

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Office of the Commissioners
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.
N. Haverhill, NH 03774
Monday August 21, 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 9:07 AM

Commissioner Gabler moved to approve the minutes from August 1, 2006, which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

The Commissioners reviewed the GCDoc Superior Court Report

Executive Director Clough presented an educational assistance application for a taxation class for the bookkeeper at the Nursing Home who is pursuing her associate's degree.

Commissioner Gabler moved to approve the educational assistance and was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

UNH Cooperative Extension Educator Tom Buob has received the Distinguished Service Award for his outstanding county program on soil fertility and financial management in cropping systems at this year's National Association of County Agricultural Agents meeting.

The Commissioners reviewed and signed the surety bond application for the Nursing Home.

The Nursing Home will be having a "Staff Appreciation Day" on Friday, September 15th from 1:30 – 3:00. Health and Human Services Commissioner Stephen will be present for the event. Executive Director Clough suggested that the Commissioners pass out service pins to the Nursing Home employees on that day. All three Commissioners will be in attendance.

Family Day will be held on Saturday September 9th from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM, with lunch being held at 12:00. Commissioner Gabler will not be able to attend.

Nursing Home Administrator Eileen Bolander asked the Commissioners for two bid waivers:

The first bid waiver request was for a Specialized Bed with multiple positions that extends to specific lengths and widths. There is only one manufacturer who is making the bed at this time and it is being marketed through Direct Supply. The bed sells for \$6409.

Commissioner Gabler moved to accept the bid waiver for the purchase of the bed, which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

The second request for a waiver of bid was for a Bladder Scanner, which is also only available through one company, and is also supplied through Direct Supply. Cost of the machine is \$10,950.

Commissioner Gabler moved to approve the bid waiver, which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

Nursing Home Administrator Bolander requested that the Commissioners approve a bid for 75 privacy cubical curtains from Direct Supply. Three bids had been obtained on the item(s) and the lowest was from Direct Supply at a cost of \$6435.

Commissioner Burton asked if local companies were asked to bid and Executive Director Clough said that she wasn't sure as she had just received the request, but could find out from the Nursing Home if needed.

The curtains are specifically manufactured to go on a track which when pulled, keeps each area private, like the ones used in hospitals, so they are not made like window curtains.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the bid from Direct Supply, which was seconded by Commissioner Gabler. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed an MS-1 Extension form for the town of Livermore, in the event it was needed.

Executive Director Clough informed the Commissioners that she had received letters from both Belknap and Sullivan Counties, which stated support for MicroCredit.

Executive Director Clough asked the Commissioners when they would like to schedule an advisory board meeting for the Barbara B. Hill Fund(s). Commissioner Cryans asked Executive Director Clough how much money was currently in the Fund to which Executive Director Clough informed him that, including the CD, there was about \$8K, stating that there have been numerous requests for money for summer programs. Commissioner Cryans said that he wondered how long the fund could be sustained, though it has been in service for nine years now. Executive Director Clough will put together a brief report for the Commissioners to show where the funds have been spent. The meeting was set for September 18th at 12:00, after the Executive Committee meeting. Lunch will be brought in.

Human Resource Director Joanne Mann arrived to discuss the Drug and Alcohol Policy, which has yet to be finalized and instituted. HRD Mann gave the Commissioners an overview of what steps she has taken so far in the formation of the policy, which has included a sample that was written by the US Drug Administration and reviews by both the Employee Law Attorney and Law Enforcement. None of these prototype policies were accepted by the Administrative Team and the Employee Council for various reasons. The County Attorney was also opposed to the last presentation as well. HRD Mann's recommendation to the Commissioners is that they adopt a policy, as one is very much needed, and that that policy be administered.

Commissioner Burton asked about models of other institutions and Government agencies and whether their policies would hold up in court.

HRD Mann said that Rockingham County has a policy. Commissioner Burton asked if the policy has a history of working or not, to which she was not sure.

Commissioner Cryans asked if other employers are doing pre-employment screening and HRD Mann and the Executive Director said that most all employers do.

There was further discussion about post accident testing and random drug testing. Commissioner Gabler discussed how they did random testing in the Navy.

Commissioner Burton said that he could not believe that the Local Government Center can't properly advise the County of a good working police that is proven. He gave HRD Mann some other names to contact.

The Commissioners received a copy of the latest revised policy, which included notes on some of the areas where there were objections. The Commissioners will review the policy and in the meantime, HRD Mann will seek out other polices and the Commissioners will review all the information at the meeting next Monday.

Rich McLeod, North Country liaison to the Governor arrived to discuss his position and to ask the Commissioners if they had any requests or comments for him. Mr. McLeod accepted this position as an interim position, but has since decided to accept it full time. Mr. McLeod has spent thirty years in the state's Natural Resource Management position and now he is learning a lot about economic development in the North Country. He stated that the Governor's foremost initiative is the job council, saying that we need to improve the economy and provided healthcare solutions in the North Country. The Governor, he said, is addressing these issues with task forces.

Mr. McLeod's stated that his role was not covered by a "job description", but that basically he works as a facilitator of dialogues between the Governor and the citizens of the state, in particular the North Country, which covers an area north of Hanover and north of Conway.

Mr. McLeod stated that this is a huge geographic area to cover, which is also economically different, and a big reason why having this liaison position is so important.

Commissioner Burton noted that the position is another avenue for the citizens of New Hampshire to interact with the state government. Commissioner Burton then stated a few areas that were in need of attention, which included the Broadband initiative, and the continual need for improvement of infrastructure in the north.

Commissioner Burton then offered Mr. McLeod a room/office in the Administration building that he could utilize while in the area, suggesting perhaps even having "office hours" in which to visit with citizens. Commissioner Burton also recommended that Mr. McLeod get in touch with GCEDC.

Commissioner Gabler noted that the State Parks and Fish & Game are in serious financial shape and echoed the sentiments of Commissioner Burton regarding the condition of the roads in the North Country and the fact that more money is being spent in the southern part of the state on this problem.

Commissioner Cryans voiced his concern for the need for financial help in the northern part of the state saying that there are simply not enough economic opportunities for employment, therefore, the young are moving on and not staying in the area. The Commissioner encouraged Mr. McLeod to get in touch with GCEDC, who are currently working on the incubator project in Hanover, suggesting that perhaps they (GCEDC) could offer some suggestions as to how one begins to entice businesses to an area.

Other problems that are foremost on the minds of people are the need for childcare, transportation and most importantly at this time of year, fuel assistance.

Commissioner Burton also mentioned the problems that citizens are having in the **Bebe** river area.

Mr. McLeod made note of all concerns that the Commissioners had brought to his attention. He also thanked the Commissioners for their offer of an office in which to work out of saying that it was very appealing as it would give him a base in which to operate out of in this area and he hoped to be able to hold hours in both Littleton and Berlin as well.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. McLeod for coming and said that they hoped that he would in fact take advantage of the offer of space at Grafton County.

Superintendent Oakes arrived with Engineers Shannon LaRock of Foresite Engineering and Jeff Tirey of Tirey & Assoc., to discuss exactly what needs to be done to rectify the drainage problem and the bank erosion.

Supt. Oakes provided the Commissioners with a cost of service report which described the scope of preliminary work that needed to be done before actual construction could begin, including surveys, construction specs, drawings, site visits and geotechnical engineering services. The cost came to roughly \$57K. Supt. Oakes was requesting for a waiver of bid from the Commissioners for the work to be done by the two engineers, saying that to wait for other bids would be very time consuming as much work needs to be done in preparation of the bids, and that time was a concern since the banks have some serious erosion problems and may compromise some structures located on or near the area.

Commissioner Burton asked exactly what the money would produce, to which Engineer Tirey said that it initially addresses the drainage issue and will prevent further damage to the structure and plans the area for the new structure (storage building) that will sit there.

Commissioner Cryans asked about a timeline, which was a difficult question because it doesn't take into account the work that a construction crew has to do, but Engineer LaRock said that they would not open up an area that could not be protected before winter. Engineer Tirey said that many of the services are time consuming so there is much that needs to be considered, including the geotechnical survey that will determine where the new structure can be located.

There was continual discussion as to timelines and the cost of the final project, and it was estimated that, the engineering portion is generally about 10% of the completed project.

Commissioner Gabler voiced his concern about the project now costing \$500K and that cost might compromise the proposed jail project.

Commissioner Cryans noted that water can be a very destructive force and that he didn't want to put this project on hold and then have something happen that caused further damage and compromised the integrity of the structures.

Supt. Oakes stated that when the budget was prepared, no one really knew what the extended cost of the project would be and that the estimated \$200K for soil erosion was simply a best guess effort. Executive Director Clough confirmed that statement saying that when the budget was created that figure was just a stab in the dark.

The Engineers said that the project could certainly be done in phases so that the costs can be budgeted over a period of time, and reiterated his point regarding the need to redirect the water away from the property.

Executive Director Clough agreed with Supt. Oakes saying that this problem really can't be ignored and it is a project that needs to be addressed before the problem worsens.

Commissioner Gabler continued to voice his concern that he did not like the thought of having this large expense when there was already going to be a need for considerable funding for the new jail.

Commissioner Cryans asked if anyone wanted to put a motion on the table.

Commissioner Burton moved to waive the bid for engineering services and to accept the proposed amount of \$57K by Foresite Engineering and Tirey & Associates, which was seconded by Commissioner Gabler.

Discussion ensued wherein Commissioner Gabler questioned whether or not an estimate from another Engineering company would produce a lower cost of work.

Supt. Oakes suggested that going with another firm/consultant may defer or even preclude any work being done in the fall as preparing estimates for this kind of work takes onsite time which may or may not be available from other firms.

There was further discussion about when the work could be done if the Commissioners decided in fact to waive the bid, which was difficult to answer again, not knowing what construction company's had on their plates between now and the fall.

Commissioner Cryans said that he was concerned about waiving a bid of this size but that he didn't want to be caught with buildings collapsing because it wasn't taken care of.

Engineer Tirey suggested contacting a couple of contractors to see if they would be available for work, because without that information or someone to perform the work, the point is moot. If contractors are available, the work could begin quicker.

Supt. Oakes suggested holding off on the geotechnical services at this time which would bring the proposal down in cost.

Commissioner Gabler said that he would only vote to waive the bid if he could be guaranteed that the work would be done by Thanksgiving, which could not be guaranteed.

Supt. Oakes will contact some contractors to see what their schedules are like, and report back at the next Commissioners meeting.

Commissioner Burton withdrew his motion to waive bid. Commissioner Gabler withdrew his seconding of the motion.

Superintendent of Corrections, Glenn Libby arrived and reported that in the month of July the average in-house population was 120 inmates and a total of 150. So far for the month of August, the average is 130 inmates in-house and 175 total. The highest number so far in-house has been 148. Supt. Libby wanted the Commissioners to know that this will have an impact on his budget at some point.

The superintendent informed the Commissioners that the County was not going to be responsible for the hospital bill of a certain inmate who was incarcerated but in the hospital until well enough to leave and enter the jail. Once in the jail however, medical responsibility will be with the County.

Supt. Libby informed the Commissioners of a new schedule change in the jail which will increase the shift by four hours, creating a twelve hour shift with three days on and three days off. The Supt. asked the Commissioners to approve the creation of a new policy in the Employee Manual, specifically for the jail which will *not* include shift and weekend differentials. The Supt. noted that if this shift change becomes permanent, then he will be seeking additional compensation for his staff at that time. Right now, there is not adequate funding to change the schedule and continue to pay the differentials. Most employees will make out the same financially in the end as they will be receiving overtime on every other payroll.

Commissioner Burton asked that if by administering this change, the public safety will be jeopardized. Supt. Libby said that in his opinion, public safety will be increased.

Commissioner Cryans asked if this change was something that the employees were okay with, to which the Supt. said that most of his employees are very willing to work these shifts and viewing the change as a good thing. Commissioner Cryans asked if it didn't work, would it be re-reviewed, to which the Supt. answered yes.

Commissioner Gabler moved to add the twelve hour shift, specifically for Correctional employees, in which there will be no weekend or shift differential. Commissioner Burton

seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Supt. Libby added that he commended his employees for all the outstanding work that they do at the facility, saying that the jail could not be run as well without them. The Supt. also added a thank you and voiced his appreciation to the Commissioners for attending the last Academy program graduation.

Supt. Libby will be traveling to St. Louis next week for the Drug Court.

COMMISSIONER ISSUES

Commissioner Burton asked the Executive Director about the rollout of the new County prescription card. Executive Director Clough, having just returned from vacation and has not had a chance to go over it with Sec. Martino, but noted it will be happening quite soon.

Commissioner Gabler will be meeting with the Haverhill select board to pass along the plans for the County.

Commissioner Gabler went to the NACo conference and said that it was extremely interesting. He brought back some items that could be of assistance to the County.

Commissioner Cryans said that all three Commissioners were at the Whole Village for their 10th year anniversary and visited the opening of the new child care facility for low income earners there.

Commissioner Cryans attended the job meeting in Littleton where the Governor and George Ball were in attendance, noting that fuel assistance will be a serious concern this season.

The next Commissioners meeting will be held on the 28th and begin at 10:00.

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk