

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Office of the Commissioners
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.
N. Haverhill, NH 03774
Tuesday August 7, 2007

PRESENT: Commissioners Michael Cryans, and Martha Richards, Executive Director Julie Clough and Secretary Jeri Martino.
Commissioner Burton arrived at 11:00 AM

Commissioner Cryans opened the meeting at 9:10

Farm Manager Kimball arrived to open bids for a new corn forage harvester. He will be trading in the old one. Two bids were received.

Blackmount	\$34,250 (includes trade in value of \$8000)
RN Johnson	\$36,380 (includes trade in value of \$2500)

FM Kimball recommended accepting the bid from Blackmount as the bid is not only lower but having them right down the road is very beneficial.

Commissioner Richards moved to accept the bid from Blackmount, which was seconded by Commissioner Cryans. All were in favor.

Commissioner Richards moved to approve the minutes from July 24, 2007, which was seconded by Commissioner Cryans. One correction was made. All were in favor the corrected minutes.

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

Superintendent Oakes arrived to open bids for the Dairy Barn Roofing project.

Commissioner Cryans asked Supt. Oakes when the front stairs would be finished. Supt. Oakes said that it was difficult to say because one of his Maintenance staff is working on them and gets pulled away to handle other maintenance issues. There was discussion as to whether or not it was worth it seek outside help to get them done. Commissioner Cryans suggested waiting a couple more weeks and review the progress at that time.

Three bids were received for the roofing of the dairy barn.

Rod Roofing	\$359,575
DCS Construction Corp	\$148,600
800Roof	\$260,315

Supt. Oakes and the Commissioners reviewed the bids and thoroughly examined the very low bid from DCS. Commissioner Cryans went over all the estimated costs of DCS and discovered that many of their estimates were "questionable", particularly the cost of

actual materials which was only \$3500 for the main portion of the barn and considerable more for the milking shed.

Supt. Oakes noted that the other two companies came out and went over the barn and that 800Roof really scrutinized the job. As far as he knew, DCS Construction had never even come to the complex let alone looked at the barn roof.

The Commissioners and Supt. Oakes continued to review the bids and did their best to give credence to the low bid proposal of DSC but found it to be not a valid bid. As per the advertisement, the Commissioners have the right to reject any and all bids.

Commissioner Richards moved to reject the bid from DCS, which was seconded by Commissioner Cryans. All were in favor.

Supt. Oakes then recommended that the Commissioners accept the bid from 800Roof as he felt they had presented themselves as a worthy company, had prepared a portfolio and spent time looking over the job.

Commissioner Richards moved to approve the bid from 800Roof with the stipulation that the Better Business Bureau be contacted to make sure there were no problems with the company, and that they specify the warranty that Supt. Oakes wanted in writing. Commissioner Cryans seconded the move. All were in favor.

Supt. Oakes then presented three proposals for a used Boom Lift which he requested in his budget. Supt. Oakes supplied the Commissioners with a comparison of the three companies, W.D. Matthew Machinery- \$46,000, Hyster - \$40,850, and United Rentals - \$41,000. After a thorough review it was the opinion of the Superintendent that they purchase the boom from United Rentals at a cost of \$41,000 as the machine appeared well maintained and there will be additional work done on it by the vendor, prior to purchase.

Commissioner Richards moved to approve the proposal from United Rentals, which was seconded by Commissioner Cryans. All were in favor.

Graduate student Matt Polzin, who is doing a study and research on farming in the community and on supplementing the public food system, with a particular focus on County Farms, arrived to get an idea from the Commissioners of the workings of the County Farm. Farm Manager Kimball was in attendance as well and was valuable in answering many of the questions from Mr. Polzin.

M. Polzin asked who makes the decision regarding the farm, which was answered by Director Clough who said that the Commissioners oversee policy and procedures, but it is the 26 member legislative delegation who approve the final farm budget.

M. Polzin asked if there were ever any problem with local farmers regarding competition.

FM Kimball said that there have been issues in the past with local farmers feeling that the County should not compete with them, but there have been less problems lately. FM

Kimball said that there are some people who would like to see the farm closed but the Commissioners and delegation are willing to keep it going.

Commissioner Richards said that as a new Commissioner, she has mixed feelings about the farm, suggesting that some of her constituents are less in favor of it, adding that nostalgia costs money. However, on the other hand, Commissioner Richards said that the County Farm is an icon for the locals and that closing it would not send a good message. There is also work for the inmates which proved beneficial. Commissioner Richards main objection is that the farm does not supply its own complex with produce, which she feels is an injustice. Commissioner Richards continues to work to change that.

M. Polzin asked if produce went elsewhere, to which both Commissioner Cryans and FM Kimball said that food is often donated to the community for social services programs and has been tracked.

M. Polzin asked how the decision is made of who to give the food to and FM Kimball said that if there is an abundance of food then they check to see who might be in need.

M. Polzin asked if the farm was financially profitable. Commissioner Cryans spoke about the intangible benefits of having the farm available to the inmates, who are able to get outside the building and work a hard day and perhaps learn something that they can take with them when they leave. The Commissioner noted that there is no other service at present available to inmates.

FM Kimball said that the price of milk, which is currently at \$22.98 will help tremendously, and that they are currently selling hay as well to help supplement the revenue.

Commissioner Burton arrived.

Commissioner Burton asked M. Polzin if he were doing this research for credit, which M. Polzin answered yes, for his master's degree. Commissioner Burton asked what the result of this report would be. M. Polzin said that he would like to put together an action plan and to take information to other Counties that may want to start a farm operation with public land. He will also be researching the possibilities of grants for these resources.

Commissioner Burton suggested that M. Polzin arrange a meeting with Commissioner Steve Taylor who would be a wealth of information. Commissioner Burton also noted that he himself is a strong supporter of the farm.

M. Polzin then left with FM Kimball to tour the farm and gather further information.

Christine Walker, new Executive Director of the Upper Valley Regional Planning Commission arrive to touch base with the Commissioners regarding her new position.

Commissioner Richards asked if all the smaller towns were aware of the services provided by UVRPC and Ms. Walker said that she is not fully confident of that but that she is working on a protocol for information to be able to educate them. This information will be sent out to the communities

There was further discussion about what her plans were and the Commissioner Cryans suggested if the County could do anything to please let them know and to keep them apprised of what's going on. Commissioner Cryans also noted that he would like to see more "action" in the lower part of the County.

The Commissioners reviewed and signed the environmental review for Littleton Learning Center CDBG grant.

A thank you card was received from D. Mitton for the retirement bonus that was received.

Treasurer Carol Elliott sent forth a request of the Commissioners to approve the borrowing of money in anticipation of taxes. The delegation had previously approved an amount of up to \$4M to be borrowed and that was the amount requested by the Treasurer.

Commissioner Burton moved to grant authority to Treasurer Elliott to borrow up to \$4M in anticipation of taxes, which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. All were in favor.

Executive Director Clough presented a letter that was sent as a reply to the town of Lincoln at the request of Commissioner Burton, which outlined all the questions that were of concern regarding the newly proposed Correctional Facility.

The Commissioners signed a group II certification form for a new staff member at the jail.

Director Clough presented the Commissioners with a proposal from Donna Lane for Grant Administrator of the Littleton Learning Center in the amount of \$9750. D. Lane's was the only proposal received.

Commissioner Richards moved to accept the proposal from D. Lane in the amount of \$9750, which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

The Commissioners received an invitation to attend an Open House at the Child Advocacy Center in Newport on August 22nd from 4PM to 6PM.

Executive Director Clough informed Commissioner's Cryans and Burton that she, Commissioner Richards and other Grafton County employees would be traveling to Portland, Maine for two days to meet with SMRT. The Core Committee will be interviewing for Construction Managers on the 23rd of August.

There will be no meeting on the 14th or 21st of August. The next meeting will be held on the 28th.

Superintendent Libby and Commissioner of Corrections, William Wrenn arrived and were greeted by the board. Commissioner Wrenn will be honoring the County by cutting the ribbon for the opening of the Farm Stand. Commissioner Cryans thanked the Commissioner for coming.

Commissioner Wrenn began by saying that he empathized with the Commissioners saying that he was just part of the building of a new \$5M police station in Hampton so he's fully aware of what a huge undertaking the building of a new jail is. He said that there's one chance to get it right within a reasonable price tag. Commissioner Wrenn emphasized that the flow of the facility is very important. He said that Berlin is the newest facility, requires less staffing and flows well.

Commissioner Cryans commented on what an asset Superintendent Libby is for Grafton County and then reiterated the important role that the farm plays on the jail. Commissioner Cryans also said that he was very proud of the Drug Court.

Commissioner Wrenn commended the County on the Drug Court saying that it was the way of the future as many of the inmates need to be in treatment. He added that jails and prisons have become the mental health providers and many people who are in there don't need to be.

Commissioner Cryans expressed his feelings about the burden that incarceration puts on the families. Commissioner Wrenn agreed saying that there is a need to set up community based assistance as there is no support when the inmate is released which results in a higher recidivism rate. He said there's a definite need to look into other alternatives to keep the family intact, saying that though there is an expense in that, there is also a huge cost to keeping people in jail, particularly when the health costs are paid at 100%.

Commissioner Burton asked if numbers were up or down over the past years, to which Commissioner Wrenn said they were up 20%, and primarily female. He said that the plan is to take some of the women out of prison and move them to County jails.

Commissioner Burton asked if the new state budget changed the relationship between County and state and Commissioner Wrenn answered by saying that a new law now allows County and state to work together to help one another out, whereas before it was just an agreement.

There was further discussion about proper healthcare and the need to reinstitute mental health facilities. Commissioner Wrenn said that they were working with HHS on two pilot programs that would help inmates to reintegrate into the community.

Commissioner Burton said that once there are new Commissioners of HHS and Community College, he will suggest that they both arrange to meet with Commissioner Wrenn. Commissioner Wrenn agreed saying it was very important.

There was further discussion about the need for inmates to be able to get and hold a job. Commissioner Wrenn said that he thought it was very important to have inmate working on the farm as it shows them what it's like to hold a job and to go to work every day, put in a hard day's work and then come home, adding the routine is important. Supt. Libby segued into talking about inmates who have held jobs running the Farm Stand, saying that only one person that has held that job has returned back to jail. The job gives them a sense of responsibility and puts them out with the community.

Everyone then left to go over to the Farm Stand for the grand opening.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk