

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, October 28, 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, HR Director May, and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard.

Guests: Terry Clark, County of Cheshire, Treasurer, John Round, Principal, Employee Benefits Practice, The Richards Group (TRG).

At 9:00 AM, Commissioner Weed opened the meeting, and County Administrator Coates conducted a roll-call of the Commissioners attending the meeting. Commissioners Weed and Englund responded as "present." Commissioner Wozmak was absent with notice, as noted above.

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:
 - Provides public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by
 - video or other electronic means.

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- 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 9:01 AM, the Chair recognized John Round from TRG to discuss Master Agenda Item #815: County health insurance renewals.

John Round was introduced and said that he was joining the meeting to support the review that Trombly and Coates have just completed for Stop Loss insurers for the Employee Healthcare plan. Trombly reviewed a handout that provided comparison plan proposals. The recommended plan is from Voya and results in a savings of 6.66% over last year's cost.

A detailed review of the plans and the history of prior plans began. The Commissioners asked several clarifying questions. **After discussions, Commissioner Wozmak moved to authorize the contract's award to Voya based on the lowest price and TRG and senior staff's recommendations. Commissioner Weed seconded the motion, and upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

A discussion of the general costs of healthcare insurance from employers began. The overall incremental cost increase to the employees is projected to be about 2% for 2021, significantly lower than many other area employer healthcare plans.

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At the conclusion of discussions, Commissioner Wozmak moved to limit the increase of the employee contribution to the healthcare plan by 2% for 2021. Commissioner Weed seconded the motion, and upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Administrator Coates for the Weekly Operations Report.

Coates said that work continues on the 2021 budget, and a draft will be ready for review next week. December 7th is the tentative date for the Delegation meeting for the 2021 budget consideration. He also said that the education/orientation session for new and continuing elected representatives would be held that day.

He then said that on January 4th, the swearing-in of elected officials would take place.

Coates then said that the Commissioners have discussed going paperless and acquiring computing devices for the Commissioners in the past and asked for their input. After discussing the issue, it was decided not to proceed with the acquisition.

Coates said that the County website update was allocated \$10K in the 2020 budget, but it has been frozen due to the general freeze on expenses. **A general discussion of the project occurred. At the conclusion of the conversation, Commissioner Weed moved to allow the unfreezing of the previously frozen \$10K for the website update based on the tax collections' results on December 17th. Commissioner Wozmak seconded the motion, and upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

Coates said that discussions with other Counties concerning inmates' housing from their departments of corrections in the Cheshire jail occurred this week. A discussion around the issues and possibilities were covered, and the Commissioners are interested in the idea, but the details would need to be thoroughly vetted before proceeding.

Coates then reviewed the homelessness issues in the region and said that housing for homeless individuals has decreased at two of the major services providers this year. He pointed out that this affects families, not just individuals, and when the current COVID-19 restriction on evictions ends, a large increase in homelessness is anticipated. He said that this is becoming a serious Countywide issue.

Old Business: None

New Business: Commissioner Weed discussed a recent publication that shows NH receives the least matching Medicaid funds of any state in the Country. The Commissioners discussed several possible avenues that could be explored to change the reimbursement rates.

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Trombly then discussed issues with the dental insurance program and said that a review of the program resulted in a recommendation to level fund dental premiums. Following a question and answer period, **Commissioner Wozmak moved to hold employee dental contributions at a level-funded rate for 2021. Commissioner Englund seconded the motion, and upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

Consent Agenda: Minutes of 10/21/2020 as amended and Manifests for the week. Commissioner Womak moved the consent agenda and was seconded by Commissioner Englund. The motion passed with unanimous consent.

At 10:37 AM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (a), Commissioner Weed moved to enter a non-public session 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 roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

As a result of deliberations in a non-public session, the Commissioners asked for additional information from the parties before rendering a decision.

At 2:37 PM, the Commissioner's voted unanimously to recess the session and reconvene in one week. They then voted unanimously to return to the public session.

2:41 PM here being no further public business to discuss, Commissioner Englund moved to recess the meeting 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