

Huntingdon, PA

Tuesday, September 29, 2020

35-2020

The regular meeting of the Huntingdon County Commissioners was held on the above date and time in the Commissioner's Office with the following present: Commissioners Sather, Walls and Thomas; Solicitor, Peter McManamon; Deputy Chief Clerk, Tracey Rhodes; Executive Director, Center for Community Action, Wendy Melius; Center for Community Action, Natasha Brubaker; Planning Director, Jim Lettiere. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the following individuals were present via GoToMeeting: Executive Director, HCBI, Debra Clark; Guest: News Reporter, Kylie Hawn; Timothy Byler; Tom Bracken; and Jeff Forshey.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Commissioner Sather. Deputy Chief Clerk Tracey Rhodes 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 September 22nd 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 were no addition to the agenda.

Under announcements, Commissioner Thomas reminded residents that this year is a census year. The deadline to participate up to September 30, 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 Wall's addresses the CARES ACT Funding is still being reviewed by the County Accountant, they are trying to review as fast as possible to get the funds distributed as soon as possible. Commissioner Sather announced that ballots for November 3, 2020 Election were received on Friday, Sept. 25, 2020. The County has started to mail ballots to county voters, the first batch will go out today, Tuesday September 29, 2020. This includes the Mail-In Ballots as well as the Absentee. We are processing thousands of applications so it may be several weeks before all Ballots are mailed due to it being a manual process. We encourage everyone who receives a Mail-In Ballot to read all of the instructions prior to completing their Ballot. The County will not be using Drop Boxes, Ballots can be returned via mail or in person. If returning in person, please return to the Election's Office located on the 2nd Fl. of the Bailey Building at 233 Penn Street. Only the voter can return their Ballot and we do require ID to do so. Voted Ballots cannot be turned in at your Precinct.

There were no Public Comments.

There were no Matters addressed by the solicitor.

Under new business, Wendy Melius, request consideration of Approval of 2019 PHARE Grant Agreement as well as Consideration of Approval of Wood Township Minor Senior Home Repair Agreement. The Funds would go to program delivery for them to do the Intake and then assign to a contractor and the rest would to the actual construction. Looking to complete 8-10 apartments in Phase 1 of the project. Depending on what the need is of the home, looking at anywhere between \$10-\$15 thousand dollars per home. The Township is in agreement, and feel it is a great fit. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and Carried (Thomas, Yes; Sather, Yes; Walls, Yes)

Under Discussion, Kylie Hawn asked what would happen with the Robertsdale School now that this project has shifted. Wendy addressed that they are still exploring developers and they are finding that this project is too small for developers to come in and do the project unless it was a local developer. Wendy noted that she thought they were releasing some office space. Wendy is unsure of future plans, there is still discussions. The actual school is owned by Wood Township.

Wendy Melius requested consideration of Approval of 3 Block Grants, HSBG Intellectual Disability Services Agreement; HSBG Homeless Assistance Program Agreement and HSBG Drug and Alcohol Treatment & Prevention Agreement. The Intellectual Disability Services will be receiving \$1440, 609 dollars. The Drug and Alcohol will be receiving \$148,481 dollars and Center for Community Action will be receiving 74,158 dollars. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and Carried (Sather, Yes; Walls, Yes; Thomas, Yes)

Under Discussion, Commissioner Thomas stated that this is the first year with this Block Grant, and it is a plus that with this Grant wherever there is a need the money is able to be moved rather than if it isn't used it would need to be returned. All of the money received will stay in Huntingdon County.

Debra Clark, requested consideration of Approval to Ratify the KOEZ Extension, this was approved at a meeting in August, Debra is just asking for the form to be signed and sent to her before the extension due date of this Friday, October 2, 2020. This is a 10 acre lot in the Broad Top City, Carbon Township area. It is undeveloped and provides opportunity in this area for Businesses to come in. This has been approved by Carbon Township, Broad Top City Borough Counsel and The Tussey Mt. School Dist. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and Carried (Walls, Yes; Thomas, Yes; Sather, Yes)

No Discussion.

Debra Clark, requested consideration of Approval of Business Loan. The Borrower is Love It Business Inc., the owner is Debra Love and the amount being requested is the amount of \$75,000 dollars with an interest of 2% rate. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and Carried (Thomas, Yes; Sather Yes; Walls, Yes)

No Discussion.

Jim Lettiere, request consideration of Approval to attend 2020 APA/PPA Virtual Planning Conference. This conference will be held October 19th and 20th and there are 7 sessions he will be attending including topics such as zoning, land used, effective tools for community engagement, land use law cases, ordinance preparation, economic development strategies and rural preservation. Attends cost will be \$100 dollars due to it being attending through the computer. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and Carried (Sather, Yes; Walls, Yes; Thomas, Yes)

Jim Lettiere requested Consideration of Approval of 2020 Act 13 Agreement. This Consideration is for 1 of the 4 2020 Act 13 Agreement that is with Walker Township in the sum of \$4,000 dollars in accordance with the project outlined. \$240 dollars for Planning and Development Administration cost, and \$3,760 to be used for the project cost. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and Carried (Walls, Yes; Thomas, Yes; Sather, Yes)

No Discussion.

Chris Miller requested Consideration of Approval for hire for Open Custodial position. New hires for considerations is Levi Barnish with start date of Monday, October 5, 2020. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and Carried (Thomas, Yes; Sather, Yes; Walls, Yes)

Matters for Action, Information, and Discussion: Brought to the Boards attention Consideration of Approval of the Broadband Projects portion of CARES ACT Funding. At this point Commissioner Sather entertains a motion, pending Solicitor's Review and completion of contracts. A motion to move forward with The Broadband proposals received from Upward Broadband in the amount of \$455,915 dollars as well as a 2nd proposal received from RBC, Rural Broadband Cooperative, proposal in the amount of \$513,607.08. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and Carried (Sather, Yes; Walls, Yes; Thomas, Yes)

Under Discussion, Commissioner Thomas addressed that contact with both entities needs to be done as soon as possible. This project needs to be completed by December 30, 2020. Although this project will not cover everyone, it will be a big improvement. Some of the counties included from Upward Broadband include: Todd Township, Burnt Cabins, Calvin, Cassville, Mill Creek, Neelyton, Broad Top, Mount Union, Shirleysburg, Three Springs, Mapleton, Shade Gap, Hustontown, Robertsdale, Huntingdon, Orbisonia, Blairs Mills, and James Creek. The portions of coverage does vary from Todd Township at 90% estimated coverage to James Creek at estimated 20%. RBC proposal coverage for Jackson Township, Barree Township, Miller Township, as well as Henderson, Oneida, Mill Creek, and additional coverage opportunities through Shirleysburg Borough, Union, Cass, Cassville, Todd and Cromwell and Orbisonia. Wendy Melius asked if they whole project has to be completed by December 30, 2020. Commissioner Sather noted that each segment can be billed as a segment completed. The total project funds must be used by December 30, 2020. Tom Bracken asked if there was any idea how long it will take the legal arm to approve the proposals? Commissioners Thomas noted that the Commissioners hope to sit down this week and meet with the two entities in separate meetings and start to get paperwork signed and then move forward. Tim Beiler asked if there were any sites where providers plan to use for towers. Commissioner Thomas stated there is a site possible in Allensville and the Commissioners will talk with both providers regarding this location. Also Mill Creek looks like they might have a site. Kylie Hawn asked where Upward Broadband office is located. Commissions Sather noted that the Primary Legal name for Upward Broadband is Paradise Energy Solutions, LLC located in Paradise, PA, Lancaster County. Commissioner Thomas added that the 3 Commissioners along with the 6 other counties has been working on broadband for some time as a priority for Huntingdon County. They have filed articles of incorporation for the Alleghenies Broadband and it will include one person from each county to sit on the board. This will be separate from the Alleghenies as well as separate from the Commissioners. It will have a total of 9 members sitting on the board will allow in the future to be able to help the counties identify the projects and secure additional funding in the future. This is separate from the CARES ACT FUNDING.

There was 0 Veteran's Burial Allowances.

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Thomas to adjourn the meeting at 10:32 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Tracey J. Rhodes, Deputy Chief Clerk.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeffrey Thomas, Secretary