

The regular weekly meeting of the Huntingdon County Commissioners was held on the above date and time in the Commissioners meeting room with the following being present: Commissioners O’Korn, Fluke and Thomas; Chief Clerk, Michelle Cerett; Solicitor McManamon; Planning Director, Mark Colussy; Daily News reporter, Kylie Hawn; visitors Larry Burger, Jim Cassatt, Scott Walls and Mark Sather.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Commissioner O’Korn followed by prayer led by Commissioner O’Korn and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag led by Commissioner Fluke.

It was moved by Commissioner Fluke, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (O’Korn, yes; Fluke, yes; Thomas, yes) to approve the minutes of the December 1st public meeting.

It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Fluke and carried (Fluke, yes; Thomas, yes; O’Korn, yes) to approve the payment of bills.

There were no additions to the agenda, public comments or matters addressed by the Solicitor today.

Commissioner Fluke expressed concern about a illegal meeting that was held last week. Commissioner Thomas stated he was not aware of an illegal meeting. Commissioner O’Korn announced that Special Election for the Mount Union School District is taking place today. He also stated today is the last day for Intern Jaime Fell. Commissioner O’Korn wished Jaime well and thanked him for his time and effort the past few months.

There were no public comments today.

First on the agenda today was the opening of the bids for the 2016 TRAN loan. The following six bids were received:

First National bank of Mifflintown	Interest on loan 1.5%, interest on deposit account .065%
Juniata Valley Bank	Interest on loan 2.9%, no deposit account offered
Community State Bank	Interest on loan 1.3%, no deposit account offered
Mifflin County Savings Bank	Interest on loan 1.49%, no deposit account offered
First National Bank of PA	Interest on loan 1.38%, interest on deposit account .45%
Kish Bank	Interest on loan 0.96%, interest on deposit account .15%

Solicitor McManamon left the meeting at this time to review the bids with the Treasurer.

The next item on the agenda was Brian Wisner and Scott Feagley to discuss a plan to action for County Bridge #9, Runk bridge. Brian stated that during a recent inspection, a crack was discovered in the floor beam. He stated there is immediate safety concern but the issue needs to be addressed. The short term plan is for Scott to monitor it monthly. The long term plan is to replace a 13’6” section of the beam. Brian presented a proposal to do the Engineering and design phase at a cost of \$8,720.00. He estimates the construction portion of the work to be approximately \$25,000.00. The Commissioners will consider Brian’s proposal at a future meeting.

Brian also provided information on County bridge #17, Neffs Bridge. He stated the deck has worsened and the Township has expressed concern. He stated that it is now considered structurally deficient and qualified for Act 13 funds. Brian suggested authorizing him to start the process of getting approval from Southern Alleghenies for the Act 13 funds. After further discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Fluke and carried (Thomas, yes; O’Korn, yes; Fluke, yes) to authorize Keller Engineers to start the information phase of this project.

Solicitor McManamon re-joined the meeting at this time and suggested approving the loan bid for Kish Bank. It was moved by Commissioner Fluke, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (O’Korn, yes; Fluke, yes; Thomas, yes) to award the TRAN loan bid to Kish Bank at an interest rate of .96%. Solicitor McManamon stated there was no recommendation on awarding an interest bearing account bid.

Next on the agenda was Nicole Leturgy, CYS Supervisor with two Purchase of service contracts for consideration. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Fluke and carried (Fluke, yes; Thomas, yes; O’Korn, yes) to approve a Purchase of Service agreement with Attorney Michael Gingrich for a period of July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner O’Korn and carried (Thomas, yes; O’Korn, yes; Fluke, no) to approve a Purchase of Service agreement with Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. for a period of July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016.

Mark Colussy was present today with two requests. Last week, an On The Job Training contract with Career Link was tabled pending the salary board meeting. Since the salary board meeting, he has obtained a contract with Career Link for a program he believes Taylor Pollicino qualifies for. If approved, the County would be reimbursed 50% of her salary for the first 800 hours of training. Mark didn’t have the completed agreement for the meeting but feels he can get it from Career Link. Solicitor McManamon suggested bringing the entire contract back once he receives it. Mark will excuse himself from the meeting following his second agenda item and request the completed contract before the meeting adjourns today. Taylor is scheduled to start work December 14th and the agreement must be in place in order for the County to get reimbursed.

Mark recommended promoting Laurie Nearhood to the position of Office Manager/Secretary. The item was addressed at Salary board last week and a recommendation was made to present it to the Board. He has revised the job description and presented it to the Commissioners for consideration. After discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner O’Korn and carried (O’Korn, yes; Fluke, no; Thomas, yes) to approve the promotion of Laurie Nearhood to office manager effective December 14th, 2015.

Solicitor McManamon received and presented Resolution 23-2015 for consideration. The resolution is related to the TRAN loan that was approved earlier in the meeting. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Fluke and carried (Fluke, yes; Thomas, yes; O’Korn, yes) to adopt resolution 23-2015 as presented.

At this time, there was discussion regarding the Deputy Chief Clerk/Elections Coordinator position. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner O’Korn and carried (Thomas, yes; O’Korn, yes; Fluke, no) to approve the termination of Kelly Hughes effective December 8th, 2015. Commissioner Fluke expressed concern with how the situation was handled. He feels a special meeting was held last week and Kelly was terminated at that meeting. Commissioners O’Korn and Thomas both stated they were not aware of a special meeting. He stated there was discussion regarding the situation with Kelly but no decision was made until today. Solicitor McManamon also stated he is not aware of any special meeting. He stated that there was a meeting with Kelly to discuss the situation and she was given a chance to resign her position. Commissioner O’Korn asked if that was a violation of Sunshine Laws, Solicitor McManamon stated it is not a violation of Sunshine Laws to have a discussion with Kelly. He further iterated that no action was considered until today. Commissioner Fluke continued to state he felt the termination was done at a special meeting. Commissioner O’Korn stated that at the meeting with Kelly last week, she was given a chance to resign her position. She refused to do so and was informed that the Board would consider taking further action. Due to the sensitivity of computer materials and access, Kelly was asked to leave the premises until further action was taken. That further action was taken at the meeting today. Commissioner Thomas stated he doesn’t feel this personnel issue should be discussed in the public meeting. Solicitor McManamon agreed and ended the discussion. Commissioner Fluke stated there are other things that are going to be made known. Commissioner O’Korn defended statements made in last week’s Daily News article about Kelly’s situation. He stated Commissioner Fluke was quoted in the Daily News that Commissioner O’Korn ripped up a letter in front of him, which is not true. Commissioner O’Korn stated that the drama of the whole situation in the Daily News last week is disgusting. He feels the Board did their best to retain Ms. Hughes but those attempts were unsuccessful.

Mark Colussy returned to the meeting at this time with the completed OTJ contract to be signed. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner O’Korn and carried (O’Korn, yes; Fluke, no; Thomas, yes) to approve the On the Job Training contract with Career Link as presented.

Michelle asked to address the vacancy in her office due to the termination of Kelly Hughes. She stated that several years ago, the Deputy Chief Clerk and Elections Coordinator positions were combined. At the time, Lori Sheffield was given both positions. Since Lori’s departure in 2013, there have been two people hired for the combined role. Michelle feels that the combined position is too much for one person to learn. She stated it worked well for Lori because she trained in Elections prior to taking the combined position. In light of the current situation, she is recommending splitting the positions back into two positions for advertising purposes. She stated she will stay within the proposed 2016 budget for salaries. After discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner O’Korn and carried (Fluke, no; Thomas, yes; O’Korn, yes) to approve the splitting of the positions. Commissioner Thomas pointed out that he made the motion for advertising purposed so the process could be started. However, he pointed out that the hiring’s should not take place until the new board is in place. Michelle agreed and said the hiring’s won’t take place until January.

Commissioner Fluke made additional comments regarding the situation with Kelly Hughes and accused Commissioner Thomas of trying to bribe him to sign the letter. Commissioner Thomas stated that Commissioner Fluke’s actions regarding the personnel situation are appalling. Solicitor McManamon again ended the conversation.

There were five Veteran burial allowances approved today.

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Thomas to adjourn the meeting at 11:09 a.m. Minutes prepared by Michelle L. Cerett, Chief Clerk.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeffrey Thomas, Secretary