

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
3855 Dartmouth College Highway
North Haverhill, NH 03774
April 6, 2021

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Nursing Home Administrator Labore, HR Director Clough

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

Nursing Home Administrator Labore arrived and gave the following report (* see attached)

1) COVID – 19 Update

- Staff Testing Frequency – NHA Labore explained that the Nursing Home is now on a once a month testing schedule due to a calculation error by CMS on the positivity rate for Grafton County. Because the percentage is lower, they are now able to test once a month rather than twice a week. April 19th & 20th are the next testing dates, if they don't have any positive cases between now and then.

- Test Processing – NHA Labore stated that there was a broadcast by the Public Health Department for the potential to encourage nursing homes to bring their COVID test processing back into the NH State Lab. They have seen a decrease in volume and therefore they were encouraging nursing homes to use state labs again. He explained that after consultation with CA Dorsett, they would continue to use the lab they are contracted with out of New Jersey. This lab is very flexible and gives them the opportunity to test on our terms not the states. They have a good system in place and have results back in 36 hours.

- Visitation Program – NHA Labore explained that, under guidance from CMS and the CDC, they have begun contact visitation for family members. Fully vaccinated residents are now allowed to have an embrace with a family member. They are all required to hand sanitize before and after, remain socially distanced during the visit then they can embrace again at the end. NHA Labore stated that it has made a big difference with the residents.

- Vaccination Program – On April 2nd the Nursing Home administered the first vial of the Pfizer vaccine to three (3) residents and three (3) staff members. He stated that through the nursing home's contracting process they are allowed to be a vaccine provider. Their pharmacy was able to deliver a single vial. Three (3) weeks from now they will receive the 2nd dose for the six (6) individuals.

2) North Country Health Consortium March 23rd Vaccination Clinic – NHA Labore stated that he wanted to thank NCHC. They completed the second dose clinic on March 23rd and vaccinated a total of sixteen (16) people, eleven (11) residents and five (5) staff members. They were great to work with.

Commissioner Piper asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from the April 1st budget meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the minutes from the April 1st Budget meeting. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

The Commissioners signed check registers 1200.

CA Dorsett submitted a MS-535 for Livermore the Commissioners to sign.

HR Director Clough arrived and gave the following report: (* see attached)

Emergency Paid Sick Leave – HR Director Clough stated that the FFCRA expired December 31st and Commissioners chose to extend the emergency paid sick leave until March 31st. She stated that she would like to request to extend that another three (3) months, giving everyone a chance to get the vaccine who is eligible for it. They do still have people being ordered to quarantine. Commissioner Ahern asked what the financial impact would be. HR Director Clough stated that this gave employees 80 hours of emergency paid sick leave. With the latest round of stimulus that came out, she believes the County can now get this reimbursed for public entities. There has been a cost impact but it has given part time employees, who may not have the time built up, the ability to stay home and not bring Covid into the building. It is important for employees to not feel like they must go to work if they are not feeling well. Commissioner Piper stated that they wanted to keep everyone safe and that was their argument for extending the leave pay. She could see this being extended another three (3) months. Everyone will then have had the opportunity to be vaccinated and if they choose not to then they will be responsible for the lost pay. Commissioner Lauer stated that she agrees. She cannot see tax payers continuing to pay for this emergency sick leave after this next extension if employees choose not to get the vaccine.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to extend the Emergency Paid Sick Leave to June 30th 2021. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Office Space – HR Director Clough stated that she had met with Steve Whitman from Resilience Planning and she has not heard the results of the study. The space they have in HR is lacking in a couple different ways. She explained that they are out of space; they have no place to put projects together, no space for large group orientations. She noted that safety and confidentiality are other concerns as well. There are many things happening in HR that are very sensitive and they do not have good exit capabilities if they were to need to get out. There is also no privacy or soundproofing to hold confidential conversations.

HR Director Clough stated that she has an idea she would like to run by the Commissioners, given the vacancy of the UNH Extension wing this past year. She explained that it that makes much more sense to have Human Resources in that private wing than UNH Extension. There is more space, confidentiality, and better exits. She has reviewed Donna Lee's portion of the study with Resilience Planning, she said they only need three (3) employees to operate her office, and therefore she is wondering if Human Resources could better utilize that space than UNH Extension can. There would be confidentiality as people would only be in their hall if they were

let in. She stated that this would need to be discussed with Extension but she would like it considered. Commissioner Piper stated that she is feeling sympathetic towards the needs of HR because she sees that there are vacant offices in the UNH Extension wing frequently because staff are not in. It seems like a conversation worth having and looking further into. CA Dorsett stated that he could look into this further with HR Director Clough.

Earned Time Buyout Request – CA Dorsett stated that Farm Manager Nelson has requested a buyout of 96 hours of earned time. He has explained that he has more than 320 hours and he has not been able to take time off due to being understaffed. He has stated that he is certain that he can manage earned time for himself and the other farm staff once there is constant contribution of inmate labor.

MOTION: Commissioner Lauer moved to allow the one time buy back of 96 hours of earned time for Farm Manager Nelson. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Discussion: Commissioner Ahern stated that being a dairy farmer you do not get vacations or time off, this is a life style you chose but he understands that this is a governmental institution and these things happen.

The Commissioners seconded the motion and all were in favor.

CA Dorsett submitted the Superior Court Report for the month of March for the Commissioners to review.

HHS Grant Opportunity for Rural Communities – Ed Shanshala, PhD, Stephen Flynn, PhD

Ammonoosuc Community Health – Dr. Ed Shanshala arrived via zoom to discuss possible grant opportunities with the Commissioners. He explained that they are looking into grants to help connect people in rural areas to services they may not currently have access to. He is exploring how they connect resources that are prevalent in urban areas and leverage them in rural areas, as it is more cost effective. They need to take the time to look at the needs that are being seen in northern Grafton County. He asked the Commissioners to keep their ears and eyes open for any opportunities and he will return as he sees funding opportunities as well. He further discussed the subject with the Commissioners and answered questions. Commissioner Lauer stated that Grafton County could work as a pass-through for some of these grants and feels this could potentially be a good partnership

Cruiser Radio Replacement – CA Dorsett stated that Sheriff Stiegler submitted a request for the replacement of a cruiser radio. In his memo, he explains that all of their cruisers except for one (1) have dual band UHF/VHF radios for multi-channel usage on municipal, county and state frequencies. They have one (1) older radio that is a single band VHF radio that they have experienced problems transmitting and receiving radio messages with. Sheriff Stiegler has explained that this is a life safety issue for the deputies using this vehicle and he is requesting to replace this older radio with the same dual band UHF/VHF radio system as the other vehicles.

The radio would be purchased under state contract price of \$5,553.35 and would be paid for out of the cruiser repair and maintenance line. They would not order/purchase this radio until May 2021 in the event any unanticipated cruiser and maintenance line item expenses revealed they would exceed their appropriated funds.

Commissioner Lauer stated that she supports this request. The safety of the deputies is worth the expense.

Commissioner Piper stated that this item was not budgeted for. Commissioner Ahern stated that based upon the caveat that they will not order until May, this may not be necessary.

Commissioner Piper agreed, stating that this is not being purchased until May in the event unanticipated expenses occur which makes it not seem urgent. Commissioner Piper also asked CA Dorsett what would happen if the Commissioners approved this expense but then another need arose prior to the end of the budget year. The Commissioners further discussed the request and agreed not to act on it at this time.

DuPont Group – American Rescue Plan – Commissioner Piper stated that the Commissioners have all seen the draft proposal for the increased scope of work that was discussed in the Officers meeting and Executive Committee meeting Friday. She explained that the DuPont Group is doing a tremendous amount of increased work because of the COVID relief and they are continuing to do so for the new American Rescue Plan. Some people on the call argued that there are webinars from NACO that directly provide guidance and so the increased scope of work is not needed. Commissioner Piper stated that she feels the DuPont Group should be paid for the work they are doing. There will be a special meeting April 16th where they will vote on this. Commissioner Lauer agreed the DuPont group needs to be compensated for this extra work as they have done an extraordinary job

CA Dorsett submitted a fact sheet for New Hampshire on the American Rescue Plan for the Commissioners review.

Grafton Regional Development Corporation – CA Dorsett presented a request for support of their \$45,000 funding request

CA Dorsett stated that he received a letter from NCIC soliciting anyone who would be interesting in buying their wireless link network, which is a semi high-speed internet provider through a series of radio towers. He stated that he plans on looking into it further.

CA Dorsett gave the Commissioners an update on the various projects he has been working on and the meetings he has been attending.

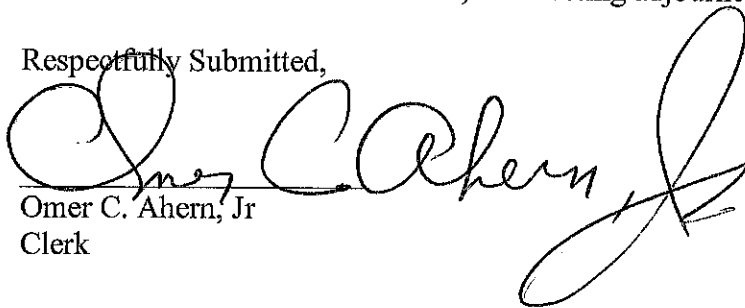
Commissioner Issues

Commissioner Piper stated that she was contacted by a reporter from NH Public Radio relative to Commissioner Reports that are submitted to the state following DoC inspections. Grafton County and others made the decision with Supt. Elliott not to inspect this past year due to COVID. They received a letter from the AG saying there had been a media inquiry regarding the reports. The email from the reporter asked in her capacity as Commissioner, if she could speak to

what they do for oversight of the DoC and asked if in her role as President of NHAC, she could speak to the statewide county process. She went to the Attorney General's webpage to see the reports from DoC inspections from other counties and there is a very strong difference in letters on how they track their tours. She stated that in looking at RSA-b:12, it asks that the Commissioners submit a report. They are the only county where the Commissioners do not submit the report, DoC Supt. Elliott does and FD Libby stated that this is how it has always been done. The Commissioners agree that they need to do what the RSA says. They will have Supt. Elliott write a report and they will sign off on it. Commissioner Piper stated that she has a meeting with the reporter at 2:00 tomorrow and she is meeting with Supt. Elliott today. Commissioner Lauer noted that they have wonderful transparency with their DoC through the monthly Commissioner reports from the DoC, Maintenance and IT. All three (3)-department heads report on the DoC and what has gone on in the facility. CA Dorsett indicated he has toured the facility twice so far, once for operations review and once for systems review.

11:42 PM with no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Omer C. Ahern, Jr.", is written over the typed name and title.

Omer C. Ahern, Jr
Clerk

Grafton County Nursing Home Commissioner's Report: April 6, 2021

Census

**Medicare: 4
Medicaid: 82
VA: 1
Hospice: 0
Private: 23
Total: 110**

FY '21 Budgeted Census:

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

Monthly Admissions/Discharges

**Admissions: 8
Deceased Residents: 4
Discharges: 1**

Other Topics:

1) COVID-19 Update

- **Staff Testing Frequency**
- **Test Processing**
- **Visitation Program**
- **Vaccination Program**

2) North Country Health Consortium March 23rd Vaccination Clinic

Grafton County Human Resources Report
Karen Clough, Human Resources Director
April 6, 2021

HR Activity Report (03/01/2021-04/05/2021)

• ***New Hires***

<u>Department</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>Position(s)</u>
Nursing Home	3 (1 FT, 1 PT, 1 PD)	1 PT / 1 FT Dietary Aide, 1 per diem LNA
DOC	1 (1 PT)	1 PT Cook
Sheriff's Dept.	1 (1 FT)	1 FT Dispatcher

• ***Separations***

<u>Departments</u>	<u>#</u>	
Nursing Home	4 (3 FT, 1 PT)	1 FT LNA, 1 FT Social Service Asst, 1 FT Social Service Director, 1 PT Dietary Aide
Dispatch	2 (1 FT, 1 PT)	1 Ft, 1 PT Dispatcher
IT	1 (1 FT)	1 FT Support Technician
DOC	2 (2 FT)	2 FT CO's
Sheriff's Dept	1 (1 PT)	1 Special Deputy

Reasons:

Resigned personal reasons/no reason given- 2

Termination – 1

Career change -1

Dissatisfaction – 3

Relocated – 1

School – 1

Retirement –

Not reappointed - 1

Not meeting Per Diem Requirements -

- ***Status Changes/ dept transfers: (2) FT LNA's to per diem, 1 FT LNA to Driver, 1 FT LNA to Restorative Aide, 1 FT Restorative to LNA, 1 FT RN to per diem***

Active Leave of Absences as of April 5, 2021

<u>Department</u>	<u>#</u>	
Nursing Home – Nursing	17	(12 are intermittent, 12 for self, 5 for family)
Nursing Home – Non-Nursing	6	(4 are intermittent, 4 for family, 2 for self)
DOC	2	(0 intermittent, 2 self)
Maintenance	1	(1 intermittent self)
Sheriff's Dept.	2	(2 intermittent family)
Farm	1	(1 intermittent self)
TOTAL:	29	

Scheduled to orient 04/07

1 FT Unit Aide (For LNA program)

Current Jobs posted/advertised

LNA's (17.35 FTE's vacant)

RN/LPN (11.15 FTE's vacant combined)

CO's

PT Housekeeper

RN House Supervisor

Deputy Sheriff
IT Support Technician (2)

OTHER BUSINESS – Extension of Emergency Paid Sick Leave
Office Space