

MEMORANDUM

To: Dover City Council colleagues; City Manager Mike Joyal
From: Fergus Cullen
Date: December 8, 2025
Re: Proposed amendments / conditions on homeless facility at County Farm

I propose the following **conditions of approval**, in the form of amendments to the resolution, intended to protect County Farm area property owners and Dover taxpayers.

How it works: We make a funding commitment, which allows the County to advance their plans now. But we won't actually cut the check until the County comes up with plans to meet our conditions. This could come in the form of a separate Memo of Understanding addressing them.

- A. As the host community, construction of the facility shall be subject to City of Dover's building and site plan permitting process through the Dover Planning Board and Planning Department.

Rationale: This ensures Dover Police & Fire have a seat at the table during the design process through the Technical Review Committee, and that the public has opportunities for input during the permitting process.

- B. The facility shall not operate except between the dates of November 15 and April 15, and may be open for shorter periods within that window. Operating the facility shall be subject to an annual permit granted by the Dover City Council and issued by the Chief of Dover Fire & Rescue.

Rationale: This prevents the facility from morphing into a year-round facility, or expanding, without Dover's consent. If there are issues with how the facility is being operated, or its impact on nearby private property, Dover has an annual opportunity to get those issues addressed.

- C. Whenever the facility closes, no person shall leave County property on foot. Everyone who needs a ride, gets a ride, provided by the County, at County expense.

Rationale: This gives nearby private property owners some assurance people staying at the facility will not camp illegally in the vicinity of County Farm between openings. Agreeing to rides can be incorporated into behavior agreements signed by people who stay at the facility. Transportation may be coordinated by the contract operator, not necessarily County staff.

- D. The County shall establish, at County expense, a Property Damage Compensation Fund to which area homeowners who sustain property damage linked to the homeless facility, documented by a police report, may apply.

Rationale: This gives nearby private property owners some assurance that if spillover problems happen, they may be compensated. If no such problems occur, then the fund won't be needed, so no harm done.

- E. Dover taxpayers shall not pay facility construction costs through the General Fund or Fund Balances. Dover may contribute net proceeds from the sale of the Rollinsford property and the existing Willand Shelter building toward construction costs – but not more than that. If there is a shortfall between the \$1,698,877.58 requested by the County from Dover and net proceeds from the two property sales, and additional funds are needed for construction, those additional funds shall be paid proportionately by the entire county, and not disproportionately by Dover.

Rationale: If this is going to be a County facility, then costs should be borne equitably by the entire County, like they are for the nursing home and the jail. Dover is about 25% of Strafford County by population and by assessed value, but is being charged nearly half (48%) of construction costs. It is unfair to Dover taxpayers to charge them a disproportionate share of costs on top of serving as the host community. It is one thing to contribute one-time available non-property tax funding to the project. It is another to take money away from other Dover priorities, including tax relief.

- F. Operating costs shall be paid proportionately by the entire county, and not disproportionately by Dover.

Rationale: See above.

- G. Dover's police and fire service expenses shall be capped at \$75,000 per fiscal year. The County shall reimburse Dover for costs over \$75,000, documented and invoiced annually by the City of Dover.

Rationale: The hundreds of annual police and fire calls related to the Willand facility currently dispatched by Somersworth will now go to Dover. At times these calls will take Dover emergency staff away from serving other community needs. Dover is already contributing \$75,000 in direct funding to the Willand facility and would likely continue to do so. Costs over \$75,000 should be subject to reimbursement by the County, capping Dover's exposure to escalating costs.