

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 Kough Pittenger, Hoover, and Fluke; Chief Clerk, Michelle Cerett; Solicitor, Peter McManamon; Richard Stahl, Planning Director; Lou Ann Shontz, Recycling Coordinator; Susanne House, HCBI; Brant Fitzpatrick, Priority Response ambulance; Susan Hartman, Curves Manager; Jeff Gill, Altoona Mirror; George Germann, The Daily News; and visitors Bruce Pergament, Joan and Jim Cassatt, Michelle Dreibelbis, Katrina and Josah Dreibelbis, Diona Chase, Ken Kyper, Clarence Fortney, Janice Metzgar, Mary Ellen Herbster, Sandi Lewis, Peg LaRosc, Bev Gembenski, Valerie Burnett, Susan Hurley, Jane Mateer, Donna Rhodes, Carol Yoder, Karen Morris, Tammy Giordano, Sue Esch, Becca Mahoney, Judy Cooper, Marcia Baxter, Mary Dubetz, Margaret Blanch, David Hartman, Matthew Kane, Alicia Kough, Greg Kough, Nicki Clampett, Jeannie Burkett, Barry Wright, Kevin Fluke, and Moxie Maxwell.

The meeting was called to order at 9:31 a.m. by Chairman Hoover followed by Prayer led by Commissioner Kough Pittenger and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag led by Michelle Cerett.

There were no additions or corrections to the January 4th minutes.

It was moved by Commissioner Fluke seconded by Commissioner Kough Pittenger and carried (Hoover, yes; Fluke, yes; Kough Pittenger, yes) to approve the minutes of the January 4th meeting.

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

There was one addition to the agenda, which is the approval of a Library Grant. The item will be addressed later in the meeting.

Joan Cassatt commented on the number of people in attendance today. She was pleased and would like to see this many people attend every meeting.

Solicitor McManamon will have documents for the Board to sign at the end of the meeting to complete the TAN note process.

Susan Hartman was first to address the Board. She is the current manager of Curves and asked to address the Board after last weeks denial of the EZ loan for Michelle Dreibelbis. Susan presented a petition to Commissioner Fluke asking that he reconsider his decision to deny the loan. The petition had 91 signatures and was read to Commissioner Fluke in its entirety. Susan spoke in depth about the benefits Curves has brought to Huntingdon County and its residents over the past seven years of being in business. Curves has held several fund raisers for charitable events and made donations to various charitable organizations. Michelle addressed the board as well and expressed her interest in purchasing this fitness club. She stated that she put months into her decision to purchase the business and is very dedicated to making it work. She gave a brief history of her experience in the fitness business.

There were several members of Curves present that spoke as well and expressed their support of Michelle Dreibelbis purchasing Curves. Bev Gembenski stated that she joined Curves when they first opened up. At that time, she was diabetic and 115 pounds overweight. She has since lost that weight and is no longer diabetic. She credits Curves with saving her life. She thanked Commissioner Fluke for all he has done for the County and asked him to reconsider his decision on the EZ loan for Michelle. Sue Esch expressed her gratitude for Curves and stated that she is very glad it is here. Valerie Burnett read a letter that she wrote to the Board. She joined Curves after moving to the County two years ago. She stated that the support she received has been tremendous and she fully supports Michelle's decision to purchase the business.

Bruce Pergament commented that he felt the EZ Loan should have the first mortgage, instead of the second. Jim Cassatt asked if there was sufficient cash flow to support the business. Suzanne House, who administers the EZ loan program, stated that the figures were reviewed in depth by the loan committee. The loan was approved unanimously by that committee, which is made up of 12 members. Greg Kough asked for a list of the members on that committee, which was provided by Suzanne House. Kevin Fluke asked if this loan was approved by the same Board who approved the previous loan that had defaulted. Suzanne House stated that it was the same committee. She also added that the EZ loan program has issued several loans and only had one default.

Commissioner Kough Pittenger addressed those present as well. She stated for the record that the County itself will lose nothing if this loan defaults. However, the pool of money that is available in the EZ loan program would be reduced if the loan defaults. She also stated for the record that the fact she, as a County Commissioner, had nothing to do with Michelle's decision to pursue the loan through the EZ loan program. She also stated that while she is thankful for the support of the Curves members, she was not involved in the organization of this particular item being brought to the Board today.

Commissioner Fluke addressed those present as well. He commented that the remarks made in the newspaper by Commissioner Kough Pittenger were not true. The newspaper stated that Commissioner Flukes denial of this loan was either personal or political. He stated that is simply not true and anyone who knows him, knows better. He fully supports businesses in Huntingdon County. However, he does not support the involvement of Government money. He asked if there was ever an EZ loan approved without real estate being used as collateral. Susanne House responded stating yes, that has been done in the past. Commissioner Fluke also commented that his decision may have been different if the EZ loan was going to be the first mortgage holder. According to Susanne House, the EZ loan cannot be the first mortgage holder. Following the discussion, Commissioner Hoover asked if there was a motion to reconsider the approval of the EZ loan for Michelle Dreibelbis. There was no motion made, therefore, the issue died for lack of a motion. Commissioner Hoover requested that if there were discussions that could be held between the Board of Commissioners and the EZ Loan board on this issue that may facilitate the approval of this loan in the future, that those discussions be held and the issue presented to the Board of Commissioners in the future.

Due to the length of the meeting, there was a brief recess prior to moving to the next agenda item.

The next agenda item was presented by Rich Stahl, Planning Director and Lou Ann Shontz, Recycling coordinator. They presented the Commissioners with a reimbursement request for the Household Hazard Waste collection that took place in September. Huntingdon County collected 14,850 pounds of hazard waste, which was the largest amount of the three Counties involved. The total cost of the collection for the three counties was \$31,706.73. DEP will reimburse 50% of that cost, which is \$15,853.37. The other 50% of the cost is covered by the South Central County Solid Waste Agency.

It was moved by Commissioner Kough Pittenger, seconded by Commissioner Fluke and carried (Kough Pittenger, yes; Hoover, yes; Fluke, yes) to approve the reimbursement request made to DEP in the amount of \$15,853.37.

Rich Stahl also requested approval of a grant for the Library in the amount of \$9,450. The grant will be used to upgrade the lighting at the Huntingdon County Library. The Planning office applied for this grant last year. Commissioner Kough Pittenger sits on the Library Board and she stated that the grant amount will also be matched by the Library. The additional \$9,450 will be taken from the Eugene Shore bequest. This will provide a total of \$18,900 to be used to upgrade all the lighting fixtures at the County Library.

It was moved by Commissioner Fluke, seconded by Commissioner Kough Pittenger and carried (Hoover, yes; Fluke, yes; Kough Pittenger, yes) to authorize the County to take advantage of this grant in the amount of \$9,450.

Commissioner Kough Pittenger noted for the record that the Library is a County owned building. She also stated that the "Friends of the Library" from Mount Union attended the most recent Library Board meeting and presented them with a donation check for \$6,500. This money was raised through various fund raisers held by Friends of the Library.

Brant Fitzpatrick was present today from Priority Ambulance Service. He provided a status update on his business, which is a new ambulance service in Huntingdon County. He has received his license and will be pursuing support from Townships throughout the County.

There were no veteran allowances to be signed today.

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Kough Pittenger seconded by Commissioner Fluke and carried to adjourn the meeting at 11:36 a.m. Minutes prepared by Chief Clerk, Michelle Cerett.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Kough Pittenger, Secretary