

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, September 23, 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, and Robert Englund (Jack Wozmak absent w/notice)

Staff: County Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, Grants Manager Bansley

Guests: Terry Clark, County of Cheshire, Treasurer, James Weatherly, Planning Technician, Southwest Regional Planning

At 8:32AM Commissioner Weed opened the meeting and a roll-call of the Commissioners attending the meeting was conducted by County Administrator Coates. Commissioners Weed, and Englund responded as "present". Commissioner Wozmak absent with notice.

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:
 - 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.

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- 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 8:33AM the Chair recognized James Weatherly to discuss Master Agenda Item #803: Master Agenda Item: Community Development Block Grant – Compass Economic Development project mid-grant hearing.

Weatherly explained that it is a requirement of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to hold a public hearing while the project is underway to allow the public the opportunity to comment and ask questions about the project. The project being discussed is the Compass Innovative Behavior Strategies CDBG project.

James Weatherly described that for the project being discussed, CDBG funds were sub-granted to the Monadnock Economic Development Corporation, who used the funds to make a loan to Compass for working capital to assist in the start-up of their clinic serving the Monadnock Region. As of the beginning of September 2020, Compass Innovative Behavior Strategies has established their facility on Marlboro Road and has been able to provide a robust suite of services for children with autism at their new clinic. Compass has also nearly fulfilled the job creation requirement of 15 new jobs.

Dan Dube, CEO of Compass Innovative Behavior Strategies and Arthur Robert, President of the Monadnock Economic Development Corporation provided the following details about the project: It was learned that the original commitment of hiring 9 employees has been greatly surpassed as 25 new

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employees have been onboarded since the start of the grant. Dube and MEDC spoke positively about the program said that it has been a great success that was funded in part by the CDBG funding.

The Chair opened the floor to public comment on the projects. There were no public comments.

Commissioner Englund moved to close the Public Hearing on the Mid-Grant portion of the CDBG Block Grant Hearing. Seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon roll-call vote the motion passed unanimously.

The Chair opened the Second public hearing for discussion of Master Agenda Item #804: Community Development Block Grant – Coronavirus Response (CDBG-CV) Application Hearing for Hundred Nights Shelter. Weatherly was then recognized and spoke to the Hundred Nights application.

Weatherly, explained CDBG funds are available to municipalities for a wide variety of projects that primarily benefit low- and moderate-income persons. Cheshire County is eligible to receive up to \$500,000 a year in the following categories: housing, public facilities, economic development, microenterprise, as well as up to \$500,000 a year in emergency funds and up to \$25,000 annually for feasibility study funds. The proposed application is under a new funding category made available under the federal CARES Act for public services that prepare for, respond to, or recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Eligible costs under this new funding source, known as CDBG-CV, include costs related to the provision of public services such as staff salaries, transportation costs, lease and rental expenses, and other program delivery costs. Cheshire County is eligible to receive up to \$500,000 in this new category to fund activities which have a service area anywhere in the County. James Weatherly provided a handout describing the NH Community Development Block Grant Program eligible activities that include the area HUD income limits and a description of the CDBG-CV funding source and eligible activities under CDBG-CV.

Weatherly provided a project handout. The proposed application to the Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA) is for up to \$500,000 in CDBG-CV public services funds.

The CDBG funds will be used assist Hundred Nights, Inc. lease a former gym space located at 15 King Court in Keene to provide 24 overflow shelter beds, as well as for related staff, utilities, personal protective equipment, and transportation costs.

Weatherly then said that the Low-Moderate Income Benefit of the Project is estimated to be 100% due to the nature of the activity as a homeless shelter.

Mindy Cambiar, Executive Director of Hundred Nights, Inc. spoke about the loss of overflow bed spaces at local churches and said that a great deal of effort has been expended and the King Street

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location can offer 24 overnight beds. The space would not be used for daytime activities. The space is approximately 5,000 sq. ft. and the space has already been fully rehabbed and is ready to go.

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

Administrator Coates then asked if this was a temporary site and if a permanent location can be found to house the entire program is still actively being pursued. A further discussion as to the use of program by various towns began and she said that Swanzey Jaffrey, and Winchester were the predominate. 80% of all beds in the past years have been used by Cheshire County residents.

Tim Murphy spoke and said that some public comments were made that confused the commitment being made by Hundred Nights for the reimbursement of the services that have been provided to Hundred Nights. Cambiar said that Hundred Nights will fully reimburse SWRPC for their work if the grant is not approved. She then spoke to the use of the present Lamson Street facility and said that it would be at least two more years before the new facility would be ready for use on Water Street.

Commissioner Englund moved to close the Public Hearing on the Project portion of the CDBG Block Grant Hearing and was seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon roll-call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Englund then moved to approve the submittal of the application and vote to authorize the AUTHORIZED DESIGNEE Christopher C. Coates, Cheshire County Administrator and Charles Weed, Chair, Cheshire County Commissioners to sign and submit the CDBG application, and upon approval of the CDBG application, authorize the AUTHORIZED DESIGNEE to execute any documents which may be necessary to effectuate the CDBG contract. Seconded Commissioner Englund. Upon roll-call vote the motion passed unanimously.

9:21AM Commissioner Weed moved to open the third public hearing regarding the Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan and was seconded by Commissioner Englund. Upon roll-call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Weatherly explained that if any permanent displacement takes places 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. James Weatherly 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.

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Commissioner Weed called for public comment and seeing none moved to close the third public hearing for discussion of the proposed RARA Plan and was seconded by Commissioner Englund. Commissioner Englund moved to adopt the Residential Anti-displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan and was seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon roll-call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Bansley was then recognized to discuss Master Agenda Item #805: JAG FFY20 Award Acceptance. She said that the overall grant is about \$1,000.00 less than last year. She then asked the Commissioners to vote to accept the JAG FFY20 Award from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Edward Burne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program for \$11,016 and execute award documents. \$5,007 will be subawarded to the City of Keene in accordance with a previously executed MOU. Grant term is 10/1/19-9/30/21. No match is required. Funds will be used to continue the cellular connectivity and smartphone data packages for both the County of Cheshire and the City of Keene.

Following review by Bansley and questions by the Commissioners, Commissioner Englund moved to accept the Award Acceptance and was seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon roll-call vote the motion passed unanimously with two Yea's.

Administrator Coates was then recognized to provide the Weekly Operations Report.

Coates said that he received an email from Maplewood concerning the availability of the high dose flu vaccine. The high dose is only available for residents and staff must obtain the shot from other sources such as CVS or other medical facilities.

Coates then discussed the filling of the position for the County Attorney's office for the open Restorative Justice / Victim Witness position.

Coates then said that last week the Sheriff requested stipends for the bailiffs and dispatchers and he polled the other Counties to see if any other Counties had provided stipends for their staffs. Only one county said that they done so and it was done somewhat outside of the established rules and they are prepared to committing to repaying the monies if required.

Coates Radically Rural begins tomorrow and the Commissioners have been provided the log in data.

A meeting concerning the replacement of the broken elevator and it was learned that the total cost will be approximately \$100K.

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Coates then discussed the removal of the trees at Maplewood and said that the logging company that has been contracted.

Old Business:

New Business: Trombly was then recognized and asked if the Commissioners were okay with the proposed budget review schedule. A short discussion began and the Commissioners said that the meeting schedule looks fine and that we should move ahead with scheduling.

Trombly then discussed the Health Insurance Plan Amendment to allow the coverage of autism coverage as part of the county healthcare plan. Commissioner Weed moved to add the coverage and was seconded by Commissioner Englund. Upon roll-call vote the motion passed with two affirmative votes.

Commissioner Weed moved to accept the Consent agenda for the Weekly Manifest and the Minutes from the week of September 16, 2020. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Englund and upon roll-call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Englund then discussed that a resident from Keene is interested in learning more about County government and would join the meeting via Zoom.

At 10:04AM there being no further public business to discuss, Commissioner Weed moved to adjourn and was seconded by Commissioner Englund. Upon roll-call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Minutes recorded by:

R. Bouchard, Assistant County Administrator

Reviewed and submitted by:

R. Englund, Clerk