

**MINUTES**  
**Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting**  
**Wednesday February 28, 2018 09:30AM**  
**County Hall Building**  
**Stillman Rogers Conference Room**  
**12 Court Street, Keene, NH 03431**

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

**Staff:** Grants Manager Bansley, C. McLaughlin, County Attorney, and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard

**Guests:** Rebeckah Bullock, Community Development Specialist with Southwest Region Planning Commission, and representatives from the Hanna Grimes Center in Keene, the NH Small Business Development Center in Concord, and the Rockingham Economic Development group.

At 9:31AM the Chairman opened the meeting and took-up Master Agenda Item #565: CDBG Mid-grant hearing for the Microenterprise grant first public hearing for discussion of the CDBG project and read the public hearing notice.

Rebeckah Bullock, Community Development Specialist with Southwest Region Planning Commission explained that it is a requirement of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program to hold a public hearing while a project is underway to allow the public the opportunity to comment and ask questions about the project. She noted that this first hearing would provide an update of the 2017 Microenterprise projects.

Bullock explained that Cheshire County received \$417,365.00 in CDBG Microenterprise funds to support Microenterprise centers around the State in 2017. Cheshire County sub-granted the majority of the funds as follows, less administration costs:

- \$137,500.00 to the Hannah Grimes Center in Keene. The center will provide access for 55 microenterprises to its hands-on workshops, one-on-one coaching, retail training at the Hannah Grimes Marketplace, and in-depth programs, such as their incubator. To date, they have served 35 microenterprises.
- \$125,000.00 for the Regional Economic Development Center in Raymond. Activities to be funded include one-on-one meetings with business advisors, training in reading financial statements, and assistance with brand development and marketing. REDC anticipates that 50 low-to-moderate income small business owners will use their many resources. To date, they have served 19 microenterprises.
- \$117,500.00 to the NH Small Business Development Center's Pathways to Work initiatives in Durham and Manchester. Some of the services they will provide to approximately 47 participants include classes on how to start a small business, e-courses on finance, and workshops on topics like marketing and accounting. To date, they have served 28 microenterprises.

The projects are scheduled to close out by June 30, 2018.

The Chair opened the floor to public comment on the projects.

Commissioners Cartwright asked a number of questions concerning the program and a representative from Hannah Grimes provided a number of statistics for the Keene program.

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The Chair closed the first public hearing at 9:51AM.

The Chair opened the second public hearing for discussion of the Community Development Block Grant Applications at 9:52AM.

Bullock explained that CDBG funds are available to municipalities for economic development, public facility and housing rehabilitation projects that primarily benefit low and moderate-income persons. Cheshire County is eligible to receive for up to \$500,000.00 in the housing and public facilities category, up to \$500,000.00 in the economic development category, up to \$500,000.00 in the microenterprise category, and \$12,000.00 for feasibility studies. Rebeckah Bullock provided a handout describing the NH Community Development Block Grant Program eligible activities that included the area HUD income limits.

Rebeckah Bullock provided a project handout. The proposed Micro Enterprise project is for up to \$500,000.00 to support three entities in southern NH: the Hannah Grimes Center in Keene (HGC), Rockingham Economic Development Center (REDC), and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). The funding is used by each entity to provide training and technical assistance and, in some cases, micro loan servicing to low and moderate income micro-entrepreneurs. If the proposed applications are successful, the funds will be awarded to Cheshire County which will sub-grant the funds, less administration, to the three Sub-recipients.

Cheshire County applied for and was awarded Microenterprise funding for the HGC, REDC, and SBDC in 2015, 2016, and 2017. The HGC, REDC, and SBDC are all interested in continuing to be recipients of the Microenterprise funding in 2018. The HGC anticipates serving 55 beneficiaries, the SBDC anticipates serving 47 beneficiaries, and the REDC anticipates serving 50 beneficiaries. This would be a total of 152 low to moderate income micro-entrepreneur beneficiaries served.

Representatives from the Hannah Grimes Center in Keene, provided the following details about the program in Keene.

The Chair opened the floor to public comment on the projects. No public comments were received.

Commissioner Weed asked about the sustainability of the program participants and was told that the Hanna Grimes program has an overall success rate of approximately 91%.

Commissioner Cartwright moved to close the Public Hearing on the Projects portion of the CDBG Block Grant



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Application Hearing. Seconded by Commissioner Weed. 3 in favor. 3 to 0. Motion passed.

Commissioner Cartwright moved to approve the submittal of the applications and vote to authorize County Administrator Christopher Coates or County Commissioner Chair Peter Graves as the Authorized Designees to sign and submit the CDBG applications, and upon approval of the CDBG applications, authorize the Authorized Designee to execute any documents which may be necessary to effectuate the CDBG contract. Seconded by Commissioner Weed. Three (3) in favor. 3 to 0. Motion passed.

Cartwright motioned to open the third public hearing regarding the Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan. Seconded by Weed. Three (3) in favor. 3 to 0. Motion passed.

Rebeckah Bullock of SWRPC explained that if any permanent displacement takes place as a result of this project, the Uniform Relocation Act must be followed, which requires that any permanently displaced household or business in a project using federal funds must be found comparable housing in a comparable neighborhood at a comparable price. Rebeckah Bullock noted that no permanent displacement is planned at this time. Under the certification section of the application, the County will certify that the Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance (RARA) Plan is in place, and in the event that it is discovered that this specific project does permanently displace persons or households, a displacement implementation plan must be submitted to CDFA prior to obligating or expending funds.

Chair calls for public comment. No public comments were received.

Commissioner Graves asked if any displacement has taken place. Bullock said that only a few temporary displacements have been experienced and no permanent displacements have occurred for any of the projects.

Commissioner Cartwright motioned to close the third public hearing for discussion of the proposed RARA Plan. Seconded by Weed. Three in favor. 3 to 0. Motion passed.

Commissioner Cartwright motioned to adopt the Residential Anti-displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan. Seconded by Commissioner Weed. Three (3) in favor. 3 to 0. Motion passed.

The Commissioners thanked Bullock and the other representatives for their presentation.

**At 10:04AM Pursuant to RSA 91-A (II) (a), (b) and (c), Commissioner Cartwright moved to enter non-public session Commissioner Weed seconded the motion and upon vote the motion passed unanimously moved to go into non-public session to discuss the hiring of any person as a public employee.**

**As a result of deliberations in non-public session a decision was made and a unanimous vote was taken to offer A. C. \$15.13 based on experience, training, and education.**

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**At 10:09AM the Commissioners return to public session.**

Master Agenda Item #566: DOT POS 5310 Federal Certifications & Assurances

**Action Expected: Sign form agreeing to comply with applicable provisions of Categories 01-21 of the FFY 2018 Certifications and Assurances from the Federal Transit Administration.**

Bansley presented a certification form for the Commissioners to sign. This is an annual certification form that the County Attorney and the Commissioners complete each year. Following a short review of the document Chairman Graves sign the document.

Assistant County Administrator Bouchard was then recognized to provide the Weekly Operations Report.

Bouchard reminded the Commissioners that the Cheshire Medical Center will be having their annual Legislative Breakfast on March 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00am at the hospital.

Bouchard then updated the Commissioners on the progress of the clean-up of the old jail and said that most of the right side of the debris pile has been processed and work will continue for the next few weeks.

Bouchard referenced a letter from the Finance Director concerning the now required enrollment of Assistant County Attorneys in the New Hampshire Retirement System (NHRS). He said that when Trombly returns next week she will go into detail about the recent ruling from the NHRS about the mandatory enrollment of all Assistant County Attorney's throughout the state in the retirement fund and the impact that the ruling could have on the County Attorney's office.

Commissioner Weed was then asked to provide a recap of the recent New Hampshire Association of Counties (NHAC) meeting, and his and Administrator Coates attendance at the Merrimack County Community Center opening.

He discussed the organizational changes being reviewed at the NHAC and provided a synopsis of the work accomplished thus far. He then said that the opening of the Community Center was well done and that the new facility will provide a short-term rehab facility for drug addicted individuals with the goal of preventing further involvement with drugs and with law enforcement.

Bouchard then handed out a short summary of real estate sales in Cheshire County for 2017 and shows that overall house prices rose about five percent (5%) and the total number of houses sold rose twenty-seven percent (27%) in the last year.

Bouchard then presented a request to donate an unused kiln at the nursing home to a local school who has an arts program that could use the kiln for their students. **Following discussion Commissioner Graves moved to donate the kiln to the Wheelock School in Keene and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

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Bouchard then said that the Horatio Colony Museum has requested to use the Delegation Hall on three separate dates this summer for a lecture series.

On Thursday June 7, at 7:00PM the first lecture will be “Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Phillips War.

On Wednesday, June 27, at 7:00PM a lecture entitled: “Digging Into Native History In New Hampshire” will be presented.

Lastly, on Wednesday, July 25, also at 7:00PM the final lecture, “Indian Wars of New England” will be given.

Bouchard then handed out the annual Auditor’s questionner to the Commissioners and asked that they fill out the questionner based on their knowledge and experience and turn the completed form in to Finance Director Trombly next week. She will then compile the final report for the auditors.

Bouchard then distributed a preliminary report on heating and cooling costs, including propane usage at the jail, as requested by the Commissioners the previous week. Facilities Director Barlow provided propane usage data that he has collected and is working on electrical costs with the goal of providing that data at the next meeting.

The Weekly Census was reviewed and a lengthy discussion concerning the jail population and the federal inmate population was covered.

**The Weekly Manifest was then reviewed and a number of questions were answered concerning invoices paid. At the conclusion of the questions, Commissioner Cartwright moved to accept the Manifest as presented and was seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.**

**The minutes of February 21, 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.

**At 11:21PM 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