

Huntingdon, Pa.
Tuesday April 9, 2013
9:30 a.m.
14-2013

The regular weekly meeting of the Huntingdon County Commissioners was held on the above date and time in the Commissioners meeting room with the following being present: Commissioners O’Korn, Fluke and Thomas; Chief Clerk, Michelle Cerett; Solicitor, Peter McManamon; EMA Director, Adam Miller; CYS Supervisor, Claudia Conrad; Planning Director, Mark Colussy; Sheriff, Bill Walters; Register and Recorder, Ginny Cooper; Daily news reporter Garrison Crow; visitors Bruce Pergament, Joan and Jim Cassatt, Arnie McClure, Scott Burnett, Betsy and Ted Simpson, Mike and Missy Budelman, Betty Ruhlman, Tim Schrack, and Willis Sneath.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Commissioner O’Korn followed by prayer led by Commissioner Fluke and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Commissioner Thomas.

Commissioner O’Korn stated that the meeting is conducted according to Robert’s rules of order and reviewed those minutes. Bruce Pergament asked to be added to the agenda or to be granted additional comment time. Commissioner O’Korn stated he would grant additional comment time if needed.

It was moved by Commissioner Fluke, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (O’Korn, yes; Fluke, yes; Thomas, yes;) to approve the minutes of the March 26th public meeting.

It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Fluke and carried (Fluke, yes; Thomas, yes; O’Korn, yes) to approve the payment of the bills.

There were no additions to the agenda.

Commissioner Fluke expressed concerns regarding the meeting rules. He stated that everyone should be treated the same when it comes to public comment time. He stated that according to the code book, the rules of the meeting must be posted. Michelle stated that the rules and procedures are on display along with the agenda for the meeting. Commissioner O’Korn stated that the agenda is reviewed by the Board every Monday. Commissioner Thomas further stated that since he has been Commissioner, nobody has been denied the chance to comment. Commissioner O’Korn announced that next week is Local Government Week. In addition, April 15th is declared Local Government Day. He offered his thanks to all local Government officials for all the work they do.

Several people were present today to request support of Senate Bill 505. Bruce Pergament was the first to comment on the issue. Bruce feels that Senate Bill 505 is about costs to the County and local Governments, not about guns. Bruce referenced the number of gun manufacturing plants in PA and surrounding States. He pointed out that of all those States, Pennsylvania is the only pro-gun State. Many of those manufacturers in surrounding States are planning to relocate due to the gun law restrictions and he feels this provides an opportunity for Pennsylvania. Bruce further stated that we cannot afford to enforce any more federal guns laws in our County due to budgetary concerns. He feels supporting Senate Bill 505 will directly benefit our County and there, he is requesting the Commissioners support. Bruce referred to a Resolution recently passed by Susquehanna County and asked the Board to consider passing a similar resolution. Mike Budelman stated that he would financially support any efforts to regulate the control of guns and he feels others would be willing to do the same. He feels the amount of automatic weapons and the number of clips should be regulated. Arnold McClure urged the Board to consider a resolution in support of this Bill as well. Arnold is the Chairman of the Huntingdon County Republican Committee. The committee recently voted on supporting the Bill and the vote was unanimous in favor of supporting the bill. He stated that residents of Huntingdon County are very concerned about the encroachment of the Federal Government on their rights. He further stated that while he is sympathetic to the victims of recent shootings, he feels we should not be penalized with new restrictions on gun laws. Sheriff Walters urged the Board to support this bill as well. He stated that the County is not able to absorb anymore expenses related to gun laws. Willis Sneath also encouraged the Board to show support for this bill. He stressed that the County should not be responsible for absorbing the cost of new gun laws. Willis also encouraged the Board not to restrict the rights of the public to provide comments at the public meeting. Missy Budelman stated that the cost of this bill should not fall on the County. Missy stated that she feels gun law regulations are necessary to protect our children. She feels that limiting the sale of 30 round clips would limit the danger to our children. Lastly, she stated that while Mr. McClure has received support from a lot of people in the County on this issue, there are also a lot of residents against this Bill. Sheriff Walters feels that the elimination of 30 rounds clips would not necessarily lower the danger. Ginny Cooper asked the status of Senate Bill 505. Commissioner O’Korn stated that it is currently in the Judiciary committee but has not been voted on

yet. Ginny stated that she feels local support on this Bill may be premature at this time due to the possibility of the Bill being changed. Tim Schrack offered his support of Senate Bill 505. Adam Miller addressed the Board on this issue. He stated he is not representing his position as County employee, further stating that his opinions are his own and no one else's. He stated that if someone were to present a petition that would go to the gun manufacturers welcoming them to Huntingdon County, considering that we have two factories closed and a third one ready to close, he would love to be the first person to sign that petition. He stated that attracting business is a County issue that we can reach into without reaching into personal feelings. He feels we should represent ourselves as a business friendly client. His next statement was that wearing the shield of a Deputy Sheriff is heavy enough already and he may find it difficult to continue carrying that on his chest with some of the requests that are coming down from the higher levels of Government. He finished by saying if he is the first person to make that comment, he won't be the last. He thanked the board for the opportunity to speak. Commissioner Fluke offered his support of this Bill. It was moved by Commissioner Fluke to support Senate Bill 505. The motion died for lack of a second. Commissioner Thomas stated that their responsibility is to manage the County and they have no authority to create or enact on gun legislation. However, the DA, Sheriff's department, State Police and Judge are charged with enforcing State and Federal gun laws. He further stated that he is a longtime member of the NRA, carries a concealed weapons permit, has completed rigorous gun safety training and is an avid outdoor sportsman. He stated that he supports gun ownership for responsible, mentally sound individuals. Commissioner Thomas pointed out that we have more gun restriction laws protecting our wildlife than we do our people. He commented on the recent mass shootings and stated that it would be irresponsible of the Government to not at least have discussion on the matter. However, he feels it would be irresponsible to endorse a bill that has not even been proposed yet. He encouraged the public to contact their Federal Legislators and asked for their support. Commissioner Thomas stated that this meeting is to hear the public concerns on County issues. He further stated that the federal gun debate will not be resolved at this meeting. Commissioner Thomas concluded by stating that all State and Federal Officials must promise to support the Constitution and that includes County level Government. If a responsible legislation is presented, he will make his decision at that time. Commissioner O'Korn stated that accusations of sunshine law have been made recently and those accusations are false. He further stated that while he does have concerns, he is personally in support of Senate Bill 505. Commissioner O'Korn has spoken with Senator Eichelberger and discussed his concerns. He stated that he did not second the motion supporting the Bill due to concerns about the Bill be amended. He stated that if the Bill remains the same, he will consider the resolution but at this point, he feels support is premature. Commissioner O'Korn encouraged the public to contact Senators who are not in support of this Bill and ask for their support. Commissioner Thomas also stated that he spoke with Senator Eichelberger and expressed his concerns.

Adam Miller, EMA Director was present with two items today. His first request was to award the bids for the Hazardous Mitigation plan update. After discussion with the Solicitor, Adam suggested tabling this issue until a future meeting. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Fluke and carried (Thomas, yes; O'Korn, yes; Fluke, yes) to table this item.

Adam also requested permission to advertise bids to demolish two properties in Petersburg. This project will be completed with HMPG funds because the property is in a flood zone. Adam thanked the Solicitor for his help in preparing the bid documents. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Fluke and carried (O'Korn, yes; Fluke, yes; Thomas, yes) to approve the advertising of the bids as requested.

Claudia Conrad, CYS Supervisor was present to request the approval of a Purchase of Service agreement. Commissioner Fluke asked if this facility has been used in the past. Claudia responded that they have not been used in the past. Commissioner O'Korn asked if this agreement was similar to the others the agency has. Claudia stated it was. Commissioner Thomas asked for clarification that services are billed on an as needed basis, which Claudia confirmed. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Fluke and carried (Fluke, yes; Thomas, yes; O'Korn, yes) to approve the agreement with The Christian Home of Johnstown, Inc. for a period of July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013.

There was one county burial allowance for approval today.

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Fluke to adjourn the meeting at 10:21 a.m. Minutes prepared by Michelle Cerett, Chief Clerk.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey Thomas, Secretary