

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Office of the Commissioners
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.
N. Haverhill, NH 03774
Tuesday May 29, 2007

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

Commissioner Cryans opened the meeting at 9:03

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the minutes from May 15, 2007, which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

Director Clough informed the Commissioners of a letter from HHS Commissioner Stephen regarding an All Health Hazard Region Working Group, suggesting that the Counties nominate three representatives (total) to participate in this group. Director Clough suggested Nursing Home Administrator Bolander as she already is quite involved in this issue. The Commissioners agreed with this recommendation.

The Commissioners discussed the issue of paying the NHACo dues and of when they might be able to get together with Director Hemenway to go over the fees and what services the County is getting for these fees. Both Commissioner Cryans and Burton said that they thought that the dues should be paid at this time, despite the increased dues. Commissioner Richards was reluctant to do so but agreed to go along with the payment of dues, but that a meeting should be arranged to discuss the dues further with Mr. Hemenway.

Director Clough read a letter from the town of Bristol Select board, which began by thanking Commissioner Richards for attending one of their meetings and updating them on what's going on in the County. They also voiced their concern for the 20% increase to the budget, saying that it was too high and perhaps the County could postpone some of their items of less concern.

NHA Bolander submitted a proposal from two companies for a high speed document scanner for the nursing home. One proposal was from Biz Tech, the other from Image Data. NHA Bolander requested the purchase come from Biz Tech, whose proposed amount was \$20,509. No amount was included for the Image Data proposal.

Commissioner Richards had numerous questions such as what was the warranty, image safety, backup, training, software upgrades and was it possible to lease? Director Clough suggested that NHA Bolander be contacted to answer these questions, The Nursing Home was contacted and NHA Bolander was not available until Thursday so the decision was put on hold.

An email was received from Franconia Notch inviting the Commissioners to the dedication of the new Welcome Center, which would be on June 23rd at 1:00 PM. Commissioner Burton said he could attend.

The Nursing Home will be holding a graduation ceremony on June 1st at 3:00, for the high school students who work there. Commissioner Burton will attend.

The Commissioners signed the engagement letter with Mason & Rich for the year ending June 30, 2008.

Director Clough notified the Commissioners that Treasurer Elliott per RSA 29:15 has recommend/nominated Frank Stiegler as Deputy Treasurer to act on her behalf in her absence. Mr. Stiegler was a past Treasurer.

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

Director Clough presented an educational tuition assistance request from a staff member in the nursing home who is working toward her BS in nursing.

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

Director Clough informed the Commissioners that there were three employees of the nursing home who, back in 2004, worked out an agreement with the County to cover the costs of schooling, which would be paid back on a monthly basis until the loan was reimbursed or forgiven. All three employees have made these payments and the balance of their loan(s) is approximately \$3500 each. Director Clough said that these employees have not taken advantage of the tuition assistance available over the years, even though they have been attending classes, which could be as much as \$750 a year.

Commissioner Cryans suggested allowing them the tuition assistance that they would have normally qualified for the past two years, thus removing \$1500 each from their remaining balance.

Commissioner Richards moved to approve the suggestion of Commissioner Cryans to remove \$1500 from the balance of each employee, which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

Commissioner Cryans said that he would like to have the employees come in so that the Commissioners could tell them in person what they were doing.

The Commissioners decided to hold a meeting in the Lebanon area on June 26th with the location to be announced.

Director Clough reviewed the budget schedule saying that there would be meetings on June 4th, 11th and 18th, culminating in the final vote on the 25th. Meetings would begin at 9:00 AM.

COMMISSIONER ISSUES:

Commissioner Richards said that she would be away June 14-23 and July 19 to Aug. 4th.

Commissioner Richards said that she would like to discuss the Farm Stand prices at some point.

Commissioner Richards questioned why the County did not keep a capital reserve fund, adding that she thought that pre-planning was important.

Commissioner Cryans said that in his opinion, there has been a lot of planning that has gone into the budget over the years and this year there were a lot of needs. He also noted that money put aside is still costing the taxpayers.

Commissioner Richards said that a 22% increase is high and that she will be “singing a different tune” next year when the employee council comes in.

Commissioner Cryans said that he feels it’s necessary to take care of the employees and that there a just a lot of things that need to be done. He added that there has been no input from the public in prior years because of the good job that has been done on the budget and sometimes it’s just the natural course of events that can create increases, such as the erosion damage from the rain. Director Clough made mention that that there is a better perspective on the maintenance needs than there has been over the years as well

Commissioner Richards reiterated her position on the importance of putting aside money for a rainy day and asked Director Clough to find out if any of the other Counties had capital reserve funds.

Commissioner Burton said that he hoped to get a feel for what the Delegation had thought about the budget and planned to contact a couple of the Representatives in his district. He also noted that once the budget is over that something should be done for the Administrative team who worked on the budget to show appreciation, saying perhaps a lunch.

Commissioner Burton was in Plymouth and Ashland for the Memorial Day celebrations.

Commissioner Cryans was the guest speaker in Enfield at their Memorial Day celebration.

Commissioner Richards and Cryans went to Plymouth for the fact finding tour which have been held throughout the state. Commissioner Cryans expressed the importance of the role of County government. The tour was conducted by Representative Mary Cooney who will report back to her committee. Commissioner Cryans asked Representative

Cooney to let him know if when there is any new information pertaining to either jails or to nursing homes.

10:35 AM – 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.

*11:15 AM – 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.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:18 AM

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk