

Huntingdon, PA
Tuesday, January 27, 2009
04-09

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, Hoover, and Kough Pittenger; Scot Gill, Solicitor; Chief Clerk, Cinnamon Bair; Richard Stahl, Planning Director; Kay Coons, Prothonotary; Janet Hanks, Register and Recorder of Deeds; Charles Swigart, Attorney and George Germann, The Daily News.

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 Kough Pittenger.

It was moved by Commissioner Hoover seconded by Commissioner Fluke and carried (Fluke, yes; Kough Pittenger, abstain; Hoover, yes) to approve the minutes of the January 20 meeting.

Commissioner Hoover asked if approving the bills would mean approving all bills not only general fund but all accounts. Scot said they are approving all accounts and spending of grants, etc that have passed through the County. George Germann asked why the Liquid fuels bills were singled out for approval to pay. Cinnamon Bair said that she was following past procedure. Scot said although past procedure is not always correct if it has not been challenged by auditors then the procedure may be in place for a reason. It was moved by Commissioner Hoover seconded by Commissioner Kough Pittenger and carried (Fluke, yes; Hoover, yes; Kough Pittenger, yes) to approve payment of invoices for the week of January 26.

There were no additions to today's meeting.

There was no public at today's meeting.

Solicitor, Scot Gill researched the question from the previous week regarding the appointment of County Department Heads. Scot said the County Code specifies that the Solicitor, Chief Clerk, Chief Assessor, and Public Defender be appointed by the Board of Commissioners at the beginning of the Commissioners term. Department Heads under the Court System are appointed by the Judge. The remaining Department Heads are considered discretionary appointments. These Department Heads are appointed/hired as they are needed and are at will employees.

Scot brought to the meeting the Centre County Prison Contract for housing inmates. Scot told the Commissioners the contract is okay. Scot also had received the Mifflin County contract and had some questions regarding the wording and wanted to speak with the Warden before accepting this contract for the Commissioners to sign.

Richard Stahl was scheduled on the agenda to have the Commissioners approve the 2009 Certification of County Funds toward Ag preservation. Commissioner Hoover said as a township supervisor he was for the Ag preservation program, but given the financial constraints of the County he did not feel that \$9,906.96 should go toward this program. Richard explained the County received \$2,093.04 in 2008 in interest collected from Clean and Green rollback tax penalties. The County budgeted \$12,000.00 toward the Ag preservation fund. Richard said the interest earned reduced the County's allocation to \$9,906.96. He explained for this reason the County would not have to spend the entire \$12,000.00. The Commissioners asked what the interest collected from Clean and Green rollback tax penalties had been in 2007 for the 2008 allocation. Richard answered \$4,680.00. Richard said they were not complete with the annual tally for subdivisions but he felt they were down in 2008, which lower the amount of property owners getting out of the Clean and Green program. Commissioner Hoover asked if any money was expected as revenue from the rollback tax interest in the County budget. Cinnamon Bair said there was no money budgeted as income from this program. Commissioner Fluke stated that even though the money was in the budget it did not have to be spent on this program the County is only obligated to pay the \$2,093.04 not \$12,000. Commissioner Kough Pittenger said the county match determines how much money the County will receive from the State for this program, the same as with Children Services if the money is not spent the State takes it from the programs. The programs benefit taxpayers. Commissioner Fluke said he felt this program only benefits one taxpayer, the one receiving the money for the property. Richard added the benefit is that the prime farmland is preserved for the future. It was moved by Commissioner Kough Pittenger seconded by Commissioner Hoover and carried (Hoover, yes; Kough Pittenger, yes; Fluke, no) to approve certifying the allocation of County Funds for the 2009 program year for Ag preservation.

During the Clean and Green discussion Charles Swigart said that Mifflin County charges rollback tax on acreage less than two acres sold off of the Clean and Green property and Huntingdon does not. Commissioner Hoover asked Scot to research this for the Commissioners.

Next on the agenda were Janet Hanks, Kay Coons and Charles Swigart regarding the space needs of the two offices. Commissioner Kough Pittenger verified with the group that they had met with the architect and that he had measured their records for future needs. Janet explained it was not a meeting he just measured and left. Kay said she had already measured and gave the figures to the architect. Commissioner Fluke said the Commissioners met with the architect the day before and he felt that much was accomplished. They were working towards getting permits and the roof was bid out and the asbestos was going to be bid out in the coming weeks. Charles asked when the Commissioners expected to be moving to the Elks building. Commissioner Fluke said he felt late spring. Janet brought up that Bedford County has scanned all their back records, and Huntingdon could if they would commit the money to scanning. Kay asked with the budget cuts where would the money come from for scanning. Commissioner Hoover replied he does not know. Charles added that the fees collected for recording records should go toward record preservation. Kay said they had never used that money out of there before.

On recommendation of Joyce Zolten, Director of Children Services to hire Tricia Spagnola, Caseworker I to fill a vacant position, effective February 2, 2009. It was moved by Commissioner Hoover seconded by Commissioner Kough Pittenger and carried (Kough Pittenger, yes; Fluke, no; Hoover, yes) to hire Tricia Spagnola, Caseworker I.

The Commissioners approved payment for 1 Veteran burial allowances, 0 widow/widower burial allowances and 1 base.

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Hoover second by Commissioner Fluke and carried to adjourn the meeting at 11:02 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Kough Pittenger, Secretary