

**MINUTES**  
**Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting**  
**Wednesday February 14, 2018 09:30AM**  
**Department of Corrections**  
**825 Marlboro Road, Keene, NH 03431**

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

**Staff:** County Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Superintendent Van Wickler, and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard

**Guests:**

At 9:30AM the Chair opened the meeting and recognized Administrator Coates who distributed a form on County Record Retention for the County. Coates discussed a need to formalize a County wide records and retention policy partial based on current practices. He said that a meeting of department heads will occur in the near future to codify the schedules and establish a best practice approach.

He asked that one of the Commissioner attend the sessions and to be part of team. He said that he has contacted a number of other Counties and none of them currently have documents retention or disposition policies but they all recognize that it is needed.

Commissioner Weed move to establish a record retention and disposition policy subject to changes, and was seconded by Commissioner Cartwright. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

Superintendent Van Wickler was then recognized and asked the Commissioners to sign graduation certificates for the five (5) staff members that will be graduating today.

**At 09:43AM Commissioner Graves moved to enter non-public session to discuss pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(c) 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. Commissioner Weed seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

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

**At 10:39AM the Commissioners voted unanimously to return to public session.**

Trombly was then recognized and discussed Master Agenda Item #559 Finance Year End Report. She said that the pre-audit shortfall was \$1.190M all attributed to unreceived grant monies that will be coming in over the next few years.

Trombly reviewed the letter with the Commissioners and discussed each of the issues as outlined below. The Commissioners asked a number of questions concerning staffing costs and the use of outside agencies other cost centers related to a shortage of medical personnel at the nursing home.

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**CHESHIRE COUNTY**  
**Finance Department**  
**33 West Street**  
**Keene, NH 03431**  
**603-355-3036**  
**Fax: 603-355-3000**  
**TTY Access: 1-800-735-2964**

To: Cheshire County Executive Committee  
From: Sheryl Trombly, Finance Director  
Date: February 12, 2018  
RE: 4th quarter 2017 Budget Review

At the end of 2017, pre-audit revenues ended at 3.12%, (\$1,006,950) under projections for the County and Nursing Home revenues came in at 1.34%, (\$183,878) remaining. The totals combined are a shortfall of \$1,190,828. This shortfall is mainly due to grants that were not awarded. Expenses that were budgeted to expend these potential grants came in under as well offsetting the revenue shortfall.

At the end of 2017, pre-audit expenses ended with a combined excess of \$2,289,065. Overall county expenses ended at 5.21%, \$1,466,669 remaining with Maplewood at 4.62%, \$822,396.

The combined year end surplus is estimated at \$1,098,237.

The total fund balance committed in the 2018 budget is proposed at \$1,494,323. Of this amount, \$494,323 is from ProShare funds received in 2017 with the additional \$1,000,000 from the current year end surplus.

The County has a policy that recommends maintaining an unassigned fund balance in the range of 11% to 15%. At the end of 2016, the unassigned fund balance was \$6,042,626. This represented 13.15% of the 2017 County Budget.

Based on the current year end projections and the proposal to assign \$1,494,323 of fund balance to offset taxes for 2018, the estimated 2017 accumulated unassigned fund balance will be approximately \$6,057,256. Based on the 2017 budget as it currently stands, this unassigned fund balance would represent 12.15% of the overall county budget.

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Although the dollar amount of unassigned fund balance will remain steady in comparison to 2016, the percentage at it pertains to the overall county budget has decreased from 13.15% in 2016 to 12.15% in 2017 as the County budget has increased by nearly \$4,500,000 in 2018.

In addition to the summary above, the following areas may be of interest:

**Revenues: General County**

Page 1 – Federal Grant Revenues – This revenue source as well as the Miscellaneous Non-Federal Grants offset certain expenses throughout the budget such as 4461 – County Received Grants, 4462 – Drug Court and other significant capital expenses. Revenues ended at (\$1,174,657) remaining however the expenses associated came in under as well.

Page 2 – Sheriff Fees came under by \$20,813 for the year. As the department had 3 deputy vacancies for an extended time during the year, revenues were impacted in the department's ability to fulfill all hours for contract details. This shortfall is covered by payroll expenses coming under as a result of the vacancies.

Page 2 – Federal Inmates revenue exceeded the 2017 budget by \$107,565. The census was budgeted for 37 Federal Inmates with the year- end average census of 40.

Page 5- Transfer from Fund Balance is at 0.00%. This line item will remain at 0.00% throughout the year. No entry is made as the offset is an accounting function of an automated decline in fund balance based on actuals and the final amount needed from fund balance at year-end.

**Expenses General County's**

Page 10 – Commissioners – This department went over. As part of the further research into Phase II of Managed Care, each County contributed \$10,000 (to be matched by the State) towards hiring a consultant to support the work of the County and State Finance Committee who will work together to study Phase II and the long-term care delivery system.

Page 29 – Human Services (Medicaid Expense) – This budget covers the County contribution towards the cost of County Residents living in Nursing Homes and Home and Community based Care and supported by Medicaid. The County is responsible for 100% of the nonfederal share. This bill is adjusted at the start of the State Fiscal year in July of each year therefore the budget needs are not known when crafting the county budget. Although this budget did go over, it was recognized that it could be managed within the overall budget for 2017 without any further amendment needed.

Page 32 – Behavioral Health Court expended only 68% of their budget with a budget balance of \$87,110 for 2017. Medicaid Expansion has had a significant impact on reducing the need

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for County payment to providers for services for clients in this program. As many clients are now covered under the expansion program, providers are able to bill for their services.

Page 33 – 34 – County Received Grants and Drug Court both came under budget for the year with budget balances of \$953,910 combined. As these budgets are fully grant funded, as explained earlier, revenues also came under as well.

Overall you will find that many departments ended the year under budget. Staff turnover and vacancies are the primary reason for many of the surpluses realized.

**Revenues – Maplewood Nursing Home**

Page 37- Overall Maplewood Nursing Home achieved 98.66% of the 2017 budgeted revenues. The nursing home did receive a daily Medicaid rate increase effective July 1, 2017 of \$8.70/day. This rate increase helped the nursing home come closer to meeting their revenue projections for 2017. A census of 134 was budgeted for 2017. The average census for 2017 was 129.

**Expenses – Maplewood Nursing Home**

Page 38-55 – Maplewood Departments – Overall expenses for Maplewood ended at 95.38% expended. This equates to expenses coming under budget by \$822,396.

Nearly every department was well within or well under budget more than offsetting the revenue shortfall. The nursing home administration, with the support of the nursing home departments, worked hard to manage expenses with the realization of the lower census by modifying staffing needs when appropriate. Furthermore, the nursing shortage at times dictated the modification of staffing levels. As a result, expenses came under by \$822,396. One department in particular adding to the overall expense surplus was the Speech Therapy department. Maplewood has been without a Speech Therapist since October, 2015 but we are pleased to note that this position was finally filled at the end of 2017.

Administrator Coates was then provided the following Weekly Operations Report:

He said that he has been working with Senator Shaheen and Congresswoman Kuster's office on the Northern Borders project.

*(The Northern Border Regional Commission is a Federal-State partnership for economic and community development in northern Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York. Each year, the NBRC provides Federal funds for critical economic and community development projects throughout the northeast. These investments lead to new jobs being created and leverages substantial private sector investments.*

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*Mission Statement*

*The mission of the Northern Border Regional Commission is to catalyze regional, collaborative, and transformative community economic development approaches that alleviate economic distress and position the region for economic growth.*

*History*

*Created by the U.S. Congress in 2008, the NBRC partnership is based on the successful [Appalachian Regional Commission](#) model and is part of a group of [new regional commissions](#) created by Congress within the last twenty years. The NBRC has been funded by Congress since 2010).*

He stated that an email he has received from Senator Shaheen's office with the following update;

Senator Shaheen is planning on introducing legislation that would reauthorize/reform the NBRC. The bill borrows from the House language and includes additional provisions aimed at building capacity in the region to develop high-impact projects. Specifically, it would:

- Continue funding for the Northern Border Regional Commission and extend its authorization for five years.
- Allow the NBRC to include promoting the development of renewable energy resources to meet their 40-percent project requirement.
- Permit NBRC to attract businesses from outside the United States.
- Provide the NBRC with a greater degree of statutory direction to grow the capacity for successful community economic development in the region.
- Establish a state capacity building grant program to further strengthen NBRC's output of local high-impact projects. Through this program, NBRC states could provide additional funds to local economic and community development organizations to improve the development of projects that will support business retention and expansion, infrastructure development and job creation.
- Add Belknap and Cheshire counties as eligible New Hampshire counties to receive NBRC funds.

The personnel issue that was discussed with the Commissioners has been brought to successfully conclusion.

He also said that the clean-up at the Westmoreland old DOC site is progressing well. He discussed a meeting that took place with DES concerning old extra tires in the rear of the old barn.

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Three (3) new organizations have come forward with requests for using the Delegation Hall facilities for 7 dates in the next few weeks. He will bring more details forward in the next few weeks as the events are booked.

Coates said that he continues to meet with the Tri-Town group concerning economic development in Winchester, Swanzey, and Hinsdale. Commissioners Graves stated that he would like to attend the next meeting, schedule permitting.

Coates asked the Commissioners for permission to purchase the snow blower for the Keene Facilities that is in the 2018 budget. He said that the unit is needed this winter to keep on top of snow removal from the three (3) parking lots during storms.

**Following discussion, Commissioner Cartwright moved to authorize the purchase of the snow blower listed in the 2018 budget for up to \$2,000.00 and was seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

Coates noted that a meeting with the fund raiser occurred yesterday and it was discussed that the fund-raising campaign for the rehabilitation of the old courthouse will wind down until sometime in September or later this year. He asked for a written report of the needed follow-ups and contacts for the next few months so that continuity of communications with potential donors can be maintained.

Coates reminded the Commissioners that Nursing Home Administrator will be out on vacation for the next two (2) weeks.

Commissioner Cartwright asked about finding a medical director for the nursing home and Coates said that a doctor at Cheshire Medical Center has been identified and has tentatively agreed to step into the position. Final approval is pending based on the completion of the necessary paperwork and formal acceptance by the physician. It is anticipated that it will take approximately eight (8) weeks before a new Medical Director could begin work from the completion of the documentation.

Trombly then presented the Audit Engagement Letter under Master Agenda Item #560. A short discussion of the letter was had and the Chairman then signed the letter.

The Weekly Census was reviewed and discussed.

**The minutes of February 8, 2018 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.

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As short discussion of the NH Association of Counties was had and the operational and organizational structure was reviewed.

**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.**

**At 11:45PM 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