

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Office of the Commissioners
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.
N. Haverhill, NH 03774
Monday March 27, 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 9:25 AM

New Hampshire Dept. of Transportation Commissioner, Carol Murray, along with the North Haverhill DOT Road Crew, were invited for a continental breakfast so that the Commissioners could show their appreciation for all the hard work that is done in the area and particularly for their assistance after the fire on January 2nd of this year. Commissioner Cryans thanked them all for coming and presented the crew with a certificate of appreciation and a plaque and picture of the fire at Grafton County.

Commissioner Murray spoke briefly about the difficulties that the crew faces this year with the conditions of the roads. Commissioner Murray then held a round table discussion with the crew, who included: Wayne Bigelow, Spencer Noyes, Everett Sawyer, Ray Shepardson, Gary White and Scott Derrington.

Commissioner Burton stated that it was time for some new money for road care in NH, and said that a coalition was needed. Commissioner Murray stated that no one wanted a tax increase but the need for improved roads can't be overlooked.

Commissioner Burton said that on June 29th, district one will have it's "Carol Murray Day", celebrating fifty years since the interstate highway was established. There will be a gathering of Classic Cars at the invitation of Commissioner Burton and he invited Commissioner Murray to ride along with him.

Commissioner Gabler gave kudos to all the State Road Crews for finding new and innovative ways to repair damaged areas.

Commissioner Cryans thanked everyone for taking the time to come to the County and wished them well.

*10:00 AM – Commissioner Gabler moved to enter into Executive Session as per RSA 91-A:3, Paragraph II, Section a). Commissioner Burton seconded the motion. All were in favor.

*10:22 AM – Commissioner Burton moved to come out of Executive Session and to permanently seal the Minutes from the Session. Commissioner Gabler seconded the motion. All were in favor. No motions were made and no actions were taken while in Executive Session.

Human Services Director Nancy Bishop arrived to request an out of cycle step increase for one of her staff members, who after six months had shown exceptional abilities on the job. Commissioner Burton moved to approve the step increase which was seconded by Commissioner Gabler. All were in favor.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the minutes dated March 20th, which was seconded by Commissioner Gabler. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

The Commissioners signed the Forest Service agreement for patrol work which was in the amount of \$18,500.

Commissioner Cryans invited Mr. Harold Brown, who was in attendance, to join in the meeting to discuss the recent letter that he had written and was published in the North Country News and discussed a salary increase. Mr. Brown declined the invitation saying that he would be happy to discuss whatever they wanted, off the record, but did not want the minutes to reflect what he wanted to say. The Commissioners said that it was a public meeting and that the minutes must reflect the discussion and again asked if he would like to discuss the letter. Mr. Brown declined.

Executive Director Clough suggested discussing the letter amongst themselves so that the facts could be stated and added to the minutes and proceeded to do so.

Executive Director Clough was most adamant about Mr. Brown's reference to the fact that the Executive Director would be receiving a raise of \$13,657 and stated that was not in fact true, and read aloud the minutes of February 27th, which stated: "HR Mann also recommended that the wages scale for the Executive Director be raised above all other scales as that position is the highest achievable and all others fall under that position.", but noted that the minutes said nothing about the monetary value of a raise as stated in Mr. Brown's letter.

Commissioner Burton recommended that a letter of response be written which reflects the true facts of what the minutes actually meant and dispute what was assumed.

Commissioner Cryans gave Mr. Brown another chance to speak to the situation and Mr. Brown stated that the letter was not a personal affront but that he did take the information from the minutes of February 27th, which stated that the Executive Director's wage scale should be above all others and from there he subtracted the difference from the Nursing Home Administrator's pay and came up with a difference of \$13,657.

Commissioner Gabler stated that nowhere in the minutes does it reflect the monetary amount that Mr. Brown refers to. Mr. Brown added that he did not make up the monetary amount regarding the jail either but noted that that particular amount was discussed by the delegation numerous times, which is where he got the \$24M figure.

Commissioner Burton asked the Executive Director if she received a message from the reporter from the Spectator regarding information about the Long Range Planning, which she had not at the time.

Commissioner Burton also referenced an email response he received from Nursing Home Administrator Eileen Bolander regarding a waiting list for the Nursing Home and asked the Executive Director if she knew how long that list was. She did not have that information at hand.

Commissioner Burton said that he would like to choose a student from Orford as Commissioner for a Day. The Commissioners decided on a date of May 15th for that event.

Commissioner Cryans reminded everyone that there would be a press conference at the Lebanon Senior Center on April 7th and that he would like to ask Sheriff Dutile and Supt. Libby to attend also as it has to do with methamphetamines.

On April 3rd, immediately following a brief Commissioners meeting, the Commissioners will attend the Annual Meeting at the Lebanon Senior Center. On May 1st. Commissioner Stephen will visit the Grafton County Complex. No Commissioner meeting would be held on that day.

Mr. Brown asked to speak again and was recognized by Commissioner Cryans. Mr. Brown made a statement that Commissioners' Gabler and Burton were not there on the day that the budget was given, referring to March 23rd. Mr. Brown stated that the Cost of Living raise proposed by the Commissioners of 2.5% to the employees was not a very fair amount to those who were on the lower rung of the ladder. Commissioner Gabler then asked Mr. Brown if he would be in favor of a \$1M tax increase for salaries.

Mr. Brown went on to say that he thought that the jail's lack of facilities for guards was despicable and the guards are not well taken care of. He said that he thought that a temporary building should be placed where the building is that burned out and make that a facility for the guards. He went on to say that a child care facility should be created at the old Commissioners' building. Commissioner Burton asked the Executive Director to please give an update on the current status of the old Commissioners' building, to which she said that the North Haverhill Post Office had looked into renting the building, but were unable to do so at this time. The building will now be given to a realtor to rent out.

Mr. Brown asked about the possibility of having a health facility or again, day care in the aforementioned building and Commissioner Gabler stated that those ideas were looked into but were rejected as not a viable option due to lack of financial return.

Commissioner Cryans stated that you can't have high traffic flow and a jail next to a day care facility.

Commissioner Burton interjected by saying that there was also concern for public vs. private and the competition between the government and the private sector to which Mr. Brown has stated opposition to in the past.

Mr. Brown reiterated that there needs to be some kind of recreational facility for the jail.

The Commissioners signed a Medicare Part D application.

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

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk