

Grafton County Delegation Meeting
Grafton County ~ UNH Conference Room
North Haverhill, NH
Monday March 11, 2013

PRESENT: Representatives Aguiar, Almy, Bradley, Cooney, Doolan, Ford, Friedrich, Harding, Ladd, Lauer, Massimilla, Mulholland, Paster-Bodmer, Piper, Shackett, Smith, Sykes, Townsend and White. Commissioners Cryans, Richards and Burton, Executive Director Clough and Secretary Martino.

EXCUSED: Representatives Bailey, Brown, Benn, Nordgren, Gionet, Higgins, Lovette, and Reilly.

OTHERS: Maintenance Superintendent Jim Oakes and Register of Deeds Kelley Monahan.

9:02 AM Chairman White opened the meeting and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited and led by Rep. Doolan.

A roll call was taken by Clerk Aguiar and it was determined a quorum was present.

Chairman White explained that the reason for the meeting was to vote on whether or not excess funds from the Jail project should be repurposed. He turned the floor over to Commissioner Cryans for information.

Commissioner Cryans stated that the Jail project came in under budget by approximately \$8M and out of that money the County was able to build a new biomass facility. He recommended that the Delegates tour that facility if they get a chance even though it is not yet completed.

Once Corrections personnel had vacated the old facility a committee was set up with Commissioner Burton as Chairman to review the possibilities for use of the building. He said that he felt that due diligence was done and now it was time to move forward. Commissioner Cryans then turned the floor over to Commissioner Burton.

Commissioner Burton brought with him a report for the Delegates that discussed what some of the meetings consisted of. *(see attached) along with a newspaper article and discussed the crux of the meetings. After holding these meetings for over a year it was decided by the Board of Commissioners that there really wasn't any viable project for that building and no money do anything either. There was a unanimous vote by the current Board of Commissioners was to demolish it.

Commissioner Richards who came on board in January and who had attended some of the meetings agreed it was time to move on.

Chairman White asked if there were any comments, questions or concerns before making a motion.

Rep. Sykes wanted confirmation that the sprinkler system had not been disconnected. Supt. Oakes said he can take it offline but only if the building is to be demolished. The system is currently still online.

Rep. Sykes asked if the bond money could be returned and re-bonded later if needed and Director Clough said there are very specific rules as to what can be done with the money and it can not be returned or used to pre-pay a bond.

There was a discussion about the building having salvage value and Supt. Oakes said he would make sure that any bid would include a credit for salvage on the structure. There was a question about the bricks and Supt. Oakes said he would be looking for a bottom line salvage value. Rep. Doolan suggested that the bricks may have a separate value of their own and again Supt. Oakes said that total salvage value would need to be part of the bid.

Rep. Ladd said he wanted a better definition about what was received in writing from the North Haverhill Fire Chief regarding shutting down the fire system. Supt. Oakes said there was nothing in writing but rather a verbal approval from Chief Hammond. Supt. Oakes went over the conditions in the building that predicated taking the building's fire system offline. Rep. Ladd asked if the system could be taken offline if the building were to be kept longer and Supt. Oakes said he didn't ask Chief Hammond that question and if the intent was to mothball the building then he would have to go back to the Chief with another question.

Rep. Harding asked if there was an estimate as to the cost to demolish and Director Clough said there had been a rough estimate of around \$400K but no one thinks it will come in at that cost. Supt. Oakes added that no contractor who actually does that kind of work was contacted for a price. It was noted that Supt. Oakes did have the building checked for asbestos and there was only a minimal amount in there.

Rep. Ladd asked how else this excess money could be used. Director Clough replied that it could be used for another bondable project or to make bond payments.

Rep. Friedrich asked what the annual cost was to maintain the empty building and Supt. Oakes said he budgeted \$50K and most of that is used to heat the building.

Rep. Sykes said that he was uncomfortable with the level of investigation for the use of the building. Commissioner Cryans replied that he felt that a lot of time had been spent to investigate the use of the building. He said it was built as a jail and now it has outlived its purpose. He said that there were a number of ideas that came forth but no one had any ideas on how to pay for them. Now there is an opportunity to take the building, which sits on a bank, down. He said that it's not a good location and there are no sustainable ideas.

Rep. Sykes said he thought that although there may not be any use for the building now, that may change later and then it would be too late. He said it may be better to just disconnect all the systems and just let it sit rather than moving to tear it down. Commissioner Cryans said that Merrimack County built their jail 10 years ago and their old one is still sitting there and he didn't want to see that happen here.

Rep. Smith said that having toured the jail back in 2008 she could see how awful it was and that to leave it sit for longer would only allow it to deteriorate more. She said that if the bond money is not used now to do this then it would have to be raised later.

Supt. Oakes said the he couldn't shut down the electricity in the building because there is a sewer grinder that is used for the complex which is attached to the system that needs to continue running. Rep. Friedrich said that the electricity would have to be rerouted if the building is torn down anyway.

Rep. Ladd said he is not comfortable voting in favor of this because he doesn't feel the question has been answered by the Fire Marshall and because the Chairman of the Selectboard in the town of Haverhill feels that no money was put towards finding out the costs to do other things with the building and that the proper investigation was not done. Rep. Almy said they don't need that information if the vote passes to demolish the building and noted that the interest rates the County has on the current bonds are so low that they're probably the best ever seen.

Rep. Pastor-Bodmer said that keeping the building would be a luxury and that any money that was gained in the future might be better spent on other, more important things that could be used in other areas of the County.

Rep. Doolan asked if anyone was interested in buying the building for a dollar and Commissioner Cryans said no one has come forth with any interest in buying the building.

Rep. Aguiar RESOLVED: That Grafton County, New Hampshire (the "County"), acting by and through its Delegation, hereby appropriates the sum of up to \$500,000 for the demolition of the now vacant old Grafton County Department of Corrections. Pursuant to the provisions of RSA 33:3-a, up to \$500,000 of such sum shall come from the unexpended proceeds of the County's Bonds which were previously authorized and issued to finance the construction of a new County correctional facility. The remaining balance of the unexpended funds (approximated at \$206,544.56 will be used to offset future bond payments for the new County correctional facility, which was seconded by Rep. Shackett seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION:

Rep. Sykes said that he has spent 20 years in the fire service answering questions about code and now that he has heard that there is another service that is tied into the electricity in the jail, he would feel uncomfortable turning off all the systems in there.

Rep. Harding said she wanted to better understand what anxiety Rep. Ladd had about this and he replied that he didn't feel there was enough information regarding shutting the systems off and keeping the building until it could be fully understood. He also didn't think that the resolution gave a clear amount of money that was needed for the demolition and he didn't like the concept of that.

Rep. Harding asked why there were no specific cost amounts and Rep. Aguiar said you couldn't expect a company to go in there and provide a quote for such a large job without confirmation that the money was even approved for the project.

Rep. Cooney asked what happens to the money if it's not all used for this and Director Clough said the remainder is used to offset bond payments.

Rep. Ladd said they should be prepared to spend that whole amount since it's now public knowledge that the County has that much to spend. He said bidders will use that to their advantage. Commissioner Cryans said it was clear how much the new Jail was approved for and that came in underbid by a considerable amount.

When the vote was taken, Reps. Aguiar, Almy, Bradley, Cooney, Ford, Friedrich, Harding, Lauer, Massimilla, Mulholland, Pastor-Bodmer, Piper, Shackett, Smith, Sykes and Townsend were in favor while Reps. Doolan, Ladd and White were opposed. Motion carries 16 to 3.

10:03 AM With no further business at hand the was adjourned

Respectfully submitted,

James Aguiar, Clerk