

The regular weekly meeting of the Huntingdon County Commissioners was held on the above date in the Commissioners Meeting Room with the following being present: Commissioners Hoover, Fluke and Kough Pittenger; Chief Clerk, Michelle Cerett, Deputy Chief Clerk, Lori Foster; Solicitor, Peter McManamon; George Germann, Daily News; John Hoffstetler, Altoona Mirror; Register and Recorder Elect, Ginny Cooper; Brian Wiser, Keller Engineers; Commissioner's Elect, Gary O'Korn and Jeff Thomas; Craig Wood, CE Woods; Treasurer, Rich Irvin; Fiscal Supervisor, Sherri Rogers; Amy Wise and Bobbi Hicks, HCBI; Ken Tucker, Tax Assessor; Court Administrator, Debbie Higgins; Sheriff, Bill Walters; Warden, Duane Black; and visitors Bruce Pergament, Pat Kepple, Jim and Joan Cassatt, Susan Hartman, Kathy Armielli, Ilona Ballreich, Julian Groenandraal, Mary Zimmerer, Dave Boer, Robert Hatala, Ed Stoddard; John Cook, Julie Peoples, Dorothy Mizzi, Michael Husband, Valerie Burnett, Deb Sheeder, Don Mitchell, Jim Hyslop, Ian Thompson, Evelyn East, Lisa Hosler, E Guenever Porcelli, Aaron Martin, Ken Warsing, Monika Kost, Kristen Couch, Catherine Wiser, Penny Wiser, Kristin Bennett, Merv Reifstick, Tan Hille, Barry Wright, Charlie Coleman, Douglas Hoover, Deb Hoover, and Greg Kough.

The Meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Commissioner Hoover followed by Prayer led by Commissioner Kough Pittenger and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag led by Michelle Cerett.

There were no additions or corrections to the November 29<sup>th</sup> minutes.

It was moved by Commissioner Kough Pittenger, seconded by Commissioner Fluke and carried (Hoover, yes; Fluke, yes; Kough Pittenger, yes) to approve the minutes of the November 29<sup>th</sup> meeting.

It was moved by Commissioner Fluke, seconded by Commissioner Kough Pittenger and carried (Fluke, yes; Kough Pittenger, yes; Hoover, yes) to approve payment of invoices for the week.

There were no additions to the agenda today.

There were no public comments today, however Commissioner Hoover made two announcements. The County received a reimbursement of \$38,272.20 from CCAP this week. This is a partial reimbursement of the Workers Comp premium since the loss run was lower than expected. He also informed the public that the Retirement Board would be meeting Tuesday, December 13<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 for the purpose of considering a 2012 cost of living increase for pensioners.

There were no matters addressed by the Solicitor today.

Brian Wiser from Keller Engineers was present today for the opening of bids for the Runk Bridge project. Prior to the opening, Brian reviewed Addendum #3 that was sent out to all potential bidders. There were indications from potential bidders that the timeline was too tight and Brian was concerned that we would not receive many bids. Brian suggested relaxing the schedule slightly and delaying the opening of the bridge until July 15<sup>th</sup>. Michelle reviewed the option last week with the Board and they agreed with the suggestion and the issuance of the addendum.

Following is a list of bidders and their respective amounts:

George S. Hann and Son's Inc.	-	\$700,394.77
Wen Brooke Contracting, Inc.	-	\$496,081.78
Cottles Asphalt Maintenance, Inc.	-	\$596,763.80
Lobar Site Development	-	\$738,831.73
Gordon L. Delozier	-	\$642,927.40
HRI, Inc.	-	\$779,915.00
Jay Fulkroad & Sons, Inc.	-	\$676,089.83
R. H. Bailey, LLC	-	\$639,556.00

Brian will review the bids and attend next week's meeting with a recommendation to award. It was moved by Commissioner Kough Pittenger, seconded by Commissioner Fluke and carried (Kough Pittenger, yes; Hoover, yes; Fluke, yes) to approve reimbursement #15 for Walnut Grove bridge in the amount of \$23,078.57.

It was moved by Commissioner Kough Pittenger, seconded by Commissioner Fluke and carried (Hoover, yes; Fluke, yes; Kough Pittenger, yes) to approve reimbursement #5-part 003 for Walnut Grove bridge in the amount of \$869.90.

It was moved by Commissioner Fluke, seconded by Commissioner Kough Pittenger and carried (Fluke, yes; Kough Pittenger, yes; Hoover, yes) to approve reimbursement #6-part 004 for Walnut Grove in the amount of \$30,771.59.

Solicitor McManamon has reviewed the union agreement between the County and ICOP that was presented last week. It was moved by Commissioner Fluke, seconded by Commissioner Kough Pittenger and carried (Kough Pittenger, yes; Hoover, yes; Fluke, yes) to approve the ICOP union contract for January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2015.

Next on the agenda were comments regarding the consideration of the 2012 millage rate. The Board presented a 27 mil budget; However, Commissioner Hoover made a request last week to see a 25 mil budget, which was presented today. A number of people were present to offer comments on the two different budgets.

Bruce Pergament was first to comment. He commented that the tax increase over the past few years is related to staff salary increases and the Bailey building. While he is not in support of raising taxes, he commented that 2 mils of tax costs each taxpayer \$1.00 per month. He also commented that cutting money from the retirement fund now will cause the County problems down the road. Kathy Armelli asked why the millage decrease is being considered when there are so many programs in the County that relay on County support. Ilona Ballreich commented on the cut of the Library allocation. She also feels the proposed 25 mil budget undermines the quality of life and misguides the public. Susan Hartman questioned Commissioner Hoover on this comments made at last weeks meeting. Commissioner Hoover stated last week that he felt the majority of the voters wanted a 25 mil budget because they voted Commissioner Fluke back into office and he had campaigned on a 25 mil budget. Susan commented that Commissioner Fluke did not carry the majority of the votes in the recent election. She stated that by supporting the 25 mil budget, he is not supporting what the majority of voters want. Susan further commented that as a current Commissioner, he owes it to the voters to do what is best for the tax payers and the County. Commissioner Hoover replied that there is a certain segment of voters who want a 25 mil budget and it is his duty to see a 25 mil budget. Bob Hatala made Commissioners aware that the proposed Library cut in the 25 mil budget will cost the Library \$127,000.00 in State funding. He stated that by cutting funding, they are "killing" the only public Library that this County has left. Amy Wise stated that the proposed cut to the HCBI funding will impact them greatly and cause the loss of staff. Ian Thompson commented that the negative issues among the current Board and the most recent election need to stop. He also commended Commissioner Fluke for attempting a 25 mil budget. Jim Hyslop offered support of the 25 mil budget and stated that we must spend within our means. Sheriff Walters asked Jim what he was to do with the criminals with his budget being cut. He further stated the crime rate has steadily increased in his 12 years as Sheriff. Scott Walls commented that the County must get away from defined benefit retirement plan. He also supports the 25 mil budget and feels the spending needs to be controlled. Commissioner Kough Pittenger commented that taxes are spent to take care of all residents of the County in many different ways and it is the Commissioners job to make the best budget possible. Commissioner Hoover informed Scott that the County does not have an option to change the retirement plan, that would need done at the State level. Valerie Burnett stated that there was no mention of reducing the millage rate at the budget presentation meeting. She asked Commissioner Fluke what the underlying problem is and why we have to request permission from the Judge. Commissioner Fluke stated that we are required by law to petition the Judge for anything over 25 mils. Greg Kough commented that Commissioners Hoover and Pittenger inherited many problems when they took office. He asked if the new Commissioners would have the option to re-open the budget in

January, Solicitor McManamon stated yes. He offered support of the 27 mil budget. Sheriff Walters offered support of the 27 mil budget, stating that a 25 mil budget can not run this County. Barry Wright offered support of the 25 mil budget stating that industry in the County is decreasing and residents can not support businesses. Commissioner Kough Pittenger reminded everyone that the County is mandated to provide certain services such as the Sheriff services, a county jail, CYS and a Planning Department. Michael Husband stated that the County needs to expand its tax base. He also offered support of the Library and urged the Board not to cut funding. Valerie Bennett thanked Commissioners' Hoover and Kough Pittenger for being responsible with the budget. Evelyn East agreed with Valerie and thanked them for taking the time to answer questions. She also stated she was proud to see so many people in attendance at the meeting. Kristen Bennett commented that paying taxes is a residents responsibility. Jim Cassatt asked that if the millage rate is maintained at 27 mils, the additional two mils should be put towards the Bailey building. Charlie Coleman asked where the money comes from when departments exceed their budget. Commissioner Hoover commented that it all comes from the general fund. He asked if there were checks and balances for the departments budgets, Commissioner Hoover stated, yes there is. Debbie Higgins commented that there is not excessive money spent and that making these proposed cuts is simply fooling the voters. When it comes to court costs, they are not all able to be controlled and the bills must be paid. Joan Cassatt commented that she supports the 27 mil budget but asked the Board to review the budget for possible cuts which are not state mandated. Rich Irvin informed the public that the 27 mil budget reflected cuts of \$1.1 million from what departments had requested. He further commented on the retirement system. The retirement system began experiencing a shortfall in the past few years due to the stock market. That liability falls back on the County and attempts have been made to resolve the issue. He stated that the fees to the money managers had been paid from the retirement system in the past. That expense is now coming from the general fund, which has helped the retirement fund greatly. Rich also encouraged the Board to make a decision today so the County can move forward with the tax anticipation note. Discussion was brought back to the table and Commissioner Fluke offered comment. He stated that he did not want to start a fight over the millage rate. He feels that CYS money coming in may be enough to get the County through the first part of the year. He thanked the office staff for their help with the budget process. He stated that the spending trends can not continue. Sheriff Walters encouraged the Board to make a decision today and move forwards. Commissioner Hoover offered comment next. He stated that cuts to certain departments are not feasible and only cause problems down the road. He stated that the reimbursements to CYS in the 27 mil budget reflect an 84% reimbursement, not an 80% reimbursement. He further commented that the problems with the retirement fund started in 2004 and nothing was done to address it. Those problems were not addressed at the time; infact, increases continued to be granted. He recommended that Judge Kurtz appoint Jennifer Habel, Carol Braceland and Greg Jackson to a committee assigned to reviewing court costs with the new Board of Commissioners. He stated that he would support the 27 mil budget with two changes. He would like the appropriation to the Co-op extension maintained at \$80,706.00 and an additional \$127,500.00 put into the CYS budget to offset the reimbursement variance. He suggested that the \$127,500.00 be moved from the retirement fund to the CYS reimbursement line. The budget committee will review these requests. It was moved by Commissioner Hoover, seconded by Commissioner Kough Pittenger and carried (Hoover, yes; Fluke, no; Kough Pittenger, yes) to petition the court for a 27 mil budget for 2012.

It was moved by Commissioner Hoover, seconded by Commissioner Kough Pittenger and carried (Fluke, no; Kough Pittenger, yes; Hoover, yes) to adopt resolution 20-2011, granting the Solicitor to petition the Court for a tax rate of 27 mils for 2012.

Craig Woods was present to request approve of change order #36 for the Bailey building. This was considered last week but tabled until Craig could be in attendance at the meeting. It was moved by Commissioner Kough Pittenger, seconded by Commissioner Fluke and carried (Kough Pittenger, yes; Hoover, no; Fluke, yes) to approve change order #36 as requested. Craig also informed the Board that the elevator is progressing slowly due to the weather.

There were no Veteran's burial allowances.

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Kough Pittenger, second by Commissioner Fluke and carried to adjourn the meeting at 12:13 a.m. Minutes prepared by Chief Clerk, Michelle Cerett.

Respectfully submitted,

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Connie Kough Pittenger, Secretary