

County of Carroll
Commissioner's Meeting
Carroll County Administration Building
July 29, 2020

Meeting convened: 9:00 a.m.
Members Present: Amanda Bevard (Chair), Terry McCarthy (Vice-Chair), David Babson (Clerk)
Others Present: Treasurer Joe Costello, HR Director Christopher Heroux, DPW Director Will DeWitte.
Public Present: Rep. Ed Comeau (www.governmentoversite.com), Clearview TV (via Zoom), Rep. Edie DesMarais (via Zoom), Daymond Steer (Conway Daily Sun via Zoom), Terry Mednick (Hale's Location), John Ostiguy
Recording Clerk: Mellisa Seamans

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

All votes during this meeting were taken via roll call. There were instructions posted on the administration building door for anyone wishing to enter for the meeting. The instructions to join the meeting remotely via Zoom were posted with the agenda on the County website and at the administration building entrances.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: "Approve the minutes of July 22, 2020 with corrections" by Comm'r McCarthy, 2nd Comm'r Babson. Passed 3-0.

Comm'r Babson added that Hale's Location obtained its DUNS number and corrected 199 to "1999".

Comm'r Babson called the former county administrator who confirmed that County billing Hale's Location \$9,000 for administrative services annually began in 2015.

Media Questions

Rep. Comeau submitted an addendum to the July 27 right-to-know request he submitted.

Public Comment

None

Manifest

Chmn. Bevard announced the manifest of week ending July 24 is \$38,639.65.

Water System Request

Mr. Ostiguy has purchased the old train station at 40 Old Route 28 and asked permission to connect to the County water system. Dir. DeWitte said the installation costs are the responsibility of the property owner. The County provides the curb stop, meter, metering horn and related equipment at no cost.

Dir. DeWitte said the water system was upgraded in 2001. It was discovered last year that the waterline along Old Route 28 is a four-inch PVC pipe. Discussion ensued about capacity of the water system. Dir. DeWitte urged caution with adding new residential customers. A drought event or breakdown could cause stress to the system. He does not have concerns with the minimal usage of Mr. Ostiguy's request.

MOTION: "Grant John Ostiguy's request to connect to the Carroll County water system" by Comm'r Babson, 2nd Comm'r McCarthy. Passed 3-0

Dir. DeWitte was asked to review the water system policies and bring recommendations to a future meeting.

Department Head Report – DPW Director Will DeWitte

Dir. DeWitte presented a written report ahead of the meeting (Attached). Selling the round bales has gone much better than he expected.

Comm'r Babson reminded the board that a logger who was granted permission to cross County property to access a woodlot promised to provide the County with two truckloads of wood. The logger provided one load but not the second. Coord. Seamans will gather background information and contact UNH Forester Wendy Scribner for the Aug. 5 agenda.

Dir. DeWitte reported the mulch barn is in extremely poor shape and is not worth investing in repairs. It is in use for storage of round hay bales.

Comm'r McCarthy will contact Dale Drew (County Lands Committee Chair) and request an update on the blueberry field.

Comm'r Babson asked the status of the repair and restitution for a fire hydrant in Courthouse Square that was hit by a vehicle. Dir. DeWitte said the hydrant has been repaired and he provided the bills to Ossipee Police Department. The driver who hit the hydrant has gone to court and is paying restitution. For an exact accounting, he suggested the commissioners talk to the finance director.

Treasurer Report – Joe Costello

As a point of information, Treas. Costello noted the County is borrowing against the tax anticipation note to pay the nursing home bond payment.

Treas. Costello asked the board to enforce their June 3 vote and update his key card access to open the finance office doors. His key only unlocks three of the five doors the board voted to authorize. Comm'r McCarthy will speak to the director of maintenance about this.

Hale's Location

Treas. Costello presented an email from Hale's Location Owner's Association President Trevor Sullivan that the Association agrees with the \$48,000 settlement of payment in lieu of taxes for forest land.

Acting in their capacity as Hale's Location selectmen, the board voted as follows:

MOTION: "To accept the generous offer from Carroll County Board of Commissioners of \$48,000 payable to the unincorporated place of Hale's Location to cover through 2019 as settlement payment of US Department of Interior PILOT funds paid previously to Carroll County" by Comm'r Babson, 2nd Comm'r McCarthy. Passed 2-1 with Chmn. Bevard opposed.

Treas. Costello provided a copy of Coos County commissioners' meeting minutes and the 2004 Carroll County Annual Report excerpt to verify that the management of Hale's Location was transferred back to Carroll County on January 1, 2004. Comm'r McCarthy will speak to the finance director about issuing a check to Hale's Location next week.

NH Department of Labor Inspection

Dir. Heroux provided the board with a request for records received from an inspector at NH Department of Labor. Items requested include copies of union contracts, personnel policies, and termination paperwork for employees who left County employ from January 1, 2020 to date.

Executive Coordinator Report – Mellisa Seamans

Competitive Bidding Policy

MOTION: “To adopt the Competitive Bidding Policy” by Comm’r Babson, 2nd Chmn. Bevard. Passed 3-0

This policy replaces the “Carroll County Bid/RFP Procedure” (revised 2017).

Employment Opportunities

The Jail Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer positions are posted in-house and advertised online.

Commissioners’ Comments and Reports

As requested by the Delegation, Comm’r McCarthy contacted Scott Eagen at Plodzick and Sanderson to see if he is available to work with County to get the 2019 audit complete. She is awaiting a call back.

Comm’r Babson suggested putting the Avenu finance software upgrade on hold until the 2019 audit is complete. He also suggested “dumping” the payroll vendor Checkmate. Chmn. Bevard agreed. The finance director will be directed to put all efforts towards providing the 2019 information as requested by the auditors.

Rep. DesMarais joined the meeting via Zoom. She explained she was asked by the Delegation to contact the auditors. She did and was told the 2019 financial audit has not begun because Carroll County has not provided the necessary materials to them. Rep. DesMarais said she talked to the finance director who has had difficulty closing the books for the year. This concern was posed to Sheryl Burke at Melanson Heath who said vouchers under \$10,000 are immaterial and should not hold up the audit. Burke said the key things they need are all cash accounts reconciled, receivables reconciled and reported into general ledger, listing of liabilities, payroll figures entered in to start the 2019 audit. She urged the commissioners to take action as soon as possible to get the audit completed.

Comm’r Babson again requested that the county attorney attend a commissioners’ meeting to discuss emails she sent to him regarding payout of accrued benefits and the interpretation of salary versus hourly.

Comm’r Babson addressed an item on the list finance timeline entered into the record at the July 27 delegation meeting. Comm’r Babson said Rep. Glenn Cordelli accused him of trying to circumvent the right-to-know law. Comm’r Babson said Rep. Cordelli misinterpreted what he said. He merely wants to commissioners to review materials prior to them being sent out in response to 91-A requests.

Comm’r McCarthy said the old server in the commissioners’ office has not been used in quite some time but is still plugged in and running. The commissioners agreed to have the IT contractor disconnect the server and remove it.

Dir. Heroux explained he is trying to set up a hiring panel and conduct interviews for jail superintendent on Aug. 6. He was asked to let the commissioners know who is on the hiring panel. Chmn. Bevard said the chief financial officer position should also have a hiring panel.

Media Questions

Mr. Steer asked for a copy of the NH DOL inspection letter mentioned previously in this meeting. Dir. Heroux clarified that the focus is particularly on fringe benefits paid out when an employee leaves the County employ.

Public Input

Mr. Mednick joined the meeting and spoke to why the spreadsheet he provided to verify the amount County owes to Hale's Location dates back to 1999 if Hale's has only been part of Carroll County since 2004. He said the acreage in the US Department of Interior Report of payments in lieu of taxes for national forests lands lists the exact acreage for Hale's from 1999 to 2018. He asked if the 1,200+ acreage of national forest land is not in Hale's Location, where might it be in Carroll County. He received no response from the Chair. Coord. Seamans noted that Hale's Location was always physically located in Carroll County, the management of it, however, was the responsibility of Coos County until January 1, 2004 when the management was turned over to Carroll County.

Non-Public Session

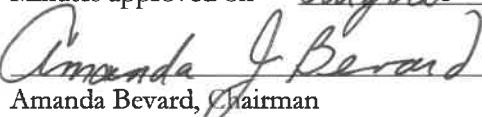
Non-public Session 1

MOTION: "To enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II(c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant" by Comm'r Babson, 2nd Chmn. Bevard. Passed on roll call vote.

Meeting reconvened and motion passed to seal the minutes.

Chmn. Bevard read a letter regarding the July 3, 2020 executive order signed by the President by which a National Garden of American Heroes to feature statues of "the greatest Americans who ever lived". A task force is looking for a location. Chmn. Bevard will respond and recommend Carroll County as a potential location.

The meeting was recessed until the call of the Chair.

Minutes approved on August 5, 2020

Amanda Bevard, Chairman

David H. Babson, Jr.
David Babson, Clerk

Terry M. Carthy
Terry McCarthy, Vice-Chairman