

**MINUTES**  
**Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting**  
**Wednesday, December 30, 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 K. May, Superintendent Iosue

**Guest(s):** County Treasurer, Commissioner Elect, Keene City Counselor Terry Clark

**At 8:30 AM, Commissioner Weed opened the meeting, and County Administrator Coates conducted a roll-call of the Commissioners attending the meeting. Commissioners Weed, Englund responded as "present." Commissioner Wozmak joined at 8:40.**

**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 Englund 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

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- 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 8:34 AM, the Chair opened the meeting

HR Director May was then recognized, and she discussed an FMLA extension for a staff member of the Cheshire County Sheriff's Department.

**Commissioner Weed moved to approve an eight- week extension for the employee. Commissioner Englund seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

May then updated the Commissioners on the expiration of the federally mandated FFCRA (Families First Corona Response Act) leave provisions that provided employees 80 hours of paid sick leave for qualifying situations due to COVID. As of 1/1/21, the mandated leave will expire; however, employers can voluntarily extend the paid leave if they wish through 3/31/21. If they do so, they would be eligible for reimbursement through tax credits. As the tax credits are only for nonpublic employers, this extension would not be reimbursable for the County.

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After further discussion, **Commissioner Weed moved to not extend the voluntary FFRCA as of 1/1/2021. Commissioner Wozmak seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

Wozmak asked when the nursing home was scheduled to be vaccinated. Coates stated that the Nursing Home is scheduled for their first dose next week. Commissioner Wozmak is hopeful that there will be a decline in sick leave with the vaccinations becoming available.

Wozmak then asked what the status is of the Department of Corrections being vaccinated. Superintendent Iosue indicated that it is unclear at this time. He has learned from the DHHS vaccine distribution guidance that Correctional Officers are not listed in the higher priority group and are actually excluded. He stated that Security Officers are on the higher priority list, which does not make any sense.

Iosue then mentioned that there is a possibility the Correctional Facility will get their own stock of the Moderna vaccine if they can provide evidence that they have proper refrigeration provided that and they can show it will keep the necessary temperature for five days consistently. Iosue expects they would receive the vaccine in approximately 2-3 weeks if they meet the criteria. This would allow the nursing staff the ability to administer the vaccine in-house.

Master Agenda Item #835: 33 Winter Street Capital Reserve Funds – Commissioner Weed then recognized Finance Director Trombly for an update on the 33 Winter Street Capital Reserve Funds. Trombly informed the Commissioners that the 2020 budget appropriated \$130,000 to the 33 Winter Street reserve fund. This allocation was set aside to offset the first-year principal payment for the bond scheduled for January of 2021. This was not included in the original 2021 budget presented, and this will be added revenue that will help reduce taxes to be raised. As a result, taxes will go down from a 1.24% (\$355,962) increase to a .79% (\$225,962) increase.

Trombly was then recognized for Master Agenda Item #836: Authorize the Clerk to sign the State Grant Contract's extension to reimburse the second weekly round of COVID-19 testing required at Maplewood.

The State has provided additional funding to reimburse for the second weekly round of COVID - 19 testing that the nursing home has had to start doing. To receive this additional reimbursement, the State needs an updated contract that requires the Commissioners authorization to allow Kathryn Kindopp to enter the agreement.

**Commissioner Weed made a motion to authorize that Kathryn Kindopp, Cheshire County Maplewood Nursing Home Administrator, is duly authorized on behalf of Cheshire County to enter into a contract or agreement with the State of New Hampshire. Further, she is**

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**authorized to execute all documents, agreements, and other instruments that may, in her judgment, be desirable to effect the purpose of this vote. Commissioner Englund seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

Administrator Coates was then recognized for the Weekly Operations Report.

Coates informed the Commissioners that the bus for Hundred Nights is in Keene and being inspected. It is expected to be brought to the parking lot by noon today.

Coates then updated the Commissioners about a call he had with NH State Senator Ricardo. As a Select Board member, she fully understands and supports the Cheshire County Commissioners' cost-shifting letter. She informed Coates that she had presented a bill to get the towns and cities their promised share of Room & Meals taxes to which they should be entitled.

Coates updated the Commissioners on the successful use of the Handy Man funds in 2020. Approximately \$28,000 was spent to install adaptive equipment in the homes of some Cheshire County residents that meet specific financial criteria. This work includes building ramps, installing handicap bars, etc., to support individuals who need this assistance to continue to live in their own homes. This has become an active program, with other current referrals being reviewed for service.

Coates mentioned that Judy Gallagher, who had moved from the Behavioral Health Court to the DOC, has decided to return to the Behavioral Health Court. This transition will happen towards the end of January. Iosue has some potential candidates and will be looking at to fill this vacancy.

**Old Business:**

Commissioner Wozmak discussed the press release in the Sentinel recently regarding the County's donation of ventilators to Diluzio Ambulance. The release didn't get the message across of what the County intended, and he wondered if we should purchase an ad of our own that would allow for a stronger message that we would like to see. **Wozmak made a motion to purchase a ½ page black and white ad with the Keene Sentinel. Weed seconded the motion, and upon a roll call vote passed unanimously.**

**New Business:** Commissioner Englund asked about the February calendar as all the meetings were listed at 8:30 am. After further discussion, it was decided that the same schedule as 2020 will be maintained, with the first meeting of the month being at 9:30 am and the remaining sessions starting at 8:30 am.

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Englund then asked about the swearing-in next Wednesday. Coates indicated that the swearing-in would happen at 9:30 am and immediately following the Commissioners meeting will begin.

**Consent Agenda: Minutes of 12/16/2020 and Manifests for the week. Commissioner Weed moved the consent agenda and was seconded by Commissioner Englund. The motion passed with unanimous consent upon roll call vote.**

**General Discussion:**

Commissioner Weed ended the meeting to reflect on his six years as Commissioner for Cheshire County. He wanted it to be known that he has enjoyed the staff, and in terms of Public Service, this has been his best experience. Weed thanked the staff and those he worked closely with and served with over the years.

Wozmak, Coates, Englund, Trombly, and Iosue then said a few words to recognize Commissioner Weed's great work.

**At 9:57 AM, there being no further public business to conduct, Commissioner Englund moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Weed. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

Minutes recorded by:

S. Trombly, Finance Director, and Assistant County  
Administrator Bouchard

Reviewed and submitted by:

R. Englund, Clerk