

Executive Council Meeting Report

Meeting of January 9, 2019

A. Medicaid Work Requirement

The previous legislature insisted upon adding a “work requirement” for recipients of expanded Medicaid that I believe is a, punitive attempt to ensnare recipients in paperwork snafus. Legislative leadership threatened to discontinue New Hampshire’s participation in the overwhelmingly successful, federally funded program. 50,000 Granite Staters receive expanded Medicaid. The vast majority of New Hampshire Medicaid recipients work to support themselves and their families making the forced work requirement unnecessary. National data shows 77% of expanded Medicaid recipients are employed, mostly at part time or minimum wage jobs.

The Council was presented with a contract to retain Maximus Health Services, Inc. to notify Medicaid recipients of the new work requirement and the penalty for failing to meet the requirement—losing all expanded Medicaid benefits. I asked the Commissioner of Health and Human Services to explain the requirement and the effectiveness of the services requested from Maximus.

“Able bodied” individuals must work or participate in approved alternative programs for 100 hours a month beginning on March 1, 2019. A failure to meet the requirement in one month may be made up in the next month, but the penalty for failing to provide the documentation that shows compliance is the recipient is removed from Medicaid. Of course, removing someone from Medicaid means that expensive hospital care will be sought when an emergency arises. The cost of emergency hospital care is passed on to those with private health insurance. The contract passed 5-0, but the Legislature and Governor are urged to re-visit this hurtful decision.

B. Breakfast at Department of Environmental Services

Councilor Cryans hosted the breakfast meeting on January 9th at the Department of Environmental Services (DES). Senator Chuck Morse also attended. The purpose of the meeting was to brief the Councilors on the clean water trust fund. Sen. Morse chairs the trust fund board. The funding for the trust comes from legal settlements and judgments stemming from MTBE pollution of New Hampshire waters. The Executive Council regularly approves grants and loans to upgrade and extend municipal water systems to address pollution concerns. One of the larger projects that is funded involves the regional effort to upgrade Manchester’s city access to the Merrimack River so that additional water may be made available to the southeastern part of the state to facilitate development.

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C. Agenda Items of Interest

Dartmouth Hitchcock Contract to Supply Psychiatric Services to State Hospital

The Council approved an extension of the contract with Dartmouth Hitchcock (DH). This contract was the subject of a great deal of controversy in 2017 when it was learned that DH was not abiding by its terms. The Governor angrily threatened action against DH and DH, in turn, threatened suit. Relations have now improved and the terms of the contract have been revised to better reflect the ongoing relationship.

Expansion of Bethany Christian Services Denied

By a 3-2 vote, Councilors Cryans, Pignatelli and I voted down a proposed expansion of the foster care parenting education and counseling services provided by Bethany Christian Services (BCS) in New Hampshire. BCS is a national religious organization that recruits and provides services to prospective foster care parents but maintains religious tenets against working with same-sex couples. BCS is being sued for discrimination in Michigan and Philadelphia. I was the lone vote against the initial contract.

Manchester School Superintendent

Although this was not an agenda item, I asked the Commissioner of Education if he was aware of the recent resignation of the Manchester School District Superintendent. Commissioner Edelblut assured the Council that he was aware of the situation and available to assist. He said the Manchester Superintendent gave him advance notice of the resignation, before the Superintendent informed his school board.

Raise of Education Commissioner

The Council approved about a six percent (6%) raise for Commissioner Edelblut making his salary \$109,305/year. Councilor Pignatelli and I opposed the raise. Councilors Prescott, Gatsas and Cryans supported the raise.

D. Nominations and Confirmations

The following persons were nominated on 1/9/2019:

Board of Accountancy, Jeffrey A. Graham, Laconia, NH
Board of Professional Geologists, Nikki Delude Roy, Northwood, NH
Compensation Appeals Board, Benjamin C. Barody, Manchester, NH,

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Maureen E. Dwyer-Henrichs, Kingston, NH, Harry G. Ntapalis, Manchester, NH, Thomas F. Parks, Jr., Dover, NH, Edward F. Patch, Bow, NH

Lakes Management Advisory Committee, Janet R. Kidder, New London, NH
Medical Review Subcommittee, Corneliu N. Stanciu, Manchester, NH and Mark Goldstein, Andover, MA.

Mechanical Licensing Board, Jeffrey C. Brown, Westmoreland, NH

New Hampshire Motor Vehicle Industry Board, David G. Allen, Londonderry, NH and Cameron Eldred, Hanover, NH

Physical Therapy Governing Board, Joseph V. Shanley, Nottingham, NH

State Board of Education, Celina T. Griffin, Gilford, 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. No compensation amounts were reported for this meeting.

F. Next Meeting

Our next regularly scheduled Executive Council meeting will occur on January 23, 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>

I will host the Council breakfast at the Department of Revenue Administration where Commissioner Lindsey Stepp and her staff will provide the Governor and the Council with an overview of state revenues. 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

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

#25 Authorized the Bureau of Construction to enter into a contract with Pike Industries Inc., Belmont, NH, for 33 miles of pavement resurfacing with six sections in the central and southwestern portion of the State, on the basis of a low bid of \$4,989,628.08. (2)Further Authorized a contingency in the amount of \$249,481.40 for payment of latent conditions which may appear during the construction of the project. Effective upon G&C approval through September 13, 2019. **100% Federal Funds. VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

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DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY

[#47](#) Authorized the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management to enter into a grant agreement with the Town of Marlow, for implementation of projects identified through the evaluation of natural hazards, for a total amount of \$123,832.50. Effective upon G&C approval through June 1, 2021. **100% Federal Funds. VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

Region 2-Merrimack County

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services

[#10](#) Authorized to enter into an agreement with the NH Medical Society, Concord, NH, to provide Medication Assisted Treatment trainings and provider tracking in an amount not to exceed \$46,870. Effective upon G&C approval through September 29, 2020. **100% Federal Funds. VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

Division for Behavioral Health

[#11](#) Authorized to enter into an agreement with Riverbend Community Mental Health Inc., Concord, NH, to develop and operate a Behavioral Health Crisis Treatment Center that will provide support services to individuals eighteen years and older who are experiencing a mental health crises, including co-occurring substance use disorder, in an amount not to exceed \$4,402,902. Effective upon G&C approval through December 31, 2021. **100% General Funds. VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

Region 3-Strafford County

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

[5#C.](#) Authorized the Bureau of Materials & Research to amend two individual **sole source** Cooperative Project Agreements with the University of NH Sponsored Programs Administration, Durham, NH (originally approved by G&C on 10-26-16, item #35), by extending the completion date from March 31, 2019 to June 30, 2019. No Additional Funding. **VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Division of Public Health Services

[#8](#) Authorized to enter into a **sole source** agreement with University of NH Office of Sponsored Research, Durham, NH, to provide telephone survey and volunteer recruitment services for the Department's Biomonitoring Program, in an amount not to exceed \$36,000. Effective upon G&C approval through August 31, 2020. **100% Federal Funds. VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

[#37](#) Authorized the NH State Library to award a Conservation License Plate (Moose Plate) Grant to the Town of Farmington, in the amount of \$10,000 for *Late 1800s Invoice Records Preservation*. Effective upon G&C approval through December 31, 2019. **100% Agency Income. VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

[#40](#) Authorized the State Council on the Arts to award a Conservation License Plate (Moose Plate) Grant to the Rochester Opera House, Rochester, NH, for the restoration of 300 seats at the Rochester Opera House, in the amount of \$20,000. Effective upon G&C approval through June 30, 2019. **100% Agency Income. VOTE: UNANIMOUS**