

GRAFTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Administration Building  
North Haverhill, NH 03774  
October 11, 2022

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

OTHERS PRESENT: County Attorney Hornick, Nursing Home Administrator Labore, Director of Nursing Porter, 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, Director of Nursing Porter and HR Director Clough arrived and requested to go into nonpublic session.**

**MOTION:** \* 9:02 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 Piper seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote. Commissioner Piper called the roll. 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.

\* 9:15 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 Piper seconded the motion. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Ahern "yes" Commissioner Piper "yes". Commissioner Piper stated that a majority of the board voted "yes" and the motion passes.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Lauer moved to support the disciplinary action taken by the Nursing Home Administrator. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

NHA Labore stated that on August 30<sup>th</sup> the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services announced that the Public Health Laboratory would no longer process COVID-19 testing samples for nursing home staff. He explained that this went into effect September 15<sup>th</sup> and in order to remain in compliance with CDC and CMS outbreak-testing requirements, Grafton County Nursing Home needs to partner with an independent laboratory to process tests that are required to be done due to an outbreak in the Nursing Home. NHA Labore stated that they have

solicited pricing from four independent laboratories and received the following two (2) responses:

Dartmouth Health: Price per test - \$76.00

Mako Medical Laboratories: Price per test - \$ 85.00.

NHA Labore recommended accepting the quote from Dartmouth Health, noting that it is the lower price but also that it is located in Grafton County.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Ahern moved to accept the quote provided by Dartmouth Health for \$76 per processed test. Commissioner Lauer seconded the motion and all were in favor.

**County Attorney Hornick arrived and requested to go into nonpublic session.**

**MOTION:** \* 9:26 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 Piper seconded the motion. This motion requires a roll call vote. Commissioner Piper called the roll. 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.

\* 10:04 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 Piper seconded the motion. Commissioner Piper called the roll. Commissioner Ahern “yes” Commissioner Piper “yes”. Commissioner Piper stated that a majority of the board voted “yes” and the motion passes.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Piper moved to approve the County Attorney’s request as discussed in nonpublic session. Commissioner Lauer seconded the motion for discussion purposes.

Discussion – Commissioner Lauer stated that there are employees in multiple departments that are in the same situation, and she could not show favoritism for one (1) department.

The Commissioners voted on the motion. Commissioner Piper “yes”, Commissioner Ahern “no”, Commissioner Lauer “no”. With the vote being one (1) in favor and two (2) in opposition the motion fails.

Atty. Hornick reported that she is struggling with Drug Court because it is an expensive and time-consuming operation. She will continue to support it; however, it needs more money, attention and focus on the rehabilitative portion. She stated that Bail Reform is bailing these individuals out of jail and they go back to their communities doing drugs. There are more people going back to jail than in the past, it is less effective. She is hopeful that things will turn around.

### **Agenda Items:**

1. Commissioner Piper asked if everyone had a chance to read the minutes from the September 27<sup>th</sup> Commissioner meeting and Farm Committee meeting. Commissioner Piper had a few grammatical edits.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Lauer moved to approve the minutes from the September 27<sup>th</sup> Commissioners' and Farm Committee meetings as amended. Commissioner Ahern seconded the motion and all were in favor.

2. The Commissioners check registers 1040-1045; 2022-09.30.22.

3. CA Libby submitted a CDBG Claim for WREN for \$18,745.10.

4. CA Libby submitted the Safety Manual for Commissioners to sign. Commissioner Ahern asked if a copy of the manual is given to each employee. CA Libby stated that each employee is given a summary of the highlights and each department is given a copy of the full manual. Commissioner Ahern strongly suggested that the whole manual be provided to each employee when they come to work for the county and that they sign for it.

5. Probation & Parole Lease Renewal – CA Libby stated that the State of NH is looking to see if the county would be looking to continue the lease, how long they would like the lease to remain in effect and the amount. The Commissioners discussed the renewal and stated that they wanted to request a 5% increase and a 2-year lease not knowing what the future of the courthouse is.

6. Courthouse Discussion – CA Libby stated that she would like to set up an initial meeting to discuss what they are going to do with the courthouse. She asked the Commissioners who they would like to be a part of that meeting. The Commissioners discussed whom they would like to invite and agreed on the Department Heads who are involved with the Courthouse, the State of New Hampshire, Grafton County Bar Association and Rep. Sykes. The meeting will take place Tuesday the 18<sup>th</sup> at 1:00.

7. Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund (LATCF) – CA Libby stated that Grafton County would be receiving \$288,665.25 this year and \$288,665.25 next year. She explained that the American Rescue Plan appropriated \$2 billion to Treasury across FY22 and FY23 to provide payments to eligible revenue sharing counties for use on any government purpose except for lobbying activity. The purpose of the LATCF program is to serve as a general revenue enhancement program. CA Libby explained that an eligible revenue sharing county is a county that is independent of any other unit of local government determined by the Secretary of the Treasury and is the principal provider of government services within its area of jurisdiction and there is a negative revenue impact due to the implementation of federal program changes. CA Libby stated that this is resulting from the county's Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) payment.

Grafton County is one (1) of four (4) PILT counties in New Hampshire. She will be drawing down the first portion of those funds.

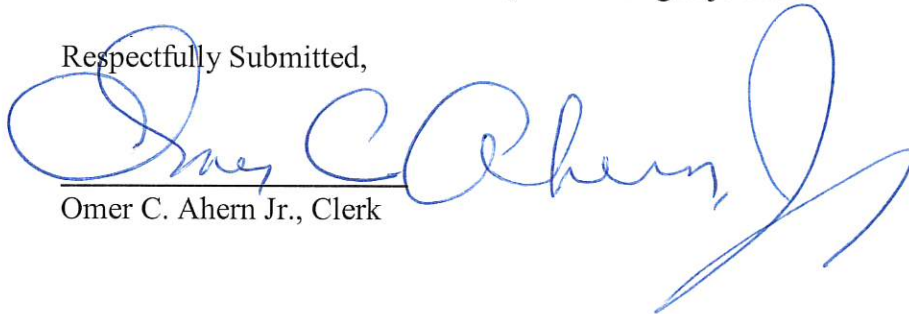
8. ARPA – CA Libby discussed the need to develop a plan for the remaining balance of the ARPA funds. She noted that she has received three (3) inquiries from outside agencies since the county approved ARPA funds for Mascoma Community Health and she told them all that the county is going to go through a process to determine what the future of the ARPA funds look like. She stated that they would need to talk with department heads to see what their needs look like in the future. CA Libby stated that she feels the ARPA requests in any given round of funding need to be limited to two (2) per department going forward. Commissioner Piper stated that it is important to talk to the department heads in order to have a plan for future ARPA spending. She stated that the Board of Commissioners explained to the Executive Committee that the county has funded employee retention, PPE, and feasibility studies for infrastructure projects. These were priorities and now the requests have become for smaller items, such as furniture. The Executive Committee has asked for a wholistic plan going forward.

**Commissioner Issues:**

1. Commissioner Piper attended the NHAC Conference October 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>. She stated that Merrimack County did a very nice job. There were very productive sessions, and she would report on them in the future.

10:30 AM with no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Omer C. Ahern Jr.", is written over the printed name.

Omer C. Ahern Jr., Clerk