

Huntingdon, PA

Tuesday, June 30, 2020

23-2020

The regular meeting of the Huntingdon County Commissioners was held on the above date and time in the Commissioners Office with the following present: Commissioners Sather, Walls and Thomas; Chief Clerk, Heather Fellman; Solicitor, Peter McManamon; CYS Director, Shannon Walborn; CYS Fiscal Tech, Chris Riling; Custodial Supervisor, Chris Miller; Wendy Melius from the Center for Community Action; and visitor, Dean Fluke. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the following individuals were present via GoToMeeting: Tiffany Jones from the Center for Community Action; Treasurer, Susan Harry; Planning Director, Jim Lettiere; Community Development Administrator, Stacia-Fe Gillen; Corey Johnson from Zelenkofse Axelrod; News Reporter, Kylie Hawn and visitor, Connie Berrier.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Commissioner Sather. Chief Clerk 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 Thomas and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by Commissioner Sather.

It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes) to approve the minutes of the June 23rd 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: opening of the sealed bids for two County Vehicles. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Under announcements, Commissioner Thomas reminded residents that this year is a census year. The deadline to participate in the census is October 31, 2020. It is important that all residents participate. For each person that opts out of the census \$2,000 in funding for the area is lost every year. You can complete the census online, via telephone, or using a paper form. Commissioner Thomas further discussed the importance of wearing masks when out in public. We do not want to be like the other states that are seeing resurgences of COVID-19. Please adhere to the CDC guidelines. Commissioner Sather encouraged the public to think of and give thanks to the vets who have protected our freedoms as we head into this Fourth of July weekend. He encouraged everyone to have a safe and enjoyable holiday.

Under Public Comments, Dean Fluke noted that one of the items on the agenda is the purchase of the Mutual Benefit Building. He asked for details about that agenda item. Commissioner Sather commented that we can discuss that agenda item further when we reach that point in the meeting. Connie Berrier thanked the Commissioners for providing the option to continue to attend the public meetings remotely.

There were no items to be addressed by the solicitor.

Under new business, Wendy Melius and Tiffany Jones from the Center for Community Action provided an update on the Human Service Block Grant. The County was approved to become a block grant county. Two points of contact will have to be provided to the State and they will provide us with further guidance on what is needed. There will be public hearings and then we will fill out the application for the block grant. Commissioner Thomas commented that this is a long time coming. These block grants were started back in 2012 or 2013. At the time, all of the agencies were opposed to it because it was new and nobody understood how it was going to work. As the years have gone by and you can see the benefits of it and how you can keep money instead of sending it back to the state and transfer money between agencies where it is needed the most, it makes sense. Wendy Melius noted that the benefit is basically that if one program is under-spent because they are getting additional funding from

other sources, then we can reallocate that money to where it is needed rather than sending it back to the state. All of the final decisions with moving the money around will come back to the Commissioners for approval before being submitted to the State for final approval.

Tiffany Jones provided an update on the CARES Act Rental Relief Funds. Each County in Pennsylvania received an allocation and Huntingdon County's allocation is \$113,000 from the Pennsylvania Housing Authority. To be eligible for this program, an individual or family must be at or below the AMI. They must have become unemployed after March 1st due to COVID or experienced at least a 30% reduction in income. Landlords and renters must apply together for this program. The Department of Labor will verify that they were impacted by COVID. They are eligible for up to \$750 per month of rental assistance for up to six months with a total of \$4,500. Applications must be submitted no later than September 30th with the program ending November 30th.

Tiffany Jones provided an update on the State Food Program. This is a five year contract that the Center for Community Action will administrate on behalf of the County. An additional \$51,000 has been designated to Huntingdon County this year and must be spent by December 30th.

Wendy Melius provided an update on the Continuum of Care Home4Good Funding. Huntingdon County will be receiving \$10,822.88 from the State. This funding is for homelessness prevention and shelter programs. This is currently the only funding that can be used for hotel/motel stays which will help places like the domestic violence shelters as they have had difficulty placing individuals due to social distancing requirements. Commissioner Walls asked if this funding could be used to help the residents of the Blair Building displaced by the fire. Ms. Melius noted that they have already received funding specifically to aid those individuals. Tiffany Jones commented that \$18,199 was received to help the residents of the Blair Building. Most of the residents now have housing. Kylie Hawn asked how much funding is received normally for the FSPP grant. Ms. Jones answered that the typical allocation is between \$61,000 and \$64,000.

Consideration of approval was given to name Kellie Benson and Tiffany Jones as the designated contacts for the HSBG Agreement. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes).

Corey Johnson from Zelenkofske Axelrod requested consideration of approval for CARES Act Funding Administration Contracts with Susquehanna Accounting and Zelenkofske Axelrod to help guide the County through the block grant portion of the CARES Act funding. The issue here for the County is that the funds are very restricted. The roles of ZA and Susquehanna Accounting is to help the County determine what the funds can be used for and make sure that all of the paperwork is done correctly. Each County is approaching this funding differently. The County will have to determine what categories this funding will be used for. The price of services will not exceed the administration fees for the grant. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Sather, yes).

Shannon Walborn and Chris Riling of the CYS Department requested consideration of approval for contract renewals for the following contracts for contract year July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. A purchase of service agreement with Terry O'Hara, Ph.D, for bonding assessments. A purchase of service agreement with Sarah Jefferson, LCSW, for counseling services. A purchase of service agreement with Mount Union Area School District as required under the Every Child Succeeds Act. A purchase of service agreement with Tussey Mountain Area School District as required under the Every Child Succeeds Act. A purchase of service agreement with Juniata Valley School District as required under the Every Child Succeeds Act. A purchase of service agreement with Jennifer Habel, Attorney, for Guardian Ad Litem services. A purchase of service agreement with Nicholas Newfield, Attorney, for Guardian Ad Litem services. A purchase of service agreement with Erica Shoaf, Attorney, for Guardian Ad Litem services. A purchase of service agreement with Christopher Wencker, Attorney, for Guardian Ad Litem services. A purchase of service agreement with Robin Binder Heath, Attorney, for Guardian Ad Litem services. A purchase of service agreement with Michael Kipphan, Attorney, for Guardian Ad Litem services. A purchase of service agreement with Robert Covell, Attorney, for Guardian Ad Litem services. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Shannon Walborn provided an update on the CYS audit. The audit went well and CYS was given an excellent review.

Consideration of approval was given for the purchase of the Mutual Benefit Building. This is a building that we are currently leasing one floor of for CYS. Shannon Walborn spoke to the need for this purchase. Currently the agency is divided between two separate buildings. Moving all of the staff into one building will allow for better supervision, communication, and planning. Additionally, foster care services and supervised visitation are being brought back in house providing for better oversight and making both services more cost effective. This is only possible with the purchase of additional space. Commissioner Thomas noted that the cost of purchasing the building will be approximately the same as what we are paying to lease one floor. As a result of the purchase and the services that we will be able to bring back in house, once the programs are up and running it could equal a savings to the county of between \$600,000 and \$1 million per year. Ms. Walborn agreed with those estimates. Commissioner Sather noted that this purchase is seller financed over a 15 year period. The purchase cost is \$625,000 at a rate of 3.75%. That comes out to roughly the same cost for all four floors (including the basement) of the building as we are currently paying to lease one floor. Commissioner Walls commented that the state will also be reimbursing 80% of the purchase cost so the cost to the County will effectively be \$125,000. The main reason that we started looking at this is because the office space that CYS is currently using is very crowded. With the new COVID regulations, this will be a good move and there may be some additional funding sources that would help us with this purchase to ensure social distancing is possible for this agency. Commissioner Thomas further noted that there will not be any change to the budget for this purchase because we are already paying the rent. Dean Fluke commented that "Human Services is killing Huntingdon County" and that the residents of the County cannot continue to be taxed at the rate they are being taxed now. It has to be cut someplace. Commissioner Thomas commented that when Mr. Fluke finds a way to cut the inmates up at the jail and teach all parents how to take care of their children then he will have solved all of the tax problems for the County. It all comes back to the jail, starting out with the inmates at the jail. We do not control who goes up there but we have to provide those services. A lot of the people that go there have kids that go to CYS. The Commissioners are open to suggestions on how to fix those two problems. Commissioner Sather noted that foster care and supervised visits were outsourced to other companies in 2013 or 2014. At that time there was a 40% increase in the Children and Youth budget. This board is bringing those services back in house to save money down the line. We are currently leasing one floor of a building that is not providing adequate space. For the same price that we're paying for that, we could purchase the entire building and bring back in some of those services that we are currently paying outside agencies to provide. Commissioner Walls commented that we have the opportunity to bring these services back in while providing the space CYS needs to effectively do their jobs without costing the taxpayers any additional money. It is a win-win for Huntingdon County, Children's Services, and the taxpayers. Kylie Hawn asked what will happen to the old space that CYS is partly occupying. Commissioner Sather noted that it is being partially occupied now by another department and that there will have to be discussions about how to most effectively use the space but it is possible that another department will be able to use it. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes) to approve the purchase of the Mutual Benefit building pending legal counsel approval from Larry Newton.

Jim Lettiere, Planning Director and Stacia-Fe Gillen, Community Development Administrator requested consideration of approval for a notice of award for the Mapleton sidewalk project. Four bids were received with the winning bid submitted by Kee-Ta Quay Construction, LLC. This project will be paid from 2015 and 2016 block grant funding. The total cost is \$88,610. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Sather, yes).

Susan Harry, Treasurer, requested consideration of approval to hire Regina McDaniel and Celia Stever as part-time temporary help for Antlerless Deer Licensing at a rate of \$8.50 per hour. She also requested to hire Lauren Heane as an intern through CareerLink with a start date of July 1, 2020. She has been approved for 240 hours. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Chris Miller, Custodial Supervisor, requested consideration of approval to hire Tracey Zimmerman for a full time custodial position effective July 6, 2020. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes).

Consideration of approval was given for an intergovernmental agreement for inmate housing with Centre County Correctional Facility. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Sather, yes).

Sealed bids for two CYS vehicles were opened. Four bids were received. Randy Hess submitted a bid of \$120 for the Ford Focus. Aaron Lane submitted a bid of \$355 for the Ford Focus. Sonny Varner submitted a bid of \$110 for

the Ford Focus. The winning bid was Aaron Lane's. Randy Hess submitted a bid of \$180.80 for the Dodge Caravan. Sonny Varner submitted a bid of \$159 for the Dodge Caravan. The winning bidder was Randy Hess. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes) to accept the highest bids for the two CYS vehicles.

There were no Matters for Action, Information, and Discussion.

There were no Veteran's Burial Allowances.

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Walls to adjourn the meeting at 11:03 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Heather N. Fellman, Chief Clerk.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeffrey Thomas, Secretary