

STRAFFORD COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2026

Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81153273457?pwd=aQZiZiKFXbJiT4X26hwRQ00rYMaMOFX.1>

Meeting ID: 811 5327 3457 Passcode: 434778

A public meeting of the Strafford County Commissioners was held Thursday, April 2, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room, Justice and Administration Building, 259 County Farm Road, Suite 204, Dover, New Hampshire. It was noted that meeting notices and agendas had been sent to all interested parties, as well as posted on the County Website. Present were Commissioners Maglaras, Feliciano, and Leavitt. Also present were Administrator Raymond Bower, Assistant Administrator Deirdra Brown, Maintenance Director Doug Kane, IT Specialist Kelly Parker, Susan Rice, Colby Williams, Holly Smith, a WMUR Channel 9 News Representative, and Executive Assistant/Deputy Treasurer Janet Hilber. Several staff and members of the public attended in person and via Zoom.

1. Approve Minutes of March 31, 2026: Chairman Maglaras postponed the approval of the March 31, 2026 meeting minutes that are in draft form.
2. Discuss Hyder House: The Commissioners announced the closure of Hyder Hospice House due to unsustainable financial losses, declining utilization, and systemic healthcare changes. Services will transition to Riverside Rest Home, though at a reduced capacity. The decision reflects broader fiscal and policy challenges facing the County, with additional operational changes anticipated. Following an administrative session, the Board of Commissioners announced the decision to:
 - Cease operations of Hyder Hospice House as a standalone facility
 - Transition hospice and palliative care services to Riverside Rest Home
 - Engage external partners (hospitals and hospice agencies) for future service delivery solutions

Detailed Rationale for Closure

A. Financial Conditions

- Annual operating cost: approximately \$4 million
- Annual revenue: approximately \$800,000
- Resulting deficit: ~\$3.2 million, fully funded by property taxes
- Hyder is a major contributor to Riverside Rest Home's overall deficit

B. Declining Utilization

- Average daily census: 3.3 patients
- Facility staffed 24/7 despite low occupancy
- Increasing unpredictability in admissions and patient stays

C. Healthcare System Changes

- Post-COVID shift toward in-home hospice care
- Patients entering hospice later and staying shorter durations
- Increased reliance on private hospice providers
- Federal and state regulatory changes limiting institutional care

D. Rising Operational Costs

- Medication costs increased from ~\$100-\$200/day to \$750-\$800/day
- No corresponding increase in federal reimbursement rates

E. External Revenue Losses

- Reduction in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainee population, resulting in significant lost revenue
- ICE contract previously contributed approximately \$9 million annually

F. Budget and Governance Issues

- County Delegation rejected the Commissioners' proposed budget
- Contributing factors:
 - Concerns over Riverside/Hyder deficits
 - Political opposition to ICE contracts
 - Exceeding municipal tax caps

G. State and Federal Pressures

- \$500,000 Medicaid cost shift from the State to the County with minimal notice
- New Hampshire's Medicaid structure requires counties to fund 50% of long-term care costs
- State budget shortfalls expected to further shift costs to counties

H. Credit Rating Impact

- Moody's downgraded the County's bond rating from A3 to BAA2
- Implications:
 - Increased borrowing costs
 - Reduced financial flexibility
 - Risk to long-term fiscal stability

I. Legal Constraints

- State law prohibits counties from operating with a deficit
- Potential legal action (by as few as five taxpayers) could remove Commissioners from office if deficits persist

Historical Context

- Hyder Hospice House previously operated under three separate providers (nonprofit and for-profit), all of which failed financially
- The County assumed operations as a provider of last resort
- Initial operations were near break-even but deteriorated over time
- Outreach to 24 hospice agencies yielded no interest in taking over operations
- Hyder is the only county-operated hospice facility of its kind in New Hampshire

Operational Transition Plan

A. Closure Timeline

- Scheduled closure date: **April 18, 2026**

B. Staff Transition

- Employees given until **April 10, 2026** to indicate interest in reassignment
- Opportunities:
 - Riverside Rest Home (limited capacity)
 - Other county departments (e.g., jail—role differences noted)
- Unplaced employees:
 - Eligible for payout of accrued benefits (vacation, etc.)
- Acknowledgement of specialized hospice skillset that may not fully transfer

C. Service Continuity

- Hospice care will continue at Riverside, including:
 - Renovation of space (Unit 3 under consideration)
- Commissioners emphasized:
 - Services cannot be fully replicated
 - Reduced capacity and different care environment expected

Broader System Challenges Identified

- Aging population trends:
 - Rapid increase in residents aged 65+
- Insufficient healthcare infrastructure:
 - Lack of hospice beds
 - Nursing home capacity constraints
- Workforce challenges:
 - Difficulty staffing specialized hospice care roles
- System-wide instability:
 - Unpredictable federal and state policy changes
 - Funding volatility

Future Actions and Considerations

- Develop and present a Riverside hospice care plan
- Initiate discussions with:
 - Local hospitals
 - Regional hospice organizations
- Evaluate potential:
 - Public-private partnerships
 - Alternative uses for Hyder facility
- Continue monitoring:
 - Financial position
 - State and federal policy changes
- Anticipate:
 - Additional budget reductions across departments

Chairman Maglaras called a two-minute recess at 9:32 a.m. before moving on to the next agenda items. Commissioner Leavitt had to step out for an appointment and returned at 10:13 a.m.

3. Upcoming Events: Chairman Maglaras asked if there were any upcoming events to discuss. The following events were discussed:
 - a. Recognize National Public Safety Telecommunications Week 2026 – April 12th through April 18th
 - b. Willand Warming Center Spring Support Fair – Monday, April 13, 2026
4. Old and New Business: Chairman Maglaras asked if there was any old or new business to discuss. With no old or new business to discuss, Chairman Maglaras moved on to the next agenda item.
5. Questions and Comments from the Public Related to this Agenda: Chairman Maglaras asked if there were any questions from the members of the public or other.

A. Community Concerns

Speakers emphasized:

- The critical importance of hospice care for dignity and comfort at end-of-life
- Hyder's role as a specialized, non-hospital environment
- Emotional and psychological benefits for patients and families

Details

Colby Williams:

- Thanked commissioners for their service and emphasized that time is our most valuable asset, especially for terminally ill patients
- Noted that Hyder is described as the region's first and only inpatient hospice residence in Strafford County with 24-hour specialized nursing
- Emphasized that hospitals are designed for curative care, not end-of-life care, and these are not interchangeable missions
- Cited 2025 data showing over one-fifth of Strafford County residents are above age 60
- Stated the closure could mean the difference between an agonizing death and a peaceful goodbye for families

- Risks of:
 - Increased hospital deaths
 - Inadequate in-home care situations
 - Burden on families and caregivers

B. Professional Perspectives

Holly Smith (Wentworth Hospice Social Worker):

- Described Hyder as "a sacred place" and emphasized it is not just a brick and mortar building
- Expressed concern about having to tell families she can no longer offer Hyder or cancel respite stays
- Noted that people at home are sometimes dying uncomfortably in unsafe situations with no one to administer medications
- Acknowledged the complexity of the financial situation and the need for cooler heads to prevail

Healthcare professionals highlighted:

- Unique expertise required for hospice care
- Limitations of hospitals and nursing homes in providing equivalent services
- Anticipated challenges in communicating service loss to families

C. Community Impact

- Strafford County's aging population increases demand for services
Closure seen as a significant loss of community resource

Commissioners' Response to Public Input

- Acknowledged all concerns as valid and accurate
- Reaffirmed commitment to:
 - Continue hospice services in some capacity
 - Explore partnerships with hospitals and hospice providers
- Emphasized:
 - Financial insolvency leaves no viable alternative
 - Decision driven by structural, not operational, failure
- Noted:
 - This is likely the first of multiple difficult decisions

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6. Non-Public Session for the Purpose of Discussing Personnel Issue(s) and Contract Negotiations Pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II: Commissioner Feliciano motioned to go into non-public session at 10:33 a.m. for the purpose of discussing a personnel issue(s) and contract negotiations pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Leavitt and approved unanimously (3 to 0) by a roll call vote.
7. Return to Public Session: Commissioner Feliciano motioned to return to public session at 12:27 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Leavitt and approved unanimously (3 to 0) by a voice vote.
8. Motion to Seal Non-Public Session Minutes: Commissioner Leavitt motioned to seal the minutes of the non-public session, seconded by Commissioner Feliciano, and approved unanimously (3 to 0) by a voice vote.
9. Adjournment: The Commissioners signed paperwork as appropriate. Commissioner Leavitt motioned to adjourn the meeting at 12:33 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Feliciano and approved unanimously (3 to 0) by a voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

George Maglaras, Chairman
Leslie A. Feliciano, Vice Chair
Sean M. Leavitt, Clerk

STRAFFORD COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2026

Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88076078990?pwd=XhfZv74QrC78qR5pDjpARV2GadmFIV.1>

Meeting ID: 880 7607 8990 Passcode: 391058

A public meeting of the Strafford County Commissioners was held Thursday, April 9, 2026, at 11:15 a.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room, Justice and Administration Building, 259 County Farm Road, Suite 204, Dover, New Hampshire. It was noted that meeting notices and agendas had been sent to all interested parties, as well as posted on the County Website. Present were Commissioners Maglaras and Feliciano. Commissioner Leavitt was excused. Also present were Administrator Raymond Bower, Sheriff Kathryn Mone, Chief Deputy Ray Pardy, EMD Director Justin Bellen, HOC Superintendent Chris Brackett, Drug Court Director Carole Lee, IT Specialist Kelly Parker, Ryan Crosby, Susan Rice, and Executive Assistant/Deputy Treasurer Janet Hilber. Some staff members joined via Zoom.

1. Approve Minutes of March 31 and April 2, 2026: Commissioner Feliciano motioned to approve the minutes of March 31, and April 2, 2026 as written. The motion was seconded by Chairman Maglaras, and approved unanimously (2 to 0) by a voice vote.
2. Approve NH Superior Court Lease Amendment: An amendment to the lease with the State of New Hampshire was presented due to the upcoming relocation of Probate and Family Division to a new facility in Rochester. The amendment extends the current contract with New Hampshire Courts until October 31, 2026 to accommodate the temporary continuation of court operations until relocation is complete and includes a 3% rent increase. Commissioners discussed the financial and operational implications, including minor anticipated revenue impacts and public inconvenience caused by separating court and Registry of Deeds services. For the record, Chairman Maglaras noted how he is bothered by the public inconvenience of the court's decision to move the Probate Office to another location. Maintaining the Superior Court's presence was emphasized as financially and operationally beneficial to the County. Negotiations for Superior Court's new four-year lease continue and will be presented at an upcoming meeting. Commissioner Feliciano motioned to approve the New Hampshire Superior Court lease extension to October 31, 2026 with a 3% rent increase. The motion was seconded by Chairman Maglaras, and approved unanimously (2 to 0) by a voice vote.
3. Approve 2026 State of NH Adult Drug Court Program Grant: The continuation of the Adult Drug Court Program was presented, highlighting Strafford County's leadership as the first such program in the state. Program data showed a 60% success rate, consistent with state benchmarks, and strong participation levels. Commissioners emphasized the program's role in reducing recidivism, preventing victimization, and lowering incarceration costs. The grant application, newly prepared internally, was praised for its thoroughness and accuracy. Commissioner Feliciano motioned to approve the 2026 State of New Hampshire Adult Drug Court Program Grant. The motion was seconded by Chairman Maglaras, and approved unanimously (2 to 0) by a voice vote.
4. Recognize National Public Safety Telecommunications Week 2026 – April 12th through April 18th: A proclamation was introduced recognizing National Public Safety Telecommunications Week (April 12–18) and the importance of formally honoring dispatchers. Leadership emphasized that dispatchers serve as the critical first point of contact in emergencies, providing calm, professional, and often life-saving assistance. Their role in gathering accurate information is essential for police, fire, and EMS responders to act effectively. The demanding nature of dispatch work—24/7 coverage, high stress, and long shifts—while noting the consistent praise received from municipalities for their performance was highlighted. Appreciation was expressed for the dispatch team's professionalism and contributions to public safety, as well as recent investments in upgraded communication systems to support their work. The discussion concluded with encouragement for the public and local communities to acknowledge and thank dispatchers for their often under-recognized role as "first – first responders." Commissioner Feliciano motioned approve and sign the proclamation to recognize the week of April 12 through April 18, 2026 as National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week. The motion was seconded by Chairman Maglaras, and approved unanimously (2 to 0) by a voice vote.
5. Upcoming Events: Chairman Maglaras asked if there were any upcoming events to discuss. The following events were discussed:
 - a. Willand Warming Center Spring Support Fair – Monday, April 13, 2026. Current contract ends April 15; program remains on budget.
 - b. Strafford County Community Night at Delta Dental Stadium, Sunday, May 17, 2026, 1:05 p.m. First Pitch – Hosted by New Hampshire Fisher Cats. \$5.00 of every ticket sold through will be donated to the Riverside Rest Home Memorial Fund.

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6. Old and New Business: Chairman Maglaras asked if there was any old or new business to discuss. Administrator Bower reported exceptional results from a recent state and federal inspection of Riverside Rest Home (RRH), with only one minor deficiency—well below industry averages of 7 federal and 6 state deficiencies — demonstrating a high level of care and compliance. Survey occurs every 9 to 15 months from the last survey. Administrator Bower explained his effort to have the deficiency changed to a MedPass for a lower impact deficiency, which was unsuccessful. The issue involved a procedural error with insulin pen usage and has since been corrected through staff retraining. There were no repeat deficiencies which is important under new regulations. RRH will maintain a high star rating.

Additional updates included progress on the new warming center project in Dover, which is advancing through permitting with construction expected to begin soon, and a reported short-term decline in ICE-related revenue, which the County is actively working to address. The numerous federal inspections for ICE detainees has made the Strafford County House of Corrections a better jail as the information is learned and implemented across the entire department. Administrator Bower noted Chairman Maglaras does not receive the positive recognition he deserves for his decades of hard work and service to the County.

7. Questions and Comments from the Public Related to this Agenda: Chairman Maglaras asked if there were any questions from the members of the public or other. The Commission addressed ongoing public interest in the closure of the Hyder Family Hospice House, noting continued discussions with potential external operators and expressing cautious optimism about future reopening under a sustainable model. Efforts are also underway to transition affected staff into other roles within the County and regional healthcare system, while renovating part of RRH to accommodate hospice residents. The importance of accurate and encompassing history was noted.
8. Non-Public Session for the Purpose of Discussing Personnel Issue(s) and Contract Negotiations Pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II: Commissioner Feliciano motioned to go into non-public session at noon for the purpose of discussing a personnel issue(s) and contract negotiations pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II. The motion was seconded by Chairman Maglaras and approved unanimously (2 to 0) by a roll call vote.
9. Return to Public Session: Commissioner Feliciano motioned to return to public session at 12:23 p.m. The motion was seconded by Chairman Maglaras and approved unanimously (2 to 0) by a voice vote.
10. Motion to Seal Non-Public Session Minutes: Commissioner Feliciano motioned to seal the minutes of the non-public session, seconded by Chairman Maglaras, and approved unanimously (2 to 0) by a voice vote.
11. Adjournment: The Commissioners signed paperwork as appropriate. Commissioner Feliciano motioned to adjourn the meeting at 12:25 p.m. The motion was seconded by Chairman Maglaras and approved unanimously (2 to 0) by a voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

George Maglaras, Chairman
Leslie A. Feliciano, Vice Chair



259 County Farm Road, Suite 105, Dover, New Hampshire 03820
Tel. (603) 742-4960 Fax: (603) 516-2280

April 6th, 2026

Strafford County Commissioners,

Every day, our dispatchers serve as the first point of contact for people experiencing emergencies, providing calm, professional, and lifesaving assistance when it matters most.

The Strafford County Sheriff's Office Communications Center will recognize National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week from April 12 through April 18, 2026. This is an opportunity to formally acknowledge the critical work these professionals do behind the scenes to keep our communities safe.

I respectfully request your support in issuing a Proclamation to recognize our dispatchers and the essential role they play. I also want to express my appreciation for your continued support of this team of professionals.

A proposed message is enclosed for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Kathryn L. Mone



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TREASURER
PAMELA J. ARNOLD

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
RAYMOND F. BOWER

STRAFFORD COUNTY
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WILLIAM A. GRIMES
Justice & Administration Building
259 County Farm Road, Suite 204
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Telephone: 603-742-1458
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Proclamation

National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week April 12-18, 2026

Whereas, emergencies that require police, fire or emergency medical services can occur at any time; and,

Whereas, when an emergency occurs the prompt response of police officers, firefighters and emergency medical services is critical to the protection of life and preservation of property; and,

Whereas, the safety of our police officers, firefighters and emergency medical services is dependent upon the quality and accuracy of information obtained from those who contact the emergency communications centers within Strafford County; and,

Whereas, Public Safety Telecommunicators are the first and most critical contact the people and visitors of Strafford County have with emergency services; and,

Whereas, Public Safety Telecommunicators are the single vital link for our police officers, firefighters and emergency medical services by monitoring their activities by radio, providing them information and ensuring their safety; and,

Whereas, Public Safety Telecommunicators of Strafford County have contributed substantially to the apprehension of criminals, suppression of fires and treatment of patients; and,

Whereas, each dispatcher has exhibited compassion, understanding and professionalism during the performance of their job in the past year;

Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Strafford County Commissioners declare the week of April 12 through 18, 2026, to be National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week in Strafford County, in honor of all telecommunicators whose diligence and professionalism keep the people and visitors of Strafford County safe.

INTRODUCED AND PASSED by the Strafford County Board of Commissioners at a Regular Meeting on April 9, 2026 in Dover, New Hampshire.

Attest:

George Maglaras, Chairman

Leslie A. Feliciano, Vice Chair

Sean M. Leavitt, Clerk

STRAFFORD COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2026

Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88076078990?pwd=XhfZv74QrC78qR5pDjpARV2GadmFIV.1>

Meeting ID: 880 7607 8990 Passcode: 391058

A public meeting of the Strafford County Commissioners was held Thursday, April 16, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room, Justice and Administration Building, 259 County Farm Road, Suite 204, Dover, New Hampshire. It was noted that meeting notices and agendas had been sent to all interested parties, as well as posted on the County Website. Present were Commissioners Maglaras and Leavitt. Commissioner Feliciano was excused. Also present were Administrator Raymond Bower, IT Specialist Kelly Parker, and Assistant Director of Purchasing Jodi Brown.

Administrator Bower provided an update regarding the closing of Hyder Hospice House noting there will be a continuation of hospice and respite care services at Riverside Rest Home. All residents have been successfully transferred to Riverside and staffing transitions have been handled in accordance with union requirements, though several nurses declined reassignment offers; cost savings from the closure are expected to begin in the second quarter and increase later in the year. Assistant Director Brown reported renovations at Riverside are progressing quickly, with four new resident and family rooms being created in prime locations near the elevator using cost-effective materials, and completion is anticipated by the end of next week. Administrator Bower reported a recent COVID outbreak was contained with only mild cases and no hospitalizations, and the facility is expected to be COVID-free imminently. Additionally, requests to reopen the Hyder facility are still under review, while ongoing challenges include managing visitor-related health risks and coordinating final renovation and IT setup work.

1. Non-Public Session for the Purpose of Discussing Personnel Issue(s) and Contract Negotiations Pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II: Commissioner Leavitt motioned to go into non-public session at 2:10 p.m. for the purpose of discussing a personnel issue(s) and contract negotiations pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II. The motion was seconded by Chairman Maglaras and approved unanimously (2 to 0) by a roll call vote.
2. Return to Public Session: Commissioner Leavitt motioned to return to public session at 2:47 p.m. The motion was seconded by Chairman Maglaras and approved unanimously (2 to 0) by a voice vote.
3. Motion to Seal Non-Public Session Minutes: Commissioner Leavitt motioned to seal the minutes of the non-public session, seconded by Chairman Maglaras, and approved unanimously (2 to 0) by a voice vote.
4. Adjournment: The Commissioners signed paperwork as appropriate. Commissioner Leavitt motioned to adjourn the meeting at 2:49 p.m. The motion was seconded by Chairman Maglaras and approved unanimously (2 to 0) by a voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

George Maglaras, Chairman
Sean M. Leavitt, Clerk

STRAFFORD COUNTY COMMISSIONERS PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2026

Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88076078990?pwd=XhfZv74QrC78qR5pDjpARV2GadmFIV.1>

Meeting ID: 880 7607 8990 Passcode: 391058

A public meeting of the Strafford County Commissioners was held Thursday, April 23, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room, Justice and Administration Building, 259 County Farm Road, Suite 204, Dover, New Hampshire. It was noted that meeting notices and agendas had been sent to all interested parties, as well as posted on the County Website. Present were Commissioners Maglaras, Feliciano, and Leavitt. Also present were Administrator Raymond Bower, HOC Superintendent Chris Brackett, CAC Director Caitlin Emerson, IT Specialist Kelly Parker, Susan Rice, and Executive Assistant/Deputy Treasurer Janet Hilber.

1. Approve Minutes of April 9, 2026: Commissioner Feliciano motioned to approve the minutes of April 9, 2026 as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Leavitt, and approved unanimously (3 to 0) by a voice vote.
2. Discuss Request for Proclamation of May 2026 as ALS Awareness Month: Chairman Maglaras presented a request from a resident of Lee to proclaim May as ALS Awareness Month. ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) was described as a progressive neurodegenerative disease affecting muscle control, slowly reducing a person's ability to walk, talk, eat and eventually breathe. Commissioner Feliciano motioned to proclaim May as ALS Awareness Month. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Leavitt, and approved unanimously (3 to 0) by a voice vote. Chairman Maglaras ordered the Strafford County seal be added to the document and sent to the requesting resident.
3. Approve Child Advocacy Center Grant Extension: Director Emerson provided an overview of a requested grant extension for previously awarded state funding approved by the Governor and Executive Council on February 21, 2024. The funding will support the hiring of a contracted trauma clinician to serve children through the Child Advocacy Center. Due to prior space limitations, funds had not yet been expended. A partnership has been established with the Rockingham County Child Advocacy Center, which offers appropriate, child-friendly clinical space. The extension would allow the grant to remain active through June 2027, enabling use of the funds. Additional long-term funding for the clinician may be supported through the Granite State Children's Alliance. Commissioners discussed the benefits of shared regional resources and acknowledged this as a temporary solution to ensure timely services for children. Commissioner Feliciano motioned to approve the Child Advocacy Center grant extension from June 30, 2026 to June 30, 2027. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Leavitt, and approved unanimously (3 to 0) by a voice vote.
4. Upcoming Events: Chairman Maglaras asked if there were any upcoming events to discuss. The following events were discussed:
 - a. RRH Resident Council Fund Yard Sale Fundraiser Saturday and Sunday, April 25 & 26, 2026
 - b. Strafford County Community Night at Delta Dental Stadium, Sunday, May 17, 2026, 1:05 a.m. First Pitch – Hosted by New Hampshire Fisher Cats
5. Old and New Business: Chairman Maglaras asked if there was any old or new business to discuss. Chairman Maglaras provided a warming center update noting The County is awaiting a final closeout report from the previous warming center season. Construction planning for the new warming shelter is ongoing. Coordination continues with Hunter Construction and the City of Dover regarding permitting and subcontractor scheduling. The project remains on schedule, though timelines depend on subcontractor availability and materials. Chairman Maglaras clarified that no construction grants have yet been awarded; applications remain pending through federal and congressional channels. The County did receive operating funds, including approximately \$144,000 through a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), in addition to earlier state funding. These funds apply to past operational expenses, not future construction. No municipal funds have yet been received for construction, as the project has not begun. A future meeting with municipal leaders will address financial coordination and any potential reimbursements. Upon returning from non-public session, the Commissioners reviewed a newly received email from the Rochester Police Department (RPD) requesting approval of the FY2025 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) award of \$23,627.00 for drone, batteries, battery charger, infrared lighting system and prep course for UAS Testing. RPD apologized for the late notice as the documents were just received due to recent federal government shutdowns and have a submission deadline of April 28, 2026. Chairman Maglaras explained Strafford County would agree to act as fiscal agent and take zero dollars. Commissioner Feliciano motioned to approve and sign the 2025 Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Interlocal Agreement with the City of Rochester for \$23,627.00. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Leavitt and approved unanimously (3 to 0) by voice vote.

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6. Questions and Comments from the Public Related to this Agenda: Chairman Maglaras asked if there were any questions from the members of the public or other. Commissioners emphasized the need to correct misinformation shared at recent municipal meetings and in public discussion. Coordination with local officials will ensure accurate reporting of funding and project status. A member of the public requested clarification on warming shelter funding and confirmed intent to correct prior public statements. Commissioners reviewed funding sources, distinguishing between operational and construction funding, and offered assistance in ensuring accurate communication. Commissioners reiterated their focus on long-term planning and adapting county operations to meet future needs.

Additional discussion included:

- Confirmation that negotiations are ongoing with Wentworth-Douglass Hospital regarding facility use, with legal teams finalizing details of an existing lease arrangement.
 - Long-term courthouse planning, including potential reallocation of space as court functions relocate.
 - Consideration of future service placement, including child advocacy services, with attention to accessibility and appropriateness of environment.
 - Acknowledgment of logistical challenges related to court relocation, including physical records management and construction timelines.
7. Non-Public Session for the Purpose of Discussing Personnel Issue(s) and Contract Negotiations Pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II: Commissioner Feliciano motioned to go into non-public session at 9:30 a.m. for the purpose of discussing a personnel issue(s) and contract negotiations pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Leavitt and approved unanimously (3 to 0) by a roll call vote.
8. Return to Public Session: Commissioner Feliciano motioned to return to public session at 11:28 a.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Leavitt and approved unanimously (3 to 0) by a voice vote. Upon return to public session, Commissioner Feliciano motioned to approve the minutes of April 16, 2026 as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Leavitt, and approved unanimously (3 to 0) by a voice vote.
9. Motion to Seal Non-Public Session Minutes: Commissioner Leavitt motioned to seal the minutes of the non-public session, seconded by Commissioner Feliciano, and approved unanimously (3 to 0) by a voice vote.
10. Adjournment: The Commissioners signed paperwork as appropriate. Commissioner Leavitt motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:38 a.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Feliciano and approved unanimously (3 to 0) by a voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

George Maglaras, Chairman
Leslie A. Feliciano, Vice Chair
Sean M. Leavitt, Clerk

COMMISSIONERS
GEORGE MAGLARAS, *Chairman*
LESLIE A. FELICIANO, *Vice Chair*
SEAN M. LEAVITT, *Clerk*

TREASURER
PAMELA J. ARNOLD

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
RAYMOND F. BOWER

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Proclamation

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month May, 2026

Whereas, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease, is a progressive fatal neurodegenerative disease in which a person's brain loses connection with their muscles, slowly reducing a person's ability to walk, talk, eat, and eventually breathe; and,

Whereas, thousands of new amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) cases are reported every year, and estimates show that every 90 minutes, someone is diagnosed with ALS and someone passes away from ALS; and,

Whereas, the safety of our police officers, firefighters and emergency medical services is dependent upon the quality and accuracy of information obtained from those who contact the emergency communications centers within Strafford County; and,

Whereas, on average, patients diagnosed with ALS survive only two to five years from the time of diagnosis; and,

Whereas, the exact causes of ALS are unknown and there is no known cure for ALS; and,

Whereas, people who have served in the military are more likely to develop ALS and die from the disease than those with no history of military service; and,

Whereas, securing access to new therapies, durable medical equipment, and communication technologies is of vital importance to people living with ALS; and,

Whereas, clinical trials play a pivotal role in evaluating new treatments, enhancing quality of life, and fostering assistive technologies for those living with ALS; and,

Whereas, the ALS Association is the largest philanthropic funder of ALS research globally and has committed more than \$154 million to support more than 550 projects across the United States and 18 other countries; and,

Whereas, the ALS Association is committed to make ALS livable and cure it for everyone, everywhere; and,

Whereas, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Awareness Month provides an opportunity to increase public awareness of the dire circumstances of people living with ALS, acknowledge the terrible impact this disease has on those individuals and their families, and support research to eradicate this disease; and,

Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Strafford County Commissioners do hereby proclaim the month of May 2026 as ALS Awareness Month. I call upon all Americans to join in supporting ALS research, advocating for increased funding, and standing in solidarity with those affected by this relentless disease.

INTRODUCED AND PASSED by the Strafford County Board of Commissioners at a Regular Meeting on April 23, 2026 in Dover, New Hampshire.

Attest:

George Maglaras, Chairman

Leslie A. Feliciano, Vice Chair

Sean M. Leavitt, Clerk