

**MINUTES**  
**Cheshire County Commissioners Meeting**  
**Wednesday, April 28, 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, Sheriff Rivera, Assistant County Administrator Bouchard.

**Guest(s):**

At 8:32 AM, Commissioner Englund 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 Englund 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.

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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 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 Vice-Chair opened the meeting and recognized May to discuss Master Agenda Item #882: Semi-Annual Report – Human Resources.

May presented an overview of the past seven months of personnel changes and spoke to the following report. She said that the hiring at most of the facilities has been good except for Maplewood that has lost 17 LNA positions during the reporting period. A discussion of the facility's needs was covered, and some creative ideas were discussed to help meet the staffing needs of the nursing home.

A senior staff meeting will be convened to review alternatives and determine how to move forward with a refreshed recruitment program. An extended discussion began of the County's needs and how to be competitive within the local Community and stay within budgetary requirements.

In response to a question, May said there are now three open Correctional Officers positions and two other medical support personnel positions.

She said only one Correctional Officer has left in the past few months and that the open administrative position for HR is actively being advertised and interviews are taking place.

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**Human Resources Activity 9/01/20 - 3/31/2021**

**NEW HIRES: 74**  
**& 1 R)**

**MNH – 43**

Dietary – 8  
EVS – 13  
Nursing – LNA – 5  
Nursing – Nurse – 3  
Nursing – Ward Aide – 10  
ALF – PCA – 3  
Human Resources - 1

**Keene – 21**

Sheriff – 6  
IT – 1  
  
Cty. Atty - 3  
Finance - 2  
System of Care - 9

**DOC – 10**

CO – 6  
Nurse – 1  
Admin - 1  
Case Manager - 1  
SARC - 1

**TERMS: 69** (36 V, 8 I, 1 D

**MNH - 48**

Dietary – 5  
EVS – 12  
Nursing – LNA – 15  
Nursing – Nurse - 4  
Nursing – Ward Aide - 5  
ALF – PCA - 3  
MNA - 1  
MDS – 1  
Receptionist - 1  
Human Resources - 1

**Keene - 8**

County Attorney - 2  
Finance - 1  
  
IT - 1  
Sheriff - 4

**DOC - 13**

CO - 6  
Nurse – 1  
Admin Asst – 1  
Internal Affairs - 1  
MLADC - 1  
Transport Officer - 1  
Mental Health Clinician - 1  
Classification Officer - 1

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- MNH successfully completed another LNA class in conjunction with LNA Health Careers in November 2020. We graduated four students, with all 4 passing their State Boards on the 1<sup>st</sup> try. All of those students were already with MNH as either a Ward Aide or Laundry Aide. We have another class scheduled to begin in late July, and at this point, we have one internal staff. With the current pandemic, DHHS is not allowing outside students into the building for clinical or classes, and we will need to hire anyone as a Ward Aide prior to the class starting to be considered staff.
- Hiring during the COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging to say the least.
- We are currently offering a \$2,000 sign-on bonus at Maplewood for any LNA or Housekeeper hired at Maplewood. This is paid out as follows: \$500 at 3 months, \$500 at six months, and \$1,000 at one year.
- We are in a staffing crisis with regard to LNAs - we are currently using more agency/traveler staff than we ever have before. Several of those contracts end in early May, and they will be gone until late July, if not permanently.
- We are also offering a \$2,000 sign-on bonus for Deputy Sheriff's paid out: \$500 at six months, \$500 at the successful completion of probation, and \$1,000 at the successful completion of the Academy. Sheriff Rivera has received approximately 20 resumes via Indeed since April 15<sup>th</sup> so, I believe he has a generous candidate pool to work with.

The Commissioners thanked May for her report, and, at 9:02 AM, Sheriff Rivera was recognized to discuss Master Agenda Item #883: Dispatch Communications.

He opened by saying that the dispatch is almost entirely staffed at this point.

He then said that a consultant had been retained to create a comprehensive radio communications plan to upgrade all and address outstanding communications issues within the County. He said that he expects to have the process complete with a final budget number to complete the upgrade before the next delegation meeting in July or August.

A discussion about the equipment reaching end-of-life and being in conformance with the national FirstNet public safety network was covered in detail.

At 9:12 AM, Commissioner Wozmak joined the meeting.

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A lengthy conversation about the communication methods and needs of the County was had. It was discussed that the consultant would produce a full value-engineered report as a foundational document to proceed with the upgrade of the communications system.

A discussion of additional training for diversity training and body cameras for law enforcement personnel was covered, and it was learned that the state would only cover 50% of the costs.

Coates was then recognized for the Weekly Operations Report.

Coates said that he was looking for a motion to approve the NH Fish and Game to continue the program that allows fish and game to release pheasants on County land in Westmoreland. **Following a short discussion, Commissioner Englund moved to authorize the program, and Commissioner Wozmak seconded the motion. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

Coates said that the old generator at the nursing home could be placed with a local non-profit if the Commissioners approve the transfer and if the unit is found to meet the recipient's needs. Further investigation will happen in the next few weeks, and Coates will report back when more data is available.

Coates said that on May 20<sup>th</sup>, a select board meeting would take place in Westmoreland that Coates and the Delegation Chairman will attend to address the replacement of the bridge on River Road in Westmorland near the Nursing Home.

Coates then said that an email was received from the City of Keene concerning old language in existing deeds within the County that is racially exclusive. Following a very lengthy discussion, it was determined that the County does not have any legal standing to modify the deeds but strongly supports the deletion of the language whenever it is discovered.

Old Business: Commissioner Englund asked about the progress of the Request for Information received from a news organization. Coates said that the work is underway and will be reviewed by the County Attorney before release.

New Business:

**Consent Agenda: Minutes of 04/21/2021 and Manifests for the week. Commissioner Englund moved the consent agenda and was seconded by Commissioner Clark. The motion passed with unanimous consent upon roll call vote.**

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General Discussion: None

**10:15 AM Pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(d), Commissioner Wozmak moved to enter a nonpublic session to discuss the consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property, which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general Community. Commissioner Clark seconded the motion, and upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.**

**As a result of discussion in a nonpublic session, no decision was made, and no vote was taken.**

**At 11:36 AM, the Commissioners voted unanimously to reenter the public session.**

At 11:40 AM, there being no further public business to conduct, Commissioner Englund moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Wozmak. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Minutes recorded by:  
Assistant County Administrator Bouchard

Reviewed and submitted by:  
T. Clark, Clerk