

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONER MEETING  
3855 Dartmouth College Highway  
North Haverhill, NH 03774  
October 6, 2020

PRESENT: Commissioners Lauer, Piper, Morris, County Administrator Libby and Administrative Assistant Norcross

OTHERS PRESENT: Human Resource Director Clough, Nursing Home Administrator Labore, Alternative Sentencing Director DePalo, Cindy Fagnant and Kim Force.

Commissioner Lauer called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

HR Director Clough arrived and gave the following report:

Grafton County Human Resources Report  
Karen Clough, Human Resources Director  
October 6, 2020

**HR Activity Report (09/02/2020-10/05/2020)**

• ***New Hires***

Department	#	Position(s)
Nursing Home	4 (2 PT, 1 per diem, 1 FT)	1 per diem MNA, 1 PT Housekeeper, 1 PT Dietary Aide, 1 FT LPN
DOC	1 (1 FT)	1 FT CO
Farm	1 (1 FT)	1 FT Farm Asst.

• ***Separations***

Departments	#	
Nursing Home	5 (2 PT, 3 FT)	1 PT Housekeeper, 1 PT Dietary Aide 2 FT LNA's, 1 FT Housekeeper
Sheriff/Dispatch	2 (1 FT, 1 PT)	1 FT Dispatcher, 1 PT Bailiff

***Reasons:***

Retirement - 1  
Resigned / other employer – 2  
Resigned / Personal Reasons – 2  
Resigned/relocating - 1  
Termination – 1

• ***Status Changes/ dept transfers: FT Dietary Aide to FT Custodian, 1 Per Diem LNA to FT LNA***

***Active Leave of Absences as of October 5, 2020***

Department	#	
Nursing Home – Nursing	15	(10 are intermittent, 11 for self, 4 for family)
Nursing Home – Non-Nursing	3	(2 are intermittent, 2 for family, 1 for self)
County Atty.	1	(1 intermittent, 1 self)

DOC	4	(1 intermittent, 2 self, 2 family)
IT	1	(1 intermittent family)
Farm	1	(1 intermittent, 1 self)
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>25</b>	

**Scheduled to orient 10/07**

1 PT Housekeeper  
2 Per Diem LNA's

**Current Jobs posted/advertised**

LNA's (15.55 FTE's vacant)  
RN/LPN (10 FTE's vacant combined)  
CO's  
PT/FT Dietary Aide  
PT/FT Housekeeper  
HR Generalist  
County Administrator  
Assistant Director of Nursing

Nursing Home Administrator Labore arrived and gave the following report:

Grafton County Nursing Home  
Commissioner's Report:  
October 6, 2020

Census:

FY '21 Budgeted Census:

Medicare: 1  
Medicaid: 85  
VA: 1  
Hospice: 1  
Private: 21  
Total: 109

Medicare: 4  
Medicaid: 94 (Daily rate= \$198.33)  
VA: 2  
Private: 23

Year-To-Date Numbers:

**2020 YTD Numbers**

Admissions: 25  
Deceased Residents: 26  
Discharges: 8

Other Topics

1) September Positive Staff Test Result

1) CMS Testing Regulation – NHA Labore stated that during their surveillance testing on September 3<sup>rd</sup> a staff member was identified as positive. That staff member had been asymptomatic. There was a two (2) week testing period with the National Guard as a result of the positive test where all staff were tested. NHA Labore thanked the staff for their support and cooperation. He stated that because of CMS language changes, they are going to be expected to test based on zones and which zone you fall into. NHA Labore explained that there are now zones being established based on number of cases per 100,000. There are red, orange and green zones. Grafton County Nursing Home is in the green zone which means 100% of staff have to be tested every 28 days.

2) October 26<sup>th</sup> 2020 Surveillance Testing Program Change – NHA Labore stated that the model created is testing of staff and taking residents out of surveillance component. Over the course of a month, three (3) of those weeks they are expected to test 10% of staff and the 4<sup>th</sup> week they are expected to test 100% of staff. They have reached an agreement with Dartmouth to process the tests and they will be charging \$76 per test which the county will be fully reimbursed for from the state. He stated that this will last at least through the calendar year.

3) Antigen Testing Capability – NHA Labore stated that the federal government had been giving nursing homes testing equipment to perform rapid tests in house. They have sent two (2) models out, one has a 97% accuracy rate and the other has an 84% accuracy rate. He stated that they received the less accurate one with an 84% accuracy rate. If you receive a negative result you need to follow that up with a nasal swab. If someone tests positive, it is counted as a positive. They have received 350 testing swabs. This test will be used for symptomatic cases. He will keep the Commissioners updated as he has more information.

4) 10/1 Presentation to LTC Safety of Residents and Staff Committee – NHA Labore stated that he was asked by Rep. Stringham to give a presentation and what things have been like at the Nursing Home during the pandemic. He stated that he gave that presentation October 1<sup>st</sup> through Zoom. He talked in general what COVID has been like for their nursing home and what it has been like for staff residents and families. He stated that overall it was a good presentation and the committee had some good questions.

5) Upcoming Event Cancellations – NHA Labore stated that they will be cancelling Trick or Treat Street as well as their annual family Thanksgiving dinner this year.

AS Director DePalo arrived and requested to go into nonpublic session.

**MOTION:** \* 9:49 AM Commissioner Piper moved to enter into non-public session for the purposes of matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant pursuant to RSA 91-A: 3, II (c) Commissioner Morris seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote, Commissioner Lauer called the roll. Commissioner Lauer “yes”; Commissioner Piper “yes” Commissioner Morris



“yes” Commissioner Lauer stated that a majority of the board voted “yes” and would now go into non-public session.

\* 10:19 AM Commissioner Lauer declared the meeting back in public session.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Morris moved to permanently seal the minutes from the just completed non-public session because they could affect the reputation of someone other than those of the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Piper seconded the motion. Commissioner Lauer called the roll. Commissioner Lauer “yes”; Commissioner Piper “yes” Commissioner Morris “yes” Commissioner Lauer “yes”. Commissioner Lauer stated that a majority of the board voted “yes” and the motion passes.

Cindy Fagnant & Kim Force from Littleton Hospital arrived to discuss concerns they have regarding the handling of mentally ill patients. C. Fagnant stated they are running up against the issue of an increase of mental health patients and they are being housed at their facility. If they are lucky if they get these patients a bed in 3-4 days. They are battling many obstacles and it is beginning to cripple them. She stated that she is very passionate about this. Her thought has been that in the Department of Corrections there are 40-50 inmates in a 150-bed facility. She asked if it would it ever be a thought, to take a small section of the jail, put up sheetrock and make it a holding area for patients waiting for a bed at a mental health facility. She is trying to find a safe place for them. They are stripped of their rights and are being held to their rooms. She stated that Littleton Hospital is doing more than most other hospitals but the physicality is ramping up. They are having people injured and the police are showing up more frequently. Alternative Sentencing Director DePalo stated that they are dealing with voluntary and involuntary patients. NH State Hospital does not want voluntary as there is more funding for involuntary. Also, involuntary patients come with court orders to keep them for a certain amount of time. When it comes to voluntary people, who know they are sick and need help, they have a couple of days to keep them, then if no one takes them they are most times released back into the community. Commissioner Morris stated that the state needs more psychiatric beds. The answer to this issue is more beds. They need to be advocating at the state level. The problem is also staffing of psychiatrists in the state of NH. AS Director DePalo stated that the state needs to designate these places. They need a permanent solution to the problem. C. Fagnant stated that she feels that if the five (5) hospitals contribute money, there is some way they can make this work. CA Libby stated that if this is something the Commissioners want to look into, they need to have these discussions with Supt. Elliott. AS Director DePalo stated that they would need to have someone else monitoring these patients. They would need different staff and training because correctional officers are not trained for these patients. Commissioner Lauer noted the difficulties in designating a place in the jail. She stated that although they have empty beds, they still need all of the units available as a part of their classification system they have in place. C. Fagnant stated that if someone comes into the hospital and has a medical condition that they cannot treat they get sent elsewhere to a specialist. These mentally ill patients don’t get sent anywhere. Commissioner Morris stated that she will go to the state with C. Fagnant. C. Fagnant stated that she wants to make a change. AS Director DePalo stated that she thinks this is something they would not struggle in getting a group together from area hospitals because people are very passionate about this subject. Commissioner Piper stated that she thinks this is a really good idea and there are modifications and changes need to be made. Criminal Justice reform and Alternative Sentencing are large-scale reform movements and this is a conversation that is

happening on the national level. She wants C. Fagnant and Kim Force to know that the BOC is very happy that they have come in and they can be assured that everyone here is happy and willing to help. K. Force noted that the challenge is the bodies don't exist to take care of these people. AS Director DePalo also made a note that there is a shortage of licensed people in New Hampshire and they need to know why there are such difficulties in getting people licensed in this state. Commissioner Morris stated that she thinks Commissioner Shibinette is the first person to contact with this. AS Director DePalo said that she is happy to be a part of any of these conversations and will do anything they can do to support this. The Commissioners thanked C. Fagnant and K. Force for their time and bringing their concerns to them.

Commissioner Lauer asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from the September 29<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Morris moved to approve the minutes from the September 29<sup>th</sup> meeting. Commissioner Lauer seconded the motion and all were in favor.

The Commissioners signed check registers: 16-18; 1061; 1064-1065; 1067-1069.

Commissioners' Council Meeting 10/13/20 – 1:00 PM – CA Libby asked if the Commissioners plan on attending. All three (3) Commissioners stated that they plan to attend.

CA Libby submitted the DoC Superior Court Report for the Commissioners to review.

Building Automation Project Bid – CA Libby stated that there was a bid alternate for an additional \$1,850 that was not approved by the Commissioners and Supt. Oakes has requested that they approve it.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Morris moved to accept the bid alternate of \$1,850. Commissioner Piper seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Safety Program Manual – Management Commitment Statement - CA Libby stated that they are in the process of their PRIME recertification through Primex which gives the county a 2.5% discount on both property and liability insurance and workers' comp insurance. One of the components of the worker's comp. PRIME recertification is the Safety Program needs to be updated every two (2) years. She stated that the Joint Loss Management Committee has looked at the program and it has been completely revised in accordance with the Department of Labor's requirements of how the program needs to be run. She stated that it is almost complete and part of the requirement of the Safety Program is the Management Commitment. She stated that it is a commitment from the Board of Commissioners to the employees that they take safety and health seriously. The Commissioners signed off on the commitment. CA Libby stated that she will get the Safety Program to Primex.

CA Libby stated that she received an email from Tim McGrath who is the Chairman of the Thornton Internet Access Committee. The New Hampshire Electric Co-op has a ballot out right now to revise their bylaws and he is trying to get the Thornton Selectboard to promote the ballot and was wondering if the Grafton County Commissioners would promote the ballot as well. The



Commissioners discussed it and agreed that they individually support this but feel it is not their role as a County to support it as they are not members of the co-op.

#### Commissioner Issues:

Commissioner Morris stated that she was contacted by numerous constituents with concerns about the Finance Director position and how that position has unfolded. She stated that the series of decisions have been made based upon the best interest of the county. It was seriously deliberated and she stands by their decisions. She hopes that other people within the County understand. Commissioner Lauer stated that this is a position that has been debated for years trying to get in the budget. Commissioner Piper stated that though it has been a long time coming, they have been aggressive in arguing for it this year. The Finance Director position work has always been done but not formally. This position is needed to allow for the department budgets to be closely looked at; closer than what the Commissioners are capable of doing.

Register of Deeds Monahan was present at the meeting to inform the Commissioners that \$1,654,362 has gone to the State of New Hampshire and \$142,000 to the County for the month of September.

Commissioner Piper stated that she attended the NHAC Executive Committee meeting. The State County Finance Committee is going to meet in November to discuss FMAP and the Intergovernmental Transfer agreement.

Commissioner Lauer stated that she attended the UNH Advisory Council meeting via zoom.

Commissioner Lauer requested to go into nonpublic session to review performance evaluations.

**MOTION:** \* 11:14 AM Commissioner Piper moved to enter into non-public session for the purposes of the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted pursuant to RSA 91-A: 3, II (a). Commissioner Morris seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote, Commissioner Lauer called the roll. Commissioner Lauer "yes"; Commissioner Piper "yes" Commissioner Morris "yes" Commissioner Lauer stated that a majority of the board voted "yes" and would now go into non-public session.

\* 12:19 PM Commissioner Lauer declared the meeting back in public session.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Piper moved to permanently seal the minutes from the just completed non-public session because they could affect the reputation of someone other than those of the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Morris seconded the motion. Commissioner Lauer called the roll. Commissioner Lauer "yes"; Commissioner Piper "yes" Commissioner Morris "yes" Commissioner Lauer "yes". Commissioner Lauer stated that a majority of the board voted "yes" and the motion passes.

12:20 PM with no further business the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'mmorris', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Marcia Morris  
Clerk