

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Office of the Commissioners
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.
N. Haverhill, NH 03774
Tuesday June 16, 2009

PRESENT: Commissioners Michael Cryans, Ray Burton and Martha Richards, Executive Director Clough (late) and Secretary Martino

OTHERS: H. Brown (briefly)

Commissioner Cryans opened the meeting at 9:04 AM

NHA Bolander arrived with her report saying that the NH census was at 129.

She has been selected to sit on the North Country Health Consortium Board beginning in September.

NHA Bolander said that there is a proposal in Washington to reduce Medicare Part A and that if that happens, New Hampshire could see almost a \$9B reduction. This is not a bill at this point but is with Congress.

FMAP money is scheduled to hopefully be sent out today.

*9:06 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.

*9:11 AM – 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 arrived

Commissioner Burton asked about the status of the generator at Horse Meadow and NHA Bolander said that P. Hatch was coming tomorrow to help with the grant application and then from there it was a matter of time to see what happens.

Commissioner Burton said the Board should keep a close eye on the proposed Medicare reductions. NHA Bolander said there will be letters written and Congressman and Senators kept aware. Commissioner Burton said he would like to be kept informed as well.

NHA Bolander said that Gregg Nory has been hired as the new Food Service Manager and will be leaving County employment to be hired on by Fitz Vogt.

Commissioner Cryans wanted to publically thank Volunteer Coordinator Doreen Moody and Activities Director Harvest Fisher for their efforts on the volunteer luncheon. He said he was pleased to see so many people there.

Commissioner Burton noted that Glencliff will be holding their 100th anniversary on September 14th.

HSA Bishop arrived and discussed the incentive funds. She had written a letter which recommended that a County elected official be appointed to sit on the incentive funds review board.

Commissioner Burton asked who would be making the decision about the letter and HSA Bishop said that there are currently no rules about the set up and the statute needs to be redone also.

Commissioner Cryans said that he thought that the letter should simply say that the County does not like the process. He said that he feels that there will be no local input and suggested that the letter recommend that the state allow the County to keep incentive funds for another year until a better way of doing them can be worked out. He said that the letter should go directly to HHS Commissioner Toumpas.

HSA Bishop will re-do the letter.

HAS Bishop is in charge of the retirement party for HR Director J. Mann which will be in the Activities room on June 30th from 1PM to 3PM. The Commissioners will then meet at 10:00 on that day.

Mark Sanborn from Gate City Consulting arrived to present the Commissioners with an offer. Mr. Sanborn was here at the request of Commissioner Burton as he was one of his interns. A UNH graduate, Mr. Sanborn has worked extensively with bureaucrats in Washington D.C. and believes he is uniquely qualified to offer assistance with certain projects. He said his biggest asset is that he has created relationships with a lot of people and has an in with them. With both legislative and executive branch experience he said he knows how to navigate the system.

M. Sanborn said he was willing to help understand why the County failed to obtain a USDA grant for the biomass plant and said that with the Commissioners permission, he would look into it as he is going to Washington next week. He said that he would see if there was anything that he could do to increase their chances and that he would do the work pro bono at this point.

Commissioner Burton said that he didn't see any harm in that.

M. Sanborn said that he would like to see a copy of the grant and to speak with the person who submitted it. He went over how grant applications are reviewed.

Commissioner Richards explained what she has been through to this point, saying that the grant application system can be daunting.

Commissioner Richards asked when a fee structure would come in and M. Sanborn said that he would like to do some digging into the situation first and see if the County even has a chance at one of these grants and then figure things out from there.

Commissioner Burton supported giving M. Sanborn permission to proceed and to contact the other parties involved, Sarah Smith of UNHCE for one.

Commissioner Cryans asked if M. Sanborn could help secure the grant and he replied that he has a high level of knowledge of the programs and more importantly that he holds personal relationships with the parties involved, which can lead to a higher level of success.

Commissioner Cryans agreed that it makes sense to have Mr. Sanborn look into this on behalf of the County.

Chris Recchia and Andrea Colmes from BERCC, along with Robert Wilson from CEI Capital Management LLC arrived to discuss alternative financing for the biomass project.

R. Wilson discussed New Market Tax Credits and noted that the biomass project falls into the area of approval for use of them. NMTC is private capital funding made to low income communities. Investors buy the credits allowing the County to be able to fund a portion of the project. Remaining money would have to be funded. There is a seven year payback period and the County would have to establish an intermediate entity that would own the project and then contract it back to the County. This would help finance 25% or around \$600K of the project, at a total cost of \$2.3M.

There was much discussion about how the County would qualify and whether or not another entity could be the applicant for the project. Commissioner Cryans asked R. Wilson if this had been done before with a County and he replied that it had not but that cities, counties and towns have put the structure together. Commissioner Cryans questioned turning over the project to another "owner" when it lies within the confines of the County property. R. Wilson said that it would be done through a contract wherein the energy would be sold back to the County and then the County could buy everything back in seven years.

The discussion continued as to whether or not this would even be feasible. Commissioner Cryans said he would need to have clearer sight as to whether this could be done or not before making any decisions. R. Wilson said that no doubt, this is a very complicated process which would require a lot of understanding and cooperation.

A. Colmes said that the Board should consider the questions brought forth and see if they think it is worth going forward with.

The group was thanked for coming in and presenting their idea.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the minutes of June 9, 2009, which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

The Commissioners received an email request from NCIC asking that one of the Commissioners act as environmental officer. NCIC plans to deploy wireless broadband in the County and will be receiving additional funds from the HUD program and one of the requirements of the program is to complete an environmental review, very similar to the CDBG projects, which are also funded by HUD. A part of the requirement is that the municipal or county official must serve as the environmental certifying officer. Commissioner Cryans agreed to take on the role.

Commissioner Burton moved to appoint Commissioner Cryans as environmental officer, which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. All were in favor.

Director Clough informed the Commissioners that the PILT payment has been received and that line will be over budgeted as more money was received than expected.

A letter was received from NHAC regarding the 2005 HS cap case. It was determined that the state will be billing the Counties for the money that they have put aside in their escrow accounts for the outcome.

A letter was received from LGC regarding Medicare part D subsidy denial saying that a hearing has been scheduled. LGC will be processing everything on the same date and requested approval from the Commissioners to represent them on their behalf. The Commissioners agreed.

A letter was received from DES which stated that with all their current information, the water tank has been determined to be a privately own distribution center which will need to conform to all the proper DES requirements. Supt. Oakes and Asst. Supt. Thompson having since been certified, will be able to comply. There has been no additional cooperation from WW & L on this matter.

Director Clough said that RFP's have gone out for the geothermal well testing for the Jail project.

The budget is schedule to go to vote on June 29th at 10:00 AM.

11:35 AM Being no further business the meeting adjourned

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk