

Pursuant to proper notice, a public meeting of the County Commissioners of the County of Norfolk was held at 614 High Street, Dedham, MA and via Zoom Videoconference on June 30, 2021, notice of said meeting having been posted as required by law.

Commissioners present were:

Chairman Joseph P. Shea  
Commissioner Peter H. Collins  
Commissioner Richard R. Staiti

Chairman Shea called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

Chairman Shea stated on Thursday, March 12, 2020, Governor Baker issued an "Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30A, Section 20." That Order was effective immediately until it is rescinded or the State of Emergency is terminated. On Wednesday June 16, 2021 by action of the Legislature the order was extended until April 1, 2022.

Chairman Shea called the roll and Commissioner Staiti, Commissioner Collins and Chairman Shea responded "present."

Chairman Shea led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Commissioner Staiti, seconded by Commissioner Collins and

VOTED: To approve the Minutes of the Open Session Meeting of June 23, 2021 as submitted

Chairman Shea asked for public comment. There were no comments from the public.

John McGowan, Superintendent of Buildings, presented the Facilities Maintenance Capital Improvement Report & Coronavirus Update. Mr. McGowan stated there have been no COVID-19 issues. He reported on the Registry of Deeds. He stated Dick Lee of IBS stated removing the existing boiler now in preparation for the installation of the new boiler would not be cost-effective for the County. Mr. McGowan stated the boiler can be removed and installed on the same day.

Mr. McGowan stated he spoke with Scott Arnell of the Trial Court regarding air purifiers. Mr. McGowan stated the Trial Court would like air purifiers in place for the opening of courts. Mr. McGowan stated he ordered approximately 30 air purifiers. He recommended examining the flat roof at Superior Court for air handler suitability during the Superior Court Dome Project.

He reported on Stoughton District Court. Mr. McGowan stated contractors want to hot dip galvanized beams. He stated this process will prolong the project.

Mr. McGowan reported on roofing. He stated contractors are repairing the rubber roof at Quincy District Court. Mr. McGowan stated they will address a slate issue at Brookline District Court.

Commissioner Staiti asked about Stoughton District Court. Mr. McGowan stated originally the structural engineer indicated that the bearing wall would not require reinforcement. Mr. McGowan stated he discovered today that the bearing wall would require iron reinforcement. John Cronin, County Director, stated he spoke with Mark Tocci about the project. He stated Mr. Tocci indicated there are 2 rooftop units and each serves a different part of the building. Mr. Tocci reported to Mr. Cronin that 1 unit requires reinforcement and 1 unit does not require reinforcement. Mr. Cronin reported the area for the courtroom air handler should be prepared in 2-3 weeks.

Mr. Cronin stated the Superior Court Dome contract was awarded and there will be a Zoom entry meeting on July 7. He stated 3 walkways at Wollaston Recreational Facility require immediate attention. Mr. Cronin stated Nancy Rockwell, CPO, will obtain quotes. He stated Ms. Rockwell will obtain quotes for Wrentham and Stoughton District Court boilers.

At 1:15 pm representatives from the Town of Dedham joined the meeting to discuss Dedham Square Parking. John Sisson, Community Development Director, stated the Town has been working on a project at 600 High Street, Dedham Police Station. He stated there have been many meetings on the future of the police station. Mr. Sisson stated parking meters on Court Street and High Street went live earlier this month. He stated the town's earlier parking management plan did not work well. Mr. Sisson stated the Town is working on policy for off street lots. He stated the Town would like to work with the County on parking in Dedham Square. Mr. Sisson stated he received a complaint from the Register of Deeds regarding placement of a wifi pole in front of the Registry of Deeds. He stated the Town will address the Register's concerns in phase 2 of the parking plan. Mr. Cronin asked for a timeline on the addressing the wifi pole. Mr. Sisson stated the timeline is about 2-3 weeks.

Commissioner Staiti commended the Town of Dedham for their work on COVID-19.

Chairman Shea stated the High Street area is impressive. He stated the County will be doing a \$1M project to refurbish the Superior Court Dome and has completed many projects at the Registry of Deeds. Chairman Shea stated the County has a parking lot behind the Registry of Deeds and a parking lot across from the Administration Building. He stated the Registry lot has available spaces and the lot across from the Administration Building is usually full. Commissioner Shea asked about 600 High Street. Mr. Sisson stated town meeting will consider the future of 600 High Street in the spring. Mr. Cronin asked about the timeline on 600 High Street demolition. Mr. Sisson stated demolition could occur in 2022. Thomas Polito of Dedham stated the cost of the 600 High Street project is approximately \$3.5M. He stated a park and a parking are 2 options.

At 1:30 pm Patrick Higgins, PLS, joined the meeting. Chairman Shea stated Mr. Higgins is the County's new professional land surveyor. Mr. Higgins stated he is excited to return to Norfolk County and looks forward to continue the department's high quality services to the 28 Norfolk County cities and towns. Chairman Shea stated Norfolk County cities and towns value County Engineering services. Mr. Cronin stated he met with Mr. Higgins and the Department and the department provides strong services to Norfolk County. Commissioner Staiti recommended increasing Engineering Department services and he advocated for an internship program. Mr. Cronin stated the FY22 Budget funds a position in the Engineering Department and Mr. Higgins will assist in developing a job description. Commissioner Staiti thanked Michael Jardin for his work leading the Department before the appointment of Mr. Higgins.

At 1:45 pm Dale Kurtz, Veterans' Services Advocate, joined the meeting. Chairman Shea stated Mr. Kurtz plans to retire on August 27. Mr. Kurtz discussed the history of the Norfolk County Veterans' Advocate (VSA) position. He stated 15-20 VSOs attended training sessions at the beginning of the Norfolk County VSA Program. Mr. Kurtz stated he currently serves the towns of Avon and Franklin. He stated there will be budget challenges for the VSA moving forward and Chapter 115 benefits must be fulfilled. Mr. Kurtz recommended identifying a large community as a district hub. Mr. Cronin stated the County will assess the VSA Program moving forward. The Commissioners thanked Mr. Kurtz for his hard work and dedication to Norfolk County veterans and their families.

Chairman Shea announced there is no old business to discuss.

Chairman Shea stated he will consider personnel matters at the end of the meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Staiti, seconded by Commissioner Collins and

VOTED: To execute payroll warrants as follows:

21-52	Payroll – County	278,441.41
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A motion was made by Commissioner Staiti, seconded by Commissioner Collins and

VOTED: To execute payroll warrants as follows:

21-52	Payroll – School	420,491.85
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A motion was made by Commissioner Staiti, seconded by Commissioner Collins and

VOTED: To execute payroll warrants as follows:

21-52(26.1)	Payroll – School	3,940.14
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A motion was made by Commissioner Staiti, seconded by Commissioner Collins and

VOTED: To execute payroll warrants as follows:

21-52(26.2)	Payroll – School	50,256.39
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A motion was made by Commissioner Staiti, seconded by Commissioner Collins and

VOTED: To execute expense warrants as follows:

06-05-21	Expense – County	185,822.66
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A motion was made by Commissioner Staiti, seconded by Commissioner Collins and

VOTED: To execute expense warrants as follows:

21-12B	Expense – School	169,576.18
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Chairman Shea stated there are no bid openings as detailed in Exhibit A.

Chairman Shea stated there are contract awards as detailed in Exhibit B.

Chairman Shea stated the Norfolk County website requires an update. Mr. Cronin stated the team reviewed bids for the website redesign and recommends awarding to Revise. Chairman Shea asked about a timeline for the new website. Nancy Rockwell, CPO, stated the new website should be ready in about 4-5 months. Commissioner Staiti stated Revise is a minority owned business.

A motion was made by Commissioner Staiti, seconded by Commissioner Collins and

VOTED: To approve the FY22 Purchasing Rules and Regulations

Mr. Cronin reported on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021. He stated the County continues fact finding and reached out to sister Counties to discuss pros and cons of taking ARPA funds or delivering funds straight to the cities and towns. Mr. Cronin stated Norfolk, Bristol, and Plymouth County officials and staff will meet tomorrow to discuss ARPA. He stated Plymouth and Bristol Counties opted into ARPA to manage the funds. Mr. Cronin stated tomorrow's meeting will be important. Commissioner Collins stated the County's intention is to pass through as much of the ARPA funds to the cities and towns as we can. He stated a small amount may be used by the County. Commissioner Collins stated the goal of the County taking the funds is for the benefit of the cities and towns in Norfolk County. Commissioner Staiti stated he is eager to have a dialog with Bristol and Plymouth County. Mr. Cronin stated cities and towns are beginning to receive the community portion of ARPA funds.

A motion was made by Commissioner Staiti, seconded by Commissioner Collins and

VOTED: To execute personnel matters as follows:

Agricultural High School

Notice of Contingent Employment for Anna E. Harper of Mendon, MA 01756 as CEC Student Worker JG: Flat Rate \$13.50/hr. effective 7/5/2021.

Notice of Contingent Employment for Nolan E. Doyle of Dedham, MA 02026 as Student Labor (PS) JG: Flat Rate \$14.50/hr. effective 7/5/2021.

Notice of Contingent Employment for Angelina J. Nichols of Hyde Park, MA 02136 as Student Worker/Summer Camp JG: Flat Rate \$15.00/hr. effective 7/5/2021.

Notice of Resignation for Tammy L. Krause of Braintree, MA 02184 as Substitute Nurse JG: Flat Rate \$25.00/hr. effective 6/24/21.

A motion was made by Commissioner Staiti, seconded by Commissioner Collins and

VOTED: To execute personnel matters as follows:

Wollaston Recreational Facility

Notice of Contingent Employment for Andrew J. Viola of Milton, MA 02186 as Seasonal Grounds Crew JG: Flat Rate \$14.00/hr. effective 7/1/2021.

A motion was made by Commissioner Staiti, seconded by Commissioner Collins and

VOTED: To execute personnel matters as follows:

Facilities Maintenance

Notice of Termination for Robert Colton of Foxboro, MA as Night Roving Maintenance Foreman  
JG: 23-5 \$81,980.12 effective 6/30/21.

A motion was made by Commissioner Staiti, seconded by Commissioner Collins and

VOTED: To execute personnel matters as follows:

Registry of Deeds

Notice of Retirement for Diane Watson of Walpole, MA as Head Administrative Assistant, JG:  
17-9 \$71,843.61/yr. effective 6/30/21.

Notice of Retirement for James P. Limbey of Stoughton, MA as Chief Information Officer JG:  
Flat Rate \$126,227.29/yr. effective 6/30/21.

A motion was made by Commissioner Staiti, seconded by Commissioner Collins and

VOTED: To execute personnel matters as follows:

Engineering

Notice of Updated Address of Record for Patrick Higgins of West Newbury, MA, 01985 effective  
6/21/21.

A motion was made by Commissioner Staiti, seconded by Commissioner Collins and

VOTED: To discuss only the personnel matter as follows:

Registry of Deeds

Notice of Appointment for Richard Hatch of Plympton, MA as Chief Information Officer JG: Flat  
Rate \$129,067.40/yr. effective 7/6/21

Chairman Shea stated the matter for discussion is a replacement for James Limbey, who is retiring. He stated the Commissioners received 2 letters regarding the personnel matter in question, 1 letter from Joseph Reardon, FY22 Norfolk County Advisory Board Chairman and FY21 Finance Committee Chairman, and 1 from Mark Abrahams of the Abrahams Group.

Commissioner Staiti stated he recalled then Finance Committee Chairman Reardon thought it was a good idea to initiate a hiring freeze. Commissioner Staiti stated he believed a hiring freeze made sense because of the budget process. He stated the County is in a pretty good situation and has a considerable unappropriated balance. Commissioner Staiti stated the Commissioners made an exception with the NCAHS Special Education Director. He stated the CIO is in charge of many things including cyber security. Commissioner Staiti asked what happens if the Commissioners do not fill the position. Commissioner Staiti asked if the County is liable if there is a system hack. Commissioner Staiti stated his understanding was that the Commissioners would work with the Abrahams Group and Mr. Cronin regarding changes and consolidation for FY23. He asked if a dereliction of duty exists if a position is not filled and funds are available.

Commissioner Collins stated the Commissioners felt the operational analysis was the proper vehicle to move Norfolk County forward. He stated the Commissioners approached the Finance Committee and asked that they do not vote for the operational analysis unless they are prepared to go forward with the guidance in the report. Commissioner Collins stated the Finance Committee agreed and hoped to put the findings of the report into practice. He stated the Finance Committee was in favor of a hiring freeze. Commissioner Collins stated the Finance Committee did not know how the fiscal year would end. He stated if the Commissioners were able to consolidate positions they did not want to hire people who may lose their job. Commissioner Collins stated he understands the cyber security issues. He asked what happened when Mr. Limbey was not around. He stated the second in command took over for a couple of weeks when Mr. Limbey was on vacation. He stated when the County Director resigned the County had an Interim Director and Assistant Director fill the position. Commissioner Collins stated Mark MacDonald, IT Director, could help the Registry if needed. He stated this is not a months and months long situation and the Abrahams Report should be ready in a few weeks. Commissioner Collins asked if the relevant portion of the Abrahams Group's Report could be expedited. He stated the Abrahams Group is examining IT at NCAHS, the Registry of Deeds, and County level. Commissioner Collins stated he respects Mr. Reardon, the Finance Committee, the Advisory Board, and the Register's concern for documents. Commissioner Collins stated he will not second the appointment since there are only a few weeks to view the Abrahams Group findings.

Commissioner Staiti stated there could be an 8 week period from the time the Commissioners receive the Abrahams Group report and the time Commissioners' complete vetting the report. Commissioner Staiti stated he is concerned with what could happen in a 3-5 week period.

Mr. Cronin stated the Register's opinion is Mr. Limbey's second in command is not ready to step into Mr. Limbey's position. Commissioner Staiti stated the Abrahams Group's Report is focusing on staffing and consolidation of IT and maintenance.

Register O'Donnell stated IT and modernization has been a focus of the Registry of Deeds for over 20 years. He stated there have been no IT issues because the Registry has always had an IT CIO. Register O'Donnell stated the CIO monitors and manages multiple systems. He stated the CIO manages and monitors routine backups and there are 13M documents. Register O'Donnell stated the CIO interprets reports. He stated the position is not redundant anywhere in the County. Register O'Donnell stated he does not think another County employee can do the job. He asked if the CIO is an essential position. Chairman Shea stated the CIO is an essential position.

Register O'Donnell stated the CIO is necessary to Registry operations and if steps are not taken to have a CIO an operational deficiency will result. Register O'Donnell stated he has not spoken to the Abrahams Group. He cited Commissioner Collins from the Minutes of the Open Session Meeting of June 16, 2021 as detailed in Exhibit C, "Reasons to Sign the Registry Chief Information Officer Personnel Paper June 30, 2021."

Register O'Donnell stated an offer was made to a candidate and the process to hire a CIO began in the winter. He stated Michelle Labadini, Manager of Personal Services, noted a job posting on MMA in April. Register O'Donnell stated the position was budgeted and funded. He stated this position is crucial and this is the most important vote in his time as Register.

Commissioner Staiti asked what makes this candidate qualified. Register O'Donnell stated the candidate worked in IT for Dell and EMC, Jordan Hospital, Partners Healthcare, and the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority. He stated current staff is enthusiastic about the candidate.

Chairman Shea stated the County is nearing the end of a process that started almost 3 years ago. He stated the operational analysis was driven by outside audit reports and the arrival of a new County Treasurer in 2017. Chairman Shea stated the new Treasurer asked questions about management letters and the County asked the Commonwealth for assistance. He stated the Commissioners then presented the case to the Advisory Board and the Board appropriated \$75,000 for an operational analysis. Chairman Shea stated he does not believe the Commissioners should rush the Abrahams Group and he believes the staffing portion could be isolated. He stated the County has not filled the plumber position or a position in the Engineering Department. Chairman Shea stated the discussion is not about not filling the CIO position, he stated the discussion is about delaying for a short time.

Chairman Shea stated he was unaware certain employees were retiring. He stated when an employee retires their vacation and sick time is paid out of their salary line item. Chairman Shea stated he believes this will be addressed in the operational analysis. He stated the CIO is an important job and stated he does not think this means the elimination of the CIO. Chairman Shea stated he will support the hiring freeze.

Commissioner Staiti stated the operational analysis may indicate the CIO position is appropriate. Commissioner Staiti stated he is concerned when he hears that an elected official has not spoken to the Abrahams Group.

Mr. Cronin stated the operational analysis final draft should be ready in late July. He stated Treasurer Bellotti indicated he had not spoken to the Abrahams Group. Mr. Cronin stated County Accountant D'Auria of the Treasurer's Office received and answered the questionnaire. Mr. Cronin stated the Abrahams Group will speak with Treasurer Bellotti and Register O'Donnell in the next 2 weeks.

Register O'Donnell asked how waiting for the Abrahams Group study affects an essential Registry of Deeds employee. He cited the Minutes of the Open Session Meeting of June 9, 2021 as detailed in Exhibit C, "Reasons to Sign the Registry Chief Information Officer Personnel Paper June 30, 2021." Register O'Donnell stated he has no problem with the vote of the NCAHS Special Education Director. He stated the CIO is also essential and not to vote seems arbitrary and capricious.

Chairman Shea asked how the Registry would handle a breach today. He asked if the Registry would bring in a back up person or an outside consultant. Register O'Donnell stated it is not a matter of if but of when and the CIO is a technical position like a sentinel dealing with cyber security and ransom ware.

Commissioner Staiti asked if the County has external technical support if needed. Mr. Cronin stated he does not believe the County has external technical support. He stated the County is protected from an insurance standpoint with increased coverage for ransom ware and attacks. Mr. Cronin stated if an issue is outside the scope of staff, the County would use state contracts. Commissioner Staiti stated insurance lawyers would argue the County did not hire a CIO. Mr. Cronin stated the County would not be negligent because they would be deferring to fill a position.

A motion was made by Commissioner Staiti, to appoint Richard Hatch of Plympton, MA as Chief Information Officer JG: Flat Rate \$129,067.40/yr. effective 7/6/21.

Commissioner Collins stated he seconded a prior motion for discussion.

On the roll call vote,

Commissioner Staiti voted "yes"

Commissioner Collins voted "no"

Chairman Shea voted "no"

Chairman Shea announced the motion fails, 2-1. Chairman Shea stated he would be happy to look at the position another time.

Commissioner Staiti stated the Commissioners should direct the Abrahams Group to speak to elected officials and to expedite the operations and staffing portion of their report. Mr. Cronin stated he will speak to Mark Abrahams about the time table. He stated Mr. Abrahams was uncomfortable expediting the operations and staffing portion in the interest of providing a full final draft in 3-4 weeks.

Mr. Cronin presented the Report of the County Director. He reported on the Engineering Department. Mr. Cronin stated he is working with Patrick Higgins to develop a position within the Engineering Department. Mr. Cronin stated he held his first department meeting. He stated the meeting had a robust agenda and he plans on regular meetings. Mr. Cronin stated he will meet with Mr. D'Auria and Rick Fitzpatrick to discuss the NCAHS FY21 Closing of Books.

Under Emergency Items/Topics the Chair did not Reasonably Anticipate Would Be Discussed, Chairman Shea stated the Commissioners received a request from Norfolk and Dedham Group to use the Norfolk County Parking Lot behind the Registry of Deeds on September 15 from 11 am-1pm. Mr. Buckley stated he spoke to First Assistant Register Lee on Monday and she has no issue with the use of the lot.

A motion was made by Commissioner Staiti, seconded by Commissioner Collins and

VOTED: To allow Norfolk and Dedham Group to use the Norfolk County Parking Lot behind the Registry of Deeds on September 15 from 11 am-1pm and to limit to 50 cars.

Mr. Cronin stated the County received a quote from American Alarm of approximately \$22,000 for key card access, alarm system, and security cameras on the Administration Building.

Chairman Shea announced the death of Leland Miner, father of Carl Miner of Wollaston Recreational Facility. Chairman Shea announced the retirement of Brookline District Court Judge White. He announced the retirement of Tammy Quinn from NCAHS. Chairman Shea stated Ms. Quinn was a teacher, assistant principal, principal, and director at NCAHS.

Commissioner Staiti directed Mr. Buckley to provide a legislative update in the coming weeks.



There being no further business to come before the Board, a motion was made by Commissioner Staiti, seconded by Commissioner Collins and unanimously

VOTED: to recess the meeting to July 1 at 12:00 pm at Taunton Superior Court to allow FY21 business to come forward

Meeting recessed at 3:20 pm.

ATTEST:

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Recording Secretary

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Clerk