

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Executive Council

CHRISTOPHER C. PAPPAS
EXECUTIVE COUNCILOR
DISTRICT FOUR



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TO: All Fourth District Cities and Towns
FROM: Executive Councilor Christopher C. Pappas
DATE: February 25, 2015

The Governor and Executive Council met on Wednesday, February 25, 2015, in the Executive Council Chamber at the State House, Concord, NH and considered an agenda of approximately 73 items.

The next scheduled Governor and Executive Council Meeting will be held on Friday, March 13, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. in the Executive Council Chamber at the State House Concord, NH.

The Executive Council convened today at 10 am at the State House. Prior to the meeting, Megan Cooley of Candia, Miss New Hampshire, sang our National Anthem. In addition, Governor Hassan and Commissioner Van MacLeod announced the creation of the New Hampshire Literary Hall of Fame, which will induct Robert Frost, Donald Hall, John Irving, and Grace Metalious as its first members. Here's an overview of the Council meeting, focusing on issues with both statewide and District 4 significance:

Nominations

The Governor nominated Denis Goulet of Manchester as the Commissioner of the Department of Information Technology; Gale Furey of Bedford to the Aviation Users Advisory Board; Paula Mattis of Manchester as Director of Medical and Psychiatric Services in the Department of Corrections; Michelle Goings of Hooksett as the Warden of the North Country Correctional Facility; Virginia Lupi of Suncook as the Director of the Division of Arts in the Department of Cultural Resources; and Paul LeBlanc of Manchester to the Higher Education Commission.

Confirmations

The Council confirmed John Barthelmes to another term as Commissioner of the Department of Safety.

Resignations

The Council accepted the resignation of Jillian Osborne of Litchfield from the Genetic Counselors Governing Board.

HHS Manchester District Office Lease

The Council approved an extension of the lease for the Manchester District Office of the Department of Health and Human Services, located in Mill West on McGregor Street. The lease extension runs for

six months as renovations to the space are underway. Once those are completed a longer term lease will be offered.

Winter Maintenance Budget Increase

The Council approved a request from the Department of Transportation to increase the budget for winter maintenance by \$8.8 million from the Highway Fund. Because of the cold stormy winter, the department's budget has already been exhausted. The increase will cover employee overtime, salt and sand, and other costs related to the severe winter we have experienced.

Strafford County Inmate Contract

The Council approved a \$310,000 increase to the agreement with Strafford County which houses female inmates that cannot be accommodated at the Goffstown Women's Prison. The number of females held at Strafford County has increased from an average of 25 to as many as 46 this past year, requiring the additional funds.

Audit for State Employees Health Plan

The Council approved a contract for \$161,000 to conduct an audit to verify the eligibility of dependents on the state employees health plan. Other states have seen significant savings by identifying dependents who are ineligible to receive benefits, including Maine which realized more than \$1 million in savings.

Mowing Equipment for DOT

The Department of Transportation requested approval of a \$1 million lease-purchase agreement for mowing equipment for the state highways. Currently, the state rents the equipment at a far greater cost. Unfortunately, a majority of the Council refused to take up the item today. They believe that the department should purchase the equipment outright, which they do not have the funding to do. I am hopeful we can revisit the issue at the next meeting and work within the constraints of the budget to procure this equipment, which is essential in maintaining our state roadways.

Today's complete agenda is available [here](#), along with the minutes and audio recording. The next G&C meeting will be held Friday, March 13, at 10 am. Stay tuned for future updates, and please don't hesitate to contact me with your thoughts or concerns.