

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Office of the Commissioners
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.
N. Haverhill, NH 03774
Tuesday March 16, 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 9:10 AM

Lieutenant Todd Landry, new Commander of New Hampshire State Troop F, stopped in for a courtesy call to meet the Commissioners. Lt. Landry grew up in Lisbon and has since moved to Littleton. He had five and a half years with the Littleton PD and sixteen years with the State. Lt. Landry was welcomed by the Commissioners.

Commissioner Burton noted that when a town either doesn't have a chief of police or decided not to elect one, then the Commander acts as its law enforcement official. Right now Lt. Landry acts as official for the towns of Lyman, Landaff, Monroe, Benton, Easton, Ellsworth and Dorchester. Both Coos and Grafton County are covered by Troop F in an area of approximately 3500 square miles. There is a staff of 40 with 32 being sworn fulltime State Troopers.

Commissioner Burton said that he appreciated Lt. Landry coming in and making himself known. Lt. Landry said that he has enjoyed working with the Sheriff's Department and that they also work with the Dispatch Center as well. Lt. Landry said that he has an open door policy and offers services to anyone who might need assistance.

Human Resource Director Mike Simpson presented his report to the Commissioners. There are still three openings for full time RNs, varied shifts and part time Correction Officers.

- HRD Simpson will be going to the Sheriff's Department today as they review twenty applicants.
- Union negotiations still continue.
- The Employee Council will be meeting with Administrators on Thursday.
- Insurance quotes are still being reviewed.
- HRD Simpson is considering a change in the Life Insurance provider.
- FMLA procedures are being scrutinized for compliance and an In-Service may follow.
- Comp time is being reviewed for compliance.
- Various educational seminars have been scheduled for the HR staff.
- HR Affiliates met on March 5th and the sharing of information was discussed.

Commissioner Richards said that she was concerned about HR's reduction in the wellness line of their budget and asked that HRD Simpson work with Cottage Hospital and the SAU's to create a broad partnership. He said that he is working with Cottage and their Community Relations person and fully intends for that line to increase over the years.

Commissioner Burton asked if there was any problem finding nurses and HRD Simpson said that he didn't really have a problem it was just that the three openings the County currently have are varied shifts and many people aren't interested in that. He said that sometimes it's due to the location or the job market itself but he doesn't see a shortage right now.

Commissioner Burton asked about academic credits for his staff taking classes and HRD Simpson said that none of the classes he has scheduled are credited.

Commissioner Burton asked that when people do attend classes or seminars, that information appear in their folder so that it will show what education they have undertaken. HRD Simpson said that certifications and grades go into the personnel folder but that information has to be forwarded by the Department Head.

Commissioner Cryans asked that the Health insurance be very well scrutinized because of its high costs. He wanted to be sure all options were looked at. Director Clough said that there are options to lowering the costs and there still needs to be some "tinkering" done. She added that it was important that all parties are involved with the process, i.e. the Dept. Heads, the Union and the Employee Council.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the minutes from March 9, 2010, which was seconded by Commissioner Cryans. An edit was made.

Commissioner Richards said that because she was not at that meeting, she had some concerns about FM Kimball raising chickens since that was not something that was discussed at the Farm forum meeting and she wondered why he was considering it. She noted her concern as to whether the idea had been well thought out and felt it needed to be reviewed.

When the vote came down, Commissioner Burton and Cryans were in favor, Commissioner Richards abstained.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the budget minutes from March 11, 2010, which was seconded by Commissioner Cryans. Commissioners Burton and Cryans were in favor, Commissioner Richards abstained.

Nursing Home Administrator Bolander and Hailey Wetherbee, who is interning with NHA Bolander, arrived. H. Wetherbee gave a little information about herself saying that she has worked at the Nursing Home for four years and has two of those years in Activities. She has a culinary degree and is an LNA. She is working toward finishing her four year degree and is working toward becoming a licensed Administrator. There was a discussion about the process and the Commissioners wished her luck.

NHA Bolander said the census at the Nursing Home was 131 with 3 more admissions this week.

NHA Bolander attended the legislative conference in Washington DC and said it was very interesting with some good speakers but there was clearly only one focus at this time, that being the passing of Healthcare.

NHA Bolander said there were discussions about municipalities not receiving funding for services and that all the States had many of the same issues.

Medicaid for inmates was discussed as a constitutional issue.

NHA Bolander will give the Commissioners the information that was presented by NHAC to the legislature.

NHA Bolander presented a request for the Health Information Manager to attend a two day Health Information Managers Association conference in Manchester which she attends annually and has money in her budget for.

Commissioner Richards moved to approve the conference attendance, which was seconded by Commissioner Burton. All were in favor.

Commissioner Cryans asked how the technology at this Nursing Home compares to others and NHA Bolander said that she knows of no other home that uses the PDA's and that Grafton County is moving forward with the electronic records program of which the Federal Government is expecting great things from. She said in her opinion Grafton County is doing very well.

Commissioner Burton asked what kind of follow up there needs to be with the Legislative Congress and NHA Bolander said that the Medicaid for the inmates discussion needs to continue.

Commissioner Burton asked if there might be another stimulus package and NHA Bolander replied that there was not much discussion other than healthcare.

Commissioner Burton said that Chuck Henderson from Senator Shaheen's office would be here on the 23rd of March and he suggested that NHA Bolander bring the information that she had at the conference with her to ask for specific requests. NHA Bolander said that she is aware that Senator Shaheen wants to touch base with those in the North County. Commissioner Burton said that while Senator Shaheen is in Washington DC, we should "work that office".

Commissioner Richards asked if woodchip biomass was discussed and NHA Bolander said that it was brought up and that Senator Shaheen's office is aware of the County's need for funding.

Commissioner Richards asked if home healthcare was discussed and NHA Bolander replied that it was and that it was noted that most agency funding has been decreased and many are no longer accepting Medicaid because of the payment rate. It was discussed as being impractical not to be able to keep people in their homes longer.

Commissioner Cryans asked about the Medicaid rate and NHA Bolander said that the rate will depend on how many people are in the program.

Commissioner Cryans said that GCSSC is very concerned about regionalization because the Senior Centers play such a role in home health care. NHA Bolander said that most people involved with seniors are concerned with regionalization which will create job losses as well as reduced services. Director Clough said that regionalization in a large geographical area such as Grafton County is a huge concern. Commissioner Cryans said it will be particularly disturbing if they break up into district offices or areas.

Drug Court Coordinator Bob Gasser arrived discuss a request with the Commissioners. Before getting to that, Commissioner Cryans wanted to ask a couple of questions that were asked at the Executive Committee meeting the day before.

First off, there will be a Drug Court graduation on the 19th of May and six participants are scheduled to graduate. There are 19 participants in the program and more on a list to get in. Through this program the retention rate is 70% whereas on a national level it is 50%.

Commissioner Cryans asked when most failures occur and B. Gasser said that most failures happen between 90 days and 6 months. More women are terminated than men but now there is a women's group which should help with that. Entrance to the program begins with the County Attorney and there are specific guidelines.

In saying that there was a list of people available for Drug Court, B. Gasser asked the Commissioners whether or not they were interested in increasing the program to 35 participants, adding that increasing the number would increase the cost of the budget. The supervision staff has stated that they can only handle up to 25 right now and adding more would require another part time staff member. There was a discussion about what it would mean to increase the program

Commissioner Cryans asked how the grant funded case manager position was going. B. Gasser said that is covered by J. Stone who splits her time between supervisory and case management and it is working well.

Commissioner Burton said that in his opinion the program should be increased to 35 and be reflected in the budget.

Commissioner Cryans said that the Board will need to speak to Superintendent Libby and see what would work for him. At present he said that Drug Court will have to work within what the current budget.

Commissioner Burton said that since the Attorney General will be at the next Drug Court graduation, B. Gasser should think about what he might want to ask for. He said that he feels that he wants to represent success stories in the County.

There was no decision made at this time to increase the program.

The Commissioners signed the check registers.

Director Clough showed the Commissioners an article that was in the paper regarding the weight lifting program that R. Lafond put together.

The Farm Advisory meeting has been moved to Tuesday April 13th at 1:00 due to a scheduling conflict.

The \$22K energy grant that was applied for was approved and Supt. Oakes will use the money to work on the kitchen hood project.

COMMISSIONER ISSUES:

Commissioner Richards would like to attend an LGC dinner in Plymouth.

Commissioners Burton and Cryans attended the grand opening at New England Wire for their new catheter operation.

Director Clough said that her budget is scheduled for this Thursday and the Nursing Home allocations reconfiguration will be reflected. Both she and NHA Bolander are comfortable with the results.

11:20 AM With no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Raymond S. Burton, Clerk