

## GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Office of the Commissioners  
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.  
N. Haverhill, NH 03774  
Tuesday April 21, 2009

PRESENT: Commissioners Martha Richards and Ray Burton, Executive Director Clough and Secretary Martino

EXCUSED: Commissioner Michael Cryans

OTHERS: H. Brown and H. Ahearn

Commissioner Richards called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM

Commissioner Burton moved to accept the minutes from April 14, 2009, which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. A change was made. All were in favor.

Commissioner Burton moved to accept the minutes from April 16, 2009 budget meeting which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

Employee Council members S. Whitney, D. Wallis and D. Burleson arrived to hear the response to their requests. Commissioners replied as follows:

- COLA: Employees requested 2.5%, Commissioners recommend 1.5%
- Commissioners do not agree to extend health insurance coverage to ex-spouses.
- Employee health insurance contributions remain at 14% and 20% with Matthew Thornton Blue with a \$5 co-pay.
- Prescription drug benefit will change from existing 10-20-30 to 10-20-45
- Personnel policy change regarding retiree health coverage as follows:

Any employee who has accrued ten (10) years of continuous full-time paid employment during which the employee was eligible for County-paid medical benefits may receive County-paid medical benefits upon retirement at age 62 or thereafter. All employees hired on or before June 30, 2009 shall be grandfathered to receive the above mentioned benefit. All employees hired after June 30, 2009 who have twenty (20) years of continuous paid time during which the employee was eligible for County-paid medical benefits may receive County-paid medical benefits upon retirement at age 62 or there after.

The Employee Council will hold a meeting with their peers and will return next Tuesday.

Henry Ahearn attended the meeting at the request of Commissioner Burton and brought forth information regarding deer farming for venison. Being a deer farmer himself, he said that he was looking for what he called a feeder farm or someone to keep the animals or him and then he would in turn buy the animals at \$2.50 to \$3.50 a pound carcass weight.

He said that the biggest expense would be the fencing at \$5 to \$7 a foot. The average expense to keep an animal for a year is \$150 and the animals can either be grazed or/and fed hay and grain.

Commissioner Burton asked about state and federal regulations and H. Ahearn said that there is a permit needed from Fish & Game but there are no federal regulations.

Commissioner Richards asked what the size of the herd would be and H. Ahearn said 250. She asked about acreage need and he said around 100 acres. She asked if extra personnel would be needed and he replied that he wouldn't envision that except when the decision was to feed the animals hay.

Commissioner Richards asked where the animals were slaughtered and H. Ahearn said that they are sent to Maine. She asked about slaughtering here on the property and Commissioner Burton asked about a portable slaughtering machine. H. Ahearn said that FDA regulations prevent that as there are specific governing laws. Commissioner Burton asked about any issues with animal rights groups and Mr. Ahearn said there haven't been any issues for a long while.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Ahearn for coming and said they would look over the information and share it with Commissioner Cryans as well.

Human Services Administrator Nancy Bishop arrived and presented the Commissioners with the expense by town report.

HSA Bishop said that the March state bill has been paid and that they will meet the cap for long term care on the April bill and will only be reimbursing for the audit. She said that the state is looking into how the FMAP money will be returned.

HSA Bishop said that she is currently working with departments to get inventories for insurance purposes.

Nursing Home Administrator Bolander arrived and said that the census was 130 with two more likely by the end of the week.

She is working on the Quality of Life application wherein the judging will be in June. She said it will be a lot tougher this time as the pool of applicants is a lot bigger.

\*10:00 AM – Commissioner Richards moved to enter into Executive Session as per RSA 91-A:3, Paragraph II, Section c). Commissioner Burton seconded the motion. All were in favor.

\*10:22 AM– Commissioner Richards moved to come out of Executive Session and to permanently seal the Minutes from the Session. Commissioner Burton seconded the motion. All were in favor. No motions were made and no actions were taken while in Executive Session.

Human Resource Director Mann arrived and began with vacancies.

- 3- PT Correctional Officers
- 2- PT Dietary
- 2-LNA's 3-11 shift
- 1-Laundry Aid 3/5

#### Recent Activities

- Staff attended training recently
- HRD Mann was asked to be a panelist at Primex
- Working on policies to be ready for July

Commissioner Richards asked if HR was receiving a lot more applications and HRD Mann said she didn't see a spike.

Director Clough said that the hearing on the Summary Judgment Motions in the Elected Official has been moved to May 22<sup>nd</sup> at 11:00 at the Superior Court.

Director Clough read a letter from M. Givens from Bridgewater who asked the Commissioners to put the Jail project aside.

Director Clough said that she had information on the bond schedule for \$4.2M (for Biomass) and a ten year bond would require that \$600K at 3.8% to be put in the budget and a fifteen year would need \$500K at 4.35%.

#### COMMISSIONERS ISSUES:

Commissioner Burton said that the aforementioned email should be responded to, sighting the minutes of the reorganizational meeting where the motion was made and voted on giving the Commissioners the authority to go forward with the Jail project.

Commissioner Burton said that he would like to visit the water tank today.

Commissioner Burton said that he was pleased to hear the executive committee move to have a letter written asking congress to fund CDBG's and that Director Clough should use the information in the Annual Report from GCEDC to draft the letter.

Commissioner Burton visited the Lincoln Selectboard and forwarded questions about the Jail to Supt. Libby and Director Clough to answer. He has also visited Bethlehem and was warmly received, and will be visiting Wentworth and Monroe tonight.

Commissioner Burton will not be able to attend the Commissioner meetings on May 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Richards said that sadly, the County did not receive the grant for the Biomass plant and that she will be following up on other areas for money.

Director Clough said that it's very unfortunate that the grant money was not received because by putting the biomass money into the budget, it is her feeling that the delegation will want to take something out and that will likely be at the expense of the employees and that they will be the ones suffering from that choice. Commissioner Burton said that the employees are the greatest asset.

H. Ahearn suggested that the County take the lead and getting a pooling of money from towns to hire an engineer that can design alternative energy for everyone.

Commissioner Richards explained that much of the money that was used to investigate alternative energy came from a matching grant and the result was the BERC report.

\*10:55 AM – 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.

\*11:00 AM – Commissioner Richards moved to come out of Executive Session and to permanently seal the Minutes from the Session. Commissioner Burton seconded the motion. All were in favor. No motions were made and no actions were taken while in Executive Session.

Commissioner Burton moved that the Board accept the recommendation of Supt. Libby of the suspension of one of his Correctional Officers for three days with no further action to be taken at this time, which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. All were in favor.

11:14 AM ~ Being no further business the meeting was adjourned

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Raymond S. Burton, Clerk