase built into the budget because of the surplus problem and she cannot fix that. She asked the Commissioners if there is a target percentage that they can all agree on. She noted that to get below 10% they need a \$1.1 million reduction in expenses or increase in revenue. CA Libby explained that because of the reason they have the increase, and in order to bring the percentage down in any significant manor, they are going to need to make operational changes to the County. Of their \$58 million budget, \$36 million is salary and benefits. There are 420 employees currently, roughly half of those are covered by union contracts. She suggested that for their budget meeting on Thursday, the Commissioners start at the beginning and go through every budget, noting that the Commissioners have already looked at the large items.

CA Libby stated that the above ground storage tank that Supt. Oakes has requested is a life safety issue for one of their 24/7 facilities and the Commissioners may need to prioritize and do away with the camera replacement cycle at the DoC for a year. Commissioner Hedberg stated that she is looking at life safety and the software at the DoC. If it were to stop working it would put the staff at risk. CA Libby noted that they have avenues of funding for those projects that they can use and will not impact the budget. Commissioner McLeod asked for a list of the available funds in LATCF, Opioid Abatement and ARPA interest.

CA Libby presented a draft response to the Employee Council. The Commissioners reviewed the letter. Commissioner Piper stated that the CPI is around 2.9-3.1% and the step increases that a majority of employees receive every year is 3%, which covers the increase in the CPI. Given

their situation with the budget, she cannot support a COLA of 2%. Any increase should be restricted to the CPI. They do have employees who are maxed out and will not receive a step increase. She stated that in 2011, employees and unions were given the option of their step increase or a COLA and they were able to come to an agreement.

Commissioner McLeod stated that she would like to look at other items. She stated that they agreed to give employees paid life insurance last year and asked CA Libby what that cost is. CA Libby stated that it is \$30 a year. Commissioner McLeod stated that she would be interested in hearing what other benefits they have for employees. She stated that they still have the issue that she does not agree with Commissioner Piper stating the step increase is the same as the COLA. She stated that she feels they need to continue to talk about them as different things that are meant for separate purposes. She understands what Commissioner Piper is saying, but they do not serve the same purpose and are different things. She stated that not doing anything for a COLA is different than changing their step policy. She continues to think of them as two (2) separate things. Commissioner Piper stated that she still disagrees and thinks Commissioner McLeod's distinction is a nicety. The way that it is built into the County budget is that they are separate, but she feels that for taxpayers, or those in the private sector or nonprofits who are not getting a 5% increase, it is still county money. Commissioner McLeod stated that it is disingenuous to consider a step increase and a COLA the same. Commissioner Piper responded by stating that she hopes they can agree to disagree. She stated that she is the one making the comments that Commissioner McLeod is calling disingenuous and she does not agree with that. She is recognizing that government has a step and grade system and that private enterprise does not. Commissioner McLeod noted that is not true. Commissioner Piper stated that she has to be cognizant of everyone outside of government that are relying on a 2% increase total. She thinks, as a former Commissioner has said many times, it is different with government because you can always go to the taxpayers for more and she is trying to get away from that.

Commissioner McLeod stated that Commissioner Piper needs to respect her position as well. Commissioner Piper added that she is going to suggest that this is a different philosophy. Commissioner McLeod explained that she disagrees, as this is a system that they have at the County and are stuck with at this point. About 60% of employees are included in this because people are maxed out or employees have anniversary dates that are later in the fiscal year and therefore the budget does not include a full year's worth of their step increase. She stated they need to look at other things and that she has heard Commissioner Piper. She asked Commissioner Hedberg if she has heard Commissioner Piper's argument. Commissioner McLeod stated that from her point of view, it is important for people to understand that what they have is a step system at the County and with regard to the budget, the Commissioners are discussing whether or not to include a cost-of-living adjustment. Commissioner McLeod stated that she has heard Commissioner Piper's opinions, and her understanding is that Commissioner Piper does not support any COLA. Commissioner Piper responded by stating that she will not answer questions from Commissioner McLeod when they are posed as disrespectfully as they have been. She

stated that Commissioner McLeod asking Commissioner Hedberg, who is sitting in the room, whether she has heard her argument, creates stress in the room. Commissioner Piper stated that Commissioner McLeod is not in the room and if she was, this might not be happening. Commissioner Piper stated that she was done with her comments.

Commissioner McLeod asked if CA Libby had anything else for them to discuss. CA Libby stated that the point of that conversation was to find out if the Commissioners were ready for her to bring the Employee Council in to meet with them and if they agree with the draft letter they were presented with a COLA of 2%. She stated that she does not want to invite the Employee Council in with this offer and then have the Commissioners change their minds.

Commissioner Hedberg stated that because they have this huge shortfall in the budget, she would like to make this decision at the end of the meeting on Thursday, after they have reviewed the rest of the budget. She is in favor of what they have presented but they may need to make cuts that she does not want to make and therefore she would prefer to wait until after they have further reviewed the budget before they invite the Employee Council back in.

Commissioner's Issues:

1. Commissioner Hedberg stated that she was invited by Donna Lee to attend a 4H gathering in Plymouth for leaders and volunteers. She was able to attend part of the event and reported that it was a great gathering. She was happy to be able to attend and meet some of the people from UNH that are not in Grafton County.
2. Commissioner McLeod stated that a constituent who is collecting signatures in opposition to 287:g MOA that the Sheriff signed has asked if the County needs that at a particular time. She stated that she has asked for the number of signatures on that petition. Commissioner Hedberg stated that she said she did not know of a timeframe because they still have more discussions at the County level before they know an end date.
3. Commissioner McLeod asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from the April 8th meeting. Commissioner Hedberg had a few grammatical edits.

MOTION: Commissioner Hedberg moved to approve the minutes from the April 8th meeting as amended. Commissioner Piper seconded the motion. Commissioner McLeod called the roll. Commissioner Piper "yes", Commissioner Hedberg "yes", Commissioner McLeod "yes". With the vote being three (3) in favor and none in opposition the motion passes.

Public Comment

1. N. De Mayo stated that in regard to the COLA and step increases, he knows that the chairman does not want to hear this because the Commissioners have heard it before, but the country still has \$37 trillion in debt and the new courthouse may cost up to \$50 million. He stated that he does not know where the taxpayers are going to come up with this kind of money and give the

employees a COLA and step increase. He suggested that they make this budget as lean as possible so people can afford to live here.

Commissioner Piper stated that she wished that when Mr. De Mayo first started to make his comment, that Commissioner McLeod had not laughed. They are a public body and she believes there has to be a measure of decorum and she heard Commissioner McLeod laugh as Mr. De Mayo mentioned the \$37 trillion deficit. As Vice Chair, she would ask the chair not to express disagreement, when their members of the public cannot ask questions. She thinks it is fair that the Commissioners do not respond, talk back or laugh at them. Commissioner McLeod explained that she chuckled at the fact that Mr. De Mayo had stated that he has made the \$37 trillion deficit statement at every meeting. N. De Mayo stated that he feels that comment should continue to be addressed as the country is still in the deficit. Commissioner McLeod stated that she has repeated Mr. De Mayo's comments and therefore it does get repeated outside of their public meetings.

MOTION: * 10:48 AM Commissioner Hedberg moved to enter into a non-public session for the purpose 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 RSA 91-A: 3, II (c). Commissioner Piper seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote. Commissioner McLeod called the roll. Commissioner Piper said, "Yes", Commissioner Hedberg said, "Yes," and Commissioner McLeod said, "Yes." Commissioner McLeod stated that a majority of the board voted "yes" and would now go into non-public session.

* 11:37 AM Commissioner McLeod declared the meeting back in public session.

MOTION: Commissioner Hedberg 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 Piper seconded the motion. Commissioner McLeod called the roll. Commissioner Piper "Yes," Commissioner Hedberg "yes," Commissioner McLeod "yes." Commissioner McLeod stated that a majority of the board voted "yes," and the motion passed.

11:37 AM With no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Katie Wood Hedberg', written over a horizontal line.

Katie Wood Hedberg, Clerk



Grafton County Sheriff's Department

Operations Division

Monthly Tracking

	December	January	February	March	April
Transports	80	97	87	<i>113</i>	
Court Transports	15	18	15	24	
Prisoner Transports	36	60	36	62	
CSO movements from jail to court	20	7	24	19	
Juvenile Transports	0	2	1	1	
Involuntary Emergency Admissions (IEA)	9	10	11	7	
Arrests	18	25	16	13	
Arrest on warrant, Superior or Civil Warrants, Instate warrant, EBW, GCSO Cases and on view arrests					
Civil Service	181	199	170	168	
Warrants	418	422	424	409	
Criminal	393	395	399	390	
Civil	25	27	25	19	
Motor Vehicle Activity					
MV Stops	7	5	6	9	
Fleet Mileage	22597	21454	19330	20552	

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT REPORT TO GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

March 18 – April 14, 2025

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Project Updates

Courthouse Conceptual Design Update

Programming: With the addition of the Register of Deeds and the elimination of the tunnel, the Programming phase is now complete.

Conceptual Design: The building site option that LBA proposed and we selected has unanticipated challenges that precipitated LBA to propose a 4th option.

The unanticipated challenges of building site option 3 are twofold. First, this option requires exceptionally tall foundation walls to get the required ceiling height for a basement vehicle sally port. The domino effect is the need for a lot of soil backfill of the foundation and the need for retaining walls to hold the soils in place. This would be inherently expensive. Secondly, the preliminary geotechnical report indicates the existing soils are not conducive to supporting any change in grade greater than 3-feet.

The option 4 proposal eliminates those two challenges. This new plan shows the building with a larger footprint than option 3 due to the addition of the Register of Deeds and it has an on-grade sally port positioned on the South side of the building.

Currently, LBA is finalizing block diagramming of each department's location within the building based on the collected programming data. I have a meeting on Friday to discuss with LBA's engineers the specifics of the HVAC equipment selection for the building. When this is complete LBA will dive into the detailed layout of all the internal spaces.

Complex

Sprinkler Systems Inspections – Hampshire Fire Protection completed a 5-year internal pipe inspection of the nursing home's one wet and two dry systems. All three systems were found to be clean. Today they are in the process of doing quarterly inspections of all sprinkler systems within the complex.

Grounds – Over the past month we've started clearing a few of the infiltration basins and embankments of brush and trees. This work will continue into May. We also started grounds clean up from the winter.

COURTHOUSE

Preventative Maintenance (PM) – My staff performed various PM tasks throughout.

NURSING HOME

Preventative Maintenance (PM) – Department employees performed various PM tasks throughout.

Lighting – In several locations we upgraded internal lights from fluorescents to energy efficient LEDs.

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT REPORT TO GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

March 18 – April 14, 2025

Hospital Beds – Over the last month we've had an uptick in bed repairs. Most have involved replacing electronic components.

Building Exterior – I met with a couple contractors who submitted proposals to repair the vehicle damage to the building. I submitted those proposals to Primex on April 8th. Despite inquiring about their status Primex has yet to give me feedback as to whether I can proceed with those proposals.

Domestic Hot Water (DHW) – My staff replaced a tank hatch and pressure relief valve on the 03 building's DHW tank. They tried removing the 03 building's DHW heat exchanger to clean it but were unable to separate it from its jacket due to improper installation by the original building contractors. While partially exposed they discovered a tiny leak in the heat exchanger coil that we cannot fix. The heat exchanger was produced by a manufacturer named Patterson-Kelley (PK). This manufacturer has selected sales vendors for their products. Power & Process, Inc. is their New England vendor, the sole source for what we need. We have two options through P&P, Inc., either an OEM heat exchanger for \$16,815 + \$250 shipping, totaling \$17,065 or a non-OEM one built to PK's specifications for \$9,984 + \$250 shipping, totaling \$10,234 for shipping. Per RSA 28:8 I am requesting you authorize me to purchase through P&P, Inc. the non-OEM heat exchanger totaling \$10,234.

Laundry Lint Collector – The lint collector resides in a shared room where the backs of the dryers are accessed. In the event of a lint collector fire, someone would have to enter that area to manually activate the lint collector's fire suppression system should it not work automatically. The laundry supervisor was concerned about entering this space should a fire occur, so I had the department's master electrician install a remote activation switch outside of the back room that houses the dryers and lint collector.

Electrical – The Profile staff breakroom had too many high-load electrical appliances plugged into a shared circuit. The department's electrician add three new dedicated circuits to spread out the electrical load to eliminate the problem.

HVAC - Air handlers HRU 3 and 4 incurred leaks in their heat coils. After a couple of tries we successfully soldered the copper coils and got them to stop leaking.

Kitchen Walk-in Cooler – The cooler was not maintaining its correct temperature. We replaced a failed motor on one of the cooler's evaporator units.

Nursing Home Rear Landscape Project Update – The project drawings and specifications are not ready yet. Jay has been working on various markups and will resubmit to Craig and I for final review next week. Because the project documents are so late, there is little chance we will find a contractor to do this project this summer since most will have finalized their summer workloads by now.

ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING

Preventative Maintenance (PM) – Department employees performed various PM tasks throughout.

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT REPORT TO GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

March 18 – April 14, 2025

Lighting – In several locations we upgraded internal lights from fluorescents to energy efficient LEDs.

Front Steps – I met with the contractor who repaired the front steps last fall to show him his company's repair failed on the lowest step. He agreed to send a crew back in late May or early June to do warranty repairs.

Generator – We found a coolant leak under the generator. To correct the problem, we replaced a radiator hose that was starting to crack.

Dept. of Corrections (DOC)

Preventative Maintenance (PM) – My staff performed various PM tasks throughout.

Lighting – In several locations we upgraded internal lights from fluorescents to energy efficient LEDs.

Showers – Eight showers that were repaired last summer are starting to peel due to poor preparation work done by the same contractor who repaired the Admin. Building steps last summer. While on site last week, I showed the contractor the showers, and he agreed to send a crew back to do warranty repairs.

Men's Medium Unit – An inmate got rough with the hot water dispensing system in the day room and broke it. We've since purchased and installed a new one.

Intake & Booking – An out of control inmate broke a piece of security glass in cell A09. I ordered replacement glazing a few weeks ago, and we are still awaiting its arrival. Cell A09 is out of service until the glazing gets replaced.

Laundry – the 75-pound washer had a contactor fail that controls the drum reversing cycle. We replaced the contactor to correct this issue.

Walk-in Cooler – The evaporator coil fans for the middle cooler were making a squawking sound. Alliance Mechanical replaced this evaporator last summer, so they replaced both fans under warranty.

Electronic Security – A few doors throughout weren't locking and a few not showing lock status when locked. We replaced a few locks and door position switches to correct these issues.

Clean Chemical Fire Suppression Systems – Fire Equipment, Inc. completed our 6-month inspections of three clean chemical fire suppression systems. All were found to be in good operational order.

MAINT/FARM BUILDING

Preventative Maintenance (PM) – My staff performed various PM tasks throughout.

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT REPORT TO GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

March 18 – April 14, 2025

Farm

Nothing to report

BIOMASS PLANT

Preventative Maintenance (PM) – My staff performed various PM tasks throughout.

Boiler – The boiler tube blow-down diaphragms and plungers wore out, an auto feature that clears the boiler heat exchanger tubes of soot buildup. We replaced all four of them, reinvigorating this energy saving device.

Boiler Room – The 6-inch pipe between the boiler and thermal storage tank has a minor leak at a Victaulic coupling. When we shut the plant down next month for spring maintenance, we will repair the leak.

ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING BUILDING

Preventative Maintenance (PM) – Department employees performed various PM tasks throughout.

Front Bathroom – Last month's water bill was 19,000-gallons more than the usual 1-2 thousand gallons use each month. Upon investigation we discovered the toilet was leaking water by continually, unnoticed by the staff. We replaced the flapper and flush valve but neither worked. A have a new toilet out for delivery within the next day or two. This condition decimated the water and sewer budget for this building.

OTHER

Staffing – Last week I filled my last open position but within a few days I had one of my skilled maintenance assistants give his notice. He is a carpenter by trade and is partnering with a friend in a carpentry business where he has an opportunity to solely do what he loves and make a lot more money per hour.

Capital Outlay – Julie informed me that the board of commissioners disapproved all of my capital outlay requests, including replacing the DOC generator Above-ground Storage Tank (AST). I want to reiterate that the AST supporting the DOC generator is failing from within due to heavy internal corrosion and much of the fuel on the West end of the tank is laden with rust. Despite numerous efforts to filter it out we've been unable to get it all due to the configuration of the tank. The tank must be replaced right away to avert any chance of premature generator failure due to clogged filters and possible infiltration of rust particles into the fuel injection system. The cost of working on this generator is exponentially expensive compared to all other generators in the complex, as last year's repair bills attest to this fact. Lastly, the DOC is a critical facility that must have reliable backup power for obvious reasons. Failing to replace this tank this summer invites the potential failure of the generator caused by the ingestion of rust into the fuel system, exponentially high repair costs and a logistical nightmare for the DOC staff trying to figure out what they will do with inmates in an extended power outage. I implore you change your mind or fund it with ARPA interest money.