

Huntingdon, PA  
Tuesday, June 23, 2009  
24-09

The regular weekly meeting of the Huntingdon County Commissioners was held on the above date in the Commissioners Meeting Room with the following being present: Commissioners Fluke and Hoover; Solicitor, Scot Gill; Chief Clerk, Cinnamon Bair; Chris Wysocki, MH/MR; George Germann, The Daily News; and visitors Charlie Coleman, Charles Putt, Duncan Robb, Randy Lang, Roger Meinhart, and Zach Gordon.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chairman Fluke followed by Prayer led by Chief Clerk Cinnamon Bair and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag led by Commissioner Hoover.

It was moved by Commissioner Hoover seconded by Commissioner Fluke and carried (Fluke, yes; Hoover, yes) to approve the minutes of the June 16 meeting.

It was moved by Commissioner Fluke seconded by Commissioner Hoover and carried (Hoover, yes; Fluke, yes) to approve payment of invoices for the week of June 22.

Commissioner Fluke announced that Commissioner Kough Pittenger was out on vacation.

There were no additions to today's meeting.

Mr. Charles Putt, Penn Township asked to speak when Commissioner Fluke addressed public comment on the agenda. Mr. Putt read from a memo he wrote regarding the Lower Trail article that was in the Daily News May 27, 2009. He asked the Commissioners to reconsider their vote on the Lower Trail. He said there are 1.4 million acres of State Game Lands and 120 State Parks in Pennsylvania. In Huntingdon there are 21,000 acres of federal land around Raystown Lake with an abundance of walking trails. Spending 7 million dollars on another trail is not a wise use of tax dollars. He suggested using tax dollars to entice manufacturing companies to Huntingdon County. Mr. Randy Lang, Walker Township said he was against the trail and the idea of the County taking ground from property owners. Mr. Roger Meinhart, Union Township said that the issue of Penn State not on the tax rolls and now the County would take land from taxpaying land owners and make trails and lose even more tax base. Mr. Meinhart said that in metropolitan areas trails bring crime. He said with all the federal land in the County put the trails there. Mr. Meinhart said he is not opposed to trails, but does not want the County to lose more tax revenue. Commissioner Hoover said that he agrees with what was being said. He told the audience that the County or no other governmental body could take land from owners by eminent domain for a trail. If a railway goes through a property, some land owners do not own it, while others do. If owners say no trail on the property and they own it free and clear, then there cannot be a trail. Commissioner Hoover said that he is not sure where the misconception occurred but he wanted say there will be no County eminent domain for properties to construct trails.

Mr. Duncan Robb asked, what is the source of the funding? Commission Hoover said that the Commissioners did not commit any money or taking of land. The Commissioners signed a resolution in support of the group working on the project.

Mr. Meinhart added that the County had taken land by eminent domain when they approved the plan for the bi-pass. Scot Gill, Solicitor said that state or municipal eminent domain is used to construct roadways. Mr. Duncan Robb addressed the Commissioners about the timber being cut off state ground. Many thousands of dollars were made from the timber that was forced to be cut due to the gypsy moths. Mr. Robb said he was aware that Oregon State gets a portion of the revenue from timber and puts it toward public schools. Commissioner Fluke said that was an appropriate time to bring that up. In Pennsylvania they are looking into taxing gas rights. It would only be fair that the state pay in when cutting timber. Scot Gill added that the County cannot make that happen, but other states have what is called an extraction tax. Commissioner Fluke added that the people planning the trails said they would not use eminent domain. Commissioner Fluke added because he found out they were not allowed. The County Code Book clearly states that eminent domain does not apply to railways, churches and cemeteries. Mr. Robb said he did not want more tax revenue lost. Scot said that the loss would be minimal. The land is now mostly under clean and green and unimproved.

Commissioner Fluke said that the parcels out Rt 26 showed land owners owning to the middle of the road. They are paying taxes on State roadway. Mr. Meinhart said the new parcels have changed and show the land ending at the right of way. Commissioner Fluke thanked the gentleman for attending the meeting with their questions.

No matters addressed by the Solicitor.

First on the agenda, was Chris Wysocki, current Assistant Director MH/MR. Chris was named to replace the current Executive Director Pat Serra upon her retirement in July.

Commissioner Hoover asked that Commissioner Kough Pittenger be called to allow her to hear and vote on the MH/MR discussion. Cinnamon Bair called Commissioner Kough Pittenger on the conference room

phone to the Commissioner's cell phone. Commissioner Kough Pittenger joined the meeting by phone.

Pat Serra brought paperwork to the Commissioners late last week and discussed the agreements for the MH/MR program and the State. CCAP was involved and had originally had the Counties MH/MR units to hold from signing regarding several issues. Pat told the Commissioners most things were worked out and the wording in the agreements allowed for future change of a few remaining items.

Today Chris came to get signatures of the agreements and a resolution signed that the Commissioners approve the Administrative Entity Operating agreements with the Offices of Developmental Programs and Childhood and Early Learning. Chris explained the Resolution will be ratified at the Tri-County Board of Commissioners meeting in September 2009. Commissioner Kough Pittenger asked if these were the agreements that CCAP were working on. Commissioner Hoover explained that Pat Serra was in after Commissioner Kough Pittenger left. It was moved by Commissioner Kough Pittenger seconded by Commissioner Hoover and carried (Fluke, yes; Kough Pittenger, yes; Hoover, yes) to sign the agreements and pass Resolution 18-2009. Commissioner Kough Pittenger gave permission by phone to the Chief Clerk to use the Commissioner's signature stamp to sign the documents. Commissioner Kough Pittenger congratulated Chris on the promotion to Executive Director.

The Commissioners approved payment for 1 Veteran burial allowance, 0 widow/widower burial allowance and 0 bases.

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Hoover second by Commissioner Fluke and carried to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 a.m. Minutes prepared by Chief Clerk Cinnamon L. Bair.

Respectfully submitted,

---

William W. Hoover, Vice Chairman