

The regular meeting of the Huntingdon County Commissioners was held on the above date and time in the Commissioner's Office with the following present via GoToMeeting: Commissioners Sather, Walls and Thomas; Chief Clerk, Heather Fellman; Deputy Chief Clerk, Tracey Rhodes; Solicitor, Larry Newton; Maintenance Director, Gary Bair; Prothonotary, Kay Coons; CYS Fiscal Supervisor, Claudia Conrad; CYS Fiscal Tech, Chris Dixon; Sheriff, Jeff Leonard; Probation Director, Len Hahn; Planning Director, Jim Lettiere; Community Development Administrator, Stacia-Fe Gillen; Wendy Melius from the Center for Community Action; Celina Seftas from the Conservation District; EMA Director, Joe Thompson; Deputy Treasurer, Cathy Bilger and Daily News Reporter, Kylie Hawn.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Commissioner Sather. Heather Fellman conducted roll call of all call-in participants and discussed policies and procedures for public comment during the meeting. All participants will be muted for the duration of the meeting except during public comment periods. During public comment periods, participants will be unmuted individually to ensure that everyone is heard. Prayer was led by Commissioner Walls and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by Commissioner Thomas.

It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes) to approve the minutes of the April 13th Public Meeting.

It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Sather, yes) to approve the payment of bills.

There was one addition to the agenda: Consideration of Approval for the CDBG Cooperation Agreement with Smithfield Township. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, second by Commissioner Thomas (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes) to add this item to the agenda.

Under announcements Commissioner Thomas asked the public for help with Broadband. If you are in need of broadband service and you are in an area that is unserved or underserved, please contact the Commissioners' Office. We have funding coming in and we may be looking at expanding broadband access. Commissioner Sather announced that there is funding for those in the hospitality industry. For more information you can reach out to HCBI.

There were no public comments.

Under Matters to be addressed by the solicitor, Attorney Newton gave an update on the Gail Galloway complaint. Mr. Galloway has filed an amended complaint against the County, the Commissioners, and Kellie Benson. This morning I filed preliminary objections to that complaint and asked that the complaint be dismissed because there is no legitimate cause of action. Attorney Newton also announced that he has circulated a draft indemnification and cooperation agreement with Juniata College and our General Authority. This agreement is necessary for the college to proceed with improvements for the library. The agreement has been approved by the college but still has to be approved by the Commonwealth. Attorney Newton commented that he is working on a Right to Know request with the Chief Clerk regarding absentee ballot applications from the last election. This RTK was submitted not only to Huntingdon County but to all of the other counties in the state. We are hoping for some state action on that request as well.

Under new business, Wendy Melius from the Center for Community Action requested consideration of approval for an amendment to the PHARE contract for Wood Township. Originally we were looking at doing senior housing. That project fell through due to COVID. The township wanted to switch gears to do home modifications with the program. That was approved by the state and the Commissioners with an end date of April of this year. However with the lingering effects of COVID, individuals were still cautious about letting us into their homes. We were anticipating doing eight homes, but with the pandemic still with us we were unable to complete the project by the end of this month. We requested an extension with the state to carry it out to the end of this year, December 2021. The state has approved it and we are requesting approval from the Commissioners for an amendment to our contract. We have three homes in progress and two applications have been submitted for review. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes).

Wendy Melius provided an update on the Emergency Rental Assistance Grant. We have spent \$78,142 serving 18 households. The majority are needing utility assistance. We have plenty of funding so if anyone needs rental or utility assistance, please contact us. You can apply on Compass or you can call our Huntingdon or main offices.

Celina Seftas, Director of the Conservation District, thanked the Commissioners for recognizing April 18-24 as Conservation District Week. Statewide, Conservation Districts are taking this week to thank our PA State Senate and House Representatives, Governor Wolf, and our County Commissioners for their support of our program. Our budget request from the state has remained level-funded for 15 years and from the county level-funded for 11 years. In honor of Conservation District Week I wanted to share an update about our programs. This spring we are happy to be back to some of our normal spring activities. This spring has been busier than normal. Construction season has just started and we have already completed 3500 feet of stream bank fencing, 800 feet of stabilized cattle walkway, and 1,005 feet of stream bank restoration. We plan to work on seven more farms this construction season for more conservation practices to reduce erosion. We are also working on 23.4 acres of forested riparian buffers this season. With all of these projects, our goal is to keep the soil on the land where it is protected for farmers and out of the streams where it can cause pollution issues. These projects were all funded by Pennsylvania's Growing Greener Grant Program, Pennsylvania's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Riparian Buffer Grant Program, as well as private funds through our partnership with Chesapeake Conservancy. We also want to remind municipalities that we are accepting applications for the dirt and gravel and low-volume roads program. Anybody that is interested in applying is encouraged to reach out to our office to schedule a pre-application meeting. Applications are due June 30th. We are also accepting applications for the Agricultural Land Preservation Program. Those are due May 28th. Our annual tree sale was a big success this year. We sold more than 4,000 trees to local land owners who are improving wildlife habitat on their own properties. All of the proceeds from this sale are put towards our environmental education fund. Even though we cannot be in schools this year or do many field trips, we are loaning out resources to schools. We have a lot of resources available, such as our wildlife kit, which contains real furs and replica skulls of common wildlife species in PA. Thank you again for recognizing Conservation District Week. Consideration of approval was given for Proclamation 4-2021 establishing April 18-24, 2021 as Conservation District Week. Commissioner Thomas offered his thanks to the Conservation District for all the work they do for the farmers and other residents of Huntingdon County. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Walls, yes, Thomas, yes, Sather, yes).

Gary Bair, Maintenance Director, requested consideration of approval to hire Atticus Clark for the position of Maintenance Crew Member. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Kay Coons, Prothonotary, requested consideration of approval to hire Kim Paxton, with an anticipated started date of April 21st. This is to fill a vacant position. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes).

Kay Coons requested consideration of approval to hire Bethany Rosevear with an anticipated start date of May 3, 2021 to fill a vacant position. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Sather, yes).

Jeff Leonard, Sheriff, requested consideration of approval to hire Samuel Harker as a full-time Deputy Sheriff. This is a vacant position that is being filled. He has a lot of training through the Department of Corrections. His start date will be April 21, 2021. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Heather Fellman requested consideration of approval to hire Heaven Bumgardner for the position of custodian. This will fill a vacant position. Her anticipated start date will be May 3rd. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes).

Len Hahn, Probation Director, requested consideration of approval for the Award Notification for the County Adult Probation Grant-In-Aid. The total funding amount is \$23,219 from PCCD. This funding will be used towards the salaries for the Probation Office staff. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Sather, yes).

Len Hahn requested consideration of approval for the 2021-2022 application for the Intermediate Punishment Treatment Program Grant. The total funding requested is \$35,000 to be put towards the salary of the CIP Officer. Commissioner Walls commented that we appreciate these funds coming into the County. Commissioner Thomas asked how long the Intermediate Punishment Program has been operational in Huntingdon County. Mr. Hahn responded that it has been running since 2015. Commissioner Thomas commented that it is a good program. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Chris Dixon, CYS Fiscal Tech, requested consideration of approval for an accounting services addendum for the Child Accounting and Profile System (CAPS). This is for fiscal year July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. The reason for this addendum is for any changes that we would like to make to our CAPS system as an individual county. The hourly rates for these services are on page 2 of the addendum. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes).

Chris Dixon requested consideration of approval for a Business Associate Agreement Addendum for contract year July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Sather, yes).

Chris Dixon requested consideration of approval for the Child Welfare Information System (CWIS) for fiscal year 2021/2022. This is a mandatory agreement that we have to enter into with Avanco International. The cost is split between all 56 counties that are involved with the CAPS system. The amount we pay is determined by the number of users that we have in the CAPS system, so our portion is fairly small. The total cost is on page 4 of the agreement. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Chris Dixon requested consideration of approval for the Child Accounting and Profile System Application Service Provider Agreement with Avanco. This is for hosting and maintenance on the system itself. We make a quarterly payment of \$7,477.49. This is for contract year July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Sather, yes, Walls, yes, Thomas, yes).

Chris Dixon requested consideration of approval for a purchase of service agreement with Robert Craig, Ph.D. This is for evaluations for parents and children, bonding assessments, and court testimony if needed. This is for contract year July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. This is a new contract. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Walls, yes, Thomas, yes, Sather, yes).

Joe Thompson, EMA Director, provided a COVID-19 update. We remain in the substantial level of community transmission. This is a concern that indicates that there is a very high exposure risk in Huntingdon County. Many of our surrounding counties have also returned to the substantial level. The purpose of me mentioning that is to emphasize that COVID-19 is still a concern and we should take proper precautions. The vaccination effort continues in Huntingdon County. It is part of the work of Penn Highlands Hospital in Huntingdon, the Broad Top Area Medical Center, and numerous local pharmacies. Everyone age 16 and older is now eligible to schedule for a vaccination. Huntingdon County has a total of 11,200 fully vaccinated people, which is about 25% of our total population. The partial vaccine is at 2,600, so we are approaching 30% of our population that has received at least partial vaccination. Our total to date number of cases is 4,761. Active cases in Huntingdon County is estimated to be about 500 at the moment. PA is now ranked 10th among the states for vaccination. Our confirmed case number is up slightly. We are seeing about 12 new cases per day in Huntingdon County. A note of concern that regionally the number of hospitalized patients is starting to tick up. The local hospital is fairly stable with inpatients but they are seeing more people in the ER with COVID-like illness. The total numbers at our local institutions are relatively low. There are a few cases at our long-term care facilities. If you are scheduled to receive your vaccination somewhere and you end up receiving it elsewhere, we encourage you to call and cancel any other place that you may signed up for. We are aware that some people have signed up at a number of places to receive the vaccine and they took the first dose that they were able to get. We appreciate them doing that but if you do not cancel your duplicate appointments, the dose that was set aside for you may go to waste when it could have gone to someone else. There is some vaccine hesitancy among folks. I encourage everyone if you have concerns about receiving a vaccine, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. They are well-trained to be able to answer your questions. A lot of the cases that are being reported are in the 65 and older age group. We are starting to see some cases in the 30-59 age group. Younger people are also being effected. We mention that as a matter of concern. Unfortunately, due to use being in the substantial category again, where there is an increased risk, we urge everyone to follow the precautions you have heard us talk about, particularly mask-wearing. COVID is a respiratory-borne disease. It is spread primarily through coughs, sneezes, and breathing. If anyone has any overall questions about COVID-19, there is a lot of information available through the PA Department of Health. Commissioner Sather asked for clarification on vaccinations and who is eligible. Mr. Thompson responded that anyone aged 16 or over can now be vaccinated. Though we have 10 sites right now that are receiving the vaccine, they may not have it the day you call but you can register to receive it. The Commissioners thanked Mr. Thompson for his report. Stacia-Fe Gillen commented that Penn Highlands does have two vaccine clinics with open appointments this week. That is for April 22 and 23. You can sign up online by searching Penn Highlands Healthcare Vaccine or you can call their number (814)503-4735. Cathy Bilger asked about the County's position on out-of-state travel for vaccinated employees. Heather Fellman responded that the County is following CDC guidelines and that their most recent recommendations indicate that individuals who travel out of state do not have to quarantine if they are fully vaccinated, meaning that it has been two weeks since their second dose of vaccine.

Stacia-Fe Gillen, Community Development Administrator, requested consideration of approval for a Cooperation Agreement by and between the Huntingdon County Commissioners and the Smithfield Township Supervisors. This is for administration of the CDBG program. We did have an executed sub-recipient agreement. This cooperation agreement gives a bit more detail on the duties of each party and does not have to be amended every time we add a CDBG project through the new application that comes out every year. The Smithfield Township Supervisors acted on this agreement at their meeting on Tuesday, April 6th. Jim

Lettiere commented that this agreement is almost identical to the previous agreement with Huntingdon Borough. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Thomas, yes, Sather, yes, Walls, yes).

There were no Matters for Action.

There were no Veteran's Burial Allowances.

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Thomas to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Heather Fellman, Deputy Chief Clerk.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeffrey Thomas, Secretary