

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Office of the Commissioners
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.
N. Haverhill, NH 03774
Tuesday February 26, 2008

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

PUBLIC: Resident Harold Brown

Commissioner Cryans called the meeting to order at 9:06 AM

Thad Gulbrandson PhD., PSU, Director of the Center for Rural Partnership arrived at Commissioner Richards request to give the Commissioners a presentation on what he observed from visiting the Farm and meeting with the Farm Manager and UNH Extension Educators.

Dr. Gulbrandson presented the Commissioners with a PowerPoint presentation of a broad assessment of the strengths and challenges of the Farm operation and possible goals for the future.

Dr. Gulbrandson said that the Farm is a great asset and a beautiful piece of land. He said that farming has been an underrepresented industry particularly in the sector of economic development. He said that it can be an important part of the economy particularly as the food needs change. Maintaining the beautiful land is within the County's best interest.

Dr. Gulbrandson said that currently the farm is not a model for other farmers or a place that people can go to learn. He said the vision of the farm is not clear and needs to be made clear. Some of its strengths and available assets include education, research, natural beauty, wildlife recreation, heritage, food, fuel fiber, and clean air and water. Right now there is a high value placed on local food. Dr. Gulbrandson said that the complex could become more self sufficient, in particular the jail and the nursing home.

Some of the challenges are that the Farm continues to operate at a loss and this is due in part to inadequate labor to run a profitable operation. The inmate labor, he said, requires more supervision than available and that the labor is inefficiently organized. This is more of a management issue and perhaps UNH can offer assistance in this area.

Other challenges include water runoff, limited irrigation areas, a misplaced shooting range, and that the animals are not visible to the public. It was also noted that there have been times when UNH and the Farm Advisory Committee has made recommendations which have been underutilized adding that there has been a lack of communications.

Dr. Gulbrandson said that there have also been limited communications with other farmers in the region and that the Farm is not seen as innovative and where "good" things are happening, though he said that it could be.

Expenses are on the rise, including the cost of fuel, bedding and feed. Facilities maintenance, regulations and labor are also an issue.

Dr. Gulbrandson said that recreation is poorly managed, there is no recreation plan, it is not managed for safety, referring again to the shooting range.

There are opportunities that can be taken advantage of but some alterations would need to be made and the time to start planning is now the Dr. said. Staffing needs to be evaluated and there needs to be decisions as to how the Farm should be run. There needs to be a better organization of the inmates and better training and education. There also needs to be better cooperation with educational opportunities which can be an enhancement. The Farm he said, can become a site of education and innovation. He said that allowing creativity can really change the current way the Farm is run. Dr. Gulbrandson also added that the County should enhance the Farmstand and to look at that as an investment and there also needs to be better parking for the Farmstand and for recreation.

New crops could be added and they could include berries, which can be pick your own, eggs, flowers and ornamentals, landscape crops, and balsam fir can be planted in wet areas. It was also suggested that the County move into other markets such as providing more food for pantries, schools and farmers markets.

Dr. Gulbrandson ended his presentation by saying that the Grafton County Farm could become a centerpiece for other farmers by improving the trail system, moving the shooting range, adding a boat launch, adding more farm animals and by having pick your own berries.

The thing that would need to be done now is to make a plan and to consider labor, private contracts (if desired), other crops, recreation, communications and the hosting of more events. Dr. Gulbrandson stated that it appears that some changes in personnel may be taking place soon with the anticipated retirement of the County Forester, Nory Parr and the County Agriculture Specialist Tom Buob. He also stated that the County Farm Manager Donnie Kimball was planning to retire in two (2) years. He expressed that this would be an opportune time to look at how the County would like to see the farm run.

Commissioner Burton said there has never been such an in-depth presentation done and commended Dr. Gulbrandson for the very valuable information that was provided.

Commissioner Richards said that it was imperative to look at a future vision of the Farm and perhaps get some public input as to which direction to go in. She said the Farm needs to be run well and it should incorporate innovative farming practices.

Commissioner Cryans said that he liked the idea of having the animals visible and having a better looking farm stand and easier parking. He agreed that there needs to be a vision and added that he appreciated all the time and effort that was put into the presentation.

Commissioner Cryans recognized H. Brown and asked if he had any input and Mr. Brown said that the farm is not the function of County government and that he thought that Dr. Gulbrandson wasted his time on this project. He added that there is no redeeming value to the inmates having to work on the farm and if they knew anything about nutrients, they didn't learn it here.

There was a discussion about whether or not the County would be charged for the services provided by Dr. Gulbrandson and he said that this particular project was done gratuitously by the college, but if a further in-depth study was requested, then a fee schedule would be arranged.

Commissioner Burton made a request that a letter of commendation be prepared in recognition of the fine work that was done by Dr. Gulbrandson.

Commissioner Richards made a motion with a request for Dr. Gulbrandson to do further research for taking the farm forward and to recommend a vision for the future of the farm, which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

The Commissioners thanked Dr. Gulbrandson for coming and again for his very comprehensive presentation.

Maintenance Superintendent Jim Oakes arrived with his report for the Commissioners *(see attached)

There was some discussion about the new maintenance building. Supt. Oakes presented the Commissioners with a spreadsheet overview of the four companies who had bid on the architectural portion of the building. Costs were as follows:

Northern Architectural Design Group	\$35,625
H.L. Turner Group	\$50,100
SMRT	\$72,500
Stephen Keller Architects	\$85,745

Though NADG was the lowest price, Superintendent Oakes expressed some concerns regarding their proposal. Specifically the fact that they had to subcontract the plumbing, heating, sprinklers, and electric work and whether or not that factor could mean that the building would take longer to complete. Supt. Oakes was also concerned that NADG was not well known in their peer group. He did state that the personnel references that were given did check out well. It was noted that H.L. Turner Group has done many state projects and have a good reputation.

Supt. Oakes said that his recommendation would be H. L. Turner Group.

Commissioner Burton moved to accept Supt. Oakes recommendation and award the bid to H.L. Turner Group in the amount of \$50,100, which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. All were in favor.

Supt. Oakes informed the Commissioners that he will be contracting with Casella Waste to handle the recycling pickup on the complex which will save not only money, (\$1000) but also man hours.

Farm Manager Donnie Kimball arrived with his report for the Commissioners. He began by saying that the Farm was fined \$750 by the federal government for an infraction that was reported by the state, this fine was related to the issue of re-cooking the slop being fed to the pigs. There was some discussion about whether or not they should try to dispute the charge. The Commissioners thought it was worth the effort to call and see if something could be done.

FM Kimball said that he was milking 78, shipping 10,700#'s for an average of 70#'s per cow. Milk price is currently \$22.71

FM Kimball said that he would like to pursue getting a new farm stand in the way of ordering a building, made of wood, from Pennsylvania. The building will sit on a concrete slab. The shed will measure 12 x 24 and cost about \$8000.

Director Clough questioned where the money would come from as there was no money put aside for this. It was determined that Farm Manager Kimball should have a discussion with the Executive Director before any decisions were made.

Corrections Superintendent Libby arrived and presented the Commissioners with his report *(see attached)

Commissioner Cryans said that he saw a picture in the Littleton Courier of the inmates working there and Supt. Libby said that he may not have the work crew go to Littleton anymore because of some of the backlash that is coming from some of the elected officials there because of the bond vote.

Commissioner Burton asked when a request for a work crew comes in from a town, does it have to be endorsed by their elected officials and Supt. Libby said no. Commissioner Burton said then that he would suggest not walking away from work in the town and that criticism goes with the job. Supt. Libby said that he didn't want to create any conflict in the community. Commissioner Burton said that no matter where they go, there will probably always be someone who will respond negatively and reiterated that he would not back off. Supt. Libby said that he didn't want to jeopardize the programs and all the hard work that has been put into the program.

Supt. Libby and the Jail Core Committee will be going to Portland ME tomorrow and there was a discussion about some of the cuts that would be made to the new correctional facility. Commissioner Cryans said that Supt. Oakes had some concerns about snow removal at the new building and Supt. Libby said that Supt. Oakes will be going to the meetings.

Director Clough wanted to confirm with the Commissioners that the plan was still to budget \$1M in the FY09 budget. She reminded the Commissioners that this money was already in the budget for FY 08. The Commissioners agreed that this was the plan.

Commissioner Cryans questioned where that money would go in FY 10. Executive Director Clough explained that the money would be applied towards the first bond payments that would be due in FY 10.

Commissioner Cryans asked when the bond numbers would be known and Director Clough said that the bond sale is tentatively scheduled for early to mid May with the closing the first week in June for the first issuance of \$20M.

11:50 AM The Commissioners broke for lunch.

12:50 PM The Commissioners resumed their meeting.

Commissioner Richards moved to approve the February 19, 2008 minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. Edits were made. All were in favor.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the February 7, 2008 Public Hearing Minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

Commissioner Cryans signed a certificate of authority for Director Clough to be able to sign the contract for the New Hampshire motorcycle rider training program, which runs from April, 2008 to December, 2009.

Commissioner Cryans signed a request for release of funds and certificate for the AdiMab CDBG.

Director Clough stated that County Government Week is April 6th – 12th, this is a couple weeks earlier than the past several years. She presented a request from the County Day committee to move County Day to Saturday, May 3rd as opposed to April 12th as the parking lots and grass areas would simply not be ready at that time due to the heavy winter. Director Clough agreed with this request. The Commissioners approved the alternate date.

Director Clough said that she met with K. Ransom and the grant for Brian's House in the amount of \$199K was submitted yesterday.

Commissioner Cryans informed the board that he was contacted by Emerge, which is a service similar to Brian's House and that he signed an MOU for them for a grant. According to the MOU, Grafton County will work with Emerge.

Commissioner Cryans was presented with an application from ACORN for consideration of social service funds. Though the application is late, they would like to be considered for funding. Director Clough asked what their reason was and Commissioner Cryans said it was because their Executive Director left. Commissioner Cryans said they had been rule out for the availability of a Vermont state grant for a period of three years because their application was delinquent. . Director Clough said that most times when your

application is late, that's it, according to most rules. Commissioner Cryans thought three years was harsh.

Commissioner Cryans moved to accept the late application from ACORN, which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed a letter to Judge Bornstein, welcoming him to Grafton County with a suggestion that he get together with Drug Court Director Bob Gasser.

*1:06 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.

*1:18 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.

Director Clough asked the Commissioners to review the information from Foresite Engineering that was given to them so that when S. LaRocque comes in they have some background information about the proposed water supply tank project.

Commissioner Burton said that he would like to see the new Commissioner of Agriculture and Corrections Commissioner Wrenn invited when the farm stand opens.

Commissioner Burton attended Cottage Hospital's annual meeting last night.

Commissioner Burton said that Wal-Mart's official opening will be on March 7th.

Merrimack County's open house for their new Nursing Home will be held on March 7th.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:26 PM

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT REPORT TO GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

February 12 - 25, 2008

COURTHOUSE

Air Quality Testing - The State of NH paid a contractor to conduct air quality testing of the courthouse...still awaiting results

Radio Room Cooling – AC unit shuts down on its own every few days...troubleshoot to bad fan motor...awaiting parts on backorder

Boilers – Nitrate levels are too low...added chemical treatment to system

Air Handler – Exhaust side belt broke...replaced belts

NURSING HOME

Lighting Ballasts - Replaced numerous lighting ballasts throughout using warranty replacement parts

Exterior Windows – replaced a few fogged windows with warranty replacement parts

Purchasing Storeroom AC – Fan motor bearings failed due to moisture...materials backordered

Motion Sensor Light Switches - Installed numerous motion sensitive light switches in bathrooms, tub & shower rooms, and clean and dirty utility rooms throughout 69 Building are 98% complete

Café & Chapel Entrances - Ordered materials to install French-style doors in entrances to Café and Chapel...materials still backordered

Dr. Defran's Office – Need to construct walls and door to enclose for privacy...door, frame and lockset backordered

Kitchen Hood – Exhaust fan failed...discovered bad connection to starter motor...repaired wiring

Panic Alarms – Alarm system auto-cleared after 5-10 seconds...Tasco Security added additional hardware and reprogrammed dialers so that system could be manually reset from the alarm location

ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING

Emergency Egress Light – Light fixture by North entrance broken...replaced fixture

Generator Power – Generator failed to start during power outage...replaced battery
- Reviewing existing loads with C.G. Electric to see if we can add more circuits from various offices

Deeds Service Counter – In process of constructing new counter...should be complete by end of week

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT REPORT TO GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Panic Alarms – Alarm system auto-cleared after 5-10 seconds...Tasco Security added additional hardware and reprogrammed dialers so that system could be manually reset from the alarm location

DEPT. OF CORRECTIONS

Segregation Area – In process of constructing a clear lexan shield attached to outer walkway bars, to protect CO's from fecal and urine thrown at them from unruly inmates

FARM

Dairy & Pig Barn Fire Alarm Systems – Both Royal Electric and C.G. Electric are in process of installing systems

Dairy Barn – Gutter cleaner gear sprockets stripped and worn out...rebuilt sprocket assemblies

Exhaust Vent – Snow falling off roof sheared hot water tank exhaust stack...patched roof

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS BUILDING

None

COMPLEX

Complex Water Tank & Water main Project – Foresite Engineering submitted their Basis of Design Report for the new water tank...Shannon is scheduled to discuss his report with you on March 18th.

New Maintenance Facility – After reviewing and checking out references on the four firms who submit architectural and engineering bids, I have my recommendation for selection (see attached spreadsheet)

VEHICLES

Maintenance ¾ Ton Pick Up – Portland Glass replaced the cracked windshield

OTHER

MSDS's – In process of reviewing products and ensuring we have MSDS's for all hazardous materials

Budget – In process of compiling R&M and Capital Outlay budgets...will be ready to present R&M budget March 6th and Capital Outlay sometime in April

Document Review – In process of reviewing blueprints and technical specifications for new jail in preparations for meetings with SMRT Feb 28 and 29th and Mar 11 and 12th

Recycling – Coordinated weekly pick up of recycling materials through Casella Waste Management...will save Grafton County approximately \$1,000 annually vs. doing it our selves (see attached spreadsheet)