

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, August 20, 2014 9:30AM
Administration Building
33 West Street,
Keene, NH 03431

PRESENT: Commissioners Pratt, and Zerba (Rogers absent with notice)

STAFF: Administrator Wozmak, Finance Director Trombly, Superintendent Van Wickler, DOC Mental Health Manager Peterson, MNH Facilities Manager Harrison, and Assistant County Administrator (ACA) Bouchard

GUESTS: Westmoreland Selectperson J. Hammond, and Dale Prgent.

Chairman Pratt opened the meeting at 9:30AM recognizing Administrator Wozmak for the purpose of providing the weekly operational update.

Wozmak updated the Commissioners on a meeting that took place on Monday concerning the Maplewood Task Force. The Chair of the Task Force has suggested that a public relations firm be hired to assist in getting the word out about the Green House concept, etc. Mr. Hoffman met with a firm that has expressed interest in providing this service. Wozmak reported that while he thinks there may be value in this idea, he is sensitive to not getting out ahead of whatever process the Delegation implements. The Commission Chair repeated his opinion that the role of the Commissioners should be to carry out the wishes of the Delegation and to wait for that directive.

He then told the Commissioners that a contractor has agreed to inspect and provide a status report and quote for repairs needed at the "Herdsman" and "Daycare" houses in Westmoreland. This is a follow-up from an inspection that was conducted by the County Safety Officer a few weeks ago where some potentially unsafe conditions were found during the inspection. The Farm Committee, chaired by Rep. Sad was made aware of these conditions and the Committee viewed many photographs of the buildings. Staff will be developing repair plans for inclusion within the 2015 budget.

Wozmak then discussed the meetings that were held with NH Gas in Keene to determine if converting the Administration Building at 33 West Street to propane heat instead of oil made financial sense. He said that the cost of the State Department of Environmental Services (DES) mandate for removal and replacement of the 4,000 gallon underground oil tank stood at approximately \$68,000.00. In discussions with NH Gas and a underground tank contractor, it was learned that the tank can be closed in place and removed from DES oversight and a gas line can be run into the building for a total cost of somewhere around \$8,000.00. The only downside to the changeover is slightly higher fuel cost but that will be potentially offset by the capital avoidance cost of replacing the underground oil tank. NH Gas will be providing further financial details and will present a contract for consideration by the end of the week.

Wozmak then asked Finance Director Trombly to provide an overview of the meeting that she and MNH Administrator Kindopp attended in Concord this week to discuss the implementation of the State Mandated Managed Care program scheduled to start on April 1, 2015. She said that at the meeting it was agreed to form a steering committee to assist the two (2) managed care companies who will be processing all claims in the state to understand how nursing homes operate. Trombly said that none of the processes for working with the managed care companies have been defined and neither of the companies have experience in working with nursing homes. Trombly said that she hopes that the state

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will set the reimbursement rates for the managed care companies so that everyone can move into this new system with foreknowledge of the reimbursement rates.

An extended discussion began about the challenges of implementing the new managed care model and the lack of sufficient funding and program implementation that is being provided by the state.

Facilities Manager Harrison was then recognized for the purpose of providing bid information on the replacement of the Deaerator tank located in the Maplewood boiler room. He said that only two companies responded to the RFP and that only one company responded with a bid. He said that the bid that was received was over budget but that by eliminating some optional items it could be brought close to the appropriated funding.

The Commissioners expressed concern that the cost of the project (\$250,000.00) didn't attract more bidders and were reluctant to award a high dollar bid based on only receiving one (1) bid. Following discussions the Commissioners asked Harrison to contact other companies that provide the equipment and services needed and inquire why they chose not to bid. The Commissioners suggested that the RFP may have to be re-posted to attract additional bidders as they were not comfortable awarding the contract based on receiving only one (1) bid response.

Commissioner Zerba moved to table the award of the bid and to postpone any decision until next week's Commissioners meeting. Commissioner Pratt seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed with two (2) Yea's.

Harrison will call the non-bidder contractors and will report back with his findings at the next meeting.

The Commissioners then reviewed the Master Item Agenda and briefly discussed the status of the open item list.

Action Item #93: Vermont Yankee Closure Coordination Project was then discussed. Administrator Wozmak said that he was approached by Southwestern Regional Planning (SWRP) to see if the County was able to participate in a project to coordinate with some of the county towns, Entergy, the State of Vermont, and the State of New Hampshire for the purpose of providing information and coordination of the closing of the Vermont Yankee Nuclear plant in Vernon Vermont that SWRP had been asked to spearhead. He said that SWRP had determined that the project required more resources than they could provide and they had neither the funding nor the personnel to participate in the project.

Commissioner Pratt and Zerba both expressed skepticism that the role was within the purview of the County and said that they are very reluctant to take on such a task without understanding many more details of the project. Commissioner Pratt said that he was unsure why the State wasn't coordinating the efforts with a team of specialist who were trained in these kinds of projects. Following further

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discussion Administrator Wozmak said that he would obtain more information on the project and discuss the details with SWRP and then report back to the Commissioners with his findings.

Superintendent Van Wickler was recognized and said that he and Mental Health Manager Peterson were in attendance to discuss the filling of the open Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor (LADAC) position at the Department of Corrections. Peterson then spoke of the history and effectiveness of the program and said that about 76% of the inmate population self-identify as either drug or alcohol abusers or as an abuser of both. He said that one of the most important services that DOC provides is substance abuse counselling with the goal of helping people not to re-offend and be re-incarcerated. Peterson explained that through grant funding they have had two (2) excellent part-time LADAC counselors for the past few years but that the grant funding was ending at the end of September. He said that the search for a full-time replacement Masters level LADAC had proven to be unsuccessful but that a highly regarded candidate who is seeking part-time employment has been identified. He went on to say that the best mix of services, skills, and programs can be provided by breaking up the full-time position into three (3) part-time positions. Having three (3) part-time positions will also result in overall lower cost to the County and higher quality and more diverse services for the inmates.

Following an extended discussion the Commissioners agreed that Peterson's plan made sense for inmate population being served and for the County. Peterson will move forward with implementing the plan in the next few weeks.

The Commissioners then reviewed the weekly census and noted the rise in federal inmate holds. Van Wickler was asked about the decrease in Electronic Monitoring inmates and he said it was part of the normal ebb and flow of people into and out of the program.

The Commissioners asked about the effectiveness of the EM program for inmates. Van Wickler said that the Cheshire County program is much more structured than other counties and that instead of serving as little as fourteen (14) days before becoming eligible for EM release, the program in the County requires that the inmate has served at least one-third (1/3) of their sentence before they can be considered for EM release. In addition, the inmate must be recommended to the Superintendent by a panel from the various departments in DOC before they can be considered. He also said that each candidate for EM must have approval from the County Attorney. He went on to say that in the history of the program only one person has absconded and they were located and re-incarcerated in a short period of time.

Van Wickler then discussed a radio interview that ran this morning (August 20th) concerning heroin addiction in the County. Two (2) inmates were featured on a pre-recorded interview session and Van Wickler said it was a very powerful show as both inmates were very forthcoming about their personal struggles with addiction. Van Wickler was also interviewed and will answer call-in questions from the public on next Tuesdays broadcast. A podcast(s) of the show(s) can be found here:
<http://wkbkradio.com/good-morning-with-dan-mitchell/categories/podcasts/> .

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The Commissioners then reviewed the manifest and **Commissioner Zerba moved to accept the manifest as presented and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Pratt. Upon vote the motion passed with two (2) Yea's.**

The Commissioners then reviewed the minutes of August 13, 2014 and Commissioner Zerba moved to accept the minutes as presented. Commissioner Pratt seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed with two (2) Yea's.

The Commissioners then reviewed the calendar and made no changes.

A short discussion of the upcoming Delegation meeting on Monday August 25th at 7:00pm began and it was agreed that all needed preparation for the meeting has been completed.

At 11:33AM there being no further business to discuss, **Commissioner Zerba moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion seconded by Commissioner Pratt and upon vote the motion passed with two (2) Yea's.**

Respectfully Submitted,

R Zerba, Clerk