

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Office of the Commissioners
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.
N. Haverhill, NH 03774
Tuesday May 8, 2007

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Nicholas Burke, Colin Robinson, Richard Mullaly, Cindi Graf, Bryce Wing, Lynn Wheeler, Nancy Murray, Mark Dunn, Martin Warren, Mark Russell, Reporter Sonia Scherr, Register of Deeds Bill Sharp and Deeds staff member George Morris.

Commissioner Cryans opened the meeting at 3:07

In response to proposed changes in software by the Register of Deeds, Attorneys and Abstractors were invited to give their opinion as to what they thought about it, as there had been numerous letters and phone calls regarding the change once it was brought to their attention.

Atty. Bryce Wing initially spoke for the group saying that they were unaware that there would be a switch from Connor & Connor to Landata and that they were upset about the news of the switch as there was no public announcement.

Atty. Dunn said that he has used the Landata system since it was installed in Merrimack in 2002 and he said there was no comparison between the two, praising C & C. Atty. Dunn said that C & C was quicker, easier, and an overall better system that indexes better and noted the importance of being able to scroll quicker. C & C will focus on the first three letters of a name and doesn't require you to have the full correct spelling of the name. C & C allows you to view all the names that "could" be possible and documents come up quickly. Having used both systems, Atty. Dunn called the C & C system the "gold standard" and prefers it over Landata, adding that although Landata is a way of doing things; it is just not the best way. Atty. Dunn also noted that the Registry of Deeds is a tax supported library and if it goes online, it should be supported by that tax base and not be charging a surtax as does Merrimack. Atty. Dunn also questioned the motivation of the change saying that as long as there's a working system and that the other Registries are using C & C, why the big push to change? Atty. Dunn said that there are abstractors who will simply not work in Merrimack County because of the Landata system.

Atty. Wing said that Sharon King of Sullivan County listened to her public when considering whether or not to change systems and suggested that the Commissioners call other Registries who use C & C to see how they felt.

Atty. Robinson said that C & C is simple to use and that there is an advantage to be able to view documents side by side. He also noted how critical it was that the information matches so that it can be considered a valid discharge. Atty. Robinson had two questions

that he wanted answered. What is the impetus behind the change and what role do the Commissioners play in this decision?

Commissioner Cryans asked that others be able to voice their opinion before any questions were answered.

N. Burke spoke and agreed with Atty. Dunn in opposition to Landata, having also used the system and said that he didn't feel comfortable with it. He said that C & C is much simpler and does work and he recommended that the Commissioners not approve the change without checking with other Registries.

R. Mullaly spoke saying that there was 20+ years of experience sitting at the table who have a wealth of knowledge that should have been tapped for an opinion prior to considering a change of systems. Mr. Mullaly said that it was arrogant of the Register not to ask the public before making this decision. He also questioned the reason why there should be a change. Mr. Mullaly said that he was not a proponent of going online at all and had concerns about identity theft. Mr. Mullaly also said that he had heard the budget for the Deeds department had been depleted and that tax payer money was used to send people to Texas.

Register of Deeds Sharp spoke up and said that his door was always open and that anyone could have come and said hello. As to being arrogant, Mr. Sharp took offense and said that arrogance was not in his religious background.

RD Sharp noted that as far as the role of the Commissioners go, if a contract is over \$5000, it must be approved by the Commissioners and that he has been following the procedures directed by the Commissioners. RD Sharp also noted that it was not true about the depletion of the budget and that was a dirty rumor being spread by the Treasurer. As far as traveling to Texas, he said that money was in his budget to do that. RD Sharp said that in an effort to save the County money, he compared the two systems and chose to go with Landata.

Someone questioned how those comparisons were made and RD Sharp said that comparisons were purely financial.

Atty. Dunn noted that the Grafton County residents and landowners also have an investment in costs and that the integrity of Landata is not good enough to warrant the savings.

N. Murray said that C & C rarely goes down and when it does, it's only for a short period of time, though agreed that there's a concern about going online, noting that some of that is personal, as it will alter her workload. N. Murray said that she didn't think the system was ready to go online considering all the marginal notes.

L. Wheeler said that she had a problem with one entity (Stewart) having control of the whole system and questioned whether it was a good idea. Ms. Wheeler also agreed with many of the same concerns as everyone else had and said that she did not think that a

quick change by the Register after just three months on the job, without a clear understanding of Deeds was wise and that he many need to step back a bit.

Atty. Robinson spoke again and said that he wasn't sure what kinds of problems they were trying to solve and that it shouldn't be changed if not needed. He also said that it wasn't wise to make a decision based on a monetary reason, plus it's not about the warm and fuzzy feeling you get from Deeds as expressed by Mr. Sharp but about business.

The same sentiment was expressed by all the Attorneys and abstractors who attended. No one spoke in favor of changing to Landata and it was suggested that further investigation be done to find out exactly who is content with Landata and who, having used both systems, is not.

Commissioner Burton spoke, saying that as per statute, any purchase of materials made by the County at or above \$5000 must be done by a bid and that he sensed that when Register Sharp brought forth this recommendation that he was a "train that needed to be slowed down". The Commissioner also stated that at present, there is no written policy that states that an elected official has to ask for approval for out of state travel, though he said that it would have been courteous to do so. Commissioner Burton apologized for not checking with the public on this matter. The Commissioner said that he believed that Deeds should be going online, but with the proper security in place for redactions.

Commissioner Richards spoke and said that she appreciated everyone taking time out of their busy schedules to come to this meeting and she too apologized to everyone for not getting public input on this matter.

Commissioner Cryans said that he had gone to Merrimack specifically to speak with staff and people doing title work and to get some information as to whether or not people liked the Landata system. Unfortunately, there wasn't anyone searching titles when he was there so it wasn't a very productive trip. He too apologized for not getting public input and praised those who attended the meeting for mobilizing and getting together to come to this meeting to voice their concerns.

Atty. Dunn gave Commissioner Cryans names of people that he could contact for information.

Martin Warren, NE Representative for Landata spoke saying that first off, Landata had an arms length relationship with Stewart and that no data stored would ever get in the hands of Stewart. It is stated in the contract that the data belongs to the Registry of Deeds.

Mr. Warren went over a few items that were of concern to those attending which included praising the online electronic recording and having a total of 50 systems. Mr. Warren said that this is not just an economic decision but will include high tech equipment backup on tape, increased work flow and quick cashiering. Mr. Warren suggested calling York County Maine to speak with Debra Anderson to see how she likes the system. Mr. Warren said the software includes a redacting piece and he welcomed anyone interested to call any number of his clients and get their input.

There was further discussion about the technical aspects of the software as well as questions about who designed it and what was their background(s).

Atty. Robinson suggested that perhaps Mr. Warren's company does not fully understand the operation of what the users here do.

Cindi Graf said that they did not come here to criticize the Landata Rep. but to add input to the needs of the users of the Grafton County Registry of Deeds.

Mr. Mullaly noted that the integrity of the past Registers of Deeds over the years has been incredible and the staff has always been great. Atty. Dunn agreed.

Deeds staff member G. Morris said that on a side note, he has personally found a scroll back method on the index. He also said that he is very tired of the old computer equipment that is available for use and prefers the high-tech equipment that Landata offers. He did not propose to know or understand what it is the abstractors do or their work.

RD Sharp said that he would like those at the table to also include the current Register of Deeds when noting the good job of the Registers. He said that he has read all the letters that were sent and disregarded those who have bashed him. He said that he appreciated everyone for coming.

After further discussion, Atty. Wing questioned the reason for the meeting and asked where it was headed. Director Clough said that first off, this is not a budget proposal and at present, the Deeds budget includes costs for Connor & Connor. She added that for clarification, the Deeds budget is not depleted.

RD Sharp said that he can agree to disagree and that his door is open, and works two ways.

C. Graf said that as an elected official, input from people should be taken seriously and particularly if the Register is concerned about his reputation.

5:45 The Attorneys and abstractors left.

RD Sharp remained and informed the Commissioners that he had a conversation with the president of C & C who was surprised about the meeting. He said that he was in a quandary and that he's studied both systems and believes that Landata is the company to go online with. He noted that if the Commissioners don't choose to go with Landata, then he'll have to think about what to do and that he feels like he's acting with the highest integrity to protect the records.

Executive Director Clough said that going online and switching software are quite different.

Commissioner Burton asked who it is that actually makes the decision to go online and whether or not there is a law or statute for reference. RD Sharp said that he was not aware of any law. Commissioner Richards said that maybe it was just a process in this day and age but that she would like that information checked.

Commissioner Cryans said that hindsight is the best teacher and suggested that Register Sharp get the customers involved when making these changes, just as you would in banking if you were changing something. People like to be kept informed and then added that there should be mutual respect. Commissioner Cryans suggested that RD Sharp go out and socialize and get to know the users and his simple advice was to make it a two way street.

RD Sharp left.

Executive Director Clough said that as per their request, she has gone out and looked for information from abstractors and Attorneys and her recommendation would be to renew the contract with Connor and Connor for July 1, 2007 (FY08) and then take some time to review any potential new system and get with the users and to work something out only if needed, but for now, it was not a good idea to make a switch.

Commissioner Richards moved to delay the decision to switch software for one year and to sign with Connor & Connor again. In the meantime there should be a review of other companies and the input of Attorneys and abstractors should be taken into consideration. Commissioner Burton seconded the motion.

There was further discussion and Commissioner Burton made a request that the equipment currently in use be updated by Connor & Connor and steps be taken to bring the system online with proper redactions.

Director Clough wanted it noted that when the Deeds Dept. moved from the Courthouse to the Admin building, that C & C did all the rewiring and set up of equipment at no charge, over a weekend.

Commissioner Cryans questioned whether or not new equipment can be added into the contract adding that he liked the idea of waiting a year and getting more input.

When the vote was taken, all were in favor.

*5:15 PM – Commissioner Richards 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.

*5:30 PM – Commissioner Burton moved to come out of Executive Session and to permanently seal the Minutes from the Session. Commissioner Richards seconded the motion. All were in favor. No motions were made and no actions were taken while in Executive Session.

The Commissioners recessed this meeting to resume at Alumni Hall at 6:00 PM

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

DEPARTMENT HEADS: Sheriff Dutile, Nursing Home Administrator Eileen Bolander, Superintendent of Corrections Glenn Libby, Superintendent of Maintenance Jim Oakes and Human Resource Director Joanne Mann.

PUBLIC PRESENT: Mark Chain, Edith Celley, Rick Ladd and Harold Brown

The Commissioners resumed their meeting, which was called to order by Commissioner Cryans at 6:10

Commissioner Cryans deferred to Commissioner Burton as this was his district.

Commissioner Burton noted at a candidate's debate last fall, his opponent suggested that the Commissioner hold a meeting at just such a place as Alumni Hall, and noted that he has obliged.

Commissioner Burton noted the sign in sheet and suggested that everyone sign it.

Commissioner Burton introduced the public members noting particularly that Edith Celley has been instrumental in the restoration of Alumni Hall and commended her work with the Historical Society. The Commissioner then recognized Rick Ladd who is the chair of the Selectboard in the Town of Haverhill and Mark Chain, the Executive Director of Alumni Hall. Harold Brown was recognized as being the most attending public member of Commissioner Meetings.

Commissioner Cryans spoke directly to R. Ladd, saying that he had hoped that Grafton County is a good neighbor and noted the 400 employees that support the County. Commissioner Cryans echoed the sentiments of Commissioner Burton in regard to E. Celley and M. Chain for the work they've done for Alumni Hall.

Commissioner Richards said that she was thrilled to be at Alumni Hall as she is a big supporter of the Arts.

Commissioner Richards moved to approve the minutes from May 1, 2007, which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

Commissioner Cryans asked R. Ladd if he would like to say anything, to which R. Ladd thanked the Board for holding the meeting at the Hall. Mr. Ladd proceeded to inform the Commissioners of the things that are happening in the town which include an update of the emergency plan, which they found was out of date during the last big blow down, working to increase the image in the community, looking at the fire and safety codes,

looking at traffic issues pending the new Wal-Mart store, marketing the business park and overall development for Haverhill.

The Commissioners reviewed the DoC Superior Court Report.

Director Clough presented an educational assistance application for someone in the Nursing Home who was pursuing her BS degree.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the educational assistance, which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed the Greenhaven authorization for payment request for the feasibility study.

The Commissioners signed the exemption of environmental review for the Greenhaven feasibility study.

Director Clough informed the Commissioners that the new Executive Director for the NHAC called and asked Sec. Martino to let the Commissioners know that if they wanted to discuss the rise in fees that they will need to come to Concord to talk to them, as opposed to visiting here which was the initial request. Their next meeting will be on June 1, 2007 at 8:00 AM.

COMMISSIONER ISSUES:

Commissioner Burton informed R. Ladd that the town of Lincoln had done exactly what Haverhill was proposing which is to offer their industrial park to real estate developers.

Commissioner Burton met with the four Congressional Offices to bring up to date as to the necessity of block grant money in the North Country and to solicit support.

Commissioner Burton said that there will be an informational meeting at the Barge Inn with Glen English and the Rail Director to discuss the possibility of laying rail from the Vermont side, over to the park in Woodsville. R. Ladd noted that there is a contest to name the park, which will open on May 18th.

Commissioner Cryans informed everyone that the Drug Court began on May 3rd and is the second County to have one.

Commissioner Cryans said that the Academy for Corrections will be looking for a new person to run the program.

There will be a Youth Suicide Prevention meeting on May 10th in Concord at 10:20.

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT:

Sheriff Dutile spoke and informed the attendees what the Sheriff Department does, saying that they have all the same authority as the police, but also do civil processes,

Court transports and Court security. The Sheriff's Department guards and protects prisoner's state wide.

In the town of Haverhill, the Sheriff's Department transports prisoners to and from the jail, assists the Haverhill PD (52 times last year) and runs security for the Haverhill Fair.

Sheriff Dutile presented a brochure on the NH Police Cadet Training Academy and said that if the Commissioners knew of any youths (ages 14-20), who were interested in law enforcement that he would like to sponsor them. It was his goal to sponsor one person from each district if possible.

CORRECTIONS:

Supt. Libby spoke saying that there were currently 118 in-house inmates and 17 were women. The population dipped a bit in April but appears to be on the rise again.

Supt. Libby has a new hire from Carroll County who was a Corporal there and will be a Sergeant now. Supt. Libby has promoted G. Bryar to Corporal and noted that Cpl. Bryar has been taking many certification classes and is now qualified to teach CPR, First Aid and train others on the Defibrillator. Supt. Libby has offered to let other Dept. utilize his knowing with training if needed.

Supt. Libby said that he hoped to hire a substance abuse coordinator by July 1, 2007.

Community work program is overwhelmed by the number of requests from towns and non-profit businesses and are scheduled into the middle of 2008. Work is being done on litter pick up and they usually cover between 40 to 50 miles of road as part of the "Keep America Beautiful" program.

Supt. Libby said that when the new jail is built, there will likely be space that certainly can be used by the town of Haverhill in the event of a storm such as the last one, and will provide a secure and lit area to congregate if needed.

Supt. Libby said that the Drug Court had its first participant, a female, who has high hopes for the program. Supt. Libby said that the data suggests that even six months of treatment can cut the recidivism rate in half, adding that it's important to put a lot of money into treatment as there is much money being spent to create more jails.

Supt. Libby commended Mr. Brown for his work as a mentor for the Thresholds program saying that the statistics show that those completing the program are less likely to return to jail. Threshold graduation is on the 9th of May.

Commissioner Burton asked when there will be five people in the Drug Court program, to which the Supt. said that it takes time to do the pre-screening and there has to be a desire but that they hope to have another in very soon.

Commissioner Burton said that he would like to see a brochure as a payroll stuffer on "Keeping America Beautiful" to remind people not to throw litter on the roads.

Commissioner Richards asked Supt. Libby if someone who came with a request for community work that appeared to be in more urgent need, would they be bumped up the list, and the Supt. said that Sgt. Paronto does a good job in checking out the needs and he does all the scheduling and prioritizing, but that it's not likely that someone could jump the list as there are many who have been waiting a very long time for help. Supt. Libby noted that Sgt. Paronto does an excellent job.

Mark Chain gave a brief overview of what's going on at the Hall and said that he is usually there from Tuesday to Thursday from 12-4, at 989-5500 or you can email at alumnihall@charterinternet.com, and there is an answering machine for messages. Mark is trying to work with Supt. Libby on putting together a film program for inmates, discussing the importance of the arts as a program. M. Chain worked in a prison with art programs and is a psychotherapist so he feels he has much to offer in that way. M. Chain also made a request for financial support from the County to be able to keep the current programs at the Hall, alive.

NURSING HOME:

Nursing Home Administrator Eileen Bolander spoke saying the current census is 125. There was a high mortality rate in the month of April, which was due primarily to the age and health of the residents.

A new Asst. Director of Nursing will be starting as soon and is currently the Pharmacy Nurse. She will begin when the current Asst. Director of Nursing leaves.

There is still a nursing shortage, particularly on the eve/night shifts, due to resignations and FMLA,

This is National Nurses Week and next week is National Nursing Home Week. A hoe- down is planned, with the entire western garb.

Commissioner Burton asked if there was a program to reach out to young people to shadow nurses. NHA Bolander said that is difficult to do in a nursing home setting but there are interns in the Social Services Dept. NHA Bolander said that she had been approached from someone who would like to be an Administrator in training, so that may be happening soon.

Commissioner Richards asked about a Candy Striper program, but NHA Bolander said that to work in a nursing home, you have to go through getting shots and so much orientation that it just takes too much staff time just to train.

Commissioner Cryans asked NHA Bolander for a brief overview of the spectrum of residents. NHA Bolander said that the youngest was probably 40 and the oldest was 101. There are 30 high functioning residents on the Alzheimer unit and there is currently a large group of men, culminating in a 50/50 split. There are also a lot of couples.

HUMAN RESOURCES:

Human Resource Director Joanne Mann gave her report beginning with vacancies.

RN/LPN – 3

LNA - 1

UNH Ext. Administrative Sec. – 1

Currently interviewing IT personnel

June is open enrollment for insurance

Dental insurance is up 6.4%, but is a voluntary program at no cost to the County.

Flexible spending will be renewed.

Revisions are being made to the Policy Manual

There will be benefits fair on June 6th from 11:30 – 4:30

HRD Mann thanked everyone who walked in the March of Dimes

There will be a Wellness workshop on Resources for Family and Friends on May 14th.

The Digital Document system is live now.

First payment for the drug subsidy has been received.

MAINTENANCE: *See attached Maintenance Report.

Supt. Oakes was on hand for the opening of the bids for the re-construction of the front stairs to the Administration building. Only one bid was received, which was from Rich Clifford in the amount of \$10,250. \$850 of that was for the center rail which will be a new addition. Supt. Oakes felt that bid was reasonable and recommended that the Commissioners accept the bid. During this time, the stairs at the North entrance to the building will be unlocked to the public.

Commissioner Burton moved to accept the bid of \$10,250 from Rich Clifford for the re-construction/repair of the front stairs, which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. All were in favor.

Commissioner Cryans asked Mr. Brown if he had anything he would like to say and Mr. Brown began with his objection to inmate labor, saying that it took work away from those who were trying to make a living and that it was not good for the economy. He noted that those using the service were trying to get something for nothing from the Government

Commissioner Burton said that there was 5,000 hours logged last year in community services, totaling \$210K for the communities who would have never have been able to afford it else wise. The Commissioner went on to say that it's better to have inmates out doing something productive rather than sitting in a cell picking on each other.

Mr. Brown said that inmates belong in a training atmosphere and Grafton County is the best place for that, be it the nursing home or maintenance, but that picking up papers on the side of the road wasn't going to help them with their future.

R. Ladd was recognized and said that inmates painted the fences at Haverhill Corner and their budget would have never supported that work that the Grafton County Jail provided.

He said that he spoke to some of the inmates and their take on it was that they were pleased to be able to give back to the community.

As the meeting wound down, Commissioner Burton noted his appreciation to Mark Chain and Edith Celley for the Hall and motioned that a donation be made in the amount of \$250 for the use of it, and it should be taken out of the Commissioners contingency line. Commissioner Richards seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:54

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT REPORT TO GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

April 24 – May 8, 2007

Courthouse ADA bathroom (1st floor) – This project is now complete and is open to the public. We will be posting signs on every floor directing the public to this facility.

Courthouse Sheriff Dept. (Old Dispatch Area) – Started renovation project last week. We will create two offices, short hallway and break room in the old dispatch area. We are also reworking the counters in the admin area in addition to replacing the carpet throughout

Nursing Home In-Service & PT Area swap – The majority of this transition is complete. We are still in the process of renovating Ellen Chapin's old office and turning it into PT's computer room

Nursing Home Cement-lined Hot Water Tank Change Out – The transition from the old tank to the new one went well. Dennis is in the process of removing the old plumbing and preparing to remove the original cement-lined tank.

Nursing Home Kitchen Hood Ductwork – Kitchen Klean completed the 6-month inspection of the subject ductwork. Since there wasn't any grease buildup it didn't need to be cleaned.

Administrative Building Front Steps – Bids to replace the front steps of the Admin Building were due in on Friday. Bids need to be reviewed and a contractor selected. Once the work begins, the north entrance will become the main entrance for staff and the public. John Bishop is in the process of refurbishing and reinstalling the handrails at the north entrance.

Administrative Building Elevator – Stanley Elevator completed the inspection of the electric cable elevator and commented that it was well maintained and in good mechanical condition.

Complex HVAC Equipment – ARC Mechanical is finishing up the preventative maintenance on all our HVAC equipment throughout the complex. To keep cost down, my staff has repaired most everything ARC found that needed repair. The Administrative Building Server Room AC condensing unit had its compressor seize up. ARC replaced it with a warranty compressor. However, the labor was not covered by the warranty.

Master Garden – I sent Dennis Jud from SMRT a copy of the Master Garden plan for him to evaluate and determine if the new jail might encroach on this area. I specifically emphasized that we would like to press forward with the planned birch garden if possible so that we don't lose the Moose Plate Grant for \$1,500. The Master Gardeners met this past weekend to clean out the existing beds, establish the new raised bed behind the gazebo and plotted out a new location for the birch garden in anticipation of losing the originally selected location.

Farm Dump Environmental Assessment – HTE Northeast, Inc. completed the core drilling on April 30th and began their environmental assessment of the landfill.

Drainage & Erosion Project (Phase II) – The structural engineer for the project provided the required info to formulate a bid request for the sheet pile wall portion of Phase II. I will place the ad this week so that it runs in the newspapers next week.