

Sullivan County NH

Type of meeting: Board of Commissioners

DOC Awards and Regular Business Meeting

Date / Time: October 18, 2005

1 PM Awards Presentation. 1:30 PM Regular Meeting

Place: Unity County Complex, Nursing Home, 1st Floor Recreation Room

ATTENDEES: Commissioners Donald S. Clarke, *Chair*, Ben C. Nelson, *Vice Chair* and Ethel Jarvis, *Clerk*; Ed Gil de Rubio, County Manager; Courtney Marshall, *Nursing Home Administrator*; Scott Hagar, *DOC Superintendent*; Sgt. Douglas Roberts; Peter Farrand, *Human Resource Director*; Sam Fletcher, *Human Resource Assistant*; Lori Blake, *DOC Secretary*; DOC Correctional Officers: Matthew Lockhart, Christina Granger, Patrick Connors and family members of the award recipients. Patti Koscielniak, *Nursing Home External Care Coordinator*; June Brunelle, *SCNH Nursing Home Clinical Reimbursement/Nurse Supervisor*

OTHER ATTENDEES: Rebecca Miller, *Eagle Times staff reporter*, State/County Delegates Larry Converse and Charlotte Houde-Quimby (arrived later).

Superintendent Hagar presented Service award pins, promotional stripes and/or certificates to the following Department of Corrections employees:

Promotion to Officer First Class – Matthew Lockhart

Promotion to Officer First Class – Christina Granger

Ten-Year Service Award – Mickey Michael (not present)

Five-Year Service Awards – Patrick Connors and Christina Granger

Commissioner Clarke and Ed Gil de Rubio, County Manager, also spoke briefly, commending each employee. The meeting was recessed for award recipients to have photo's taken and for family members to visit with County employees and officials, and to partake of hors d'oeuvres and beverages provided by the Food Service Department.

1:29 Commissioner Clarke resumed the meeting.

NOT ON AGENDA DOC REPORT

Superintendent Hagar provided a verbal and written report to the Commissioners.

POPULATION

The DOC population is at 102: 92 at the main facility and 10 at the THU. 16 transfers to other jails. 6 others released on programs or furloughs. Took in two (2) Cheshire inmates due to safety reasons; those two were included in pretrial count of 57.

NIC CONFERENCE

Mr. Hagar, Ed Gil de Rubio the County Manager, Greg Chanis the Facilities Director, and Commissioner Ben Nelson leave Sunday to attend the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) Conference in Colorado. The conference reviews building/planning of new correctional

institutions and goes over retaining consults to complete needs assessments and design concepts. The only County cost to attend the conference is travel from airport to conference.

STAFF

They are working thin, but have decreased the vacant positions from four to three. There is one Officer on FMLA, one on maternity leave and one at the academy. Officers are working double shifts and committed to getting through this period.

CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Ken Swain and Patrick O'Connor's recently completed advance driver training, a program offered to emergency management personnel.

Commissioner Nelson asked about transfer protocol "Do we transfer out more than there is transferred in?" Hagar agreed, typically, they do not have room to take on other inmates; however, they needed to repay debts to Grafton and Cheshire. It was asked how much the facility could hold. Hagar noted the facility was designed in 1978 and geared towards approximately 42-44; throughout the years it has been double and triple bunked. He noted they only have program / staff areas designed for 44 inmates, though they have no area to segregate, they are constantly juggling liabilities.

1:36 Rep. Larry Converse and Charlotte Houde-Quimby arrived.

The County Manager noted there was \$125,000 the delegation approved which was allotted for planning; but Commissioner Clarke noted there were no specific plans on the table.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1 MEETING MINUTES

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.A. OCT 11, 2005 PUBLIC

Johnson-Callum confirmed she handed out, today, the Audit Exit Interview draft notes, but had not completed the typed draft of the public meeting portion. Commissioners agreed to table those meeting minutes.

AGENDA ITEM ON. 1.B. JULY 19, 2005 3:52 PERSONNEL ISSUE

1:39 A motion was made by Commissioner Nelson to keep the July 19, 2005 3:52 Personnel Issue meeting minutes sealed and to place them in the personnel file. Commissioner Jarvis seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.B. JULY 19, 2004 3:10 CONTRACT ISSUE

1:40 A motion was made by Commissioner Jarvis to unseal the July 19, 2005 3:10 Contract Issue meeting minutes. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously

AGENDA IMTE NO. 1.C. AUG 2, 2005 2:26 PERSONNEL ISSUE

The County Manager recommended that the minutes remain sealed and place in the personnel file. General discussion commenced. The County Manager noted he withdrew his recommendation.

1:42 A motion was made by Commissioner Jarvis to unseal the August 2, 2005 2:26 Personnel Issue meeting minutes. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.D. AUG 2, 2005 3:09 LITIGATION MEETING MINUTES

1:43 A motion was made by Commission Jarvis to unseal the Aug 2, 2005 3:09 Litigation meeting minutes. Comm. Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM ON. 1.E. AUG 16, 2005 2:49 LITIGATION ISSUE

The County Manager recommended the minutes permanently be sealed as it regards a possible litigation and personnel issue and they have not received a signoff yet.

1:45 A motion was made by Commissioner Jarvis to keep the Aug 16, 2005 2:49 Litigation issue meeting minutes sealed, for the time being. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1.F. SEP 20, 2005 LITIGATION ISSUE

1:46 A motion was made by Commissioner Jarvis to unseal the Sep 20, 2005 1:46 potential litigation issue meeting minutes. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3 HUMAN RESOURCE REPORT

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3.A. ARTICLE XXX SMOKING POLICY – UPDATE

Human Resource Director, Peter Farrand, recapped the Article XXX Smoking Policy presented at a previous meeting. He noted Valley Region would be a smoke free campus as of Jan 1st. He had not gathered any additional information on competing nursing homes. The County Manager discussed a proposed structure that would basically be a small confined space, away from building but close enough in case an emergency arises, about 10 X 6 to 10 X 12, and would cost between \$12,000 - \$15,000, it would be vented with exhaust fans and include lights. The County Manager noted Greg Chanis was working up cost details. Commissioner Clarke requested it to include speakers for employees to hear public announcements / emergency calls made from within the Nursing Home. The County Manager confirmed it could. Commissioner Jarvis noted she would not sign a smoking policy, as she does not want to see taxpayer money spent on smoking building in health institution. Mr. Farrand discussed why another facility failed to enforce a smoking policy. He also reiterated, from a previous meeting, the 25-foot regulation that the smoking area was required to be away from a public facility window or door. Commissioner Clarke requested Mr. Marshall's impression on the impact to employee recruitment if Sullivan took leadership and changed to a non-smoking campus and go with Valley Regional date. Courtney's opinion is to wait and see - he spoke with Clair Bowen of Valley Regional who noted their smoke policy would be strict. The County Manager noted the current smoking building for residents is in violation of the 25 feet rule. Comm. Clarke requested input from Ms. Koscielniak. Ms. Koscielniak asked for clarification on the smoking

policy if it pertained to residents or employees. It was noted it pertained to employees. Koscielniak explained Valley Regional could easily go to a non-smoking campus, as they are a temporary stay place. Koscielniak feels there are more smoke free campuses evolving. Commissioner Nelson indicated his concern is that the County pays the health care for their employees and feels they should not spend a lot for smoking employees that is not paid towards non smokers. Comm. Nelson broached the idea of just allowing employees to use their cars to smoke in. The County Manager did not want see the County encourage employees to use their cars vs. a smoking hut, as emergency calls would not be heard in vehicles.

2:05 A motion was made by Commissioner Nelson to extend the smoking moratorium three more months and, as of January 1st, go to a non smoking facility. Commissioner Jarvis seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

The County Manager thanked the Board of Commissioners for the in depth thought and time spent on the difficult decision. The County Manager will distribute a memo tomorrow notifying all employees of the decision to make the County non-smoking campus as of Jan 1, 2006. Mr. Farrand noted he would retype the written policy by the next commissioners meeting for the board to sign. Sam Fletcher, Human Resource Assistant discussed the program currently in place at Wal-Mart for employees wanting to use the patch to stop smoking. The Commissioners concurred they want the program to continue.

AGENDA 3.B. ARTICLE XXXII EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES (NEPOTISM)

Mr. Farrand read through Article XXXII Employment of Relatives (nepotism) policy. He noted the County does not want one in a supervisory role, supervising a relative. He noted this would compromise county standards and/or conflict of interest; it would look bad to taxpayers and the general public, and would look demoralizing to employees. If an issue comes up that two related employees are at the same level and one is up for promotion, the employees would have to be separated to different areas.

2:13 A motion was made by Commissioner Nelson approving Article XXXII Employee of Relatives (Nepotism). Commissioner Jarvis seconded the motion. Discussion: it was noted this would be effective Nov 1, 2005. A voice vote was taken. The motion carried, unanimously.

The Board signed and dated the new article. (See copy of article on following page)

Article XXXII Employment of Relatives (nepotism)

Sullivan County and its employees are committed to the principle of objective, fair and equitable treatment of all employees. Accordingly, it is crucial that County activities be conducted in an atmosphere that is free of actual or apparent conflicts of interest that compromise this principle. For the purpose of protecting both the integrity and objectivity of its employees Sullivan County has adopted the following policy concerning nepotism.

No person shall be employed or appointed to any position by Sullivan County or transferred to a department under the supervision, either directly or indirectly, of a relative or member of their household who has or may have a direct effect on the individual's progress, performance or welfare. Relatives include parents and children, husband, wife, brother, sister, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, step relatives in the same relationship, grandparents, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, cousin, and domestic partners.

David Clark
Chairperson

Oct. 18, 2005
Date

Bernie Nelson
Commissioner

Nov 1, 2005
Effective Date

Ethel Jarvis
Commissioner

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4 NURSING HOME REPORT

The Nursing Home Administrator, Courtney Marshall, discussed information reflected on the July, Aug and Sep 2005 "Daily Census Reconciliation" spreadsheets (copy on file at Commissioners Office in meeting minutes binder) disbursed at meeting.

Mr. Marshall discussed the "Month-end Aged Analysis" for the month of Sep 2005 (copy on file at Commissioners Office in meeting minutes binder) disbursed at meeting.

Mr. Marshall discussed the "September 2005 Billing" report (copy on file at Commissioners Office in meeting minutes binder) and noted there were still under budgeted revenue. He added, at 138 beds, they still have the capacity to add 18 more residents, which would close the revenue gap. Commissioner Clarke thanked Ms. Koscielniak for her work at decreasing the empty beds, noting empty beds are costly.

Comm. Clarke asked as part of state level discussions, how much of the gap; if you took medicaid bed days and multiplied by the difference between the rate we should be getting and the rate we receive, you come up with a number; does that revenue from MQUP cover the shortfall? Mr. Marshall noted he would gather that information.

NAME CHANGE ISSUE

Mr. Marshall noted there is still a perception in the community that Sullivan County does not have rehabilitation therapy services. He noted he held a meeting recently with Claire Bowen of Valley Regional Hospital and found her surprised the rehab department was offered at Sullivan County. Ms. Koscielniak noted, in talking with discharge planners, they constantly offer places available. However, when they mention Sullivan County Nursing Home, the person immediately says no "that's where you stay forever!". She noted the current name is a definite turn off. She added, that part of her job is to identify threats to the business, even adding "and rehab" or "Sullivan County Nursing Care" would be positive. Ms. Koscielniak sees no problem with keeping the words "Sullivan County". Commissioner Clarke concurred they need to have a facility name that describes their services and strike a balance. Koscielniak noted "Sullivan County Nursing Care and Rehab" would be her suggestion. Commissioner Clarke noted it would be inappropriate to decide quickly and would want to publicly announce discussions about the name and take comments and have suggested names submitted through Mr. Marshall. The County Manager recommended holding a public hearing at the next Unity meeting. The County Manager will send invitations to delegates. Rep. Houde-Quimby suggested the issue be placed on the Delegation agenda for their October 31st meeting.

DISASTER PLANS

The County Manager noted, because of the recent national and state emergencies that have occurred, they have asked themselves "Where do our residents go if our building becomes uninhabitable?" Mr. Marshall noted when Maple Hill assisted care caught fire, some residents were brought in to the main facility and some were transferred to local hospitals. He noted the Nursing Home would be holding a regular safety meeting Thursday and would address this issue during the meeting. Commissioner Clarke suggested they coordinate plans with local nursing homes to create a regional procedure. The County Manager noted the plan would need to include regional transportation (ambulance, etc) agencies. The County Manager will put something together with public health administrators and safety personnel, of the county, to come up with a

plan.

STAFFING

Mr. Marshal noted the Director of Nursing works constantly on staffing issues with the Unit Managers. He noted they recently hired a number from local facilities. He noted Patti Henderson was starting up an LNA class. They are sending four employees to an LMNA class at Unicare. Ads are running for support service positions. The County Manager noted the Nursing Home has turned the corner in staffing, showing they have a viable product. He commended Mr. Marshall and Mr. Farrand for their recruitment of very good people.

AUDIT MANAGEMENT LETTER FOLLOW UP

The County Manager noted, as a follow up to the County auditors exit interview, the County Manager will meet with Dodi Violette-Commissioners Office Account Clerk I, Julie Woodman-Nursing Home Business Office Manager and Mr. Marshall to review the aging account procedures and issues discussed during the management letter at exit interview.

Charlotte Houde-Quimby inquired about categories listed in the "Daily Census Reconciliation" reports, pertaining to RUG levels of reimbursement. Mr. Marshall noted they are rehab categories; rehab is spending more time, but not necessarily with nursing care. It was noted that in order to do "pick" lines, an RN must be in house for 24/7. June Brunelle discussed the RUGS groups in rehab areas and noted rehab services bring in more revenue. RUG categories determine the funds coming in. It was noted the highest rate is around \$450 per day. Ms. Koscielniak indicated they are taking in more complex nursing cases, but before taking on a referral the case is discussed with the nursing care to make sure they can accommodate the level the person is at.

Commissioner Nelson requested the County Manager review the Sep 2005 billing spreadsheet to verify the amounts shown in the budgeted column compared to the actual approved budget.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5 COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

FACILITIES UPDATE

The County Manager noted an agreement was entered in to through Ted Walski, Fish and Game, to proceed with the brush hogging. Commissioner Clarke suggested they do reconnaissance to make sure fields can be accessed, as they were pretty wet.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The County Manager discussed briefly the advisory committee he was invited to sit on for Primex. The committee is composed of various county elected/appointed officials, and provides suggestions to the Primex Board, with some of the new ideas pertaining to training Primex offers to municipalities.

NIC CONFERENCE

The County Manager noted he would be attending the NIC conference next week, and would return to reorganize and implement the Sullivan County Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct 31st, Monday – State/County Delegation meeting.

The County Manager will be working with Dodi and Laurie Geer preparing department head budget forms for the FY 07 budget season.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6 COMMISSIONERS REPORT

STATE COUNTY FINANCE COMMISSION DISCUSSIONS

Commissioner Clarke provided a verbal update. He noted their committee was looking at the business relationship between the counties and state. Seven counties have partnerships with the state. King submitted HB 638, where we would reexamine those partnerships, going back to 5 areas, pre sunset bill. They met yesterday to make recommendation to King, but failed to do this, instead the group decided to step back, before looking at spreadsheet options, and come up with a management model. Clarke asked the County Manager and Nursing Home Administrator to review this after the County Manager returns from the NIC conference and to discuss the impact on the County, how it would relate - specifics on intake and impact on financial components. Commissioner Clarke read through the proposed bill wording. Complete long term care package, case management, and conceptional outlook. Their goal is to bring changes to make business more efficient, provide better care and eliminate possible contentions between state and county in future. Rep. Houde-Quimby asked if it was the States goal to streamline DHHS and that doing that will cost shift to counties? Commissioner Clarke indicated yes and added to review how the County can do it better. Looking at the demographics of the aging population, what can county take on? Where is cost of elderly going, in comparison to youth problems? Commissioner Clarke noted he previously thought bills came to the County for Ms. Curtis to check – to confirm accuracy; but had since heard differently and will follow up with Ms. Curtis later.

Commissioner Nelson noted he spoke with a Merrimack representative to compare Nursing Home Medicaid census, and found Merrimack low in medicaid census also.

Commissioner Jarvis had nothing to comment on during this section.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Rep. Larry Converse asked when the smoking policy takes affect, what would happen with the residents who smoke. It was noted, that, historically, employees who smoke have volunteered to escort them to the smoking hut for residents. Mr. Marshall noted they would cross that bridge when they get there. June Brunelle noted it is a minor issue and not enough to be worried about. She noted the 3-11 shift has no staff that smoke, so would be more of a concern then. County Manager noted the resident needs would be met.

3:14 The Commissioner Chair adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ethel Jarvis". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

*Ethel Jarvis, Clerk
Board of Commissioners*

EJ/s.j-c.