

## Sullivan County NH

**Type of meeting:** Board of Commissioners Regular Business Meeting  
Minutes

**Date/Time:** Tuesday – June 20, 2006, 1:30 PM

**Place:** Unity County Complex, Sullivan County Health Care Facility, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Activities Room

**Attendees:** Commissioners Donald S. Clarke – *Chair*, Ben Nelson – *Vice Chair* and Ethel Jarvis – *Clerk*; Ed Gil de Rubio – *County Manager*; Courtney Marshall – *Health Care Facility*; Patti Koscielniak – *External Care Coordinator*; Patti Henderson – *Health Care Staff Coordinator*; Heidi Smith – *Director of Nursing*; Sheriff Michael Prozzo; Peter Farrand – *Human Resource Director*; and Sharon Johnson-Callum (minute taker).

**Other attendees:** Sofia – Valley News staff reporter and State/County Representative Larry Converse

**1:34** Commissioner Clarke called the meeting to order. Sheriff Prozzo led all in the *Pledge of Allegiance*.

### AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 MEETING MINUTES

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.A. JUNE 1<sup>ST</sup> FY 07 PROPOSED BUDGET HEARING MEETING MINUTES

**1:35** A motion was made, by Commissioner Jarvis, to approve the June 1, 2006 FY '07 proposed budget hearing meeting minutes. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion or changes. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.B. JUNE 6<sup>TH</sup> PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

**1:35** A motion was made, by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the June 6, 2006 public meeting minutes. Commissioner Jarvis seconded the motion. There was no discussion or changes. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 1.C. JUNE 14 SPECIAL PRESENTATION AND OTHER COUNTY BUSINESS

**1:36** A motion was made, by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the June 14<sup>th</sup> Special Presentation & Other County Business meeting minutes. Commissioner Jarvis seconded the motion. There was no discussion or changes. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 2. SHERIFF'S REPORT**

Sheriff Prozzo reminded them of the NH Fish & Game grant he discussed at the previous meeting, which would help other law enforcement monitor trails; and his previous comment about attaining a grant for an ATV. He applied for a grant for an ATV, but because there are only two grants awarded in this area, and the towns of Newport and Washington applied, also, the County would be taking away from one of them. His position is not to take away from local enforcement but to supplement through help. As he anticipates a surplus in his department of over \$25,000, he would like to decline the second grant if awarded to their office, and use a portion of the surplus to pay for an ATV, trailer, ramps and appropriate clothing for the two officers using it. He has received recommendations from Claremont Chief of Policy regarding the type of ATV appropriate, which would be a 2007 400 cc ATV with a three-year warranty. The cost would be approximately \$7,770. The advantage would be that they did not have to give back the ATV, unlike the grant. This would allow them also to use the ATV for search and rescues. He has confirmed with Greg Chanis that they have storage for this in winters at the Unity Complex, with summers to be at whoever is doing the trail patrols.

**1:46 A motion was made, by Commissioner Nelson, to authorize Sheriff Prozzo to spend the \$7,770 from the Sheriff's Office budget to purchase the ATV and related equipment. Commissioner Jarvis seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.**

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 3. HEALTH CARE REPORT**

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 3.A. PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS PLANNING UPDATE**

Mr. Gil de Rubio noted the Commissioners had in their binder a list of towns interested in participating in the County's pandemic preparedness planning meeting. List showed: Acworth, Charlestown, Claremont, Croydon, Lempster, Newport, Springfield, Sunapee, New London, Sutton, Wilmot and the schools districts SAU 6 & 43. *Patti Koscielniak left the meeting to copy the list and brought back and distributed.* Tentative dates for the regional meeting are set for July 12th or July 13<sup>th</sup> and would include County officials, department heads, elected officials. Mr. Gil de Rubio noted the list just illustrated towns who expressed an interest and who returned MOU's, and was not the full invitation list.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 3.B. CENSUS**

Mr. Marshall noted the Commissioners should have copies of the most current census, which totaled 148: 112 Medicaid, 21 Private and 15 Medicare. They have one admission coming in tomorrow.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 3.C. STAFFING**

Heidi Smith confirmed they have two nursing positions to fill and are doing very well

SIDE NOTE – Mr. Marshall and Heidi Smith spoke briefly of a June 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting they attended with their medical practice group at Valley Regional Hospital; they'd like to recruit physicians that refer their patients to Dr. Schell. Patti Koscielniak spoke regarding the overall physician's perceptions of the four and ½ miles to the Health Care facility being "so far out". Heidi noted during the meeting, Dr. Schell spoke highly of the Health Care facility. Ms. Koscielniak spoke again about how the hospital is losing physicians at the hospital, and due to this the remaining physician have to work hard covering on call and they see it as one other thing they have to take on and are reluctant to do so. Mr. Marshall discussed their plan to meet with administration at Valley Regional in order to review their progress with recruiting. Mr. Gil de Rubio requested "recruitment" to be placed on the next agenda.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3.C. ABATEMENT OF UNCOLLECTIBLE ACCOUNTS.

Mr. Gil de Rubio reminded the Board of their request to make sure abatement of uncollectible funds was on the agenda for the last meeting of the fiscal year. Mr. Marshall noted the uncollectible accounts go back as far as 1990 for Medicaid and private accounts; and for Medicare as far back as four years. Mr. Marshall indicated it appears as though nothing was billed to Medicaid. The dollar amount was \$481,366.15. He noted all accounts listed were two or more years old and on the old system prior to that. Mr. Gil de Rubio indicated Genesis has become heavily involved in the Health Care Business Office as the auditors had mentioned this issue in last year's County audit. Commissioner Clarke asked if the auditors have reviewed their process? Mr. Marshall noted it was a suggestion from last years audit that the old accounts be written off. Mr. Gil de Rubio confirmed this was part of the audit. Commissioner Clarke firmly requested, if they approve the write it off, the Health Care Facility should continue to try and collect on the accounts, pointing out, even if written off, if they receive money at a later date, the write off can be reversed. It was noted they could submit as far back as 18 months for Medicare. Mr. Marshall confirmed \$175,181.02 from the amount was from Medicaid and private pay combined, \$306,000 was Medicare between 2002 and to the date they began the Medicare billing. Mr. Marshall confirmed collections in the last 12 months improved dramatically and noted Genesis consultants were in the business office three days last week and two days this week. He noted the Business Office Manager, Julie Woodman, is learning in the process and is moving ahead. He's quite confident the 18 month due items will be collected quickly. Commissioner Clarke noted his long time concerns with the abatement account and feels his concerns were well founded. Mr. Marshall noted they were now on top of the Medicare and billing process. He confirmed, per the Business Office Manager, the amount presented today has never been written off. Commissioner Jarvis would like the auditors to double-check this. Mr. Marshall noted with Medicare billing, if you have procedure - in a policy form - in place for collections, you can place it on the cost report and they will pay back; unfortunately, that policy was never in place when those accounts were due, like they now have in place. Mr. Gil de Rubio noted the auditors would also review these items when they performed their audit, and would notice if any duplication of write offs were done.

**2:11 A motion was made, by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the write off Courtney Marshall discussed [of \$481,366.15], pending auditors review and approval. Commissioner Jarvis seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.**

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 HUMAN RESOURCES -- ARTICLE XIII WORKMANS COMPENSATION**

Mr. Farrand noted a copy of the Workman's Compensation Article XIII was provided to the Board. Originally, the article had four parts, which remain exactly the same, and the last four were added. Mr. Farrand read through the following four added:

- *"While on light duty the employee will provide the employer with detailed doctors reports specifying the nature of the injury or illness, the dates the employee will be absent due to the injury and specific limitations or work restrictions. (75 WCA-1) form must be used".*
- *"While on light duty the employee will provide the employer with doctor's notes for all subsequent appointments noting any changes in condition or work restrictions".*
- *"The employee must progress towards a successful recovery from the injury within a twelve (12) week period. Light duty will not be provided after twelve (12) weeks unless there is demonstrated and predictable progression to full recovery. Employees not progressing in recovery after twelve (12) week period will not be permitted to work until such time as they are able to perform all duties of the position".*
- *"Light duty programs will consist of duties assigned by department heads in conjunction with the Human Resource Dept. during the employees regularly scheduled shift when these alternatives are available. The County reserves the right to assign employees on different shifts and different locations to accommodate employee's physical restrictions".*

Mr. Gil de Rubio pointed out this was similar to Merrimack county's. General discussion commenced about light duty and Workmen's Compensation.

**2:20 A motion was made, by Commissioner Nelson, to authorize the Chair to sign the workmen's compensation article, to be effective July 1, 2006. Mr. Nelson noted he amended his motion to include signatures from Clerk and Vice Chair. Commissioner Jarvis seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.**

It was agreed they would do a six-month update at the Unity Complex to show changes in the number of incidents. Mr. Gil de Rubio requested Johnson-Callum to place this on the agenda.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT**

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 5.A. BOILER UPDATE AND READINGS**

Mr. Gil de Rubio reviewed the Newport boiler spreadsheet with the Board. He noted readings had been kept since 1991, up to current date. He discussed the comparison between years, how since improvements were done, usage has dropped. He noted Economy has indicated they might be able to cut this last County cost of \$8,569 by a

third. Mr. Gil de Rubio wanted to report on this to show the savings and progress they have made.

SIDE NOTE – Health Care facility heat conversion to begin within a month.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5.B. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR PERSONNEL ISSUE

Mr. Gil de Rubio requested an executive session at the end of the meeting to discuss a personnel issue.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5.C. HEALTH TRUST UPDATE

This is a one year ratified contract that affects the entire county including: appointed officials, elected officials, bargaining and non-bargaining. Mr. Gil de Rubio briefly discussed the “kick off” meeting he attended with Mr. Farrand and Sam Fletcher with Health Trust representatives; they will come up with a very comprehensive plan and have a banking program.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 COMMISSIONERS REPORT

Commissioner Nelson thanked the delegation for all their time on the budget and the six and half hours they spent during the Convention. He noted the positive part on a 27 million budget was that they only disagreed on one issue. He applauded their spirit of compromise. He noted he'd like to direct the County Manager and staff to look in the budget for the \$88,000 the Delegation cut to honor the contract with Genesis through the year. He continued, indicating he felt all staff and vendors should know the Board honors contracts they make and do not go by whims. He'd like to proceed on that route to honor the contact through the end of year, and request they look at where we go from there.

Mr. Gil de Rubio recommended they sit down with Ray Thivierge and Courtney Marshall within the next two weeks to review the whole situation. Commissioner Clarke indicated he would very much appreciate that, also, and requested it to be set before their next Board meeting.

**2:37 A motion was made, by Commissioner Nelson, to direct the staff to find \$88,000. Commissioner Clarke seconded the motion. Discussion – It was noted the public and delegation is not fully aware of all that Genesis is doing on a day-to-day basis. Commissioner Clarke pointed out they heard today from Mr. Marshall regarding the abatements of accounts, just one of the issues Genesis is helping on. A voice vote was taken. Commissioner Nelson and Clarke voted in favor. Commissioner Jarvis voted against. The motion carried 2-1.**

SIDE NOTE - Mr. Gil de Rubio noted the FY07 budget passed yesterday and wanted to publicly thank all County Department Heads, Elected Officials and staff; he thanked Mr. Marshall, as well as corporate Genesis and all Genesis employees that the County officials does not see but takes a personal interest in Sullivan County and are happy with

their successes and hurts when we are not successful. He thanked the Board of Commissioners and extended a special thanks to Brenda Ferland, EFC Chair, noting she's had a very difficult year, has put in a lot of hard work and dedication, and with issues she deals with and make up of the delegation he wanted to "tip his hat" to her to hold it all together. Commissioner Clarke concurred they need to make a better effort of publicly showing the different things Genesis does behind the scenes to help out.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 COMMISSIONERS REPORT**

Commissioner Nelson thanked Ron McPhall and Cora for the work they did on the presentation for the Rehab Open House and Convention. He noted the Health Care meals in the staff dining room and resident's dining room have worked out well.

Mr. Gil de Rubio thanked the Health Care "apex of administration" Courtney Marshall, Patti Koscielniak and Heidi Smith for a great job.

Commissioner Jarvis had nothing to report.

Commissioner Clarke noted he covered everything.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

Q. Rep. Converse asked for a percentage to the people affected by the newly adopted Workmen's Compensation article?

Commissioner Clarke noted they requested a six-month update to review that data. Mr. Gil de Rubio reminded Mr. Converse he was provided a report of the Workmen's Compensation usage when they began the budget reviews with the EFC. It was noted workman's compensation increased by approximately 8-10% due to situations like this over the past few years. Commissioner Nelson spoke about how light duty also affects the performance of other employees. Representative Converse noted he was in favor of the Commissioners approach.

SIDE NOTE - Commissioner Jarvis and Clarke are unable to attend the DOC tour and requested a reschedule of tour in July. Mr. Gil de Rubio and Commissioner Nelson will visit the facility today.

SIDE NOTE - Mr. Gil de Rubio spoke to the Board regarding the Chair position at the Sullivan County Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee. This issue will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

**2:59 A motion was made, by Commissioner Nelson, to go in to Executive Session, in the Business Conference room, to discuss a personnel issue [per RSA 91-A.3.II.c]. Commissioner Jarvis seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A roll call vote was taken. The motion carried with all in favor.**

**3:20 A motion was made, by Commissioner Nelson, to come out of non public. Commissioner Jarvis seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried unanimously.**

There was no formal action taken. Mr. Gil de Rubio will report back to the Board with options.

**3:23 A motion was made, by Commissioner Nelson, to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Jarvis seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.**

*Respectfully submitted,*



*Ethel Jarvis, Clerk  
Board of Commissioners*

*EJ/s.j-c.*