

MINUTES
Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting
Wednesday, March 03, 2021
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: Jack Wozmak, Robert Englund, and Terry Clark
Staff: County Administrator Coates, Finance Director Trombly, HR Director May, and Assistant County Administrator Bouchard.
Guest(s): Henry Herndon, Samuel Golding Electrical Aggregation Consultants, and Alex DeRosa of one+three.

At 9:30 AM, Commissioner Wozmak opened the meeting, and County Administrator Coates conducted a roll-call of the Commissioners attending the meeting. Commissioners Englund and Clark responded as "present."

Commissioner Wozmak 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
 - 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

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- 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 opened the meeting and recognized Administrator Coates, who took-up Master Agenda Item #860: Cash Vest Program. Coates reviewed the prior work and the amended contract that was requested at a previous meeting.

The Commissioners asked further questions, and Commissioner Wozmak then moved to authorize the County Administrator to sign and commence the contract at a time that complied with the finance department's workload and ability to implement the program. Commissioner Englund seconded the motion, and upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Master Agenda Item #859: The Carbon Cash Back letter presented at last week's meeting was then taken-up for discussion and, Coates said that the resolution letter of support for the Carbon Cash Back program to be sent to Congressional members is ready for final review, acceptance, and signature.

Commissioner Clark moved to authorize the letter to be sent, and Commissioner Englund seconded. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously. The Commissioners then signed the letter.

At 9:45 AM, Master Agenda Item #861: Finance Year-End Report was addressed, and Trombly provided the following letter to the Commissioners concerning the 4th Quarter Budget Review.

To: Cheshire County Commissioners
From: Sheryl Trombly, Finance Director
Date: March 3, 2020

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RE: 4th quarter 2020 Budget Review

At the end of 2020, pre audit revenues ended at 5.60% remaining, (\$2,573,461) for the County and Nursing Home revenues came in at 4.91% over projections, \$1,009,965. The totals combined are a shortfall of (\$1,563,496). This shortfall is mainly due to grants that were not awarded and the late startup of the System of Care Sustainability program. Expenses that were budgeted to expend these potential grants and program came in under as well offsetting their revenue shortfall. As for the nursing home overage, an increase in Bed Tax revenue, Private Pay payers and COVID funding all contributed to the surplus.

At the end of 2020, pre audit expenses ended with a combined excess of \$4,091,707. Overall county expenses ended at 9.43%, \$3,780,345 under budget with Maplewood at 1.34%, \$311,362.

The combined year end surplus is estimated at \$2,528,211.

The total fund balance committed in the 2021 budget is proposed at \$2,428,416. Of this amount, \$1,446,519 is from ProShare funds received in 2020 with the additional \$981,897 from the current year end surplus.

The County has a policy that recommends maintaining an unassigned fund balance in the range of 12% to 16%. At the end of 2019, the unassigned fund balance was \$9,614,812. This represented 17% of the 2020 County Budget.

Based on the current year end projections and the proposal to assign \$2,428,416 of fund balance to offset taxes for 2021, the estimated 2020 accumulated unassigned fund balance will be approximately \$9,714,608. Based on the 2021 budget as it currently stands, this unassigned fund balance would represent 17.36% of the overall county budget.

As the current policy suggests fund balance levels should be in the range of 12% to 16%, it would be time to revisit the fund balance policy to determine if an increase in the percentages would be warranted.

The Commissioners reviewed the letter, asked several questions concerning fund balance, and discussed increasing the fund balance percentage. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) rules that govern County finances were discussed. The fund balance policy will be addressed for possible amendment at next week's meeting.

HR Director May was then recognized and asked for a non-FLMA leave-of-absence for an employee that is a member of the union at the Department of Corrections. Trombly clarified the leave-of-absence policies and said that the request conforms with existing County policy and with the union contracts.

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Commissioner Clark moved to authorize the leave-of-absence and was seconded by Commissioner Wozmak. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

At 10:14 AM, Master Agenda Item #862: Joint Powers Agreement for County Community Aggregation of Electric Supply Project was taken-up for review and discussion. Herndon did a brief overview of the meeting's purpose, saying that it is to form a County aggregation program. Golding then spoke to his background and outlined why community aggregations are put into effect to inform and energize. He reviewed the next step after the aggregation is completed and discussed signing a Joint Powers Agreement with other towns and cities, including Hanover, Lebanon, and Nashua.

A committee will be established to form the County of Cheshire Community Power Aggregation, and Commissioner Clark will represent the Board of Commissioners.

Administrator Coates was then recognized for the Weekly Operations Report:

Reported that the work to update the basement space that houses the Monadnock Center for Violence Prevention (MCVP) is nearing completion. He said that the electrical work is almost complete and the final carpeting will be installed next week.

Coates then said that the UNH Cooperative Extension offices would move into 12 Court Street 2nd floor offices on March 12th.

He reminded the Commissioners that an Executive Committee meeting would be held on March 15th to review and discuss the County Energy upgrade project.

Coates then related that on Monday, March 22nd, the Delegation would meet at 7:00 PM to adopt the 2021 budget.

He then said that the annual invoice for membership for the NH Association of Counties was received and, for 2021, the amount is \$14,259.00.

Coates explained that he is on a committee for the Community Kitchen in the midst of exploring an option to put a mobile pantry place that would serve the surrounding communities. A great deal of further investigation will be done in the next few months to determine the plan's cost and feasibility.

Old Business: Commissioner Englund asked about the letter sent to the DOC employees thanking them for their work, patience, and perseverance in the last year as several organizational and personnel changes were completed. Coates said that the letter was well received and that the staff was appreciative of receiving the letter.

New Business: None

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Consent Agenda: Minutes of 02/24/2021 and Manifests for the week. Commissioner Clark moved the consent agenda and was seconded by Commissioner Wozmak. The motion passed with unanimous consent upon roll call vote.

General Discussion: None

At 10:43 AM, there being no further public business to conduct, Commissioner Wozmak moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Englund. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Minutes recorded by:
Assistant County Administrator Bouchard

Reviewed and submitted by:
T. Clark, Clerk