

Executive Council Meeting Report

Meeting of February 6, 2019

A. Raises for Liquor Execs Delayed

Last week featured a bit of a showdown between the Governor and his recommendation for 5% raises for top liquor execs and Councilors Cryans, Pignatelli and me.

The other Councilors and I voted to delay the raises, at least until the fall, so that we could see progress towards implementing a new sales automation system and a start to a mail order wine sales program. I also wanted to see improvement in the State Liquor Commission's relations with labor.

Whether we like it or not, New Hampshire is heavily dependent upon retail and wholesale liquor sales to support our state budget. Approximately, 6% of the state budget results from liquor sales and net profits from liquor have been flat for a number of years. The state liquor commission has also missed projected profit margins three years in a row. The Executive Branch should hold liquor officials responsible for making good business decisions --- and the Governor should not lose his temper when we do so. The ultimate vote was Councilors Cryans, Pignatelli and I voted to table the raises until the next annual audit is completed in the fall. Councilors Gatsas and Prescott would have approved the 5% raises for each of the four liquor execs, all of whom earn in excess of \$100,000/year.

For more, click here:

<https://www.nhpr.org/post/rare-move-executive-council-denies-pay-raises-liquor-commission-management>

<http://indepthnh.org/2019/02/06/raises-for-top-liquor-brass-a-slow-pour-at-executive-council-meeting/>

https://www.unionleader.com/news/business/raise-for-six-figure-nh-liquor-commission-executives-rejected-over/article_c6b042f7-0eef-556e-85ea-c593474b5f4e.html

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B. Breakfast at the DOIT.

Councilor Prescott hosted the Council breakfast at the Department of Information Technology (DOIT). Most of the Council members knew before the meeting that DOIT employees are embedded throughout state agencies to facilitate big jobs and ongoing software and hardware upgrades. The Council received information at the breakfast that the procurement of software is both expensive and time consuming. Much effort goes into developing the standards for a large IT purchase, at times, in excess of a year. The initial acquisition and implementation phase of an IT purchase may require 3-10 times the time and expense of simply maintaining existing software. Existing software must be maintained during the implementation process. IT software is then generally thought to have a life of about ten years. New Hampshire doesn't always meet this ten year replacement guideline. The enterprise software at the Department of Revenue Administration that is now being replaced has been in place since the 1980s. There are parts of state government that still have green blinking DOS cursors.

C. Agenda Items of Interest

Foster Parent Consultant Contract Amended

The Council approved an amendment to an existing \$75,000 agreement to extend the time frame through June 30, 2019 and expand the scope of services offered by consultant Deborah Bradley to DCYF regarding foster parenting. The contract was amended to add \$14,500 to the previous price limitation. Ms. Bradley is not affiliated with Bethany Christian Services.

Manchester Airport Taxiway Work

The Council approved a grant amendment to increase the funds available for work on the taxiways at Manchester Airport from \$3.5 to \$3.6 million. 95% of the funding for the grant is from federal sources.

CDFA Grants for Laconia

The Council approved two grants totaling \$500,000 for the acquisition and development of property on Court Street in Laconia.

LPN Training

The Council approved amendment of an agreement between the Department of Business and Economic Development's (BEA) Office of Workforce Opportunity and the Community College System to increase funding for Licensed Practical Nurse training from \$3.6 million to \$3.68 million. The

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Governor made clear during the discussion that this funding is separate from the \$24 million investment in Community College capital improvements relevant to nurse training that he proposed to make during the previous fall campaign.

I also raised a concern about the ability of returning vets to sit for nurse licensing exams without taking additional substantive coursework that is duplicative of military service training opportunities. A group composed of Deputy Adjutant General Warren Perry, Office of Professional Licensure and Certification Commissioner Peter Danles and Deputy BEA Commissioner Will Arvello promised to investigate the concern and report back to the Governor and Council in the near future.

Rochester Clean Water Revolving Loan

The Council approved a \$3 million loan to the city of Rochester to finance the Colonial Pines Sewer Extension Phase 2 project.

Attempt to Revisit Expansion of Bethany Christian Services

Councilor Prescott raised the possibility of revisiting the contract with Bethany Christian Services during our breakfast meeting. The Governor declined to bring the contract forward when a majority of the Council indicated a lack of interest in revisiting the matter.

D. Nominations and Confirmations

The following nominees were confirmed:

Associate Commissioner of Population Health, DHHS, Ann H.N. Landry, New London, NH

Board of Licensing for Alcohol and Other Drug Use Professionals, Alexandra H. Hamel, Weare, NH, Kelly M. Luedtke, Raymond, NH

Board of Nursing, Wendy Stanley Jones, Greenland, NH and Ann Finn-Waddell, Concord, NH

Board of Registration of Podiatrists, Julie M. Shaheen, Stratham, NH

Director of Project Development, DOT, Peter E. Stamnas, Windham, NH

Division of Administration Director, State Liquor Commission, Rosemary Wiant, Hopkinton, NH

Medical Review Subcommittee, Colin O'Brien, Amherst, NH and Tanya Rule, Exeter, NH

Nash Stream Forest Citizens Committee, Jeffrey P. Lougee, Jackson, NH

New Hampshire Transportation Council, Rad C. Nichols, Durham, NH and Heidi J. Marshall, Hopkinton, NH

State Veterans Council, James H. Adams, Pittsfield, NH

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The following individuals were nominated:

Assessing Standards Board, Paul R. Grenier, Berlin, NH
Assistant Commissioner Department of Environmental Services, Clark Freise, Litchfield, NH
Board of Veterinary Medicine, Winifred Grogman, Dunbarton, NH
Board of Managers of the New Hampshire Veterans Home, Susan A. Cuddy, Amherst, NH and Carol A. Maynard, Epping, NH
Commissioner, Department of Employment Security, George N. Copadis, Manchester, NH
Enhanced 911 Commission, Scott A. Brooks, Quechee, Vt.
Family Mediator Certification Board, Lynn E Aaby, Portsmouth, NH
Genetic Counselors Governing Board, Erica S. Stelmach, Londonderry, NH
Public Water Access Advisory Board, Scott Biron, Bradford, NH and Kelly A. Buchanan, Concord, NH
Site Selection Committee, Tracy L. Tarr, Gilmanton, NH
State Board of Auctioneers, Gregory J. Peverly, Northfield, 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.

Vendor SymbioSys Solutions, Inc., Agenda Item #30, was awarded an increase of \$50,800 to their existing state contract. They reported they are not contemplating layoffs and their lowest hourly wage for a person working on the contract is \$35.00 an hour.

Vendor VHV Company, Inc., Agenda item #56 was awarded a \$154,266 contract. They respectfully declined to provide their lowest hourly wage, but reported that there are no planned layoffs and in fact, they are looking for additional plumbers and sheetmetal workers to meet demands.

Vendor DEW Construction Corp., Agenda item #57 was awarded a \$14,041,781 contract. They did not respond to the request.

Vendor Arnold M. Graton Associates, Inc., Agenda item #58 was awarded a \$564,500 contract. They reported there are no planned layoffs in 2019 and their lowest hourly wage is \$20.00/\$25.00 an hour.

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F. Next Meeting

Our next regularly scheduled Executive Council meeting will occur on February 20, 2019 beginning at 10 a.m. 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>

Councilor Gatsas will host the Council breakfast at the Department of Labor. The public is welcome to attend. The breakfast begins at 8 a.m.

G. Items of Interest to District Two, by Region

Region 1-Monadnock Region

[#44](#) Authorized to award an Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund grant to the Harris Center for Conservation Education, Hancock, NH, in the amount of \$200,000 for the purpose of conserving a 515-acre parcel of land in Stoddard. Effective upon G&C approval through December 31, 2019. **100% ARM Funds. VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

[#56](#) Authorized the Division of Public Works Design and Construction to enter into a contract with VHV Company Inc., Winooski, VT, for the HVAC Replacement and Repairs Rebid at Monadnock Mills, Claremont, NH, for a total price not to exceed \$154,266. Effective upon G&C approval through August 30, 2019. **96% Capital – General, 3% Other, 1% General – Operating Funds.** (2) Further Authorized the amount of \$5,500 for payment to the Department of Administrative Services, Division of Public Works Design and Construction, for engineering services provided, bringing the total to \$159,766. **100% General – Operating Funds. VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

Region 2-Merrimack County

[#20](#) Authorized the Bureau of Construction to enter into a contract with Evroks Corporation, Northfield, NH, for preservation efforts on NH 1B bridges over Piscataqua Estuary in Portsmouth and New Castle, on the basis of a low bid of \$2,087,470.46. (2)Further Authorized a contingency in the amount of \$208,747.05 for payment of latent conditions which may appear during the construction of the project. Effective upon G&C approval through September 18, 2020. **100% Federal Funds. VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

[#24](#) Authorized the Division of Agricultural Development to enter into a grant with the Society for the Protection of NH Forests, Concord, NH, in the amount of \$35,000 to expend an education maple program to increase consumer awareness in NH maple products. Effective upon G&C approval through October 1, 2020. **100% Federal Funds – Specialty Crop Block Grant. VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

[#40](#) Authorized a loan agreement with Pennichuck East Utility Inc., Merrimack, NH, in the amount not to exceed \$4,240,000 to finance water system improvements. Effective upon G&C

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approval. **100% Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund Repayment Funds. VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

[#41](#) Authorized to enter into a grant agreement with the City of Concord totaling \$5,669 to fund a Household Hazardous Waste Collection project. Effective upon G&C approval through June 30, 2019. **100% Hazardous Waste Funds. VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

[#46](#) Authorized a Clean Water State Revolving Fund loan agreement with the City of Rochester in an amount not to exceed \$3,000,000 to finance the Colonial Pines Sewer Extension Phase 2 project. Effective upon G&C approval. **100% CWSRF Repayment Funds. VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

[#53](#) Authorized to amend an existing subgrant with the NH Department of Safety, Concord, NH, from the Federal Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, Project Safe Neighborhood (originally approved by G&C on 5-16-18, item #70), by increasing the price by \$5,000 from \$16,200 to \$21,200. Effective upon G&C approval. **100% Federal Funds. VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

Region 3-Strafford County

#5A DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Division of Economic & Housing Stability

[#A.](#) Authorized to amend a **sole source** agreement with Merrimack Valley Assistance Program Inc., Concord, NH (originally approved by G&C on 2-10-16, item #10), to provide supportive services, rental assistance, housing information and mortgage and utility payments to low income persons and their families living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, by extending the completion date from February 28, 2019 to March 31, 2019. Effective upon G&C approval. No Additional Funding. **100% Federal Funds. VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

[#15](#) Authorized the Bureau of Materials & Research to enter into an agreement with the City of Dover, for a total fee not to exceed \$519,600. Funding is provided by the Federal Accelerated Innovation Deployment Demonstration Program through project AID Demonstration Grant for City of Dover: Creating a Benchmark for Traffic Signal Performance. Effective upon G&C approval through January 31, 2021. **100% Federal Funds. VOTE: UNANIMOUS**