

Huntingdon, PA

Tuesday, June 8, 2021

21-2021

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 via GoToMeeting: Commissioners Sather, Walls and Thomas; Chief Clerk, Heather Fellman; Solicitor, Larry Newton; Sheriff, Jeff Leonard; Planning Director, Jim Lettiere; Brandon Carson from Allegheny Broadband; CYS Fiscal Supervisor, Claudia Conrad; CYS Fiscal Tech, Chris Dixon and Daily News Reporter, Kylie Hawn.

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

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

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

There was one addition to the agenda: discussion of an RFP for Broadband Expansion with Brandon Carson. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes).

Under announcements, Commissioner Walls urged the public to exercise caution while driving now that schools are out for the summer and more kids may be outside playing.

There were no public comments.

Under matters to be addressed by the solicitor, Solicitor Newton noted that he is working with Susan Harry on the hotel excise tax and 4 objections to tax sales. There is also a special General Authority Meeting scheduled for June 16<sup>th</sup> to approve and sign a cooperation agreement for the RACP grant.

Under new business, Jim Lettiere requested consideration of approval for an update to the PennDOT consult selection form for the New Fording Bridge Project. This form had been previously approved and this update will add Mr. Lettiere to the selection process. To date, we have received 20 solicitations of interest proposals. Mr. Lettiere will evaluate them and make a recommendation to the Commissioners. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Thomas, yes; Walls, yes).

Brandon Carson discussed an RFP proposal for broadband expansion. An infrastructure analysis was undertaken last year to examine broadband access need in the region. It gave us a comprehensive look at the needs of the region. The study concluded in September 2020 and it became obvious that we need an entity to help us pursue state and federal resources for broadband projects. That is now Allegheny Broadband. I am here today to talk about a request for proposal that was released yesterday in collaboration with the six counties in this region. We are looking at potentially using American Rescue Plan funds that have begun to flow through here this summer. The RFP is currently open. Proposals are due by July 7<sup>th</sup> at 4PM. Commissioner Walls commented that we want to reach as many people as we can. Commissioner Thomas commented that these are exciting times. At no time during broadband history have we had the opportunity to expand services in our region like this. There are some areas in our region where no internet provider is going to come in without some kind of supplement to get them there. We need to look at these proposals and address some of them and also look at those hard to reach areas. Thank you for those of you who have called in so far. Please call the Commissioners' Office and ask for a Commissioner if you have access issues so that we can get your name and address on the list for expansion. Most of the calls that I have gotten so far are from Blairs Mills and Blacklog. If you are in need of internet, underserved or unserved. We are going to try to reach you. You have been patient this long. Please be patient just a little longer while we get this built out.

Jim Lettiere, Planning Director, requested consideration of approval for Resolution 8-2021. This resolution is in memory of John Paul Espy III. Mr. Espy served his community as a member of the Partners for Economic Progress. Mr. Espy was actively involved in making Huntingdon County a better place. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes).

Jeff Leonard, Sheriff, requested consideration of approval to attend the PA Sheriff's Association's annual summer conference in July. The registration fee is \$500 and the lodging cost is \$126 per night for four nights. This is a budgeted item. It was moved by Commissioner Sather, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Sather, yes).

Chris Dixon, CYS Fiscal Tech, requested consideration of approval for a purchase of service agreement with Amber McCloskey for guardian ad litem services on an as-needed basis. This is for contract year July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Chris Dixon requested consideration of approval for a purchase of service agreements for guardian ad litem services on an as needed basis with Amber McCloskey, Robert Covell, Andrea Lehman, Michael Kipphan and Nicholas Newfield. These are renewals for contract year July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. It was moved by Commissioner Sather, seconded by Commission Thomas and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes).

Chris Dixon requested consideration of approval for purchase of service agreements with Huntingdon Area School District and Southern Huntingdon School District for transportation of foster children to their home districts as needed. This is a mandated service under the Every Child Succeeds Act. The cost of this program is broken into thirds and shared between the home school district, the district where the child is living while in foster care, and the Huntingdon County Children's Services Office. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Sather, yes).

Chris Dixon requested consideration of approval for a purchase of service agreement with Professional Family Care Services. This agency provides foster care services in the county on an as-needed basis. It is a renewal from last year for contract year July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. It was moved by Commissioner Sather, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

There were no Matters for Action.

There were no Veteran's Burial Allowances.

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Thomas to adjourn the meeting at 10:07 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Heather Fellman, Chief Clerk.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Jeffrey Thomas, Secretary