

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
3855 Dartmouth College Highway
North Haverhill, NH 03774
March 23, 2021

PRESENT: Commissioners Piper, Lauer, Ahern, County Administrator Dorsett and Administrative Assistant Norcross.

OTHERS PRESENT: Broadband Committee via Zoom – Nik Coates, Finance Director Libby, HR Director Clough

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

A. Grafton County Broadband Committee Update – Nik Coates

Nik Coates reviewed the attached PowerPoint presentation to the Commissioners and answered questions.

B. Finance Director Libby and Human Resources Director Clough arrived and requested to go into nonpublic session.

MOTION: * 9:40 AM Commissioner Ahern 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 according to RSA 91-A: 3, II (a) Commissioner Lauer seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Lauer “yes”; Commissioner Ahern “yes” Commissioner Piper “yes” Commissioner Piper stated that a majority of the board voted “yes” and would now go into non-public session.

* 11:21 AM Commissioner Piper declared the meeting back in public session.

MOTION: Commissioner Ahern 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 Lauer seconded the motion. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Lauer “yes” Commissioner Ahern “yes” Commissioner Piper “yes”. Commissioner Piper stated that a majority of the board voted “yes” and the motion passes.

C. Commissioner Piper asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from the March 23rd meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the minutes from the March 23rd meeting. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor. Motion carried.

- D. Commissioner Minutes/ Department Reports – CA Dorsett stated that the Commissioners had raised questions regarding the finishing of the minutes in terms of grammatical errors in the reports from Department Heads. He asked if there is a new standard format the Commissioners would like to see. Commissioner Piper stated that she doesn't know of a specific format but that it is always customary to include all reports directly in the minutes. The Commissioners discussed the topic and agreed to not include reports directly in the minutes but attach them at the end.
- E. The Commissioners signed check registers 1195-1197, 46.
- F. Travel Guidance Policy – CA Dorsett stated that he started a discussion with HR Director Clough in regards to the State of New Hampshire changing the requirements for quarantining. He is questioning if the County should do the same. Gov. Sununu lifted the quarantine requirement for people coming back from any domestic travel within the United States. International travel and trips on cruise ships still require the quarantine. HR Director Clough sent out an email to Department Heads for their input. Some were in favor and some were not. Commissioner Piper would be in favor of matching the new policy set by the state. Commissioner Ahern and Commissioner Lauer agreed. .

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to adopt the state guidance for Travel Guidance Policy. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor. Motion carried.

- G. Carwash Fundraiser Permission – Commissioner Lauer stated that she feels the amount of water used compared to the benefit the residents of the Nursing Home would get from this organization is much more. CA Dorsett stated that this organization's purpose is to support the needs of the residents at the Nursing Home. They would like to use the parking lot for a car wash fundraiser. Commissioner Ahern stated that one of his concerns was if there is any chance that this organization can go to Woodsville Water and Light to donate the water and not bill the County for the usage during this fundraiser. He stated that he is not looking to take away from the residents but he is giving Woodsville Water and Light the opportunity to participate. Commissioner Piper asked if this is County staff on this organization. Commissioner Lauer stated that the majority of them are county employees. Commissioner Piper asked if they should be asking their own employees to go to Woodsville Water and Light. CA Dorsett stated that he can send a request in to see what they say.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to allow use of the Courthouse parking lot for a carwash fundraiser through the Grafton County Home Association. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

- H. Farm Liability Coverage – CA Dorsett stated that he had reached out to Primex and asked if they could segregate the county's coverage and if so how much would they save by removing the Farm off Primex coverage and placing them under another entity. He was told that when Primex does their actuary numbers they do not base it on each individual facility. Therefore, if they remove the Farm it has no impact on their annual Primex

expense. If the county did move the Farm operation to another coverage it would make Primex a secondary coverage, therefore they would still be providing coverage on the buildings.

I. Commissioner Issues:

1. Commissioner Ahern stated that while signing invoices he has noticed many WB Mason invoices for water and water cooler rental. He asked, depending on how much the County pays every year to Woodsville Water and Light, if the County should consider putting in some water wells to provide water for the facility and possibly look into the American Rescue Plan Act money to put in some wells, as it is infrastructure costs. He stated that he suggests they also look into solar. CA Dorsett noted that he has started those conversations.

Commissioner Ahern stated that he attended the Wentworth Selectboard Meeting and discussed what was going on in Grafton County. He is also continuing to have his Just Omer TV program on Pemibaker TV to keep the public advised as to what is happening in Grafton County Government.

2. Commissioner Piper stated that she attended the NACO legislative conference on Friday. She attended the session on broadband initiatives and the Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy. She explained that inmates lose all federal benefits the moment they are incarcerated, even if they are pretrial, and county taxpayers pay for all their health care needs that would normally be paid by Medicaid. Two (2) Senators had a bill introduced in 2019 called the Equity and Pretrial Medicaid Coverage Act. This bill allows an otherwise eligible individual who is in custody pending disposition of charges, to receive Medicaid benefits which would eliminate the tax burden on county tax payers. She also noted that a Representative has introduced a bill called the Medicaid Re-entry Act of 2021. It was introduced into the house and this bill allows Medicaid payment for medical services for an incarcerated individual during the thirty (30) day period prior to the individual's release. She explained that this bill is to help get the inmate the care they need, possibly mental health services, prior to being released to help lower recidivism rates.

11:59 AM with no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Omer C. Ahern, Jr
Clerk