

## GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Office of the Commissioners  
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.  
N. Haverhill, NH 03774  
Tuesday September 7, 2010

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

OTHERS PRESENT: H. Brown

Commissioner Cryans opened the meeting at 9:01 AM

Nursing Home Administrator Eileen Bolander arrived with her report beginning with a census of 131.

She said that the antique car show at the Nursing Home this past weekend was a big hit with the residents and noted that Commissioner Burton had brought both his 1957 Desoto and his 1959 Cadillac and even gave rides to some. There were eight vehicles altogether.

NHA Bolander said that the State survey at the Nursing Home is over and that they could be facing fines from perhaps ten deficiencies. She said that the surveyors seemed to have very different interpretations regarding certain practices and in her opinion the surveyor's interpretations were in the minority and went against what she called normal practices.

Commissioner Burton asked how the survey team gets selected and NHA Bolander said they are State employees who generally have a clinical background. She said they do go through extensive training regarding federal regulations. She also noted that there are huge inconsistencies between places surveyed which she found inequitable. She said that certain State run nursing homes were not hit with the same discrepancies which seemed to signify that the survey is interested in creating revenue for the State and not against it.

There was a discussion as to how discrepancies could be disputed and Commissioner Burton asked if a letter from elected officials would hold any weight in the matter. NHA Bolander said that she really didn't think that would have any affect and noted that the Feds were aware of what she considered a "normal practice" in surveying. She said that what would be required would be a federal law in order to change things. She said that she thinks these surveys are looked at as revenue makers and noted that she overheard one of the surveyors say that they would probably be getting a raise as a reward to one of the discrepancies he/she found.

Commissioner Burton said that NHA Bolander should let this play out and see exactly what does happen and to keep the Board informed and to let them know if they can be of any assistance to her in this matter. Commissioner Cryans agreed that they should wait and see what the results are before making any kind of decisions as to what do.

Commissioner Burton asked what the time frame was and NHA Bolander said that the State will present their report (to which there is no timeframe for), and then the County will have ten days to respond.

Commissioner Richards asked if the surveyors spoke to the residents and NHA Bolander said they had and that the residents had very positive things to say about their care. Commissioner Richards asked if the deficiencies on the survey had anything to do with the reduction of the budget and NHA Bolander said they did not.

Commissioner Richards moved to approve the minutes from August 31, 2010 which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

Superintendent Libby arrived.

The Commissioners will not be meeting next Tuesday, primary election day.

Bids that were received for the 2010 Ford Explorer for Community Corrections were opened. Only two bids were received.

Hillsboro Ford	\$24,445.
Gateway Motors	\$25,198.55

Supt. Libby wanted to review the bids to be sure they included everything he specified.

Susan Brown arrived to discuss preserving the old part of the Jail once the building is vacated. She said that she had spoken with Maggie Stier from NH Preservation Alliance and the two of them wanted to encourage the Commissioners to reconsider their decision to tear down the old 1896 portion of the Jail saying that it would probably be more costly to destroy than to keep. She said they would like to be able to submit the building to the 2010 Seven to Save list, whose focus is on historical properties in the State of New Hampshire. Entries must be submitted by September 17<sup>th</sup>.

Director Clough said that the Commissioners voted affirmatively to tear down the old portion about a year or two ago. Commissioner Cryans said it would be cost prohibitive to try to maintain and repair the old part of the Jail.

S. Brown said that maybe someone would want to lease it and do the upgrades themselves. Commissioner Cryans said that it would be very expensive for someone to take on that task noting the need for lighting and ventilation amongst other things.

S. Brown said that on behalf of herself and Maggie Stier it would be nice to be able to hold on to the older more unique buildings and made more sense to repurpose them than to destroy them. She asked that the Commissioners at least consider it for next year perhaps. Commissioner Richards said that she would be willing to chair a committee to review the possibilities of keeping the building and S. Brown said that she would be willing to sit on the committee.

Commissioner Burton said he didn't see much hope in saving the building. Supt. Libby said that he agreed with Commissioner Cryans that restoring or even preserving the building would be extremely costly. He said that if private money were involved he

could see considering it but otherwise it would just be a money pit for the County. S. Brown said she wasn't suggesting that the County take on this project but if the building could be put on the list for next year, maybe a private investor would be interested. Again, she asked that the Commissioners simply think about it for next year.

After reviewing the vehicle bids, Supt. Libby recommended that the Commissioners accept the low bid from Hillsboro Ford.

Commissioner Burton moved to accept the bid from Hillsboro Ford for the 2010 Ford Explorer in the amount of \$24,445 which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. All were in favor.

Commissioner Burton asked a couple of questions regarding the vehicle such as whether or not it would be marked, it would not because the vehicle is used to visit businesses of those out on work release. Whether it would have a communication radio and a cage, it would. He asked what kind of plates would be on the vehicle and Supt. Libby replied that they would be government plates.

Commissioner Burton asked if all the Ford dealers in Grafton County were contacted to bid and was told that they were.

9:55 AM – Commissioner Richards moved to enter into non-public session for the purposes of discussing the consideration of the acquisition, sale, or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community according to RSA 91-A:3, II (d). Commissioner Burton seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote, Commissioner Cryans called the roll. Commissioner Richards “yes”; Commissioner Burton “yes” Commissioner Cryans “yes”. Commissioner Cryans stated that a majority of the board voted yes and that they would now go into non-public session.

\*10:22 AM– Commissioner Cryans declared the meeting back in public session and to seal the minutes of that session. The Commissioners then resumed their public meeting.

Supt. Libby and the Commissioners agreed on a GED graduation date of September 29<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM.

Human Resources Director Michael Simpson arrived to give the Commissioners his report. He began with various position openings at the County such as LPNs, RN's and LNA's He said that there have been several LNA turnovers and some internal moves. The Sheriff's Dept. is also looking to fill a Deputy's position and there is a need for part time Correctional Officers.

HRD Simpson publically thanked HR Clerk W. Hubbard for her help during the survey at the Nursing Home. He said her help with the personnel files was well appreciated by all.

There will be a 20 week program for smoking cessation in which the County will be partnering with other entities.

HRD Simpson has joined the DHMC Healthy Living Committee which is similar to the Wellness Committee here at the County.

Union negotiations are still on going.

There was a discussion about how terminations are handled, whether voluntary or involuntary.

HRD Simpson brought a copy of the Employee Handbook to go over changes that he and the Dept. Heads had agreed on.

The first change was to the nepotism policy. Some of the language was clarified to make it more unambiguous. Commissioner Burton asked if the changes conform to all laws and HRD Simpson said that they do and that he has spoken with other Counties, businesses and a labor attorney regarding the changes.

Commissioner Burton asked Director Clough if she was comfortable with the changed wording and she said that she was. HRD Simpson said that he had gone over everything with both Dept. Heads and the Employee Council.

Commissioner Burton asked if the changes will enhance or encourage employees to attend Community College and HRD Simpson said that some of the changes will.

Commissioner Cryans asked how these updates will be administered to employees and HRD Simpson said they will be given out as an additional handout and that HR will avail themselves to anyone who needs a better understanding.

HRD Simpson said he would like to see the practice of longevity end as of September 7<sup>th</sup> and not on July 1<sup>st</sup> because new hires had received the handbook which allowed longevity prior to the decision to abolish it for new hires.

There was a line in the longevity paragraph that Commissioner Cryans said he would like removed. Everyone was in agreement with that.

There were a number of changes that were made. Some were slight and most favored employees.

Commissioner Richards moved to accept the changes to the Employee Handbook which was seconded by Commissioner Burton.

Discussion:

Commissioner Cryans asked if the impact to the budget due to these changes had been calculated. Director Clough said that would be too hard to do. HRD Simpson said that changes such as the one regarding training and travel time could be limiting and that moving per diem employees to full time and then offering health benefits immediately could be of cost to the County. Allowing holiday pay after 3 months as opposed to 6 six will also have an affect but that will depend on when the person gets hired as there are more holiday's at the end of the year.

Commissioner Cryans asked Director Clough if she can live with these changes. She said that there was a vetting process and there were some things that she didn't care for and that was because of the impact to the budget but yes, she could live with the changes.

Commissioner Cryans said that he wouldn't like to see more benefits given at the risk of it being so costly that it might impact someone's job. Director Clough said she didn't see that happening and HRD Simpson said that if he thought that there was chance that even one person would be jeopardized by any of these he would not have recommended it.

When the vote came down, all were in favor.

The Commissioners reviewed the DoC Superior Court report.

Director Clough informed the Commissioners that Deputy Eck is transferring to the DoC as Training Sergeant and will start on September 18<sup>th</sup>.

The Commissioners signed paperwork for the Tax Anticipation Notes. Director Clough said that the legal paperwork is being compiled by D. Barnes of Devine Millimet. She said that the County will probably not need money until October and it probably won't exceed \$3M.

Director Clough said that the Commissioners should begin to think about who they would like to dedicate the Annual County report to, which will be in the works soon.

Commissioner Burton said that he had attended the festivities for the 10 year celebration of Horse Meadow Senior Center and brought back some material from it.

Commissioner Richards asked if the Incentive Fund meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> was open to the public and was informed that it was.

It was mentioned in the meeting, that for an elected official to use a county phone number on his campaign material is totally inappropriate. Commissioner Cryans said the issue has been addressed by himself and the Secretary of State's Office.

Commissioner Cryans said that last Tuesday night he and Commissioner Burton attended the Sullivan County Farm Day in which there were various discussions, a speech by a legislator and the introduction of political candidates.

11:30 AM With no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Following the meeting the Commissioners were planning to have lunch at the Jail and then to tour the Jail Construction project.

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Raymond S. Burton, Clerk