

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Office of the Commissioners
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.
N. Haverhill, NH 03774
Monday January 23, 2006

PRESENT: Commissioners Michael Cryans, William Gabler and Ray Burton, Executive Director Julie Clough, and Secretary Jeri Martino.

The Meeting was called to order 11:08 AM

Mr. Harold Brown, local resident had requested an audience with the commissioners and was in attendance to propose a plan. Mr. Brown recommended that the Commissioners consider constructing a Hydro Plant suggesting that it would lower the cost of taxes, put local people to work, create revenue with it's energy and reduce overall costs to the county. Mr. Brown suggested damming the river and perhaps building an overpass to cross over into Vermont. Aware that there may be licensing and environmental issues, Mr. Brown thought that the project may run between \$25 – \$100 Million Dollars in costs to build. Mr. Brown also thought that it would create an environment that would allow inmates to go out on work release construction crews, and be minimally paid.

Two other suggestions from Mr. Brown were a fire pond to go with the Master Gardener's proposed garden area which would provide a place for people to enjoy as well as a place to draw water from in an emergency, and he suggested that the jail be located either next to or on top of the courthouse.

Commissioner Gabler addressed the Hydro plant idea saying that it would probably be a difficult plan to sell, in that damming up the river and closing out the farmers would not be a good idea. Commissioner Burton said that Hydro Plants are a long shot these days noting that he was aware of it taking ten years for one entrepreneur to acquire all the proper permits to get one going, coupled with the fact that there really aren't any viable areas in the region to place one, citing environmental issue as well as governmental issues. Commissioner Cryans said that there were many parts that play a role in considering a Hydro Plant, but thanked Mr. Brown for time and for sharing his ideas with the board.

Treasurer Carol Elliott arrived to present the investment information to the Commissioners. \$12M was available for investment from the monies collected in tax revenues.

\$6M was invested in Money Market accounts as follows:

- ❖ \$2M to Meredith Village Savings Bank at 2.75%
- ❖ \$2M to Northway Bank at 3.445%
- ❖ \$2M to Citizens Bank at 4.05%

\$6M was invested in CD's as follows:

- ❖ \$1M to Citizens Bank for open ended repurchase agreement at 4.40%
(nursing home payment in September)
- ❖ \$1M to Banknorth for 6 mos. At 4.45%
- ❖ \$2M to Woodsville Guaranty Savings Bank CDARS for 6mo at 4.35%
- ❖ \$1M to Community Guaranty Savings Bank for 9 mos. At 4.59%

❖ \$1M to Connecticut River Bank for 9 mos. At 4.64%

Commissioner Cryans asked about whether or not Service Credit Union was given the opportunity to bid on interest rates. Treasurer Elliott said that she had contacted Service Federal Credit Union but did not get word back to her so she did not send them a bid letter. Commissioner Burton suggested writing a letter to Phil Blatsos, who is the head of the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) and ask him if in fact the county can solicit bids from Credit Unions. Treasurer Elliott will follow up on that.

Commissioner Gabler moved to approve the investments that the Treasurer made, which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

11:45 The Commissioners broke for lunch

12:00 The Commissioners resumed the meeting.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the minutes from January 19, 2006, which was seconded by Commissioner Cryans. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

Executive Director Clough presented an application for education assistance from an LPN. Commissioner Burton moved to approve the application, which was seconded by Commissioner Gabler. All were in favor.

The Executive Director presented estimates from three companies for 35 Over the Bed Tables for the nursing home. Nursing Home Administrator Eileen Bolander had chosen NOA Medical Industries, who were the lowest estimate, to purchase the tables from in the amount of \$3186.08

Commissioner Gabler moved to accept the purchase from NOA Medical Industries and was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

Executive Director Clough informed the Commissioners that she had received an extension from the DoL until April 10, 2006, which will give the Joint Loss Management Committee time to work on the manuals.

The Executive Director informed the Commissioners that she has spoken with both Farm Manager Kimball and Maintenance Superintendent Oakes, who both feel that if the burned barn is to be taken down then the blacksmith building which sits behind it should be removed also. There is much structural strain on that building due to age and it will more than likely come down itself in time. It then makes sense that if the demolition is to be bid on, that it should include the other building also. Executive Director Clough went on to say that there may be additional costs due to the fact that asbestos shingles will need to be disposed of. Commissioner Cryans asked if bids will specifically note that that certain materials must be disposed of properly.

Executive Director Clough said that it was the responsibility of the county to make sure that whatever company they contracted with, made sure that they followed all DES protocol.

Commissioner Gabler moved to have the fire damaged building demolished and the blacksmith shop taken down as well, which was seconded by Commissioner Burton.

Commissioner Burton also stated three things concerning the removal of the buildings:

1. Any antiques, tools or machinery in either of the structures that were of value, should be kept and preserved.
2. The demolition should be put out to bid publicly, but must insist that the companies will comply with all the proper state, federal and local regulations. Anything less should not be accepted.
3. Photos of the process should be taken to chronicle the event.

Commissioner Cryans would like to see the buildings taken down no later than April 1, 2006.

Regarding the above motion, all three Commissioners were in favor.

There will be a luncheon on February 6, 2006 at 12:00 in the Activities Room at the Nursing Home, for the firefighters who were toned to the fire.

Executive Director Clough informed the Commissioners that the nursing home reimbursement rate has increased from \$139.17 to \$147.55, which is an \$8.38 increase.

NACo County Week is April 23–29 this year. The theme is “Protecting our Communities”. The Executive Director will be heading up a committee for activities which will be held on the last Saturday of that week.

Activities Professionals Week is January 22-27 and there will be an open house in the Activities Room at the nursing home on the 26th at 2:00 PM for anyone who would like to attend.

Superintendent Oakes arrived to talk to the Commissioners about the heating system at the Courthouse. He would like to have a new HVAC system installed as the old system is outdated, not properly functional and you can not get parts or service for it. It is only a matter of time before it quits completely. Bids were solicited from three companies' who were capable of installing a new system. After much scrutiny which including going over all the information with each company, Supt. Oakes recommended that the company Controtech, out of Keene New Hampshire receive the job. They were the overall best choice as far as cost, willingness to defer expense of NAE controller unit until FY07 and a well established working rapport and great product line.

Their equipment is currently in the courthouse so they are also familiar with the building. Total cost for replacement is \$18,202.

Commissioner Burton asked if the money was available. Executive Director Clough said that maintenance would have to be overextended but there was money available to do this project.

Commissioner Burton then asked Supt. Oakes if he had gone over all the details and he replied that this has been a long process and he has gone over everything.

Commissioner Burton then moved to accept the bid proposal from Controtech for the new HVAC installation in the Courthouse, which was seconded by Commissioner Gabler. All were in favor.

Supt. Oakes then gave an overview of his maintenance report saying that there was a boiler at the nursing home that needs to be replaced. It is no longer under warranty. Cost to replace the boiler will be approximately \$2000. The Commissioners agreed that a new boiler should be purchased right away so as to avoid any problems.

There will be not meeting on March 6, 2006 as Commissioners Burton and Gabler have other commitments.

Commissioner Cryans excused himself for a prior engagement.

Commissioner Burton attended the retirement party for Becky Barry at the Courthouse on January 13, 2006.

Commissioners Burton and Gabler attended the job fair in Littleton at the Employment Office and were pleased to see Human Resources Manager Joanne Mann there with a table set up. Commissioner Burton noted that Commissioner Brothers is sponsoring a bill to close some employment offices and Littleton is on the list, along with Plymouth and Salem. Commissioner Burton will draft a letter in opposition to the closing.

Commissioner Burton noted that Strafford County Drug Court was in the paper. He spoke with Commissioner Stephens who said that that program took \$400K to run, and that the money comes from the AG's Office.

Commissioner Burton nominated Commissioner Gabler for the Caroline Gross Fellowship.

Executive Director Clough informed the Commissioners that Megan McCarthy of the Caledonian Record contacted her for some Long Range Planning information to go into the paper.

The Executive Director produced an old NIC assessment from 1983 on the jail which stated just about the same information as the most recent assessment.

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:20 PM

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk