

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, August 26, 2020
County Hall Pursuant to Emergency Order #12 Pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04
This meeting will be conducted electronically.

Conference Call Information
Phone Call-in Number: +1 646 558 8656
Meeting ID: 409 748 8803
Pin #: 6031233

Present: Commissioners: Charles Weed, Jack Wozmak and Robert Englund
Staff: County Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Maplewood Administrator Kindopp, and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard.
Guests:

At 8:33AM Commissioner Weed opened the meeting and a roll-call of the Commissioners attending the meeting was conducted by County Administrator Coates. Commissioners Weed, Wozmak and Englund and responded as "present".

Commissioner Weed then moved to conduct this meeting as an emergency meeting under the relevant provisions of NH RSA 91-A, and consistent with the recommendations contained in Executive Order 2020-04 Order 12 issued by Governor Sununu. Commissioner Wozmak seconded the motion and upon roll-call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Emergency Order #12 Pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04
Temporary modification of public access to meetings under RSA 91-A
Pursuant to Section 18 of Executive Order 2020-04 it is hereby ordered, effective immediately, that:

1. Pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, paragraph 8 provides: "State and local government bodies are permitted and encouraged to utilize the emergency meeting provisions of RSA 91-A to conduct meetings through electronic means while preserving, to the extent feasible, the public's right to notice of such meetings and ability to observe and listen contemporaneously."
2. Pursuant to Emergency Order #2 issued pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, gatherings of fifty people or more are prohibited.
3. To implement these orders and recommendations, the requirement in RSA 91-A:2, II 1 (b), that a quorum of a public body be physically present unless immediate action is imperative, is waived for the duration of the State of Emergency declared in Executive Order 2020-04.
4. To further implement these orders and recommendations, the requirement in RSA 91-A:2, II 1 (c), that each part of a meeting of a public body be audible or otherwise discernible to the public "at the location specified in the meeting notice as the location of the meeting," is waived for the duration of the State of Emergency declared in Executive Order 2020-04 so long as the public body:

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- Provides public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by
- video or other electronic means.
- Provides public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting.
- Provides a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are
- problems with access; and
- Adjourns the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting.

Coates then outlined the rules of the meeting.

1. Public has an opportunity at the beginning of the Commissioners Meeting under “Public Comment” to speak. Community input will not be allowed after that point, unless recognized and allowed by the Chair of the Commissioners.
2. All votes will be Roll Call and when recognized, we are asking that you re-state your name and yes or no
3. If you have a question or motion that you would like to ask to put forward, please state the following, “Mr. Chair, Commissioner (your name) has a question or motion”.
4. If you are having issue hearing the call, please text or call the County Administrator at 603-313-9002.
5. Please mute your phones so background noise won’t interfere with the meeting.
6. This meeting has been posted on our website so that the community, department heads and media can listen into the meeting.
7. This meeting is utilizing a Zoom Platform so listeners can join us via audio or audio/visual.

At 8:35AM the Chair recognized Administrator Kindopp to discuss Master Agenda Item #792: CMS initiative - Earn Money for Less Than Average COVID-19 Infection Rate. Kindopp discussed that a new program that will provide additional funding up to approximately \$2B nationally, to nursing homes for meeting markers for low COVID-19 infection rates, the attainment of educational requirements, and the achievement of other goals that are being worked out as the program is introduced. Kindopp said the new program is called ECHO that stand for Extension for Community Healthcare Outcome.

Kindopp outlined how the previous stipends helped retain staff during the payment period and it is anticipated that payments from the ECHO program would be used for staffing support issues. She said that the latest statistics show that healthcare workers in the work force are twice as likely to be at risk of death compared to other hazardous jobs such as the logging industry and

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other highly dangerous careers. She said that the total payments from the ECHO funding could be up to \$70K.

The Commissioners asked a number of questions concerning the proposed program and Kindopp outlined the anticipated impact on staff and morale.

An extended discussion of the logistically and operational issues were covered in detail including expenses and funding for covering the costs that are expected to be incurred. A question was asked about overall staffing levels and Kindopp outlined some the challenges that are being faced during the reconstruction of the building. She highlighted the problems with the kitchen and laundry areas in particular.

Coates was then recognized to discuss Master Agenda Item #793: Change in State GOFERR Rules.

Coates said that the GOFERR rules have been changing yet again and outlined that the rules appear to support the use of the monies for issues like payroll supplements. He said that the previous issue that was discussed of using some of the funds for local ambulance services needed to be reviewed.

The Commissioners then discussed the need for supporting the ambulance service and it was agreed to provide some or all funding for the previously conditionally approved equipment. The previous approval was based on the availability of funding monies for purchase of ventilators and IV Pump equipment that is greatly needed to support the healthcare of all County residents.

Coates then discussed a complaint that has been received from a resident on Partridge Brook Road concerning speeding trucks and other issues that are concerning them. Coates outlined the details of the complaint and discussed his communications with farm personnel who rent the buildings and the complainant.

Coates then discussed communication from a County resident concerning the need for a County Animal Officer to investigate any animal abuse and cruelty issues. A discussion of the previous history of the position was covered.

A further discussion was had around possible additional CARES funding that may be available from federal funding sources for services such as transportation, child care, community kitchens, child care services and many other needs for low-and middle-income residents.

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Coates said that he attended a call for Keene State College yesterday hosted by the Keene State President Linda Treadwell. He outlined that a number of students, approximately 93%, will be on campus for this year. He said that the in-state student population has increased 11% but with a decline of out-of-state students and that a total of \$4.5M has been cut from the Colleges operating budget.

He said that KSC is requiring that all students must be tested prior to entering the campus and that there are currently 187 students on campus as of this week with more coming next week.

He then said that the NH Association of Counties emergency meeting was held on Monday concerning additional Medicaid funding that has been received by the State that is not being shared with the Counties. A meeting will be held today to discuss this issue as the Counties seek equity from the State on these funding issues.

A cookout is scheduled for Wednesday September the 16th at Maplewood Nursing home to support the staff and Commissioners Englund and Weed will attend.

Coates then said that on September 8th a Zoom Drug Court graduation will be held at 12:00PM and invited the Commissioners to attend.

Coates then outlined the upcoming NH Association of Counties Annual Conference agenda that will be held via Zoom on October 26 – 30th. The agenda will include the following topics.

Medicaid 101

Henry D. Lipman, Medicaid Director, New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services

Unity Training (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion)

Kirsty Fontaine, Health Program Manager, National Association of Counties

Blaire Bryant, Associate Legislative Director for Health, National Association of Counties

Federal Update on COVID-19

Mark Ritacco, Deputy Director of Government Affairs, National Association of Counties

Teryn Zmuda, Deputy Chief Innovation Officer and Chief Economist, National Association of Counties' County Innovations Lab

Broadband Update

Arthur Scott, Associate Legislative Director, Agriculture and rural Affairs, & Political Outreach Manager, National Association of Counties

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Criminal Justice Reform Work

Kerwin Henderson, Program Manager for Justice and Public Safety, National Association of Counties

Brett Mattson, Associate Legislative Director for Justice and Public Safety, National Association of Counties

Old Business: Trombly discussed the Mascoma Bank employee loan account that pays .04% interest rate and said that additional funds are being placed with the bank. The Commissioner agreed to approve the transfers based on the judgement of the Director of Finance.

A second discussion around the annual rollout of benefit sign-ups and the use of Zoom to complete the needed presentations was covered in-depth.

New Business: None

Commissioner Englund moved to accept the Consent agenda for the Weekly Manifest and the Minutes from the week of July 29, 2020, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Wozmak and upon roll-call vote the motion passed unanimously.

At 10:24AM there being no further public business to discuss, Commissioner Englund moved to adjourn and was seconded by Commissioner Wozmak. Upon roll-call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Minutes recorded by:
R. Bouchard, Assistant County Administrator

Reviewed and submitted by:
R. Englund, Clerk