

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, August 28, 2019
County Hall Building
Stillman Rogers Conference Room
12 Court Street, Keene, NH 03431

Present: Commissioners: Charles Weed, John Wozmak and Robert Englund

Staff: County Administrator Coates, Director of Finance Trombly, Assisted Living Facility Administrator Gowen, HR Director May, and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard

Guest(s):

At 8:31AM Chairman Weed opened the meeting and recognized Assisted Living Facility (ALF) Administrator Gowen to discuss Master Agenda Item #704: Semi-Annual Report - Assisted Living. Gowen presented the following written report.

*Assisted Living Facility
Semi-Annual Report to the Board of Commissioners
August 28, 2019*

Staffing: Remains consistent with 11 employees and 8 per diem. We recently hired a fulltime 11-7 PCA. The new hire got her LNA license and transferred to MNH. The fulltime employee out on FMLA should be returning next week.

Census:

Admissions: 6 (1 transfer from MNH)

Re-admissions from MNH: 4

Discharges: 4

20 people on the waiting list with 2 planned admissions within the next few weeks.

License: survey deferred this year due to 2 years of deficiency free surveys.

CMS changes: The state is focusing on the Developmentally Disabled (DD) and Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) group. Choices For Independence (CFI) is still set to be looked at next but they are unsure how to do this. There may be a provider self-assessment form that is sent out with the idea that we do a plan of correction for any criteria we didn't meet. Preliminary thoughts are that facilities like Maplewood Nursing Home will be grandfathered in. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is doing a heightened scrutiny pilot and New Hampshire and Ohio are the two states chosen. Also, there is a rumor that CMS may relax some of the reasons why this process needs to be done but it's only speculation at this point. (It's been going on for 5 years)

Addendum to the above for April –Sept 2019:

Staffing: 2 long term staff members have retired and positions have been filled.

Census: 21

Admissions: 0

Re-admissions from MNH: 1

Discharges: 0

Waiting list: 37

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CMS update; “CFI Provider Self-Assessment/Remediation Form” has been created with Garrish Manor a nursing home in Boscawen, NH, being the first to pilot the process. The committee implementing this program worked/supported them to be in compliance. We have not been given a date and I’ve not heard if any other county has been audited.

We received 3 minor deficiencies during this years’ survey; an annual self-medication order, annual “keep under lock and key order” and semi-annual assessment to self-medicate. (This was all for the same resident and it was corrected prior to survey.) Life Safety was deficiency free.

Projects:

*Member of: Waiver Transition Project, MALF, CFI Template Work Group.
Developing Assisted Living Facility continuous quality improvement (CQI) Program
Training for new Electronic Medication Charting (ECP) Program*

A discussion of the types of payments being received (private pay, Medicare and Medicaid) for the Assisted Living Facility was covered and the types of services offered was reviewed.

The mission of the Assisted Living Facility was reviewed and the cost compared to the local community for-profit operations was discussed. Staffing issues were covered concerning the licensing requirements for the various staff positions and the grade level designations for staffing categories were also reviewed.

A discussion of the services offered by the ALF for residents and the introduction of the use of digital medical records was covered. Gowen said that there are currently 37 applicants for the apartments at the facility and that for the first time in memory five (5) couples have applied for one the 20 studio apartments.

Gowen discussed the pending testing of a tablet-based medication tracking system in the facility. Following discussion, the Commissioners said that they support the use of the proposed electronic tablets for medication tracking and management and Gowen will move forward with implementing the system.

The Commissioners thanked Gowen for her report.

At 9:21AM Commissioner Wozmak moved to enter a non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a) to discuss the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted. Commissioner Englund 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.

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At 9:53AM the Commissioners voted unanimously to return to public session.

Coates was then recognized to present the Weekly Operations report.

Coates said that a Correctional Officer was attacked by an inmate last night and suffered injuries. The city of Keene Police is investigating the incident and assault charges against the inmate may result.

Coates then discussed his visit to the State of NH Attorney Generals (AG) office to discuss the NH opiate lawsuit. He said that approximately \$540M in costs have been identified and although significant work remains to be done, the opiate lawsuits pending across the county, and as recently highlighted in the national press, continues to move very rapidly towards a similar resolution as was reached in the Tobacco lawsuit settlements of 1998. Coates said that the meeting with the AG explored possible settlement issues and he expressed the Counties great concerns around the State keeping any settlement monies and not passing the funds to the Counties and municipalities that actually suffered the impact of the costs over many years.

Coates said that he will be meeting with the Conval School district on September 10th with the Restorative Justice staff to explore the possible inclusion of the program in the schools.

Coates then discussed the external learning opportunities that are available to some high schools and said that Hinsdale has developed a very active and admired program for their students. He went on to say that other County school districts would do well to emulate Hinsdale program.

Coates related that the NH US Marshalls meeting held on Monday went very well and he said that the Marshalls office is not only very pleased with the services provided by the County it is also interested in sending more inmates for custody holds. The Medicated Assisted Treatment program was also discussed as a positive reason to be able to host more federal inmates as the Marshall's offices look for these types of services with the institutions that they work with.

Coates said that one request received from the Marshall's is to investigate having the Correctional Officers who do the transports to the courts wear suits or blazers and escort the inmates into the court room and then remain with the inmate for security purposes while they are being presented. Coates said that he will consult with the Superintendent on the request.

Coates said that a second Handyman project will be presented today for review and the preliminary assessment is that the proposed project seems to meet the guidelines of the program.

Coates reminded the Commissioners that on October 29th the Conservation District will hold their Annual Meeting at the Keene County Club. The event begins at 6:00PM and former Keene Sentinel editor Jim Rousmaniere of Roxbury, will be the keynote speaker and will discuss his recent book, "Water Connections: What Fresh Water Means to Us, What We Mean to Water".

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Coates then handed out a communication from the Superintendent of the Department of Corrections requesting clarification of the progressive discipline guidelines for staff members.

Old Business: A discussion of re-introducing the Commissioners letter at the next NHAC monthly meeting began and it was decided to ask to have the re-presentation and discussion of the letter added to the September meeting of the group.

New Business: None

The Weekly Census was then reviewed and the report was accepted as informational.

Commissioner Weed expressed a concern that he has heard about the number of federal inmates being held at the Department of Corrections and how the facility was meant to be for local use and the cost that must be occurring to the County because of holding the federal inmates.

A discussion concerning the number of federal inmates from NH and VT started and the priority order of how inmates are accepted from outside of the County was covered. It was learned that all local inmates have first priority to be housed followed by NH Prison and NH federal holds, followed by VT local and federal holds.

Also covered was that many times when citizens who express this concern are informed of the priority order and the income gained from the US Marshalls Federal Inmate Hold Program (over \$2M in 2018 and on track for over \$1.5M in 2019) coupled with the space that has been available because of the implementation of Diversion Programs introduced in the Court systems, many of the objections are satisfied and a majority of those inquiring support the programs.

The Weekly Manifest was then reviewed, and Commissioner Englund moved to accept the Manifest as presented and was seconded by Commissioner Wozmak, upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

The minutes of August 21, 2019 were then discussed and Commissioner Englund moved to accept the minutes as presented and was seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

The calendar was then reviewed and no changes were noted.

At 11:52AM there being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Englund moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn was seconded by Commissioner Wozmak and upon vote the motion passed unanimously.

Minutes recorded by:
R. A. Bouchard, Assistant County Administrator

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Reviewed and submitted by:
R. Englund, Clerk