

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday November 15, 2017 09:30AM
County Hall Building
Commissioners Conference Room
Keene, NH 03431

Present: Commissioners Peter Graves, Joseph Cartwright, and Charles Weed

Staff: Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Sheriff Rivera, Communications Director Crowell, and Assistant County Administrator (ACA) Bouchard

Guests:

At 9:30AM the Chair opened the meeting and recognized the Sheriff and Director Crowell who discussed the public safety radio transmission sites throughout the County. The Sheriff described the present system and discussed the various challenges of public safety communications in the hilly townships of the County. He also discussed the aging equipment base and said about \$2.5 million dollars of equipment has been deployed thus far.

A discussion of how to fund emergency equipment replacement was covered and how to anticipate upcoming maintenance and repair costs was reviewed.

The Commissioners thanked the Sheriff and Crowell for their update and then recognized Administrator Coates for the Weekly Operations Report.

Coates discussed the use of the public meeting spaces in the building and cited the recent use of the facility by the Monadnock Bar Association, the Monadnock Republican Party, and other local groups in the past few weeks.

Coates then discussed the meeting that took place with local ambulance, medical, and dispatch personnel to discuss the regionalization of ambulance services for County towns. He discussed the costs associated with providing the services needed to the towns and the potential pullback of services by Keene because of the growing demand for services within the city.

The discussion continued around what the various towns are doing trying to meet the needs of the communities and the growing costs that individual towns can no longer carry on their own.

Coates then said that the County is featured in November 2017 "The New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage Investment Program" (LCHIP) newsletter in the spotlight column.

Coates discussed the previously approved bonus for a staff member in the Drug Court program and also discussed the recruitment and onboarding of new personnel. He said that it appears that more applicants are being attracted to the County and the general quantity and quality of the applicants is improving and is credit to the work of Mary Walker in the HR department.

Coates related the details of a break-in that occurred at the old red barn in Westmoreland saying that a window was broken and panels on sliding door were kicked-in. Bouchard will investigate the installation of motion detectors for lighting and alarms for the building.

Coates said that he has been invited to attend a meeting in Swanzey in December to discuss economic development issues among three local towns. He said that he will attend.

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The State Renewable Energy Credits (REC) program for the geothermal system were discussed and contact with the PUC provided valuable information on how to move forward to qualify for the program was covered.

Coates discussed a meeting that was held with the Chairman of the Delegation this week to discuss the sale of the Blood Farm. The Chairman recommended the negotiations for the farm continue. Commissioners Cartwright and Graves said that the counter-offer should wait until a meeting with the Delegation Farm Sub-Committee has been completed. A wide-ranging discussion of a counter offer position was covered.

Coates then reviewed the farm maintenance issues that are pending including the painting of the herdsman's house, the repair of the main barn roof and the repair or replacement of the doors on heifer barn.

Coates then asked Trombly to discuss and review an IPG Insurance meeting that was held yesterday to discuss County Healthcare plans. She discussed a proposal that was received and said the recommendation is to continue the self-insured plan that is presently in place but to consider working with a different third-party administrator. The cost escalation of the plan over the past seven years was reviewed and the impact of the Affordable Care Act and reinsurance was covered. She pointed out the year-over-year increase of large claims from last year was over \$800k.

Following discussion Commissioner Weed moved to accept the recommendation to move from the current TPA to Harvard Pilgrim and was seconded by Commissioner Cartwright. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

At 11:24AM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(c) Commissioner Cartwright moved to enter non-public session and was seconded by Commissioner Weed, to discuss matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of this board, unless such person requests an open meeting. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously

As a result of deliberations in non-public session no decision was made and no vote was taken.

At 11:33AM the Commissioners voted unanimously to return to public session.

At 11:34AM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(e) Commissioner Graves moved to enter non-public session to discuss the consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation which has been threatened in writing or filed against this board or any subdivision thereof, or against any member thereof because of his or her membership therein, until the claim or litigation has been fully adjudicated or otherwise settled. Commissioner Cartwright seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

As a result of deliberations in non-public session no decision was made and no vote was taken.

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At 11:48AM the Commissioners voted unanimously to return to public session.

The Census was reviewed and discussed.

The Weekly Manifest was then reviewed and Commissioner Cartwright moved to accept the Manifest as presented and was seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

The minutes of November 8, 2017 were then reviewed and Commissioner Weed moved to accept the minutes as amended and was seconded by Commissioner Cartwright. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

The Commissioners Calendar was then reviewed.

The Commissioners then began a very lengthy review and discussion of the 2018 Commissioners budget.

Commissioner Weed moved to approve the Salary and Wage scale study and to implement the 50% scale presented by Finance with the intent to fund the 100% scale in 2019. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cartwright seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

At 1:50PM there being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Cartwright moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn was then seconded by Commissioner Weed and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
C. Weed