

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Office of the Commissioners
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.
N. Haverhill, NH 03774
Tuesday January 16, 2007

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

Commissioner Cryans opened the meeting at 9:10 AM

Mark Chain, Executive Director of Alumni Hall in Haverhill, arrived to give the Commissioners an update on some of the activities and programs that have taken place at the Hall and to request that a monetary donation to the Hall be added to the budget for FY08.

M. Chain began by thanking the Commissioners for allowing photographs from a recent exhibit to be displayed at the Courthouse.

M.. Chain gave a brief overview of how the Hall came to be, noting that it was the original sight of the Grafton County Courthouse, and later became a school. The Hall was closed in 1992 and then, for its historical value, was renovated and re-opened again in 2004, with the help of local residents and spearheaded by Edith Celli. Mr. Chain is the second Executive Director and has a background in both the Arts and Psychology.

Some of the events that have taken place at the Hall include:

- Annual photo contest exhibit
- Barn, Tea and R & B dances.
- Art exhibits
- Quilt sales and most recently Bi-State Quilt Documentation Day.
- Musical recitals
- Arts for Youth

The Hall has a Board of Directors and is a not for profit. M. Chain said that he would like to offer more programs but due to the operating costs of the Hall, and its demographics, it's very difficult. Proposed budget for this year is \$65K, with approximately \$18K presently coming from donations.

Commissioner Burton noted that Mark Chain is a prime example of what one person can do and said it was a great accomplishment in this area, however, the County is not in a position to offer donations to individual entities as it would open them up to numerous other requests and that it was just not possible. The Commissioner asked M. Chain how many paying people have passed through the doors, to which Mr. Chain said approximately 2500.

Commissioner Burton suggested names of a number of other people to get in touch with in regards to donations and then offered the suggestion that County Corrections may be available to do general work for the Hall, referring him to Supt. Libby.

Commissioner Richards asked if perhaps rehabilitation classes could be offered to the inmates in the way of art courses and then suggested that Mr. Chain talk to Supt. Libby in preparation of the new Correctional Facility, noting that having a psychotherapist background would come in handy.

Commissioner Cryans noted that the sustainability of operations is always a difficult task and suggested other ways to get more money.

M. Chain said that he had had a lot of help to get where things are today and openly thanked all the volunteers who have made the operation of the Hall possible, saying that it wouldn't be where it is without them.

Mark Scarano, Executive Director of the Grafton County Economic Development Council arrived to give his update to the Commissioners. Commissioner Cryans introduced Mr. Scarano to Mr. Chain and the two briefly discussed ways to get money for the arts. M. Scarano had some background knowledge from a similar situation in Maine where he came from, and was more than willing to discuss different possibilities with M. Chain.

M. Chain left.

M. Scarano passed out literature and gave the Commissioners an update on what kinds of activities had taken place since he's been on board. The Dartmouth Incubator project was discussed as a positive endeavor and M. Scarano said that he and GCEDC would be looking into another such project which would incorporate the towns of Littleton and Plymouth. M. Scarano will be applying for a \$15K grant which will go towards creating a business plan for the new project and will act as a reimbursement fund for his participation.

There was further discussion about the possibility of Mascoma Corp leaving the incubator and moving away from Grafton County. Commissioner Burton asked if that were legal given their partaking in the grant which helped them get in. M. Scarano said that once Mascoma Corp fulfills its obligation of creating 25 jobs in the 18 months of being there, they can do as they like, which includes moving away.

Commissioner Cryans noted that best case scenario he would like to see occupants of the incubator stay in Grafton County as the, if not in Grafton County then at least in the region and at the very least, the state, as opposed to moving away. M. Scarano agreed with the Commissioner adding that GCEDC will work as hard as possible to try to keep them in the area but ultimately it is up to the company.

Commissioner Burton engaged M. Scarano in a conversation about how the Division of Economic Development can enhance the CGEDC and M. Scarano said that he relies more on the state than vice versa.

Commissioner Cryans noted the accomplishments of the GCEDC, expressed his appreciation of the work that is and has been done and also stressed the importance of replacing board members if needed and that he (M. Scarano) should come to the Board of Commissioners in the event that a member is needed so that they can offer

recommendations, noting to Commissioner Richards that Executive Director Clough currently sits on the board.

The Commissioners thanked Mark Scarano for coming and for supplying them with the enlightening material, saying they look forward to future updates.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the minutes of January 9, 2007, which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

Executive Director Clough gave the Commissioners an update on the NACo Prescription Drug Card, saying that in the month of December, there were 353 users of the card for an average savings of \$8.78 (20.6% average savings) and a total monthly savings of \$3099.21. The total for the last three months is 843 users for a total of \$7329.79 (20.21% average savings).

Commissioner Burton would like to see town moderators relay the RX Card information at town meetings and will draft a letter.

The County received a thank-you note from North Country Resource Conservation and Development for the money they received from the FY07 budget.

Executive Director Clough informed the Commissioners of the money received from National Forest Funds which is to be redistributed back to the SAU's in Grafton County. Amount is \$42,832.92 and distribution amounts are based on population.

Director Clough gave the Commissioners an update on the credit/charge file in the Deeds office saying that RD Sharp came up with a plan to eventually eliminate the file, which she ran past the auditor J. Lyford, who made other suggestions. Auditor Lyford suggested that anything that was of a certain age and amount (<\$5.00) should simply be eliminated rather than trying to locate its owner. Money will be reported to the Commissioners.

After a walkthrough in Deeds Executive Director Clough was in agreement that a different type of accounting system needs to be in place and will talk to Leo Lessard, Register in Strafford County, to find out how other Counties handle their billing systems. Director Clough said that she wants to feel comfortable that when audit time comes that this new system works properly.

Commissioner Burton wanted it noted that any additional accounting fees charged to the County by Mason & Rich, because of this hitch, come out of the Deed's budget.

Executive Director Clough gave the Commissioners an update on the latest Criminal Justice Committee meeting and where the Needs Assessment stands.

In a preliminary decision, it was determined that there will be a need for 240 beds which will take the facility into 2025. For a pre-architectural view of things, they are looking at designing a facility with 240 cells which in the future could be double bunked for a total of up to 400+/- inmates. Aforementioned design is subject to programming and costs.

A final report should be available from R. Miller in about two weeks.

Executive Director Clough said that she thought it important to inform the Executive Committee of where things stand and of the readiness to move into the next phase, which is the programming phase.

Commissioner Cryans asked how much money should be put into the FY08 budget for this continuing project and Executive Director Clough said that they will have a better idea in March.

Commissioner Richards said that she was most impressed with SMRT and their body of knowledge. She stated that she was humbled and proud to be on the committee. Commissioner Richards also said that she would like to put the notion of a regional facility which would include other Counties, to rest, as it will not take place.

Commissioner Burton said that he would like to be sure that there is enough money in the budget to keep things going so that there is no lull, as things seem to be proceeding at a good pace. Commissioner Burton also noted that once the new facility is built, he would like to see the existing building removed, thus preventing any issues with future erosion.

Executive Director Clough said that the steering committee is also looking into the existing building to see how and if it can best be utilized.

Commissioner Burton said that he hoped that decision would be made quickly after the move so that the existing building is not just "hanging out there".

There will be a Master Plan Meeting on January 30th at 1:00 PM and Executive Director Clough asked the Commissioners if they had any specific concerns so that she could direct them to M. King prior to the meeting.

Commissioner Richards said she would like to see the plan grammatically cleaned up and Commissioner Burton said that he would like to see ten specific recommendations from NCC on what should be done.

Commissioner Burton suggested that a letter be written to Representative Paul Hodes regarding the offer of the use of office space in the GC Admin building wherein he could hold office hours if he so desired. The letter should include an invitation to meet the Commissioners and a tour of the complex.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 PM

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk