

Huntingdon, PA

Tuesday, March 15, 2022

11-2022

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: Commissioner Walls; Chief Clerk, Heather Fellman; Solicitor, Larry Newton; Planning Director, Jim Lettiere; EMA Staff Member, Katie Unger and Daily News Reporter, Kylie Hawn.

Commissioners Sather and Thomas and Erika Dominick from PA One Call attended remotely via GoToMeeting.

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

It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes) to approve the previous week's minutes as presented.

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

There were two additions to the agenda: Consideration to fill a position in the DJs Office in Porter Township. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes) to add this item to the agenda. The second item is consideration of approval for interconnectivity funding. It was moved by Commissioner Sather, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes) to add this item to the agenda.

Under announcements, Commissioner Thomas urged residents not to let their guard down about COVID. Get the vaccine and the booster, if eligible. He also encouraged residents to allow their children to be vaccinated against COVID. Commissioner Walls commented that we all see what is happening in Europe. It is a tragedy to believe that in 2022 things like this could happen. I don't know what we are going to do as a country or as a world but individually if there is any way we can help that effort I think we all need to do that, financially as well as prayer for our leaders that this will get resolved quickly and that we do what we have to do to get that resolved.

There were no public comments.

There were no items to be addressed by the solicitor.

Under new business, Jim Lettiere, Planning Director, requested consideration of approval for payment application number four to Mid-State Construction for the library elevator project in the amount of \$10,350. A grant was received by the Huntingdon County Library in the amount of \$48,650. The total for the project was \$147,286. \$8,500 was for engineering. The balance is for construction. These funds are not paid out of the County general Fund. The Library is paying costs not covered by the grant. Change order number 1 was approved on January 25th to change the substantial completion date to May 31st. This is a payment for work completed as of this date. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Sather, yes).

Jim Lettiere requested consideration of approval for change order number two for the MUMA Hill Valley Sewer Improvement Project. The funding for this project is \$87,306.73. The original contract price with Guyer Brothers was \$114,156. This request is to increase that cost by \$2,044 for some changes to the manhole rehabilitation and extend the deadline to May 31, 2022. It was moved by Commissioner Sather, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Jim Lettiere requested consideration of approval to appoint Laurie Nearhood as acting Community Development Administrator effective March 21, 2022. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes).

Erika Dominick, Damage Prevention Liaison for Pennsylvania One Call, requested consideration of approval for Proclamation 2-2022 to declare April as Safe Digging month. \$30 million is the annual society cost of damages to underground infrastructure. You can help lower the cost by contacting 811, Pennsylvania One Call at least three business days before you dig. This call before you dig process helps prevent injuries, property damages, and inconvenient utility outages and the service is free to homeowners. It was moved by Commissioner Sather, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Sather, yes).

At the request of Treasurer Susan Harry, consideration of approval was given to table the Fairfield Online Dog License Agreement. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Heather Fellman, Chief Clerk, requested consideration of approval for two polling place changes in Huntingdon County. The first is for Hopewell Township, Puttstown District. The Church of God Tabernacle has terminated our lease and provided the required notice. Upon receipt of this notice, the County began a search for another venue in partnership with the Township. Due to lack of available publicly accessible buildings in the district, I am requesting that the location of the polling place be moved to Hopewell District in Hopewell Township. After speaking with the township, we do anticipate that voting will be able to move back to a location in the Puttstown District in the future, but until further notice all voting for Hopewell Township will be held in the Sunday School Room at the United Church of Christ. Their address is 18835 Raystown Rd in James Creek. Public notices were hung within the municipality on the morning of Friday, March 11th. Notices and updated voter registration cards will be mailed to all affected voters. The second polling place change is for Wood Township. At the request of voters in this district, the County reached out to Robertsdale, Wood and Broad Top Fire Hall to ascertain their willingness to serve as a polling place for Election Day. They have agreed and the polling place will move from the Lions Building to the Fire Hall at 6340 New Grenada Highway in Robertsdale. Public notices were hung within the municipality on the morning of Friday, March 11th and notices and updated voter registration cards will go out to all affected voters. We in the elections office offer our sincere thanks to all of our polling places for being such gracious hosts to the voters of Huntingdon County. Commissioner Thomas thanked Heather Fellman and Tammy Thompson for their hard work in moving the voting locations. It is really difficult to find places that are willing to serve as a polling place and people that are willing to serve as poll workers. If you are willing to work at a polling place, please contact the Elections Office. Commissioner Sather expressed his appreciation to those organizations and people who are working with us for elections. Commissioner Walls commented that a lot goes into moving a polling place. Ms. Fellman and Ms. Thompson went out on Friday and performed an inspection of the new polling locations to make sure that they met the ADA requirements. It was moved by Commissioner Sather, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes; Thomas, yes).

Consideration of approval was given to hire Lena Summers for the position of MDJ Secretary effective March 16th. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Walls, yes; Thomas, yes; Sather, yes).

Consideration of approval was given to approve the 911 State Interconnectivity Funding. Huntingdon County has been awarded \$378,465.74 to be used for maintenance, new generation 911 conformance, etc. When the grant is fully executed, payment of \$268,699.61 will be made to Huntingdon County. The remaining balance of the grant award will be disbursed based upon the approved project work plan provided by Huntingdon County on the grant application and PEMA's funding guidance. Commissioner Sather expressed his thanks to Sid McConaughy for all of his work on this project. Commissioner Walls commented that this is for redundancy for our regional 911 center. If one dispatch center goes down, another county can pick it up. It is really important and we are really happy to see this funding go to operate the 911 center. This is all 911 money. It is specifically designated for 911 projects. It was moved by Commissioner Sather, seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried (Thomas, yes; Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Katie Unger, EMA Assistant, presented an update on COVID-19. The average number of new cases per day in the county was 3, down from 5 the previous week. The State is at an average of 898. Huntingdon County has moved down to a medium level of community transmission. SCI Smithfield currently has 13 inmates and 4 staff testing positive. SCI Huntingdon has 2 staff testing positive. There is nothing to report with the schools. The Department of Health reports a total of 6 COVID cases among school-aged children and less than five among children 4 and under. Juniata College continues surveillance testing and has had a total of 55 positive cases this semester. COVID hospitalization for the state stands at 777. Our incident rate for the county is 26.6 per 100,000 and the state is 35.8. The PCR percent positivity is 1.5% for the county and 3.6% for the state. Long-term care facilities have had 35 residents and 30 staff test positive. 24,212 vaccines have been distributed in the county. 10,388 boosters have been given. The county is over 48% vaccinated. There were no deaths in the last week. There have been no deaths since February 26th. The dominant variant is still Omicron. Nationally, Omicron BA.1.1 accounts for 73.7%, B.1.1.529 is 14.7% and Stealth Omicron is 11.6%. In Pennsylvania, Omicron B.1.1.529 is at 89.8% and Stealth Omicron is at 10.2%. The Commissioners expressed their thanks to Ms. Unger for her report and for keeping the public informed. Solicitor Newton asked what level of community transmission the surrounding counties are at. Ms. Unger responded that Mifflin is still at medium and everyone else is low.

There was nothing discussed under matters for action, information and discussion.

There were no Veteran's Burial Allowances.

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Sather to adjourn the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Heather N. Fellman, Chief Clerk.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeffrey Thomas, Secretary