

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 and Walls; Chief Clerk, Heather Fellman; Solicitor, Peter McManamon; Planning Director, Jim Lettiere; Community Development Administrator, Stacia-Fe Gillen; EMA Director, Joe Thompson; visitor, Dean Fluke and Daily News Reporter Kylie Hawn.

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

It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes) to approve the minutes of the October 20th Public Meeting.

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

There were five additions to the agenda. The first addition, consideration of approval for CARES Act funding for initial applicants – phase four. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes). The second addition, consideration of approval to award CDBG Planning funds for the Huntingdon Borough sidewalk project. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Walls, yes; Sather, yes). The third addition, an update on the election. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes). The fourth addition, consideration of approval for a notice to proceed for the Huntingdon Borough sidewalk project. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Walls, yes; Sather, yes). The fifth addition, an update on COVID-19. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Under announcements, Commissioner Sather announced that there will be no meeting next week because it is Election Day.

Under public comments, Dean Fluke asked if Jeff Thomas was not at the meeting and who is on the call. Heather Fellman confirmed that Commissioner Thomas is not on the call and listed the participants.

There were no Matters addressed by the solicitor

Under new business, Stacia-Fe Gillen, Community Development Administrator, requested consideration of approval for a revision to Resolution 13-2020 to add the on-behalf-of communities of Huntingdon Borough and Smithfield. Ms. Gillen asked if Commission Thomas would be able to sign this at a later date. Commissioner Sather asked Solicitor Peter McManamon to weigh in on this question. Mr. McManamon commented that this would be up to Commissioner Thomas to decide. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Stacia-Fe Gillen requested consideration of approval for a revision to Resolution 16-2020 to include a list of selected CDBG projects and their allocations. Commissioner Walls commented that it is great to be able to help small communities with projects for infrastructure, sanitation, and things that normally they would not be able to afford. This money comes in to be used for those projects. He thanked the Planning Commission for their efforts in

securing this funding. Kylie Hawn asked for a copy of the resolution to be sent to her. Ms. Gillen will send her a copy. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Walls, yes; Sather, yes).

Stacia-Fe Gillen requested consideration of approval for a cooperative agreement between Huntingdon County and Huntingdon Borough for the CDBG program. This agreement allows Huntingdon Borough to take on some of the administrative functions for their CDBG Entitlement Program. The Planning Department negotiated an agreement that would allow Huntingdon Borough to request up to \$3500 annually of the 18% allowable administration fee from CDBG. This fee can be renegotiated annually but never to exceed \$3500. Dean Fluke asked if this information can be provided to the newspaper as well. Ms. Gillen will send this information to Ms. Hawn. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Stacia-Fe Gillen requested consideration of approval for a disclosure report for the CDBG program indicating that CDBG regulations are being followed. Commissioner Walls commented that it is good to get all of this out in the public so that the public can see all of the regulations and requirements that the Planning Department goes through in order to complete a project. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Walls, yes; Sather, yes).

Stacia-Fe Gillen requested consideration of approval for a language access program which stipulates that any municipality that has a 5% minimum of residents who speak English less than well there must be a language access plan. This program spells out what we will do if there is such a need. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Stacia-Fe Gillen requested consideration of approval for a notice of award for John C. Yenter, who was the lowest responsive bidder on the Huntingdon Borough sidewalk project. The Borough Engineer also reviewed these bids and found that Mr. Yenter is the lowest responsive bidder. Mr. Fluke asked if any county tax dollars are involved in this project. Commissioner Sather responded that CDBG funding is received from the state. He asked if there was a borough match. Ms. Gillen responded that these are federal funds that are administered by the state. There is not a borough match to the best of Ms. Gillen's knowledge. Commissioner Sather commented that there is no county match that is required. Ms. Gillen confirmed that that is correct. Commissioner Walls commented that there is an admin fee to compensate for the labor that the county has in administering. It is essentially self-funded. Kylie Hawn asked how much this project will cost and what the amount of the bid that was submitted is. Commissioner Sather responded that the cost of the project is \$51,312. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Walls, yes; Sather, yes).

Stacia-Fe Gillen requested consideration of approval for a notice to proceed for John C. Yenter for the sidewalk project. If approved, the project would commence today. February 28, 2021 would be the date of completion with the date of readiness of final payment being March 15, 2021. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes).

Joe Thompson, EMA Director, presented an update on COVID-19. The latest figures from the Pennsylvania Department of State added four to Huntingdon County's positive cases bringing our overall total to 874. There have been approximately 7800 negative tests. Our case rate in Huntingdon County is 1,900/100,000 which is the highest case rate in the region and one of the highest infection rates in the state. We have had 15 COVID-caused deaths to date. We are now seeing an increase in people going to the Emergency Room with symptoms. Our PCR positivity is 12%, which is the highest in the state. It is important that all of us do everything we can to stop the spread. It is expected that we will have a large spike in our numbers today. COVID-19 is affecting businesses, churches, the election, long-term care facilities and social services agencies. Kylie Hawn asked what the number of positive cases is at the Jail. Mr. Thompson responded that he does not have those numbers in front of him but can research it. It is difficult to get these figures as the testing has been done in Centre County. Commissioner Sather thanked Mr. Thompson for all of the work he and his staff have done for the residents of Huntingdon County.

Joe Thompson presented the COVID-related Disaster Declaration from March for renewal. This renewal is not needed because there is no real expiration date for that however the increase in COVID cases has become a significant concern. We are renewing this disaster declaration to further emphasize the Commissioners' concern and to increase public awareness about the seriousness of the COVID situation. This declaration of disaster emergency is different than declaring a state of emergency. Mr. Thompson also announced that a COVID testing

site will be coming to Huntingdon County in the Huntingdon Plaza. It is opening this Thursday by request of the Commissioners. The general rule is that this site will be set up for five days based on the number of cases and demand for services with the option to extend if needed. There will be no charge for the test and it will be open from 7AM to 6PM. Drive-through and walk-in services are available and no prescription is needed. Bring your photo ID and insurance card if you have one. Results can be expected in one to three days. Commissioner Walls commented that he is glad to see this come to the County, although he had some concerns because it will put our numbers up if the County starts mass testing. The Department of Health has said they will not punish Huntingdon County for being proactive to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. We do not look for any shut-downs because of this effort to identify those who are positive. It is very important for our vulnerable populations and emergency responders. It was moved by Commissioner Walls, seconded by Commissioner Sather and carried (Sather, yes; Walls, yes) to ratify the declaration of disaster emergency.

Joe Thompson announced that EMA has completed an Emergency Protective Measures application for the National Emergency Declaration for the COVID-19 Pandemic. These grant funds were primarily used for the purchase of personal protective equipment. We were fortunate enough to have gotten on this quick enough to receive what is known as a streamlined application. The bottom line for everyone is it was much simpler and faster.

Joe Thompson announced that the EMA office is also keeping an eye on the General Election and it is expected to be a big day. His office will be available if anything is needed.

Heather Fellman, Chief Clerk, provided an update on the election. We have been very busily working through everything that has come into our office related to the election. We have received thousands of applications for mail-in ballots. At this time, we are caught up with the applications that have come in through yesterday. We are continuing to send out ballots as applications come in on the day that they are received. Today is the last day for early voting in PA, so if anyone is interested in voting here in the office, today is the last day to do that. Today is also the last day to apply for a mail-in ballot. So far, we have over 5,000 ballots out and we have registered over 2,000 new voters in the county as well as processed several thousand change applications for changes of address, party, name, et cetera. We appreciate the patience of the residents of the County as we work through the high volume of requests that we have received. If you do have questions about your voter registration status, the status of your ballot, or any other questions about the election, please contact the Commissioners' office. We are receiving hundreds of calls so we ask that rather than dial directly into the elections office, dial into the Commissioners' Office that way we can track down somebody to help you as quickly as possible. Commissioner Walls commented that if anyone has not received their ballot we are still working through them and getting them out. Ms. Fellman added that we have sent out ballots for all eligible applications received through yesterday. There are only a handful of applications left in the office to process other than what we will receive throughout the day today, which I anticipate will be a significant number. Commissioner Walls offered his thanks to the office staff and commented that the process that is required to provide a voter with a mail-in ballot is extremely time-consuming. The staff has been working feverishly to keep up with demand. Commissioner Sather commented that the security and integrity of the process is being maintained in Huntingdon County. Commissioner Walls further commented that we continue to be surprised by legislative change and policy changes during this election cycle. Kylie Hawn asked for clarification on the end of early voting. Will residents not be able to drop off their ballots at the office now? Ms. Fellman commented that they can still drop off their ballot but after today they may no longer apply, receive a ballot, and vote all in one trip. Commissioner Sather offered a point of clarification that residents may personally drop off their own ballot, but they cannot return a ballot for someone else. Ms. Hawn asked if we check for photo ID. Ms. Fellman responded that we do request some form of identification, although it does not have to be a photo ID. We just have to have something to verify that the voter is dropping off their own ballot. Commissioner Walls also commented that Huntingdon County only has one drop-off location for ballots. That is at our office. There are no drop boxes or satellite locations.

Commissioner Sather announced the Phase Four funding release of the initial CARES Act applicants. This release of funds will go to 17 businesses and totals an additional \$93,909.36. Commissioner Walls commented that we certainly want to get the money out to help these businesses and we are working on getting this funding out as quickly as possible. The folks that we have hired to go through all the regulations work with several other counties too are working hard to process these applications. We do not make the rules, that is the job of the federal and state governments, but we do have to make sure that the rules are properly enforced. Commissioner Sather commented that a total of \$545,341.41 has been distributed to businesses in total. Dean Fluke thanked the Commissioners for providing those figures.

There were no Matters for Action, Information, and Discussion.

There were no Veteran's Burial Allowances.

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Walls to adjourn the meeting at 10:47 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Heather Fellman, Deputy Chief Clerk.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeffrey Thomas, Secretary