

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Office of the Commissioners
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.
N. Haverhill, NH 03774
Monday March 13, 2006

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

The Meeting was called to order at 9:15 AM

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the minutes from February 27th, which was seconded by Commissioner Gabler. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

The Commissioner reviewed the GCDOC Superior Court Report.

The Executive Director read an email from the Real Estate division of the Post Office in regards to the renting of the old Commissioners Building, which stated that they would not be moving into the building. Executive Director Clough asked the Commissioners how they would like her to proceed and the consensus was to contact the local realtors and let them handle the listing.

The Executive Director informed the Commissioners of a meeting that she had with Ron O'Keefe from the LGC regarding the fire load and water situation. There was talk about using the river as a water source. Mr. O'Keefe has contacted the three local Fire Chiefs in the area for a sit down to discuss the situation and he will then get back in touch with the Executive Director and make his recommendation. There is the likelihood that it will be suggested that the County hire a Fire Protection engineer to put a plan together.

Executive Director Clough informed the Commissioners that the second quarter Drug Rebate had been received in the amount of \$43,260.

Chuck Leif, Miro Wienberger and John Crowley-Delman from the Hartland Group arrived to present the Commissioners with a request that Grafton County be an applicant for a CDBG grant to the State, for the construction of low cost housing in the Hanover/Lebanon area. Twenty-Five acres of land has been donated in which the housing development is to be built on. The Hartland Group is a three year old company that will be acting as co-developers with Twin State Housing Authority to oversee the project. Twin State will be overseeing the on site services provided, though Hartland Group will be keeping a close eye on where the money goes. The Project will include 120 units, half which will be rentable while the other half will be for ownership. 40-60 units are for low income rental and 20-25 homes will be sold to those earning 80% of the income level in the area. The intention is to blend the needs of the community and to offer affordable housing for Dartmouth and anyone wishing to live in that area. It will be a \$25M project when completed. The gentlemen presented a map of the proposed project.

Commissioner Burton asked if a market study was done to determine the need and Mr. Weinberg replied that an extensive comprehensive study was done which definitively showed a need on both sides of the river.

Commissioner Burton asked what services would be available. Mr. Leif stated that on the rental side there will be services provided in the way of life skills. Twin Pines will be the ones handling the services.

Commissioner Burton asked the Executive Director what the monetary allotment was, to which she replied, \$500K for housing as of July 1, 2006.

Commissioner Burton asked that if built, when the first person could move in. Mr. Leif suggested that it would take about one year from the time the project began until move in.

Commissioner Gabler noted that he had read some of the minutes from the initial meetings and noted that some of the houses would cost \$250K, asking if they were truly affordable.

Commissioner Cryans read an article that showed the average cost for a home in Hanover was more than twice that. Mr. Leif also noted that the project had gone from 60 units to 120 thus providing more units available at the low income rates.

Commissioner Cryans asked at what rate the average rental would go for. Mr. Leif said that they would run anywhere from \$650 to \$1050 for a three bedroom but the average was probably around \$800.

Mr. Leif noted that the Hanover Select Board was totally behind this project as they were aware of the need to provide affordable housing in the community and the donation of the land by the Giles Foundation provided the perfect opportunity.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the project as presented by the Hartland Group, which was seconded by Commissioner Gabler. All were in favor.

Executive Director Clough presented a plan for the design of the new farm/maintenance barn which was put together by Supt. Oakes and addressed the needs of both areas. The first floor will be slated for the farm and will include the root cellars. The second floor will be for maintenance vehicles and will also house a woodshop, and the third floor will be storage. The Commissioners reviewed the plan and thought it looked fine. Commissioner Burton asked about an architect and the Executive Director said that one would need to be hired to make sure that nothing is overlooked. The Commissioners agreed that the preliminary plan was fine and that the process should continue.

The Executive Director noted that she had received an email from Commissioner Burton regarding an article from the North Country News. The article focused on salaries of the Department Heads of the County and increases that they received last year. Commissioner Burton wanted to know if the information Mr. Brown had listed was factual. The Executive Director replied that the figures come from the fiscal year 2006 budget book, however they are presented in a manner that doesn't truly represent the facts. There is no explanation of the County's pay structure from which most of the noted salary increases originated from. The article also inaccurately portrays the increase in the Maintenance Superintendent's position. A response will be written to clarify the position of the County.

Commissioner Cryans was invited to Warren by Kathy Jablonski to help judge a 4-H contest and was impressed with the results.

Commissioner Gabler has been asked to speak with the County Farm Bureau on April 10th.

Executive Director Clough informed Commissioner Burton that she, Supt. Libby and Commissioner Gabler will be in Colorado on the first of May when Commissioner Stephens comes to visit. Commissioner Burton said the day was already scheduled so he would just leave it as is.

Commissioner of Corrections William Wrenn arrived to visit with the Commissioners along with Superintendent of Corrections Glenn Libby and Dave Cady from Probation and Parole

Commissioner Cryans welcomed Commissioner Wrenn and congratulated him on his new position.

Commissioner Wrenn thanked the Commissioners for the invitation and said that he had hoped to have a good working relationship with the County in the future. Commissioner Wrenn told the Commissioners that he lives in Hampton and was a police officer for thirty-one and a half years and Chief of Police for eleven years before becoming Commissioner of Corrections, a job he has had for just three months now. He also noted that he had big learning curve to deal with.

Commissioner Wrenn said that he was looking forward to working at both a State and County level. Commissioner Burton said that he hoped that the Commissioner will work to reduce the recidivism rate and work towards helping people to consider schooling and help them to get back on the right track. Commissioner Burton said that there has been an economic shift in this area and having people out of work has a direct effect on the population of the jail.

Commissioner Burton also asked Commissioner Wrenn if he had looked into any of the old State Prison land with the possibility of planting crops for food. Commissioner Wrenn said he was currently looking into it.

Commissioner Gabler agreed that the County and State need to work together. Commissioner Wrenn said he was looking into the growing issue of female inmates and that perhaps a possible solution might be an institution that takes both State and County female inmates. Commissioner Cryans said that he hoped that the Commissioner would take into account the different problems that being released in a rural community poses over a more populated area. Commissioner Wrenn said that he would like to see a formulated plan for a smoother transition from incarceration, through the system and then out again, to where those released would be more integrated into society, noting that counseling and drug problems were an issue. Services have been weak and finding jobs has been another huge problem. Commissioner Wrenn said that there was a need to match skills with opportunities on the outside as the system is currently set for released inmates to fail.

Commissioner Cryans concurred saying that jobs are necessary to keep people from re-offending because without a job to go to, it's only a matter of time before the old patterns take hold which leads to recidivism.

Parole was another topic for discussion as the Commissioner asked D. Cady just how many cases they had. D. Cady said at present they probably were handling 450 between him and four other officers. Commissioner Wrenn noted that in a rural area such as this that becomes even more problematic as you have to travel such a distance to visit each parolee.

The discussion turned to methamphetamines and the havoc that that drug is causing throughout the area.

Commissioner Wrenn will be touring the jail and visiting with Probation and Parole while at Grafton County.

The Commissioners thanked him for coming. Commissioner Wrenn noted that in all his visits to different Counties he's found that the majority of facilities are doing a great job. He thanked the Commissioners for their invitation.

Commissioner Cryans informed Commissioner Wrenn that he had attended a homeless meeting and there was someone there from his office who had given her own time to be there and speak. Commissioner Cryans wanted to give Commissioner Wrenn her name so that she could be commended on her volunteerism.

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:25 AM

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk