

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, January 15, 2014 9:30AM
Department of Corrections
825 Marlboro Road, Keene, NH 03431

PRESENT: Commissioners Pratt, Rogers and Zerba.

STAFF: Finance Director Trombly, County Attorney McLaughlin, MNH Task Force Chairman Hoffman, County Administrator Wozmak and Assistant County Administrator (ACA) Bouchard.

At 09:30AM – Commissioner Pratt opened the meeting and recognized John Hoffman who provided an update on the Maplewood Task Force activities to date.

Hoffman stated that the prior day he was interviewed by a reporter at the Sentinel and he briefed the reporter on the Task Forces progress and provided an overview of the material to the reporter that was presented at the last Task Forces meeting at Maplewood on January 7th. He then updated the Commissioners on the process plan that outlines the items completed and the next steps that will be taken to develop a recommendation to the County Delegation. Hoffman stated that the consensus votes from the Task Forces thus far had yielded a recommendation for the County to continue to run the nursing home and that the next steps are to further narrow the focus to examine or develop several specific options for the facility. He said that one option that is attracting a lot of interest from many members on the Task Force is the Green House Program that offers a new structure and format that is much more resident friendly and more home like than the current institutional operation. A concentrated study of the Green House option coupled with an in-depth cost analysis needs to be completed.

Hoffman and Commissioner Pratt agreed that we should hold off on any public meetings pending a more complete financial picture of the various broad options. Hoffman said that we had received a financial feasibility contract from Green House and if we signed it, the Green House people would do the financial projections as to their models. He said it would cost some money as Green House charges approximately \$250 an hour for feasibility work. They estimate that it might take less than 8 hours to crunch the numbers for us. Hoffman said that his goal was to present a preliminary report to the Delegation perhaps in March and then to take their feedback and adjust recommendations as needed. The Task Force would consider holding a series of public “Town Meetings” in five (5) towns around the County that would present the issues and discuss a summary of a draft report but would not make any final recommendations until the public has had full input into the process. At the conclusion of the town meetings, a final recommendation report would be prepared and submitted to the County Delegation for consideration sometime in the late March – April time frame.

County Attorney McLaughlin was then recognized and he provided the Commissioners the following report for his office for the last quarter of 2013.

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The County Attorney's Office has had no personnel changes this quarter. 102 felony case files were referred to our office, and a Victim/Witness Coordinator was assigned to all of these cases. 50 individuals were indicted, on a total of 105 charges. In this quarter 4 jury trials were held. 26 felony level cases were resolved as misdemeanors at the Circuit Court level. Our office handled 37 Violations of Probation, and 11 Superior Court Petitions to Annul.

The Regional Prosecutor Program added one half-time salaried position this quarter. 180 cases were handled by the Regional Prosecutor's Office during this time period. This includes new misdemeanor and felony cases. No Victim/Witness Coordinator was assigned to any of these cases.

The Domestic Violence Prosecutor reviewed 4 Felony Domestic Violence cases and 1 Misdemeanor Domestic Violence Case this quarter. A Victim/Witness Coordinator was assigned to each felony case. No DV cases went to trial, and no Felony Domestic Violence cases were resolved as Misdemeanors at the Circuit Court level.

11 One-Party authorizations were issued. 26 untimely death calls were handled in October and November. December figures are not yet available. 15 Abuse and Neglect referrals from DCYF were reviewed.

8 defendants are participating in the Cheshire County Drug Court program as a result of guilty pleas to felony charges.

McLaughlin then told the Commissioners that the new part-time regional prosecutor, Adam Wood, had received a full-time job offer from the Belnap County Attorney's office and that he would be leaving Cheshire County shortly.

A discussion of security in the old courthouse started and a number of topics were discussed concerning increasing security throughout the building. ACA Bouchard will be following up on the possibility of installing temporary wiring in the former marital court area to allow the county attorney staff presently in the basement to move up onto the same floor as the rest of the county attorney staff. This would also help some of the security issues. The concern expressed was the cost of temporary wiring and the condition of any wiring left behind by the court system. During the meeting, a contractor was contacted to begin the cost estimation process. Staff will also re-evaluate the concept of cobbling something together to see if the computer and phone computer systems can be made to work using the temporary system.

McLaughlin said that the Drug Court program was going very well and that no one in program had tested positive for drugs since the inception of the program. Commissioner Pratt asked how long the grant would cover the operation the program and was told it was a three year grant that may be renewed but that a "Friends of the Drug Court" program

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had already been envisioned to help offset future program costs so the program can continue in some form if the grants were not renewed.

McLaughlin then discussed two new programs that were being tried out in the Courts, an Early Case Resolution program and a program that would start all felony cases in Superior Court instead of District Court as is now done.

The Commissioners had a brief conversation with the County Attorney regarding the upcoming discussion about the biennial adjustment of elected officials salaries. This Delegation vote will take place sometime in March in anticipation of the June election sign-up period. No change in salary for elected officials would take place prior to the beginning of 2015 when newly elected officials take office.

The Commissioner thanked the County Attorney for his thorough the review.

County Administrator Wozmak then communicated the following events/activities:

- The deaerator tank at Maplewood which is a device that is used for the removal of oxygen from the boiler feed water storage, and required immediate repairs. Although the repairs were completed the overall condition of the tank and pumps are severely degraded and both the tank and pumps will need to be replaced in the near future.
- A nascent group consisting of four towns in the County is considering coming together to share the cost and operation of an internet fiber loop that will serve all four towns with high-speed internet services. ACA Bouchard will be representing the County for the initial discussions and will keep the Commissioners apprised of the progress of the group.
- The County Administrator further reported the following;
 - A farm tour of the County farm, Blood Farm and surrounding land and buildings would be made next week.
 - The inmate complaint received last week has been resolved by DOC Superintendent Van Wickler.
 - The snow guard and slate repair project for the Old Courthouse will proceed with MacMillin as negotiations on reducing the cost were successful.
 - The State of NH and Police Standards and Training will be using the DOC training room to conduct Part-Time Police Officer training classes for the region beginning shortly. A new fiber internet connection between the state and DOC to support the class has been recently completed.

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- The investigation of installing Wi-Fi internet connection's at Maplewood is underway and a cost and implementation plan is being developed.

A detailed follow-up report that was received from the Sheriff was then discussed and the six (6) statistics for the Sheriff's office was as follows;

2013 Statistics (Six year review) 5 Year Review

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Investigations	45	85	77	138	59	100
Arrests	328	386	271	294	282	238
Motor Vehicles Stops	633	1585	1364	1133	1035	1118
Transports	2641	2918	3707	3691	3070	2497
Civil Process	3936	3884	3489	3135	3061	2988

The Master Item Agenda list was reviewed:

The Commissioners reviewed a comparative list of the salaries for all county elected officials using information gathered by the New Hampshire Association of Counties. The list was taken under advisement.

The Commissioners noted under "old Business" that the meeting with the officers of the Delegation to discuss the courthouse renovations will take place on January 27, following the next Executive Committee budget meeting.

Action Item #2013002 The Delegation voted to authorize the Commissioners to explore the sale of the Blood Farm and to require the Commissioner to present to the Delegation their proposed sale at a future Delegation meeting

Status Update: Administrator Wozmak provided the Commissioners with a detailed RFP document that will be reviewed by the Commissioners and discussed at a future meeting.

The next agenda item discussed was **Action Item# 2013003**. An RFP was published for certain emergency repairs and snow fencing on the roof of the old courthouse using funds recently appropriated by the Delegation. A bid was timely received from MacMillin and Melanson. This is the first phase of repair work for the old courthouse roof.

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Status Update: MacMillin has been contacted and work is expected to begin within the next two (2) weeks dependent on weather conditions.

The remaining open action items were reviewed no change in status was noted from the previous week's report.

The commissioners reviewed the census.

Commissioners reviewed the manifest and **Commissioner Rogers moved to accept the manifest the motion was seconded by Commissioner Zerba. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

The Commissioners then reviewed the minutes of January 8, 2013 and Commissioners Zerba moved to accept the minutes as presented. Commissioner Rogers seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

The Commissioners calendar was reviewed.

At 11:39AM there being no further business to discuss, **Commissioner Rogers moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion seconded by Commissioners Zerba and upon vote the motion passed with unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,
R Zerba, Clerk