

Huntingdon, PA
Tuesday, March 24, 2009
12-09

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 Fluke, Hoover, and Kough Pittenger; Scot Gill, Solicitor; Chief Clerk, Cinnamon Bair; Maureen Safko, Grants Administrator; Richard Stahl, Planning Director; Janet Hanks, Register and Recorder; George Germann, The Daily News; Jeff Gill, Altoona Mirror; and visitors Randy Carper, Willis Sneath, Susan and David Hartman, and Robert Salmons.

The meeting was called to order at 9:32 a.m. by Chairman Fluke followed by Prayer led by Chief Clerk Cinnamon Bair and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag led by Commissioner Kough Pittenger.

It was moved by Commissioner Hoover seconded by Commissioner Kough Pittenger and carried (Kough Pittenger, yes; Fluke, yes; Hoover, yes) to approve the minutes of the March 17 meeting.

It was moved by Commissioner Fluke seconded by Commissioner Hoover and carried (Fluke, yes; Hoover, yes; Kough Pittenger, abstain (not present)) to approve payment of invoices for the week of March 23.

There were no additions to the meeting.

Willis Sneath, Logan Township resident addressed the Commissioners regarding six different topics. 1) Mr. Sneath asked the Board when they plan to have additional town hall meetings. Commissioner Kough Pittenger agreed there needed to be more meetings with the public. She told Mr. Sneath that the meetings were not official Commissioner Meetings. 2) Mr. Sneath addressed the County website. He thought it had good improvements, but he could not find the meeting agenda, and the budget had not been updated since 2005. The Commissioners noted that Richard Stahl (present) was the person who could work on the site. 3) Mr. Sneath said that the Board should look at all exempt properties within the County. He named Penn State, Juniata College, Grier School, etc. His suggestion was in lieu of taxes give free tuition to Huntingdon County kids. Mr. Sneath told the Board that in 2006 the State raised the \$ 1.20/acre to \$3.60/acre contingent on the gaming control board's gaming fund. Mr. Sneath said the fund according to articles he had read is pretty significant. He felt this should be looked into as a way to get money to the County. Mr. Sneath also mentioned reviewing the Hotel Occupancy Tax. 4) The Elks (Fisher Bailey) Building should keep moving if you use prisoners to help with the renovation the County could save. The Commissioners told Mr. Sneath that State Inmates from the "CReW" have been working. The CReW is planned to be shut down the end of June by the State budget. The Commissioners plan to send letters to the legislators supporting the CReW, Operation Outward Reach, Inc. 5) Mr. Sneath said that he felt that the phone companies were unfairly treating rural customers by not providing high speed internet to them. He felt that if the Commissioners spoke out about the lack of service the companies may listen. And last, 6) He noted it had come to his attention that when the County had surplus property the employees were given first opportunity to bid, without general public knowledge. He suggested that other counties placed items to bid on a website allowing anyone to bid. Commissioner Kough Pittenger said that Mr. Sneath had some good suggestions and said they were past due for another town meeting. Commissioner Hoover noted that the County would not be in a bind if the State would pay the County for all the reimbursements they were owed, Children and Youth, District Attorney's salary, etc.

There were no matters addressed by the Solicitor.

First on the agenda, Richard Stahl met with the Commissioners to request approval to respond to the DCED economic stimulus funding through the CDBG program. The County is eligible to receive an additional \$80,320 as part of their FY 2009 CDBG contract. The funds must be spent on viable projects within 120 days of the contract date. Maureen went over a draft spreadsheet with the Commissioners showing expected timelines and projects that would fit them. The top three projects were Dudley- Carbon-Coalmon Water tank rehabilitation, Fisher Bailey building elevator, and the Shirley Home Window replacement. Commissioner Fluke asked if there was admin money in the \$80,320. Maureen said that was not asked and they intended to use the full

sum on a project. Rich went over the entire list noting problems that other projects had completing in the time given.

The Commissioners asked about the Shirley Home projects, Commissioner Kough Pittenger asked if the projects were in the budget for a later date. Maureen said they were. Commissioner Hoover asked how many windows were in the home. Maureen had figured 68 windows. Commissioner Fluke stated the Architect said the better energy savings would come from storm windows rather than replacement. Maureen said that they did a study on the Ellinger House and found replacement was better. Commissioner Kough Pittenger added that the Architect may have been saying that because of the historical value of the Courthouse windows. Richard Stahl told the Board that they would need to respond by April 3, 2009 to DCED. Commissioner Fluke asked if the money could be used to help with using geothermal heating in the Elks. Richard said no, this funding needed to help low income/ADA projects. Richard also noted that Huntingdon County is prepared to spend the money in part because they go by a three year plan, which not all counties do. It was moved by Commissioner Kough Pittenger seconded by Commissioner Hoover with the addition to looking into other projects at the Shirley Home that may have a larger energy savings than windows and carried (Fluke, yes; Kough Pittenger, yes; Hoover, yes) to approve Richard and Maureen applying for the additional CDBG money in the amount of \$80,320.

Next on the Agenda Richard Stahl went over the 2008 Annual Huntingdon County Planning Commission Report. Richard mentioned curbside recycling, Community Improvement Awards, the financial report, the Huntingdon County Website, Planning workshops, municipal assistance, park projects, Huntingdon County Comprehensive plan, the completion of the 911 addressing project, the Leadership program, and Richard wanted to especially thank his loyal and helpful staff for all of their work each year. The report can be viewed at the Planning Office.

The Commissioners discussed the MATP program. They had been sent a letter from Department of Public Welfare to have more County involvement in the program and only use one outside agency. The County had since 2006 placed the administration with Center for Community Action (CCA) and the operations with Employment and Training. The State felt that the County should play a greater role in administration. Center for Community action had offered to run the program completely, but recently sent a letter to the Commissioners saying they were no longer interested in being part of the program. Scot advised the Board that after the letter from Center for Community Action they needed to talk with Employment and Training. Their line of credit may need to be increased to provide for the program between reimbursements. Center for Community Action had previously advanced money to the MATP program. Commissioner Hoover noted that the program has had increased usage due to the price of fuel. Commissioner Kough Pittenger gave a brief history of how Center for Community Action and Employment and Training both worked in the program. Ann Foor had previously worked for the County as the Human Services Director. Ann left the County and privatized with Center for Community Action. Ann retained the county grants as the administrator. Employment and Training has been the operational part of the program for years. George Germann asked what the amount of the program was. Chief Clerk Cinnamon Bair told him the total allocation for 2009 was \$ 526,848. The Commissioners wanted to Thank Center for Community Action's involvement in the program and their ability to step up with funding to pay the clients and many providers when the program required more than the allocated amount. Commissioner Kough Pittenger said CCA deserves acknowledgement that the program under their leadership had no delays; due to CCA's advancements to Employment and Training. Commissioner Kough Pittenger also noted that Employment and Training have done a good job operating the program. All Commissioners agreed.

The Commissioners were asked to change the policy regarding excused Wednesday afternoons. The Policy that is currently in effect allows Department Heads the option to send part of their staff home with pay if their work is caught up. The Commissioners contacted their personnel consultant regarding the legality of the policy. The consultant recommended that the Board of Commissioners revise the policy to no longer allow this practice. It was moved by Commissioner Fluke seconded by Commissioner Hoover and carried (Kough Pittenger, yes; Fluke, yes; Hoover, yes) to no longer allow excused Wednesday afternoons off with pay. Amended from the original motion to include; the policy change goes into effect April 1, 2009.

It was moved by Commissioner Kough Pittenger seconded by Commissioner Hoover and carried (Fluke, yes; Hoover, yes; Kough Pittenger, yes) to reappoint members of the Area Agency on Aging Citizens Advisory Council for a one year term:

Chester Grissinger, Huntingdon
Gerald Foster, Huntingdon
Leo Gordon, Three Springs
Robert Wargo, Petersburg

Hannah Gordon, Three Springs
Robert Wise, Shirleysburg
Augusta Wargo, Petersburg (Alternate)
Patricia Wise, Shirleysburg

It was moved by Commissioner Kough Pittenger seconded by Commissioner Hoover and carried (Hoover, yes; Kough Pittenger, yes; Fluke, yes) to approve Maureen Safko to attend the Community and Development and Housing Practitioners Annual Conference in State College, April 20th and 21st. The Conference is an eligible CDBG reimbursement. The cost to attend is registration \$100 plus mileage and lunch expenses.

It was moved by Commissioner Hoover seconded by Commissioner Kough Pittenger and carried (Fluke, yes; Kough Pittenger, yes; Hoover, yes) to approve Sandra McNeal to attend the Western Pennsylvania Election Personnel Association, April 1st in Butler, PA. The cost will be for one night stay and expenses, estimated at \$ 80.

It was moved by Commissioner Kough Pittenger seconded by Commissioner Hoover and carried (Fluke, yes; Hoover, yes; Kough Pittenger, yes) to approve D. Brian Young, Mapping Director to attend the 2009 PA GIS Conference in Grantville, PA. The cost to attend is \$219.00 registration fee, one night hotel \$132.09, and mileage.

The Commissioners approved payment for 6 Veteran burial allowances, 0 widow/widower burial allowances and 1 base.

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Hoover second by Commissioner Kough Pittenger and carried to adjourn the meeting at 11:23 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Kough Pittenger, Secretary