

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Bristol Town Office

230 Lake Street

Bristol, NH 03222

Monday September 11, 2006

PRESENT: Commissioners, Michael Cryans, and William Gabler, Executive Director Julie Clough and Secretary Jeri Martino, County Attorney Rick St. Hilaire, DoC Superintendent Glenn Libby and Farm Manager Donnie Kimball.

GUESTS: Bristol Selectman Joe Denning, NH Representative Catherine Mulholland, Executive Director for the Grafton County Economic Development Council, Mark Scarano and Reporter for the Record Enterprise Barry Walker

EXCUSED: Commissioner Ray Burton

The Meeting was called to order at 9:22 AM

Commissioner Cryans asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of the lives that were lost five years ago on 9/11.

Commissioner Cryans introduced himself to the attendees and invited everyone to do the same. Commissioner Cryans informed the attendees that Executive Director Julie Clough oversees the operation of the County and it's nearly 400 employees, noting what a good job she does.

Commissioner Cryans then noted an article in the Valley News which described the incubator project in Hanover and handed the floor over to Mark Scarano to give an overview of his new position as Executive Director of the Grafton County Economic Development Council.

Mr. Scarano began by saying that he had grown up in Maine and was with community development there noting that he had had a very good rapport with the three Commissioners in his County in Maine.

Mr. Scarano said that growing up in a small rural community; he has a good understanding of the values of a small community, noting that the quest for land for development of business is always a challenge. Mr. Scarano said that he hopes to be able to bring a report to the Commissioners regarding available spaces.

One item that Mr. Scarano alluded to was the need for more counseling available for those interested in starting small businesses and said he hopes to find ways to make that happen.

Commissioner Cryans encouraged Mr. Scarano to get out into the communities and explore their diversity. The Commissioners wished him well and look forward to working with him in the future.

9:40 Mark Scarano left.

Commissioner Gabler moved to approve the minutes from August 28, 2006, which was seconded by Commissioner Cryans. All were in favor.

Commissioner Gabler moved to approve the minutes from September 5, 2006, which was seconded by Commissioner Cryans. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

The Commissioners reviewed the DoC Superior Court Report.

Note was made that pretrial inmates make up between 50-60% of the population.

Commissioner Gabler moved to award the bid for the new sidewalk installation between the Courthouse and the Nursing Home, to Morrill Construction.

Bids were opened at the meeting on September 5, 2006, but a question remained regarding the length of the sidewalk which has since been answered. Length is 580'.

Commissioner Cryans seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Bid was awarded to Morrill Construction in the amount of \$20,355.

Commissioner Cryans noted that the Bristol Selectmen would soon be constructing a pathway of their own and requested that Selectman Joe Denning inform the attendees of the plan.

Mr. Denning said that a plan for a multi-path project had been in the making for many years, but had been put aside from time to time until recently when the current board of selectmen and federal, state and donated money made it possible. The multi-path is approximately 2.5 miles long and 10' wide, paved, and will be completed in October of this year. Mr. Denning said that eventually he would like to see it connected to another pathway.

The Commissioners signed a MS-1 form from the unincorporated Town of Livermore. Executive Director Clough explained that Livermore is the only town in Grafton County that is unincorporated. Executive Director Clough noted that Coos County takes care of the administrative business for Livermore as they are more familiar with it having their own unincorporated towns.

Executive Director Clough presented the Commissioners with a request from the North Haverhill Post Office, who would like to use the old Commissioners building on September 30, 2006 for "Passport Day". The Commissioners agreed to this request.

In regard to an item brought up at the September 5th meeting, Executive Director Clough reported to the Commissioners that LGC will not pay for the class A foam or the jacket that was ruined by the fire on the complex on January 2, 2006, as was requested by the North Haverhill Fire Department. The invoice totaled \$1074 and \$699 of that was the cost of the coat.

Commissioner Gabler said that he was willing to agree to reimbursing the Fire Department for the foam but felt that equipment is not something that should be reimbursed, stating that the County pays taxes to the town of Haverhill and that's what the taxes are used for, and questioned what would happen the next time if the equipment should be a ladder or even a vehicle.

Commissioner Cryans said that in the spirit of cooperation, the jacket should also be paid for.

Since only two Commissioners were in attendance and they had opposing points of view, the item could not be brought to vote. This will be brought up again for decision at the next Commissioners meeting.

Executive Director Clough informed the Commissioners that the state of New Hampshire will be sending out their clawback bill, which is the Medicare Part D, that the County is responsible for paying, for the months of January thru August and will be due in mid to late December.

Executive Director Clough requested that the Commissioners sign the order giving the Treasurer authority to borrow money in anticipation of taxes. This will be used in the event that money is needed prior to receiving tax payments.

The Executive Director informed the board that there would be a public forum on the Flu Pandemic at the Littleton Regional Hospital on Wednesday September 20th from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM

COMMISSIONER ISSUES:

Commissioner Cryans noted that there was an article in the Sunday Union Leader which covered the new expansive dispatch center.

Commissioner Cryans said that he was pleased to be in Bristol today noting the importance of getting out and visiting the various communities and helping to inform people about County Government. The Commissioners and Attorney St. Hilaire also attended the 911 ceremony at the Fire Station prior to the meeting.

The Commissioners will meet in Lisbon on October 23rd and in Hanover on November 13th.

Commissioner Cryans noted that the recent Family Day at the Nursing Home was a great success with a good turnout.

Commissioner Cryans asked Rep. Mulholland if she had anything she would like to say and Rep. Mulholland took the opportunity to say that she finds a lot of value in understanding how the County is run.

Commissioner Gabler noted that during a recent state inspection of the Nursing Home, they were found to be deficiency free which is a great achievement. Commissioner Cryans gave credit to Nursing Home Administrator Eileen Bolander and her staff for a

wonderfully run home, noting that there were roughly 130 residents in a state of the art home.

Commissioner Gabler noted that the Jail Core Team met to review the proposed Needs Assessments and that they will be interviewing three of the four companies who sent proposals.

Commissioner Cryans turned the floor over to County Attorney Rick St. Hilaire to talk about the Drug Court and he and Supt. Libby's recent trip to St. Louis.

Atty. St. Hilaire said that he was pleased to see that the Commissioners get out to the communities and sees that as being a great opportunity to see what's going on in the County.

Atty. St. Hilaire gave the attendees a brief overview of his position in the County saying that he is the Chief Law Enforcement Authority for the County which is just another name for District Attorney. The Attorney's Office handles felony prosecution cases in the County which are all serious crimes. Atty. St. Hilaire said that he and his fellow Attorneys' make a point to get out into the communities to get to know all the different ways the law is enforced.

In regard to drug crime, Atty. St. Hilaire said that to look at the numbers of drug crimes, you would have to look at property crime because most addicted people will resort at some point to stealing.

Attorney St. Hilaire along with Supt. Libby, Judge Burling, Court Clerk Muh and others traveled to St. Louis on a federally funded award, to receive training on Drug Court which has been shown by the Dept. of Justice to break the cycle of drug related crimes with up to an 80% success rate. The group has received the tools needed to write a policy book to follow. The way the Drug Court works is as follows:

After a felony crime conviction (excluding violent or sex offenders or those who make or distribute drugs) the convict is given the opportunity to participate in the Drug Court. There is a stringent three times a week drug testing and they must go in front of a judge once a week. The person must have a job and receive counseling/treatment and these things must be complied with as there is no second chance.

Resources to pay for the Drug Court include money from the budget and federal grants. The fees will be on a sliding fee scale and insurance. The hope is that people will be able to pay their own way through the program which will continue for at least 18 months for each participant. Data will then be accumulated to see how effective the program is. The program is available to all Grafton County offenders under the aforementioned conditions.

Commissioner Cryans stated that he was struck by the number of volunteers who have given their time toward this project. He then asked Atty. St. Hilaire to inform the attendees of what happens when a person completes the program and follows all the rules

and guidelines and comes through successfully. Atty. St. Hilaire said that he felony is then expunged from their record.

Rep. Mulholland asked how this new program will affect the new jail. Supt. Libby said that the key is that counseling and treatment will help to control the population.

Barry Walker asked what percentage of cases will qualify for the program and Atty. St. Hilaire said that he was presently aware of 20-25 people who he can currently identify as qualifying.

Commissioner Cryans asked Supt. Libby what percentage of people are incarcerated for drugs, to which the Supt. said 90%.

Attorney St. Hilaire asked the attendees if they could be thinking about ways or suggestions to help people get to their appointments and counseling stating that transportation is a huge problem. Mr. Walker reiterated the fact that transportation is a problem County wide.

10:45 Attorney St. Hilaire left.

Superintendent Libby then gave his report saying that there were currently 112 inmates in-house with a total of 150. 11 were out on bracelets and 4 were on work release. There are 9 females.

The staff has begun their twelve hour shift cycle.

Community Service Programs in Bristol have included: reclaiming cemeteries, cleaning up beaches, schools, fire department and the historical society. The CS program is running almost 12 months a year now and is coordinated by the Farm/Community Supervisor 5-7 days a week.

Supt. Libby said that the program makes inmates easier to handle after they've worked hard all day.

Supt. Libby credits his staff for the fine operation of the jail.

Farm Manger Kimball gave his report saying that this has been a very difficult year for crops and that in his 25 years in farming there have been many ups and downs and this year is a down year. Milk is being sold at \$12.40#, ending up at about \$11.00 after hauling.

FM Kimball stated that although the Farm has not operated in the black for a while, the Commissioners and the Delegation support it and understand that it does not always create huge revenues. With this understanding, the budget was passed with the addition of another full time employee to help milk.

B. Walker asked if the Farm supplied the Nursing Home with food, to which Commissioner Gabler answered that the current food service contractors states that they can supply food to the County much cheaper, plus and their contract is in effect until July 2008, at which time, Commissioner Gabler said, the contract will be reviewed.

FM Kimball stated that food does go to food pantries, shelters church suppers,

particularly in the fall when the root crops and squash are available.

B. Walker asked how many acres are utilized by the Farm, to which FM Kimball said that there were 400 agricultural acres which do not include the forest.

Commissioner Cryans publicly thanked Attorney St. Hilaire, Supt. Libby and Farm Manager Kimball for their presentations and for attending the meeting. The Commissioner also made a point again of recognizing Executive Director Clough and noted that both she and Attorney St. Hilaire had been the recipients of the 40 under 40 awards given by the Union Leader.

Commissioner Cryans thanked all the attendees for coming.

Being no further business the Commissioners adjourned at 11:18 AM

Respectfully Submitted,

Raymond S. Burton,
Clerk