

**MINUTES**  
**Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting**  
**Wednesday, October 7, 2020 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, IT Director Hummel, HR Director May, Grants Manager Bansley, and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard.

**Guests:** Terry Clark, County of Cheshire, Treasurer, Energy Efficient Investments, Mike Davey, County Owners Representative, Steve Horton.

**At 9:30 AM, Commissioner Weed opened the meeting, and County Administrator Coates conducted a roll-call of the Commissioners attending the meeting. Commissioners Weed and Englund, and Wozmak 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 is 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 session if the public is unable to access the meeting.

Coates then outlined the rules of the meeting.

1. The 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 issues 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 to the meeting.
7. This meeting is utilizing a Zoom Platform so listeners can join us via audio or audio/visual.

At 9:32 AM, the Chair recognized Grants Manager Bansley, who presented Master Agenda Item #809: Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Grant Award Acceptance.

Bansley asked the Commissioners to vote to accept the award and execute award documents for the 2021 Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) grant "DV Prosecutor Grant" from the New Hampshire Department of Justice for \$30,000 per year plus a \$10,000 per year match. Funds will be spent to offset the salary of a domestic violence prosecutor partially. The prosecutor's benefits payments will meet the required grant match.

**After questions and discussion by the Commissioners, Commissioner Englund moved to accept the grant award and was seconded by Commissioner Wozmak. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

IT Director Hummel was then recognized to present Master Agenda Item #810: IT Services and Support for Towns. Hummel presented the following report.

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*IT Department Status Report - October 07, 2020*

***Staffing & Workload***

*The IT Department is currently fully staffed. All staff members are involved in a wide range of activities from routine monitoring and maintenance, user support, and active research and development. The IT workload has increased to support "dual offices" as more users alternate between office and home. In addition, a significant portion of staff time is required to support the Maplewood reconstruction project.*

***IT Department Projects***

***1. HVAC Monitoring Services (Maintenance)***

*Previous statement:*

*The maintenance department contracted ENE Systems of NH to install new boiler and HVAC controllers that require an Internet connection for monitoring and control. Systems were installed at Maplewood and in Keene. To ensure that these systems do not provide a pathway for unauthorized access to County data, we provisioned them with an isolated network and firewall connections.*

*Clarification:*

*At the September 16, 2020 Commissioners' meeting, Commissioner Wozmak asked if the "dial-in is protected with proper firewalls." Facility Director Harrison responded that "Hummel was involved with the connection to make sure everything is secure."*

*IT has no direct control or involvement with the HVAC equipment or applications and cannot vouch for their security. Access is controlled via a built-in web-based interface and all security of the application is determined by the vendor – not County IT. The sole involvement of IT has been to provide access from the Internet to the HVAC system and to isolate the system to ensure that a compromise of the HVAC system will not allow a malactor direct access to county data systems.*

***2. County File Sharing Service (NextCloud)***

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*The "NextCloud" file sharing service was developed internally as a secure, no cost, locally-hosted service to allow the County Attorney office to store and share large volumes of documents with extra-county agencies. The Grants, Alternative Sentencing, and Finance departments are now using this service to facilitate file sharing of documents that are too large or too secure for traditional email. IT anticipates that the use of this system will continue to grow within the County.*

### *3. Telephone System Replacement and Upgrade*

*The conversion to a VoIP/SIP telephone system on all campuses is complete to the extent allowed by the current infrastructure. Inter-campus dialing using 4-digits has been implemented, allowing all internal calls to remain solely within our infrastructure.*

*Keene: In September 2019, a majority of the telephone lines at 12 Court and 33 West were ported from Consolidated (FairPoint) to a SIP provider. The remaining lines were ported on October 2019.*

*HOC: All lines were ported from Consolidated (FairPoint) to the SIP provider in January 2020.*

*Maplewood: IT was asked to accelerate the SIP conversion at Maplewood to reduce the need to provide new installation of legacy wiring to support the then-existing digital phone system. We did so, ensuring that the new system was developed and deployed in parallel with the old system. However, porting the phone numbers from Maplewood was a lengthy and extremely contentious process due to lack of cooperation on the part of Consolidated.*

*The first Maplewood phone number port request was submitted in January 2020 and the last number was finally moved to the new provider in September 2020. During this seven-month conversion period, IT ensured that all phones were operational and worked to resolve issues (cut lines, relocated offices) caused by the construction.*

*The County is now compliant with e911 requirements at Keene, HOC, and Maplewood. In addition, the County is compliant with the dialing and notification requirements of Kari's Law (compliance required by February 16, 2020) and Ray Baum's Act (compliance required by January 6, 2021).*

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*As of now, the new phone system cannot be extended to either the 33 West Street building or to the Maplewood ALF due to a lack of cabling infrastructure. Projects to wire these buildings have been discussed as far back as 2017.*

*Services for the large number of FAX and fire alarm/elevator (POTS) lines will continue to be provided by Consolidated.*

#### *4. Work-From-Home*

*In March 2020, administration informed IT that it should plan to support a work-from-home (WFH) program for County employees that may need to work remotely. At that time, the possibility of purchasing computer equipment through normal channels was already compromised. Our traditional suppliers were already reporting sold-out of most items and no delivery dates available. IT was asked to provide an initial capability of 35 WFH systems.*

*The nature of many of the large server-based applications that are in use by the County to manage finances, medical records, and confidential files do not lend themselves to remote installation. These programs operate extremely slowly – if at all – over a remote connection to the point of being unusable. It made sense, in both time and dollars, to enable remote connections to existing desktop systems.*

*IT moved quickly to purchase the required number of cameras and speaker-mics for those requiring them from non-traditional suppliers. Beyond that, creating deployable systems did not require capital outlay. Several years ago, we had taken advantage of the free Windows 10 license offer from Microsoft so there were no operating system costs. Because the remote PCs would access the user's primary PC, we avoided the huge licensing cost for virtual desktop access. And our VPN access program had adequate license capacity to handle the new load. In one week, IT was able to deliver 42 complete systems available to be taken home. System Administrator Melissa Beckford managed this effort and is directly responsible for its success.*

#### *5. VPN System for Remote Connections*

*IT developed a new VPN system with the intent of upgrading the mobile connections used by the Sheriff Deputies. In a review with NHDOS, the system was rejected due to a lack of FIPS compliance certification. (Although the VPN may meet the requirements, it has not been certified by the vendor – a lengthy and expensive process.) The Sheriff will continue to use the current system that is FIPS compliant.*

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*However, County operations that do not fall under the CJIS requirements have been converted to the new VPN system. This system is more robust, can auto-connect, and combines with a hardware firewall to improve connection security. Employees have been issued updated work-from-home PCs that are configured to use the new system and operate in an "always connected" mode. This simplifies operations for the users and allows IT to more closely restrict access by authorized users as well as perform Windows updates and anti-virus management. The system has been deployed to approximately 75-percent of remote users with overwhelmingly positive feedback. IT implemented this new VPN system at no cost to the County.*

*6. Tele-Medicine at Maplewood*

*When nursing home visitation was suspended in April 2020, IT was asked for a solution to allow video visits (Facetime, Skype) between residents and families. We fielded a few test systems comprising a PC, camera, and mic/speaker built from equipment we had on-hand. After a successful test, we purchased rolling stands to allow these units to be deployed safely in a health-care environment.*



*The requirements for casual visitation are similar to those for remote medical consultation. As such, we anticipated that the carts might play a future role in a remote medical program and built them to the higher standard. In July 2020, we were asked to re-deploy the carts as part of a Dartmouth-Hitchcock telehealth program. As of today, two carts are in service at Maplewood in*

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*the program. A total of five carts have been provisioned. Total cost to the County was under \$800.*

*7. Secure Internal Video Conferencing*

*An IT research and development project produced an in-house secure video conferencing (SVC) system that provides secure video meetings that never leave our internal network, eliminating security concerns raised by using outside services. The original motivation was to provide a secure system that could be used to host video visitation or medical consultation between rooms at Maplewood.*

*IT has tested the system for video meetings as well as remote video monitoring (unattended PC with camera). Recently, the Finance department asked for a way to conduct remote benefit briefings (person-to-person or person-to-group) to new Maplewood employees without the risk of an in-person visit. The SVC system is being used for this task. IT implemented this new SVC system at no cost to the County.*

*8. HR Document Archiving*

*IT is working with the HR department to create "digital paper" versions of employment records that must be maintained for a period of time. The scanned versions can be placed on our storage servers at no cost and are available for rapid retrieval. Additionally, they can be archived off-site for record preservation.*

*8. HOC Card Reader System*

*The HOC Card Reader system controls access within the facility. It is also required for officers to access the Com-Tec security panels. The current system is no longer supported by the manufacturer and replacement parts are difficult to find. The control computer for this system is currently running on an installation of Windows XP that is "air-gapped" to reduce the risk of compromise.*

*A capital equipment allocation was approved for the 2020 budget to perform an in-place upgrade to this system. Work on this project was delayed at the request of the County administrators. IT expects to put this upgrade out for bid in Q4 of 2020.*

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***Availability, Continuity of Business, and Disaster Survivability***

*A primary responsibility of the IT Department is to ensure the availability of computing resources to all County departments when and where required and to ensure the County's continuity of business. We have a comprehensive business continuity program in place which is reviewed, updated, and tested regularly.*

*On August 4, 2020, an incident occurred that impacted the ability of IT to deliver services. One of the UPSes operated by Dispatch failed catastrophically. When it failed, it compromised the commercial power that is distributed to other parts of the 12 Court Street building – including the IT network operations center (NOC).*

*Each rack in the NOC contains a rack-mounted UPS system that is sized to provide power to the servers and network switches in that rack. They do not have the capacity to power the systems long-term (> 30 minutes). In the case of lost commercial power and a generator failure (which has happened in the past), the rack UPSes are designed to pull power from the dispatch UPS – in this case, the UPS that had failed. The result was that the rack UPSes could not draw power from either source and, when exhausted, the servers and switches operating dispatch shut down.*

*IT attempted to obtain tertiary power sources including using extension cords to other outlets in the building and attempting to use portable gasoline generators. None of these attempts were successful. When an electrician arrived and repaired the damage to the commercial power supply, we were able to resume service.*

*This incident highlighted our dependency on power from the commercial mains. To address this, I will be installing a UPS system capable of powering the NOC for approximately six ours at its current load. In addition, we will develop a "load-shedding" plan to extend run time as needed.*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Robert L. Hummel*  
*Director of Information Technology*

Commissioner Wozmak then asked about the access to the County networks by HVAC vendors granted access to control the environmental systems at the Nursing Home, Department of Corrections, and Keene downtown campus. Following discussions, Mike Davey and Steve Horton offered to submit the protocol used by EEI/ENE to the Commissioners for review and documentation purposes.

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A discussion about the use of the Maplewood Telehealth project ensued. The residents and staff are both pleased with the program.

Hummel said that he has put into the IT budget for next year a UPS system capable of supporting the entire County server network for approximately six hours. The cost of about \$60K is covered by cuts in other parts of the IT budget.

Hummel then reviewed the network security systems in place and provided documentation to the Commissioners on the number of attacks and the sources of these attacks that occur at a growing rate.

IT services for the municipalities in the County was then discussed and it agreed that if the County were to commit to providing essential computer services the towns should be consulted on needs and costs before implementation of any program. The use of online storage services for police cameras recordings was on the suggested uses. A suggested list of potential services will be created by Hummel and discussed and reviewed by the Commissioners.

Administrator Coates was then recognized to discuss Master Agenda Item #807: EEI - County Energy Audit Review.

Coates provided a short overview and then introduced Mike Davey and Steve Horton, who reviewed the work completed thus far, and Davey discussed the following slides.



## Energy Efficient Investments

### Energy Project Update Cheshire County

**October 7 2020**



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### **Update as of 10-7-2020**

1. Solar PV removed from the project at this time. County will look into solar outside of this process.
2. 25 year old ALF HVAC units added to scope
3. EEI has obtained a lease finance quote at 2.85% over 20 years. However, budget will be based on 3.0% as closing would not occur until spring and rates could move
4. Current budget assumes PUC grant for biomass which will be applied at end October.

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EEI & ENE ENERGY ADVISOR



### **Major Findings From Audit**

- County Hall HVAC System at End of life
- Opportunity to move toward renewable fuel at all facilities
- LED Lighting Offers significant energy savings opportunities
- Admin Building Cooling system problematic with City Gas back up Boiler
- Geo-thermal at corrections is being underutilized

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EEI & ENE ENERGY ADVISOR

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An in-depth discussion of the projected cost of ~\$4M was had. Commissioner Wozmak expressed his reluctance to include the LED lighting upgrades in the 20-year lease, saying that the technology would be long obsolete by the time it was paid for and that it doesn't make sense to include the lighting in the upgrade plans. He said that he understood and supported the replacement of critical capital equipment items that have reached operational and economic end-of-life but wants to examine and discuss other aspects of the plan more closely. As a result of the discussions, Coates and Bouchard will meet with Commissioner Wozmak to vet the plan's recommendations in the coming weeks.

**At 11:29 AM, pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(b), Commissioner Wozmak moved to enter a non-public session to discuss *hiring any person as a public employee*, and Commissioner Englund seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

**As a result of deliberations in a non-public session, the Commissioners authorized the hiring of P. H. for the position of Director of Restorative Justice and Victim Witness services at a rate no greater than the amount offered by the County Attorney.**

**At 11:51 AM, the Commissioners voted unanimously to return to public session.**

Coates was then recognized for the Weekly Operations report and discussed Master Agenda Item #808: NH Association of Counties (NHAC) Proxy Vote Discussion.

Coates said that he spoke with Dupont Group concerning the proxy vote process for the NH Association of Counties. He outlined how proxy voting worked. A discussion about how the process works in the NHAC was covered and examined at length. The letter to be sent to the Dupont group follows:

Kate Horgan

October 9th, 2020

The Dupont Group  
29 School St., Suite 200  
Concord, NH 03301  
[khorgan@dupontgroup.com](mailto:khorgan@dupontgroup.com)

Dear Kate:

At the Commissioners October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 public meeting, the Commissioners voted unanimously to appoint the representatives listed below to serve on the New Hampshire Association of

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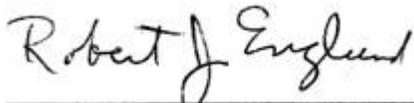
Counties' Executive Committee as our representatives from Cheshire County. Included is an excerpt from the October 7<sup>th</sup> 2020 minutes wherein the appointments were voted on.

"Commissioner Wozmak motioned to appoint Commissioners Jack Wozmak, Bob Englund, County Administrator Chris Coates, Director of Finance Sheryl Trombly and County Nursing Home Administrator Kathryn Kindopp, to serve on the NHAC Executive Committee. Seconded by Commissioner Englund and accepted unanimously on a voice vote 3 to 0. Commissioner Wozmak motioned to give County representatives serving on the NHAC Executive Committee the power to present proxy votes for members unable to attend meetings. Seconded by Commissioner Englund and accepted unanimously by voice vote 3 to 0. A letter will be sent to NHAC's Dupont Group notified them of these decisions."

Commissioner Jack Wozmak @ [jwozmak@mfs.org](mailto:jwozmak@mfs.org)  
Commissioner Robert Englund @ [bobenglund42@gmail.com](mailto:bobenglund42@gmail.com)  
County Administrator Christopher Coates @ [ccoates@co.cheshire.nh.us](mailto:ccoates@co.cheshire.nh.us)  
Finance Director Sheryl Trombly @ [strombly@co.cheshire.nh.us](mailto:strombly@co.cheshire.nh.us)  
Nursing Home Administrator Kathryn Kindopp @ [kkindopp@co.cheshire.nh.us](mailto:kkindopp@co.cheshire.nh.us)

If there is any other information you require, please let me know.

Very truly yours,



Bob Englund, Clerk  
Cheshire County Commissioners

Coates then said that NH Superior Court Chief Justice Nadeau sent out a letter concerning potential state budget cuts that outlined budgetary threats to the State's drug courts. The resulting questions and concerns expressed by several participants resolved the issue, and funding will continue.

Coates then reviewed a new potential grant that will provide funding for a wrap-around program for older adults and special needs individuals in the County. The grant amount can be up to \$250K and will supplement the existing Handyman program.

Coates said that the initial discussion with The UNH Cooperative Extension is complete and that the group is planning to move into the County Hall building. The move will be accomplished by the end of November if no roadblocks occur.

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Coates then said that the County Conservation District is hosting a virtual meeting on October 14th to discuss the District's programs and to seek feedback on their effectiveness and gain insight for other programs and services that are needed. From the Conservation website:

***Local Work Group Meeting (virtual) - October 14, 2020 @ 11:00 am***

*What aspects of local conservation are most important to you? Let your voice be heard!*

*Join the Cheshire & Sullivan County Conservation Districts as they co-host a Virtual Local Work Group Meeting on October 14, 2020 from 11am-1pm via the online video platform Zoom.*

*This meeting is open to the public; those encouraged to attend include land owners/operators of farm and forest land as well as experts in the field of soil, water, agriculture, forestry, and wildlife sciences who are familiar with the agricultural and natural resource issues of our communities.*

*A Local Work Group is comprised of area agencies and organizations working with natural resources, and interested farm and forest landowners. Local Work Groups set local priorities based on public input and needs assessments. They identify locally important natural resource concerns and make recommendations to the State Technical Committee and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Conservationist on such items as priorities, conservation practices, and policies. This meeting is an opportunity to voice any concerns related to any of these programs so that your thoughts may be taken forward to the State Technical Committee.*

Registration is required: <https://lwgmeeting2020.eventbrite.com>

He went on to say that recently a local contingent consisting of the Chamber of Commerce, Southwest Regional Planning Commission, and Jaime Trowbridge of Yankee Publishing and others assembled a grant for the region's marketing and promotion for Cheshire County for \$500K that was just submitted.

Coates and Bouchard then discussed creating a new email address of [commissioners@co.cheshire.nh.us](mailto:commissioners@co.cheshire.nh.us) that will be used for scheduling Zoom Meetings and email communications for the County of Cheshire Office of the Commissioners. The email and other

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communications will be managed and administered by Bouchard for the Commissioners' Office as he has done for many years.

**Following the Commissioner's questions about why a formal vote to create this email was even necessary, Commissioner Weed moved to authorize the email creation and further authorize Bouchard to utilize and manage the address for purposes that he determines to be necessary and useful. Commissioner Englund seconded the motion and, upon roll call, vote the motion passed unanimously.**

Director Trombly then discussed a meeting with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) representative, who addressed the use of FEMA funds. Trombly said that FEMA only pays for response and planning costs and services but not prevention equipment such as the Personal Protection Equipment needed to ensure the safety of employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. Trombly said that as a result of the meeting, the County would charge some items to GOFERR instead of FEMA based on a clarification of the FEMA rules.

Coates then discussed that the ventilators and IV Pumps ordered by the Diluzio ambulance services are in process. He said that the State has determined the use of GOFERR funds for the equipment purchase is covered. Coates stated that if the State turns down the request, the equipment purchase will not move forward.

Old Business: None

New Business: Commissioner Weed provided the following issues for new business:

1. NHAC Annual Conference events are now posted on the NHAC website ([www.nhcounties.org](http://www.nhcounties.org)). Commissioner Weed outlined some of the programs and suggested to his colleagues that they check out the website for details.
2. Weed then said that on October 20<sup>th</sup> a virtual energy conference for Keene's Energy Plan Forum is being held online on Tuesday, October 20, 2020, from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM by the City of Keene. The link to register is: [www.keeneenergyplan.com](http://www.keeneenergyplan.com)
3. Weed then said that the National Association of Counties (NACo) Virtual Federal Policy Summit will be held on October 21-22,2020. He said that the purpose of the NACo Virtual Federal Policy Summit is to connect county officials, members of Congress, federal agency partners, and other key decision-makers and thought leaders.

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4. Weed then discussed that the NH Association of Counties management team at the Dupont group has spent a significant number of hours on COVID-19 planning and response and that the added costs to the Counties could be \$150K. He said the fee might be paid by the NH Governor Office of Relief and Recovery (GOFERR) if it is determined that the work falls under the program guidelines.

**Consent agenda Minutes of 9/30/2020 and Manifests for the week of 10/05/2020.**

**Commissioner Wozmak moved the consent agenda and was seconded by Commissioner Englund. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

General Discussion. Coates said that his voluntary quarantine due to traveling out of State will end next week and that he will be back in the office on Thursday, 10/15/20.

**12:44 PM, there being no further public business to discuss, Commissioner Englund moved to adjourn and was seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

Minutes recorded by:

R. Bouchard, Assistant County Administrator

Reviewed and submitted by:

R. Englund, Clerk