

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Office of the Commissioners
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.
N. Haverhill, NH 03774
Tuesday June 5, 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

Commissioner Richards moved to approve the minutes from May 29, 2007, which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

Director Clough reviewed a letter from Paul Bonaparte Krogh that said that there would be an update of the video that was done on County Farms that will include Grafton County. Commissioner Richards who attended the UNH Advisory Board meeting last evening said that it was also brought up there.

Maintenance Superintendent Jim Oakes, and Engineers Jeff Tirey and Shannon LaRocque were in attendance for the opening of the bids for a sheet pile wall and accompanying work. Two bids were received.

Miller Construction.....\$389,900.
Winterset.....\$461,124

Supt. Oakes, J. Tirey and S. LaRocque left to review the bids before making any recommendations.

Commissioner Cryans brought in a nomination form from NHAC, seeking five officers to serve on the Executive Committee. The Commissioner said that those nominated should be committed to attending. Nominees can be either appointed or elected officials. After some discussion, nominees submitted will be Director Clough, Commissioner Cryans, NHA Bolander, Supt. Glenn Libby, and HSD Bishop.

Nursing Home Administrator Eileen Bolander and Health Information Manager Tammy Robbins arrived to answer questions on the purchase of a new scanner that was requested. NHA Bolander began by saying that the state is in the process of offering a grant to those who will be in the position of interconnecting electronic records that can be shared with other hospitals and nursing homes. This will included Littleton, Weeks, and Cottage hospital. In light of this information, NHA Bolander has withdrawn the original request for the scanner equipment and is looking into further information.

HIM Robbins was able to answer some of Commissioner Richards original questions. The purpose of the new scanner is to get away from paper files and to computerize and

electronically manage the records. The nursing home is running out of storage space and this is a much better way to handle the need for space, which will also bring Grafton County into the times. Scanned CD's will hold 1000 discharges as skilled residents are in and out of the nursing home all the time. The eventual goal is to get rid of all paperwork. There is a one year warranty on the scanner and then a yearly maintenance fee thereafter. HIM Robbins believes that it would be more expensive in the long run to lease the equipment than to own it.

Any of the scanner company's will provide training.

Commissioner Burton asked if there was a backup offsite for the records, to which HIM Robbins said that all records will be stored onsite (as they currently are) in a locked fireproof vault. Storing offsite would be an additional charge.

Commissioner Burton discussed death certificates with HIM Robbins.

Commissioner Cryans asked if the PDA's will integrate with the scanner equipment, which NHA Bolander said they would.

There was further discussion as to how long it would take to do the manual work of scanning all the records, which could be as long as six hours per record, on average.

The Commissioners thanked NHA Bolander and HIM Robbins for coming.

Director Clough informed the Commissioners that there would be a change in the minimum wage both federal and state. The state of New Hampshire will increase theirs in two steps.

Sept. 1, 2007 increase will go to \$6.50 and Sept. 1, 2008 it will increase to \$7.25

Director Clough passed out copies of the final draft of North Country Council's Master Plan of Grafton County and asked the Commissioners to look it over for review and discussion at a later date.

Supt. Oakes and Engineers Tirey and LaRocque returned with their evaluation of the bids. J. Tirey said that Miller Construction was in the ballpark of their estimated amount for the job, noting that Winterset was significantly higher.

As Miller was in the price range of what was anticipated, coupled with the fact that S. LaRocque had worked with them before and was satisfied with their work, Miller was recommended for the bid award.

Commissioner Richards moved to approve the award of the bid to Miller Construction in the amount of \$389,900., which was seconded by Commissioner Burton.

Commissioner Richards asked if trucking fees were calculated in or if that could be an added expense at the end of the job. J. Tirey said that the bid amount is at a set cost.

Commissioner Richards then asked if having this done will take care of the problem indefinitely or will it need to be revisited in a few years. J. Tirey said that this is phase II of the work, which is installing the retaining structure which must be done before any erosion work. The retaining walls usually have a life of 50 years.

Commissioner Burton asked what was to be done with the granite slabs. J. Tirey said that some of them would be removed to a place of the County's choosing, while others would be left in place and used.

Commissioner Burton asked if Supt. Oakes would be clerk of the works. Supt. Oakes said that he just did not have the time to watch the job all day, to which S. LaRocque said that he would be in the area and he could check in on occasion to see that everything was going fine but that there would be no full time inspections.

Commissioner Burton asked who certifies that the fill that comes in is clean and environmentally correct and safe. S. LaRocque said that the fill has to meet standards and will come from a gravel pit. The selected materials must meet specifications and the source will be known.

Commissioner Cryans asked what would happen if the County decided not to do this job, to which J. Tirey said that likely there would be further erosion of the access road and then eventually any walls left would simply collapse.

Commissioner Richards asked if another access road could be made to which the answer was no.

When the vote came down, all were in favor.

Work is to begin around June 18th and should be done in approximately 90 days. Coordination will need to take place with the Farm.

Farm Manager Kimball arrived and informed the Commissioners that the cost to move the corn crib would be \$12K.

Commissioner Burton said that after re-thinking it, he was more in favor of leaving the land more open and that putting a building up on it would not be such a good move. Commissioner Richards thought the prices was too high also and suggested just putting up a structure such as the one down the street from here. FM Kimball said that he would continue to use the corn crib as a drying area for now.

Milk prices are up to \$18.74 and should continue to rise. FM Kimball discussed the possibility of haying other people's fields, but that he would need inmate labor to help with the work. Commissioner Burton asked if the landowner would receive a benefit from that, to which FM Kimball said that hadn't been worked out but perhaps he would receive some of the hay from the cut. Commissioner Burton asked about having inmates on private land, which would have to be investigated further.

Commissioner Richards asked whether or not there were different species of potatoes grown and FM Kimball said there were three different types.

Commissioner Richards then asked FM Kimball about growing decorative sunflowers. The Commissioner also noted that she wanted to be sure that the prices at the farm were kept in line with the competition.

On another note, Commissioner Burton said that Commissioner Steve Taylor will not be seeking re-appointment next term and thought that Grafton County should invite him here before he leaves office.

Superintendent Libby arrived with his report saying that the population is low right now with 92 inmates.

Supt. Libby noted that there may be a need to increase the safety of staff out in the community as there have been incidents lately.

The officer that was recently hired from Carroll County lasted only one week, saying that he did not expect to have to work so hard.

The Supt. said that he had received calls from two different newspapers regarding the increased budget and asked the Commissioners for guidance on that issue.

Commissioner Cryans said that he and Commissioner Richards recently spoke at a selectman's meeting in Bristol where they fielded many questions. Much of the concern was about the need for all the capital improvements, whether they were really necessary, and money put aside for the new jail. Commissioner Cryans point was that once the new jail is in place, there's not going to be a lot of money for items that needed to be done. He said this rationale did not go over very well and that the town didn't feel that enough had been done to keep the budget down.

Supt. Libby said that he was concerned about the fact that he may need to make some cuts in his budget and that he may need to make some serious decision because of that. He said that he was admittedly overwhelmed at the eventual cost of staffing a new jail.

The Supt., Executive Director, Commissioner Richards and other staff had visited other facilities and have been enlightened about the operation of them.

Commissioner Richards said that while talking with others, she tries to stress the idea that this new facility will place a lot of the focus and attention on rehabilitative programs.

Commissioner Cryans asked if there was any way to measure the cost effectiveness of the jail and questioned how one knows if the cost is too high. Supt. Libby said that he didn't know, but compared to Sullivan County, we will get much more than what they've spent money for. The Supt. added that there may be possibilities for creating revenue by taking in both female inmates and Vermont inmates.

In regard to an article in the Valley News, which didn't portray the Drug Court in a positive light, Commissioner Burton said that he encourages all who are involved in the Drug Court to keep a positive attitude, particularly when the newspapers are writing negatively.

Commissioner Cryans said that the cost of the jail is one thing, but the cost of lives are another and that going in and out of jail all the time is not a worthy life and there needs to be an alternative for these people.

Supt. Libby requested that he be able to take inmates from Belknap County for their motorcycle weekend, noting particularly the females, and that he will be working out some type of barter system.

Human Resource Director Joanne Mann arrived to discuss the market adjustment for grades 6 & 7, which was done to address the nursing issue and the fact that the County had fallen below on wages for them. At the time it was decided that all positions in grades 6 & 7 would be included in the wage adjustment. A letter was received from the Employee Council regarding that issue and HRD Mann thought that it should then be revisited.

HRD Mann thought that it was important to note that this was a market adjustment and not a classification adjustment, which is different. Although there were different ways that this issue could have been addressed, it was decided that everyone on the two scales would be included.

HRD Mann said that she would like to address some of the issues in the Employee Council letter and stated that the non-nursing positions were considered, including the Asst. County Attorney as the County Atty. had concerns about their pay. She said that it was not fair to say that there was no analysis done and that because of supply and demand, a loss in any of those positions would be detrimental. HRD Mann gave her rationale as to why the adjustment to all the positions was done and disputed the arguments of the Employee Council, saying that the letter was not correct.

In her opinion, key management positions are hard to fill and though she disagreed strongly with the letter, she did agree with the notation that the wage consultant is always used for adjustments.

Commissioner Cryans asked Director Clough for her opinion who began by saying that she was already mulling this situation over prior to receiving the letter from the Employee Council, and had in fact discussed it with Commissioner Cryans yesterday. It was the Director's recommendation that all non-nursing personnel remain at the same rate of pay that they currently at. Adding two steps at the end of the scale will allow them further potential. (The Maintenance Superintendent is excluded from that scenario). HRD Mann said that she will support the decision of the Executive Director and noted that for the record, there was never any intention of not being above board with the original decision.

Commissioner Burton said that since the Employee Council wrote the letter, they should receive a response in the matter. Commissioner Cryans said that while it is important that

the Employee Council weighed in on this matter they need to know that it was discussed prior to the receipt of the letter.

Commissioner Burton moved that all non-nursing position within grades 6 & 7 will remain at their same rate of pay and will have the growth potential at the end of the adjusted pay scale as the first two steps have been removed and two steps added at the end, which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. All were in favor.

Director Clough went over a couple of revenue adjustments that might help with the budget, which included looking into a five year bond for capital projects and reviewing the five year improvement plan of the Superintendent.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:05

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk