

Huntingdon, PA

Tuesday, May 10, 2022

18-2022

The regular meeting of the Huntingdon County Commissioners was held on the above date and time in the Commissioner's Meeting Room with the following present: Commissioners Sather, Walls and Thomas; Chief Clerk, Heather Fellman; Deputy Chief Clerk, Tracey Rhodes; Solicitor, Larry Newton; Planning Director, Jim Lettiere; EMA Director, Katie Unger; Sheriff, Jeff Leonard; Mapping Director, Andrew Sharp; Daily News Reporter, Kylie Hawn and guest, Jeff Reel. .

Bob Troxell from Upward Broadband attended remotely via GoToMeeting.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Commissioner Sather. 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 previous week's minutes as presented.

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

There were four additions to the agenda: 1. Consideration of approval for a new hire for the Sheriff's Office. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes). 2. Consideration of approval for a new hire for the Mapping Department. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes). 3. Consideration of approval for a funding opportunity grant application for development of the Huntingdon County Active Transportation Plan. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Sather, yes). Consideration of approval for a new hire for the EMA office. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Under announcements, Commissioner Thomas asked everyone that is eligible for a COVID shot or booster to get one. Commissioner Sather reminded the public that due to the election there will be no public meeting next week on May 17th. Commissioner Walls commented that today is the last day to apply for a mail-in or absentee ballot.

There were no public comments.

Under matters to be addressed by the solicitor, Solicitor Larry Newton requested an addition to the agenda of an amendment to the grant cooperation agreement with Alleghenies Broadband. The supplement stated that the project shall be completed no later than July 31st of this year. The amendment will allow the project to be completed no later than December 31st of this year. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes).

Under new business, Sheriff Jeff Leonard requested consideration of approval to hire Ryan Bookheimer. He was previously an intern at the Sheriff's Office and did a great job then. His hire date will be May 16, 2022. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Sather, yes).

Andrew Sharp, Mapping Director, requested consideration of approval for a GIS Intern, Matthew Dutka, effective May 16, 2022. Commissioner Walls commented that while he welcomes the intern, he will have to vote no because this is a paid internship and we have never paid an intern before. Commissioner Thomas commented that

the Mapping Office is currently one employee short so we are actually saving because this is a part-time position and a new hire will not be approved for this office until the internship is completed. Commissioner Walls commented that this sets a precedent that he is not comfortable with. Huntingdon County has never paid interns before. Commissioner Sather commented that it is a dangerous precedent to set. Knowing that, each intern will be evaluated on an individual basis. It is also part of the record that the open position in this office will not be filled until the internship is over, which was a deciding factor in approval of the salary. Mr. Sharp also noted that this intern is also a planning major and will be working on some collaborative projects with the planning office as well. Mr. Newton asked if he would be interested in the full-time position after his internship. Mr. Sharp responded that that is his hope. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, no).

Jim Lettiere, Planning Director, requested consideration of approval for an engineering reimbursement agreement for the New Fording Road Bridge Project. 80% is paid by the Federal Highway Administration, 15% by PennDOT, and 5% is the county government match. The federal amount is \$1,340,000. The state allocation is \$251,250. The County share is \$83,750 for a total cost of \$1,675,000. Commissioner Sather asked if this would be for renovation or replacement. Mr. Lettiere responded that that decision has not been finalized yet. Commissioner Sather noted for the record that he is advocating for replacement. We would like to retain the historic bridge and repurpose it elsewhere. Mr. Lettiere commented that he will be involved in these discussions and will convey that message to PennDOT. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes).

Jim Lettiere requested consideration of approval for the Act 13 Marcellus Shale Legacy Funding Agreement with Warrior's Mark Township. This is for purchase of bleachers for the little league field in the amount of \$10,000, \$600 of which will be retained by the Planning Office for Administrative expenses. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Sather, yes).

Jim Lettiere requested consideration of approval for a funding opportunity grant application for the development of Huntingdon County's active transportation plan. This grant will allow the county to procure a consultant to develop a non-motorized transportation plan to everyday destinations in the county. \$10,000-\$25,000 is available. We will be applying for \$25,000. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Consideration of approval was given for resolution 7-2022 for the Huntingdon County Area Agency on Aging. This resolution will appoint Connie Brode as executive director and signatory. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes).

Consideration of approval was given for a joint resolution with Bedford and Fulton counties and PennDOT to provide transportation for elderly residents. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Sather, yes).

Consideration of approval was given for a parking lot lease with Kathleen Herr. This is a renewal from last year at total annual cost of \$5,080.52. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Consideration of approval was given for an amendment to project supplement 2021-01 to the grant cooperation agreement between Huntingdon County and Alleghenies Broadband Incorporated. This will amend the project completion date only in the event of unforeseen equipment or material delays to not later than December 2022. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes).

Katie Unger, EMA Director, requested consideration of approval for a new hire, Emily Clevenger, for the position of Operations and Training Officer. The effective date is to be determined. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes).

Katie Unger presented an update on COVID-19. The average number of new cases per day in the county was 4. The State stands at an average of 2,564. Huntingdon County remains in the low level of community transmission. SCI Smithfield currently has 7 inmates and 1 staff member testing positive. SCI Huntingdon has no inmates and no staff member testing positive. There is nothing to report from the schools. Penn Highlands does not have any inpatient COVID cases this week. The Department of Health reports less than five COVID cases among school-aged children and less than five cases among children 4 and under. Juniata College continues surveillance testing and has had a total of 56 positive cases this semester. COVID hospitalization for the state stand at 792. Our incident rate for the county is 46.5 per 100,000 and the state is 87.8. The PCR percent positivity is 4.4% for the county and 10.7% for the state. Long-term care facilities are doing well and have 0 additional staff or residents testing positive. 24,580 vaccines have been distributed in the county. 10,739 boosters have been given. There have been 804 that have received a second booster. The county is 49% vaccinated. There was one death in the last week. The dominant variant is still Omicron. The US variant distribution is as follows: BA.2 is at 61.9%, BA2.12.1 is at 36.5%, B.1.1 is at 1.3%, and B.1.1.529 is at .1% and there is another variant that is showing up that is not labeled yet that is at .2%. The PA data shows that BA.2 is at 57.7%, B.2.12.1 is at 40.9%, B.1.1.529 is at 1.3% and the other is at .1%.

Under matters for action, information and discussion, Commissioner Thomas introduced Jeff Reel who has been hired as a consultant for Alleghenies Broadband Incorporated. He has vast knowledge in the field of telecommunications. He will be working on behalf of the counties with the ARPA funding and the NTIA grant. He started last week and we look forward to working with him.

There were no Veteran's Burial Allowance.

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Walls to adjourn the meeting at 10:17 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Heather N. Fellman, Chief Clerk.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeffrey Thomas, Secretary