

Carroll County Lands and Annex Subcommittee

Date: **July 7 2023**
Location: Carroll County Annex
Time: **2:30pm**
Present: Representative Mark McConkey
Representative Richard Brown
Representative David Paige (remote)
Commissioner Terry McCarthy
DPW Director Will DeWitte
Mellisa Seamans, Executive Coordinator
Public: Amanda Bevard
Dan Karl
Daymond Steer (Conway Daily Sun)

Pledge of Allegiance

Comm'r McCarthy: Engineer was onsite at Annex last week. Architect coming by the end of the month. Awaiting reports from both. There is a staff member in finance who can help with scheduling at Annex. She was going to be at 32 hours per week but there is enough to keep her busy for 40. We will probably need to hire a custodian for the Annex.

Dir. DeWitte: 20 hayfields (approximately 70 acres). Ossipee DPW wants to discuss with the County about installing culvert, swales to address the County Farm Road runoff. The road was first fully developed in 2003 when the jail opened.

Rep. McConkey: Make sure that whatever the Town proposes is of great benefit to the County.
If we were to take some hayfield away, is there another location where we can develop hayfield?

Dir. DeWitte: At one point we looked at developing a 6-acre hayfield and it would cost \$50,000
Rep. McConkey: Is hay best use of the land or is it just what we do?

Dir. DeWitte: There are other farming operations that yield a lot more money per acre, i.e., vegetables. But hay is valuable to the people that need it to feed their animals.

Rep. Brown: Has there ever been a long-term farm plan?

Dir. DeWitte: I've done plans in the past but the Delegation had no appetite to do anything.
Ms. Bevard: The former Lands committee did a lot of work and had a written plan

Dir. DeWitte: No a good location for community garden in a rural area.

Rep. Paige: Request staff compile the past studies and proposals

Discussion about walking trails that were in progress years ago. Some work done, no users, probably grown up and needs to be redone.

Rep. McConkey: Does the hoop house belong to the County? Is the Extension using it?
Dir. DeWitte: I don't know how to answer this. There was an issue between you and the Extension, something about an MOU. I wasn't part of that conversation.

Rep. McConkey: Status of haying this year?
Dir. DeWitte: Weather challenge. Due to the rain since end of May, growth is good but difficult to harvest, fields are wet. It's still pretty early in the season.

Rep. McConkey asked for cost benefit analysis of the haying operation. Chmn. McCarthy will have the CFO work on this. Chmn. McCarthy suggested the group walk some of the County properties.

Ms. Bevard suggested inviting the public, offering hayrides.

Rep. McConkey: Request information about the fields we hay that do not belong to the County.

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Dir. DeWitte: Lower Beacham Hill Road, about 15 acres. Drive our equipment up Route 171 to the road.

Dir. DeWitte: Going to continue to move to all round bales, eliminating square bales. All fields have a history of how many bales, by type, came off each field, and grades each bales before putting in the barn. 90% of customers are returning customers. Told they cannot order until after April 1. Start a list of customers who call in and as hay becomes available, call them. Some customers order the hay, pay me for all, and I leave in the field for them to pick up. If any hay not spoken for, it is first come first served basis. Past couple years none let over.

Rep. McConkey: Are we holding any hay for people who have not paid for it?

Dir. DeWitte: No. And in the winter all the equipment is stored so no room for hay in barns. I don't save hay. A few customers outside the County. Most are within 20 miles of the complex.

Rep. McConkey: Status of the possible use of daycare on County property, housing, recovery center.

Comm'r McCarthy: Last conversation I had was that recovery center no longer interested in coming here because it would take too long.

Rep. Paige: Executive Council just approved plan for use of some funds for grants to daycare centers for facility improvements. At the tiny home project in Durham, they integrated daycare and invited us down to look at their project.

Rep. McConkey: Housing needs committee coming to conclusion with many recommendations – changes to DES permitting, denser development, rehabbing properties, etc. Report due out in September. DES looking at changing regulations.

Attended Ossipee Planning Board meeting. Town received a grant for technical assistance on their master plan housing chapter. Ossipee has already gone through 23 zoning revisions.

Not in favor of condos or expensive family homes on County property so workforce has an opportunity.

Dir. DeWitte: Asset management grant and planning grants received. Well company will pull pumps and evaluate the wells and set up recording system. Second grant is to set up piping and meters. Once these two steps are complete, Underwood will bring in hydrogeologist to determine capacity. Meters are being installed on all County buildings. All new fire hydrants (12) hopefully to be installed this fall. Underwood, based on possible future uses for recovery campus, housing, daycare, would need new water source at estimated \$1.5 to \$1.9 million. Wells should be producing 55 gallons per second if testing correctly. If the main goes offline, the other two wells should be able to handle that capacity. Water system currently uses about 20,000 gallons per day. With possible additional future uses, the estimate increases that to 60,000 gallons per day.

Rep. McConkey: Asked for a map of where the main well is and projected groundwater protection around it. It would be nice if we could provide water and/or sewer to potential projects. Is there sufficient land that we might be able to drop a couple of smaller yield wells and not affect our water production. I'm not looking to expand the County water system.

Dir. DeWitte: Map is available from NH DES. State required us to do PFAS testing two years ago. You have to turn the wells on for 15 minutes before sampling. While that was happening, one of our backup wells kept shooting air. We won't know what caused the problem until we have the company come out and pull the pumps.

MOTION: **Approve the April 24, 2023 Lands Committee meeting minutes** by Rep. Brown, 2nd Rep. Paige. Passed 4-0

Mr. Steer: There was a lot of stuff that went on at the Farm – farm days, pig project, trails, a commissioner grew pumpkins. I asked Mitch Yeaton of White Horse if still interested in County land and he is.

Rep. Brown: Part of the process as we go through this is making sure we get feedback

Rep. McConkey: We are going to have things resolved – how much space, how many gallons per day – and if we don't have land available for a purpose it won't go forward. We have a resource and are going to take our time. Developers want water and sewer. What can we do to make it better for developers? We're going to investigate a lot before we start filling those uses. Rehab is a huge problem for our county. Once we know what our capacities are, it might be something that can be done here.

Rep. Paige: We had a great year with truly bipartisan wins I think in the State budget, particularly on childcare and housing. Did we make enough progress? Childcare scholarship program, more money for housing, Housing Champions program...

Rep. McConkey will have the Speaker's Office pull those points together.

Follow-Up Items

Next Meeting: Friday, July 21, 2023 at 2:30 p.m.