

Executive Council Meeting Report

Meeting of October 3, 2018

A. \$20 Million Grant for Substance Abuse Treatment

The Council voted to accept the first half of an approximately \$40 million federal grant to pay for substance abuse treatment in our state. The grant monies are to fund operations over a two year period. Future funding at this level is not guaranteed. As a result, a good deal of the state's focus is to set up a treatment infrastructure that NH currently lacks; the state having allowed much of our community mental health system to waste away. Of this year's approximately \$20 million allotment, about \$7.7 million is designed to pay seven regional hospitals to act as treatment hubs that will provide assessment, data management and clinical support to treatment providers that will act as spokes within their regions. I asked whether the contracting was in place with the hospitals and was told the contracts will be completed shortly. I am concerned because public comments by some hospitals indicate reluctance based on the proposed payments offered. (I do not know the fairness of the contracts offered.) I also am concerned that the hub and spoke model may undermine the Safe Stations programs now operating in Manchester and Nashua. About \$1 million is to defray the cost of Narcan. I expect additional information will be forthcoming from the Governor and the Department of Health and Human Services in the near future.

B. Breakfast at the Fire Academy on Smokey Bear Drive in Concord.

Councilor Wheeler hosted the breakfast meeting on October 3rd at the Fire Academy. The presentations by Academy Director Deb Prendergast and the State Police Aeronautics Unit were very informative. We also toured the Academy's training facility which apparently attracts firefighters from around the New England region.

Our Council meeting was held at the newly refurbished Council Chambers in the Statehouse.

C. Agenda Items of Interest

Business Finance Loan Guarantee

The Council approved, 4-1, Councilor Wheeler dissenting, a loan guarantee to permit the John Turner Consulting Co., Inc. of Dover to refinance its existing debt for expansion purposes.

Domestic Violence Grant Extended

The Council retroactively approved extending from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019 a statewide grant for 12 crisis centers that is administered by

the NH Coalition against Domestic Violence (“Coalition”). The cost of the amendment was approximately \$650,000. I asked the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services why the Coalition manages the sub-grants to the crisis centers instead of the Department managing the sub-grants itself. The Commissioner informed the Council that this system that relies on the Coalition to manage the overall grant has been in place for some time and he did not know its origin.

Senior Companion Services

The Council approved a one year extension of a contract with Community Action of Merrimack and Belknap Counties, Inc. of Concord to continue to provide senior companion services through June 30, 2019 at a cost of \$60,000.

Clean Diesel Program

By a vote of 3-2, Councilor Pappas and I dissenting, the Council voted to table the receipt of a federal clean diesel grant in the amount of \$106,250. The grant requires the Department of Transportation to destroy an older diesel engine in order to receive the grant and purchase a newer, cleaner engine. As a result of EPA regulations, diesel engines manufactured today are cleaner than ever before. But because diesel engines can operate for 30 years or more, millions of older, dirtier engines are still in use. Reducing exposure to diesel exhaust from these older engines is especially important for human health and the environment. Thus, EPA offers funding for projects that reduce diesel emissions from existing engines. Councilor Wheeler objected to the destruction of a “perfectly good” engine. Of course, continued use of the engine would violate the terms of the grant. For more information, go to: <https://www.epa.gov/cleandiesel/learn-about-clean-diesel>

Office of Professional Licensure and Certification Grant

The Council approved the receipt of a \$244,000 three year grant to review licensing processes in the state, but the handling of the grant raised eyebrows. Director Danles of the Office of Professional Licensure and Certification confirmed that the Office’s staff attorney had to personally drive the grant application to Washington, D.C. in order to file it on time. The Governor’s office was unaware of this action and the Council members were all very surprised by this use of resources.

An increase in wages by a state contractor

A construction project supervised by the Department of Administrative Services was tabled from the last meeting to enable the Department to inquire of the contractor, Coleman and Son, Inc. of Conway, what was the wage paid to the lowest paid worker. Previously, Coleman had reported paying less than \$10/hour. This time, Coleman reported paying \$14.00.

D. Nominations and Confirmations

The following persons were nominated:

Dental Hygienists Committee, Mary Duquette, Hopinton, NH
Director, Division of Personnel, DAS, Lorrie A. Rudis, Merrimack, NH
Justice, New Hampshire Circuit Court, James D. Gleason, Henniker, NH
Personnel Appeals Board, David M. Goldstein, Dover, NH
Recreational Therapy Governing Board, Jayme L. Severance, Manchester, NH
Volunteer New Hampshire Board of Directors, Christine B. Williams, Bedford, NH and Allison A. McLean, New London, NH
Wetlands Council, Lee E. Carbonneau, Loudon, NH

The following nominees were confirmed:

Associate Commissioner of Operations, DHHS, Lori A. Weaver, Concord, NH
Board of Architects, Sonya L. Misiaszek, Laconia, NH
Board of Licensure of Interpreters for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Rachel V. Farrell, Northwood, NH
Board of Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy, Richard T. Serino, Epping, NH
Fire Standards and Training Commission, Allan R. Clark, Sugar Hill, NH and Robert M. Buxton, Bedford, NH
Merrimack River Valley Flood Control Commission, Steven H. Slovenski, Lee, NH
New Hampshire School Building Authority, Timothy J. Corbett, Auburn, NH; Gregory G. Hill, Northfield, NH; John M. Potucek, Derry, NH
Professional Standards Director, DOC, Lynmarie C. Cusack, Webster, NH

E. Spotlight

\$15 an Hour

At my request, the state's agencies began reporting the lowest rates of compensation paid by state vendors to their employees on the contracts in question. The following contractors were approved with the pay scales noted:

No new contractors reported.

F. Next Meeting

Our next regularly scheduled Executive Council meeting will occur on October 17, 2018. The meeting will begin at 10 a.m. at Council Chambers in Concord. The agenda for the meeting will be posted by the Secretary of State on the Executive Council web page late on the preceding Friday afternoon.
<http://sos.nh.gov/GC2.aspx>

Andru Volinsky, Executive Councilor for District Two
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I will host the Council breakfast which the public may attend. It will be held at the Community Loan Fund located at 7 Wall Street, Concord, beginning at 8:00 a.m.

G. Items of Interest to District Two, by Region

Region 1-Monadnock Region

None

Region 2-Merrimack County

[#28](#) Authorized the Bureau of Construction to enter into a contract amendment with Evroks Corporation, Winnisquam, NH, for bridge preservation work on three bridges in the Towns of Andover and Danbury, by increasing the amount by \$265,000 from \$1,564,424 to \$1,829,424. Effective upon G&C approval. **100% Federal Funds. VOTE: UNANAMOUS**

[#73](#) Authorized the Division of Public Works Design and Construction to enter into a construction contract with A.W. Therrien Co. Inc., Manchester, NH, for Roof Replacement on the Veterans Cemetery Maintenance Building, Boscawen, NH, for a total price not to exceed \$113,874. (2)Further Authorized the amount of \$1,740 for payment to the Department of Administrative Services, Division of Public Works Design and Construction, Clerk of the Works for oversight and engineering services provided, bringing the total to \$115,614. Effective upon G&C approval through November 2, 2018. **100% General – Capital Funds. VOTE: UNANAMOUS**

Region 3-Strafford County

[#48](#) Authorized to enter into an agreement with the University of NH Stormwater Center, in the amount of \$75,000 to complete the *Great Bay Waterbody/ Watershed Nitrogen Nonpoint Source Study Implementation: Phase 3 University of New Hampshire BMPs to Reduce Nitrogen*. Effective upon G&C approval through December 31, 2020. **100% Federal Funds. VOTE: UNANAMOUS**

[#49](#) Authorized to enter into a **sole source** agreement with the University of NH, Sponsored Programs Administration, Durham, NH, for the Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics to conduct an analysis of the economic benefits of alternative drinking water and groundwater standards for arsenic, in the amount of \$30,000. Effective upon G&C approval through September 30, 2019. **100% Federal Funds. VOTE: UNANAMOUS**