

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 Walls, Thomas and Reeder; Chief Clerk, Heather Fellman; Solicitor, Larry Newton; Jodi Skipper and Stephen Hoy from Rothrock State Forest; Lee Slessor and Ben Dworsky from SAP&DC; Brian Wiser from Keller Engineering; Brandy Moore from Tax Assessment and Reporter for the Daily News, Joe Thompson.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Commissioner Walls. Prayer was led by Commissioner Thomas and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Commissioner Walls.

It was moved by Commissioner Reeder, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Reeder, yes) to approve the minutes of the October 15th meeting.

It was moved by Commissioner Reeder, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Thomas, abstain; Reeder, yes; Walls, yes) to approve the minutes of the October 22nd meeting.

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

There were two additions to the agenda. The first is a county-wide burn ban resolution. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Reeder and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Reeder, yes). The second is work change order number 4 for Westmoreland Electric. It was moved by Commissioner Reeder, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Thomas, yes; Reeder, yes; Walls, yes).

Under announcements, Commissioner Reeder commented that the VFW banquet was very nice and thanked everyone for the work that they put into it. Commissioner Walls thanked the staff in the Commissioners' Office for all of their hard work on the election. He also extended his thanks to the Courts for their assistance with the election. Court offices sent over employees to help manage the high volume of calls and to help with pre-cavass on Election Day. The election went off without a hitch. There was a lot of discussion about different things, especially on social media. In the end, Huntingdon County had as good or better return of mail ballots compared to other counties our size. There have been some posts on social media discrediting our staff. Our staff is very dedicated and they obey the rules to do the election right. The bottom line is that the staff works for the Commissioners. I am not appreciative of posts that denigrate our employees, especially when people don't have accurate information. Commissioner Thomas commented that the Commissioners' Office staff did an incredible job. This election ran a lot smoother than the last because we have more experience with mail-in ballots now. Overall, the election ran very smoothly. It was a lot easier to work with the general public this time. People seemed more engaged in the election. Not everything that you read on the internet and social media is true. Commissioner Walls commented that overall the general public was very understanding. With the "early voting" all counties were taxed a lot heavier than anticipated. With elections, you want to make sure things are done correctly. It's not like you can just pull people off the street and fill extra positions in this office. Our existing staff did an excellent job.

There were no public comments.

There was one matter to be addressed by the Solicitor: bid openings for county bridge repairs. This project includes repairs to bridges 8, 16, 18, and 20. Two bids were received. The first was from Glenn O. Hawbaker, Inc. for a total project cost of \$394,993.50. The second bid was from Kukurin Contracting, Inc. for a total project cost of \$495,594. Mr. Wiser and Solicitor Newton will review the bids and make a recommendation at

next week's public meeting. These repairs are made with funds from Act 89, 44, and liquid fuels, not General Fund dollars.

Under new business, Lee Slusser from SAP&DC requested consideration of approval for a letter of support pledging \$150,047, if needed, to fully fund the Riverview Business Park Access/522 Road Improvements Project. This commitment is needed to secure \$2.8 million from ARC. We will continue to pursue other grant options to cover the remaining \$150,047, but we must have verification of committed funding by December 9th in order to qualify for the ARC funding. This project will be very beneficial for the community, bringing in an estimated 265 new jobs and improving highway safety conditions. It was moved by Commissioner Reeder, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Reeder, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes).

Stephen Hoy and Jodi Skipper from Rothrock State Forest requested consideration of approval for Resolution 7-2024 enacting a county-wide burn ban. There have been 5 fires in the state so far this fall. Everything is very dry and resources are slim. The burn ban will go into effect at 11am on November 14th. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Reeder and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Reeder, yes).

Brandy Moore, Deputy Chief Tax Assessor, discussed the homestead/farmstead exclusions. The Tax Assessment Office is sending out a letter reminding of schedule F submission requirements. March 1, 2025 is the state-mandated submission deadline. Letters will be in the mail at the beginning of December.

Consideration of approval was given for work change directive #4 for Westmoreland Electric. This project involves moving outlets and the County will be billed for time and material. Commissioner Thomas commented that it would not be difficult for them to give us an estimated cost for this addition. In the future he wants all changes to be submitted with an estimated cost. It was moved by Commissioner Reeder, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Thomas, no; Reeder, yes; Walls, yes).

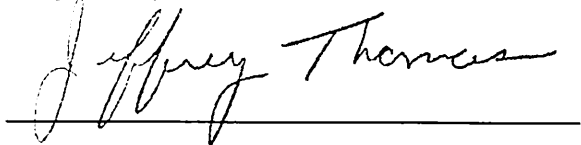
There were no Matters for Action.

There were 5 Veteran's Burial Allowances.

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Thomas to adjourn the meeting at 10:14 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Heather Fellman, Chief Clerk.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jeffrey Thomas", written over a horizontal line.

Jeffrey Thomas, Secretary