

GRAFTON COUNTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Administration Building
North Haverhill, NH 03774
March 23, 2026

PRESENT: Reps. Baldwin, Bjelobrk, Bolton, Franz, Sellers, Spahr, Stringham, Sykes.
Commissioner McLeod, Commissioner Hedberg, Commissioner Piper, County Administrator
Libby, Assistant County Administrator Elsholz, and Administrative Assistant Norcross.

OTHERS PRESENT: Treasurer Cryans, Register Monahan – via Teams, Emilie Smith – via
Teams, Nick De Mayo – via Teams, Graham Steadman – via Teams

Rep. Sykes called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and began with the Pledge of Allegiance led
by Rep. Spahr.

Rep. Sykes stated that the first item of business to be completed was the approval of the minutes
from the November 17th meeting. Rep. Sellers had the following corrections:

- Page 4, American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 – Rep. Sellers noted that it says eight (6)
and sixteen (14). Those were corrected to read six (6) and fourteen (14).
- Page 13, Paragraph #1 – Rep. Sellers noted that Rep. Opper's name was spelled
incorrectly.

MOTION: Rep. Stringham moved to approve the minutes from the November 17th
meeting as amended. Rep. Bjelobrk seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

**Treasurer Cryans arrived and gave the following Treasurer's
Report:**

TO: GRAFTON COUNTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
FROM: MICHAEL CRYANS, TREASURER
SUBJECT: TREASURER'S REPORT
DATE: MARCH 23, 2026



CURRENT CASH POSITION (as of 02/28/2026)

Grafton County General Fund

Checking Account (ICS @ 3.79%)	\$	247,192.28 (Bar Harbor Bank & Trust)
Investment Account Money Market (3.67%)	\$	30,259.93 (NH Public Deposit Invest. Pool)
Investment Account (ICS @ 3.5%)	\$	529,824.07 (Mascoma Savings Bank)
Investment Account ICS @ 3.60%	\$	54,328.67 (Bank of NH)
Investment Account (ICS @ 3.83%)	\$	2,028,888.22 (Claremont Savings Bank)
Investment Account (13 Wk CDARS 3.92%)	\$	3,021,026.82 (Bar Harbor Bank)
Investment Account (13 Wk CDARS 3.83%)	\$	3,020,530.48 (Union Bank)
Investment Acct. (ICS @ 3.50%)	\$	508,707.83 (Camden National Bank)
Investment Account (13 Wk CDARS 3.77%)	\$	3,020,250.63 (Passumpsic Bank)

Grafton County Reserved/Dedicated Accounts

Deeds Surcharge ICS (2.23%)	\$	325,374.28 (Claremont Savings Bank)
Dispatch Capital Reserve ICS (1.49%)	\$	108,180.13 (Claremont Savings Bank)
Nursing Home Capital Reserve (3.50%)	\$	674,307.67 (Camden National Bank)
American Rescue Plan Funds (3.60%)	\$	1,033,016.80 (Bank of NH)
NTIA Letter of Credit ICS (3.60%)	\$	3,078,539.48 (Bank of NH)

RECENT TRANSACTIONS of NOTE

- The Combined Accumulated interest in the current fiscal year (7/1/25-02/28/2026) is \$178,944. The FY '26 budget is \$275,300

Rep. Stringham asked, given the amount of cash that the county currently has, when they would need to go to a line of credit. Treasurer Cryans explained that they hope not to borrow any money until they are at least through the end of this upcoming budget process. He noted that last year, the county started drawing on its line of credit in September. Treasurer Cryans stated that a lot of it depends on how the money comes in, but it is their hope and goal that they would not need to draw much before September. He added that last year, the Delegation authorized the county to borrow up to \$12 million, and they ended up borrowing \$7.5 million.

Rep. Sellers asked if these interest rates were the best the county could get. Treasurer Cryans stated that the tax investments were put out to bid in December, and these were the rates that came from that.

MOTION: Rep. Franz moved to approve the Treasurer’s Report. Rep. Bjelobrk seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Commissioner McLeod gave the following Commissioner’s Report:

Commissioners’ Report
March 23, 2026

Nursing Home:

- The nursing home's census is currently 125. Our budgeted census for FY26 is 124. Our payer mix differs slightly from the budget, but we are maintaining our revenue projections. Our NH Medicaid rate decreased by \$2.91/day effective January 1, 2026; however, when the FY 2026 budget was prepared, we used a rate of \$247.78. Our new rate is \$250.10, which is higher than the budgeted rate. January and February census numbers were lower due to illness at the facility, but as you can see, the census has rebounded. We should continue to see a positive revenue variance for the nursing home for the remainder of the fiscal year as long as the census stays on track.

Department of Corrections:

- The current in-house census is 93, with another 36 out of the facility. We have 48 in pretrial services. We budgeted for an average daily census of 90. Through February, our

average daily population has been 98.25. The census has leveled off since December, but we are still over our average daily population for the budget.

- The DOC has dealt with a significant increase in inmate population due to bail reform and other criminal justice system changes. There has also been a significant change in the medical acuity of the inmate population. The United States has experienced a "graying" trend in the inmate population since the 1990s, but this change in Grafton County has been dramatic in fiscal year 2026. Hospital details have skyrocketed compared to the prior year. The jail has seen a number of inmates brought in who needed to be taken immediately for higher-level care, and the nursing staff are caring for inmates with significant medical needs with minimal medical equipment. All of these are having an impact on the fiscal year 2026 budget. The medical budget is 93% expended through eight (8) months, with several outstanding bills. The Commissioners approved funding from the LATCF funds to temporarily bring on two (2) full-time LPNs from a Staffing Agency to help with the immediate crisis that the jail is facing.
- We will continue to monitor the impacts these are having on the budget.

Broadband Update:

- Construction began on May 21, 2025
- This project includes 5,671 utility poles – we are working with seven (7) different Utility and Telcom companies to work through the Pole Licensing process. This is a significant number of poles and is a slow process. At this point, we have 1667 poles fully licensed and ready to have fiber installed. There are 10,247 pole applications to be reviewed and approved (many poles require multiple licenses from both utility and telco). The licenses are spread out across the project area, and as such, construction is slower because there are not long continuous spans to be completed. This process continues to be very slow. We are reaching out to all utilities to see what can be done to expedite these licenses.
- Through March 20th, 49.2 miles of aerial fiber have been installed out of 198.8 miles, and 8.5 miles of duct/conduit have been installed underground out of 9.1 miles. 68 handholes/vaults have been installed out of 95 handholes. Underground construction has stopped because of winter weather, and we are waiting on permits from the Department of Transportation, Rail and Transit Bureau.
- Currently, we are engaged in conversation with NH Electric Cooperative on ways that our Broadband projects can benefit each other. We are early in these discussions, and it appears that there are some ways that we will be able to work together.

Courthouse Update:

- Lavallee Brensinger (LBA) has been working on redesigning the building. This includes moving the courts to the first floor and some space reductions that were offered by departments located in the building. There will be an update to provide more details at your next meeting.
- They will be doing a new cost estimate once the redesign plans have been reviewed.

American Rescue Plan Act of 2021:

- Grafton County received \$17.4M in ARPA funding. Ninety-two (92) ARPA projects were approved by the Commissioners and Executive Committee. Most of the projects have been completed. All funds were required to be obligated by December 31, 2024. The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) defines an obligation as an order for property or services or the creation of contracts, subawards, or other similar transactions that require payment. ARPA regulations require local governments to return unobligated grant funding to the U.S. Department of Treasury beyond the December 2024 end-of-year deadline.
- All of our ARPA funding has been obligated. Currently, four (4) open projects have obligations totaling \$628,382.14 that will be paid out over the next nine (9) months. The deadline to expend ARPA funds is December 31, 2026.
- ARPA spending was allowed in four (4) categories:
 - Public Health
 - Premium Pay
 - Infrastructure (specifically Water, Sewer, & Broadband)
 - Revenue Loss (Local governments can claim up to \$10 million of their ARPA SLFRF grant allocations for revenue replacement)
- Below is the breakdown of Grafton County’s obligations:

Response to Public Health Emergency	Premium Pay for Essential Employees	Water, Sewer or Broadband Infrastructure	Revenue Replacement	Total Allocation
\$ 2,565,414.07	\$ 1,158,536.24	\$ 4,058,854.89	\$ 9,676,496.80	\$ 17,459,302.00

Grafton County EMS Study

- The County has hired Municipal Resources Inc (MRI) to do a study of EMS (Emergency Medical Services) available throughout the County. This study has concluded. MRI final report is available on the County’s website. We are evaluating next steps.

NH Rural Health Transformation Program –

- Grafton County Rural Communities EMS Collaborative Response. With contracts being approved by Governor and Council, we are hopeful that we will be eligible to apply for funding for the EMS initiative. We have invited Councilor Liot Hill and Donnalee Lozeau, Director of GO-NORTH, to a future Commissioners’ meeting to discuss funding opportunities and the EMS Study that was conducted.

FY 2027 Budget

- Budget meetings with departments have begun. The Commissioners will meet throughout April to put together the Commissioners’ Proposed Budget, which will hopefully be completed by May 1, 2026. We are already seeing significant increases caused by inflation and world events. We have also received a 26% rate increase in health insurance costs for our employees and are actively researching options to mitigate this increase.

Rep. Sellers asked if the EMS grant is an ongoing grant or if it is a one-time grant. Commissioner McLeod explained that they applied for start-up funds for five (5) different areas to help regionalize EMS services, whether it be getting equipment or building renovations. She stated that they had looked at \$1,000,000 over five (5) years to do four (4) or five (5) different projects. Commissioner McLeod stated that this was their original intent. The funding proposals are starting over again, and EMS is included, but the county will have to put in another proposal. Rep. Sellers expressed concerns about using a grant for an ongoing expense.

Rep. Stringham stated that one of the challenges of GoNorth, which was a federal government program created as part of the Big Beautiful Bill, is the significant cuts in Medicaid. In order to get the bill through and satisfy certain senators, they created a fund called GoNorth. There are challenges with some of the health clinics and federally qualified health centers with these Medicaid cuts and having enough operational costs, especially as the number of uninsured people increases, and they are required to provide care regardless of ability to pay. He stated that all of these programs will hopefully do things that can make them more efficient. There is a significant amount of money out there for investment, but it is for one-time infrastructure projects, and it will run out in five (5) years.

The Commissioners further discussed the issues around EMS with the committee and answered questions.

Rep. Sellers asked what the justification was for a 26% increase in health insurance. CA Libby explained that the increase in health insurance is in part due to their own claims experience. The county has some high-cost claims. She stated that they are looking at every option available. Commissioner McLeod noted that they have solicited quotes from other insurance companies as well.

Rep. Stringham asked what healthcare expenses the county is responsible for with the inmates at the Department of Corrections. Commissioner McLeod explained that once someone is taken into custody at the DoC, they lose their benefits and the county covers 100% of their medical costs. Commissioner McLeod noted that if an inmate is brought to the hospital, an officer from the DoC has to stay with that inmate, which affects staffing levels. She added that the level of nursing care they are providing to inmates coming in with substance abuse issues and other health issues has increased significantly as well. Rep. Stringham asked if the thought behind adding the two (2) additional LPNs was to help manage the needs of the inmates without having to send them to an outside facility or to help with the level of care. CA Libby stated that they did not have 24/7 coverage at the facility, and these two (2) positions have given them that coverage. Supt. Lethbridge felt it was absolutely vital to add two (2) additional LPNs.

Rep. Stringham stated that, in regard to the courthouse, they were given a presentation about renovations versus a new build. When he went to the public sessions, he heard there was a possibility of a catastrophic failure. He asked if it is possible to know what one of those failures may look like as they are going through the budget cycle. Commissioner Hedberg stated that they cannot predict what those catastrophic issues may be. The reports from both engineering

companies say it would be more expensive with poor results if the county were to try to renovate. She stated that the Commissioners just received the Maintenance budget and will be reviewing it.

MOTION: Rep. Sellers moved to approve the Commissioners’ Report. Rep. Bjelobrk seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

CA Libby gave the following County Administrators Report:

County Administrator’s Report

March 23, 2026

Financial Reports

- ❖ Cash Management Report – This report shows where the county’s funds are invested. This includes operational monies and reserve accounts. County taxes have been collected, and all funds have been invested.
- ❖ The Monthly Variance Report compares the budget to actuals on an equal monthly basis and looks at the positive (black) or negative (red) variances. These reports represent eight (8) months complete.

Nursing Home Revenue:

Payer Source	FY 2026 Budget	FY 2026 YTD Actuals
NH Medicaid	73	62
VT Medicaid	20	20
Medicare	4	3
Private Pay	18	25
Veterans	9	7
Total	124	117

- In fiscal year 2026, we budgeted for a census of 124, broken down by the payor sources as listed above. The current census at the nursing home is 125. We are showing a favorable revenue variance.

- Proshare/Bed Tax – ProShare is a lump sum payment received in June. Bed Tax is paid quarterly. ProShare is an unknown amount. We have collected the first and second quarter payments, which is tracking slightly under projections.
- The Department of Corrections currently shows a favorable variance at this time.
- The farm shows a favorable variance of \$34,425.54. This is due to farm stand, sale of livestock, and miscellaneous revenues being fully collected. The challenge for the farm is the current and projected price of milk. Milk was budgeted at \$21/hundredweight, and today's milk price is in the \$16.50/hundredweight range, with projections for it to go even lower. This makes meeting revenue projections very difficult, with milk being the main source of revenue for the farm
- The Sheriff's Department shows a favorable variance at this time.
- County Attorney/Victim Witness. These are both grants. We receive \$30,000 in grant funding from the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which is used to offset the salary of the prosecutor who does this work in the County Attorney's office. We also received funding from the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). This grant reimburses costs associated with our Victim Witness program. It is a direct reimbursement for expenditures. Reimbursements are requested quarterly. The VAWA grant is a calendar-year grant, and we realize the entire \$30,000 in the timeframe between January and June.
- CA –Circuit Court – The County Attorney's office provides prosecutors who provide Circuit Court services for police departments throughout the county. We have one (1) contract with the Upper Valley Prosecutorial Association. This shows an unfavorable position due to the timing of receipt of payments.
- Alternative Sentencing is currently showing an unfavorable variance of \$14,713.02. That is due to the timing of revenue collection.
- The Register of Deeds revenue shows a favorable variance of \$103,807.36.
- Interest income shows a slight unfavorable variance of \$4,589.05. This has improved greatly since tax money was received and invested.

Overall revenues are trending on target for the fiscal year 2026 budget.

Expenses

- ❖ Through eight (8) months, the variance report shows a number of departments with negative variances. Many of these variances are due to January being a three (3) payroll month. Most of the departments will even out as we continue through the year. Bonded

Debt shows the largest negative variance, and that is because all bond payments have been made for the fiscal year. The other department that is being monitored closely is the Department of Corrections. That is showing a negative variance currently, and expenses are trending higher due to the higher inmate population and the increased medical acuity. We will continue to monitor this.

- ❖ Pro-rated Report: This report looks at the percentage of the year completed and then pro-rates revenues and expenses based on known variations in revenues and expenditures.
 - 66.67% of the fiscal year completed. On the pro-rated report, I factor in the revenue and expenses that are either over or under at this point in the fiscal year. Based on the February reports, we are at 67.04%, over revenue by \$211,686.36. We are at 66.24% or under-expended by \$248,505.97.
- ❖ Over-Expenditure Report—This report shows any over-expended line item at month-end. There are several accounts on the report at this time. We will transfer funds to cover this. You will see a request to transfer funds into the TAN interest line as it is over-spent by \$11,437.32. All the other lines are minimal, and there are funds within department budgets to transfer funds to cover the overages.

Rep. Sellers asked if they have an estimate on what the county will receive for the Proshare payment. CA Libby explained

CA Libby submitted the following Appropriation Transfer Request from the Commissioners:

Please accept this request per the requirements of the Delegation By-laws to transfer in excess of \$5,000 into the Tax Anticipation Interest line item (01-9100-120). The line item is over-expended by \$11,437.32. We borrowed \$7,250,000 at an interest rate of 4.65% from Bar Harbor. The total interest budgeted for this expense was \$50,000. The total interest accrued was \$61,437.32, thus leaving the overage. We request a transfer of funds from the Human Service Long Term Care line (01-4190-560), which will have ample funds remaining at year-end.

MOTION: Rep. Stringham moved to approve the appropriation request as presented. Rep. Sellers seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

MOTION: Rep. Sellers moved to approve the County Administrator's Report. Rep. Bjelobrk seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Rep. Sellers stated that in regard to the courthouse project, the Executive Committee had discussed meeting more frequently and wonders where that stands. He stated that he also looked at the EH Danson report again, and he did not realize that in the repair part of the EH Danson report, it had a 33,000 sq ft. addition included with the repairs. The repairs themselves may be much less, and they are blowing it out of proportion that the repairs are going to be much more.

He feels they can fix many of the items. He stated that the county should start budgeting funds and tackling some of these issues rather than putting the citizens of Grafton County in debt. Rep. Franz asked if the building is being maintained, if Supt. Oakes is being proactive and making repairs. Commissioner Hedberg stated that Supt. Oakes and his staff do an amazing job maintaining the building. The issue is that there is an expected lifespan on these items, and the fact that they are still running is due to the work done by the maintenance department.

New Business

1. Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3 II (l)

MOTION: * 10:18 AM Rep. Stringham moved to enter into a non-public session for the purpose of consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel, either in writing or orally, to one or more members of the public body, even where legal counsel is not present per RSA 91-A: 3, II (l). Rep. Bjelobrk seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote. Rep. Baldwin called the roll. Rep. Baldwin “yes”, Rep. Bjelobrk “yes”, Rep. Bolton “yes”, Rep. Franz “yes”, Rep. Sellers “yes”, Rep. Spahr “yes”, Rep. Stringham “yes”, Rep. Sykes “yes”. Rep. Sykes stated that a majority of the committee voted “yes” and would now go into non-public session.

* 10:43 AM Rep. Sykes declared the meeting back in public session.

2. Discussion concerning a request for a non-public session under RSA 91 - A:3 – Rep. Sellers stated that the purview of the Executive Committee is money, not policy or how the county is run. Rep. Stringham stated that they learned about what circumstances qualify for a nonpublic session, and their efforts should be to maintain maximum transparency. Rep. Sykes stated that nonpublic sessions by the Executive Committee are very limited because they do not handle operational items, only financials.

3. Discuss Process for setting Elected Officials' Salaries for 2027-2028 – Rep. Sykes stated that they will need to set a meeting date for the full Delegation. CA Libby stated that this needs to be held before the filing period opens in June. The Executive Committee agreed to meet on Monday, May 11th, at 9 am for their regular Executive Committee meeting and will discuss their recommendations for elected officials' salaries. The full Delegation will then meet at 11:00 am.

4. Proposed Budget Meeting Dates: 6/1; 6/5; 6/8; 6/12 with 6/15 “if needed”. Full Delegation Budget Vote 6/22/26.

Comments from the Delegates

1. Rep. Stringham stated that, to the benefit of the full Delegation, they should be encouraged or notified that they can attend the budget meetings.

2. Rep. Sellers asked if it would be more useful when going through the budget to point out changes to the budget rather than going line by line. Rep. Sykes stated that he always tells department heads prior to their budget presentations to discuss important highlights.

Next Meeting Date – May 11th at 9:00am

Public Comment

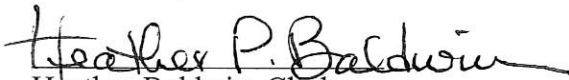
1. Register Monahan stated that, having served the county for 16 years, she has taken her responsibility very seriously. She spent many years on JLMC until she was asked to leave the committee because she found too many liability issues within the Maintenance Department. She had specifically requested to go into a nonpublic session today with the Executive Committee to discuss security. She wanted to have a conversation with the Executive Committee, which was directed by the president of the NHAC at the Register of Deeds meeting. They were told to reach out to their Delegation members. Register Monahan stated that someone could have called and asked what her concerns are, but noted that this does not happen in Grafton County. They base all decisions on what is projected as the truth. Register Monahan stated that she has a proven pattern of misinformation being spread on many issues. She has resisted going to the Attorney General with this to benefit the taxpayers. She had to request that Homeland Security, rather than go through a year's worth of motions, bring a private security force paid for with taxpayer dollars. Homeland Security's recommendation of a security staff member was not taken, and since then, this Executive Committee has sat on its hands with regard to security. Her concerns are county-wide and have never specifically been her office. Rep. Sellers stated that when they went into a nonpublic session, they learned what they can and cannot do. When it comes to policies and the workings of the counties, it would go through the Commissioners, they only handle finances.

2. Nick De Mayo stated that he doesn't know if it is the acoustics of the room, but they need microphones. He would suggest that people take public speaking classes or enunciate their words for transparency. He would suggest two (2) microphones, one (1) at each end of the table. He then stated that the topographical map in the administration building should be taken down or fixed so Sugar Hill is represented, because it looks like someone cut it out of that map. It is an empty rectangle on the map. N. De Mayo stated that he is a taxpayer and he should be visibly represented.

3. Emilie Smith stated that the question was asked if the salaries and benefits that were presented were equal to what Grafton County citizens have. The answer by the Commissioners was yes, it did represent what the regular citizens have. That is inaccurate. The majority of Grafton County citizens do not have half the salaries and benefits that county employees have. She stated that she does not understand why there is no capital reserve fund for the building repair costs. Schools and towns have them, she wonders why the county does not. She keeps hearing what a great job the maintenance department does, and if the building is in such horrible disrepair, those people are responsible for that. That statement is incorrect.

11:14 AM With no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,


Heather Baldwin, Clerk