

Lewistown, PA

May 7, 2020

The Board of Mifflin County Commissioners met for their Regular Meeting on Thursday, May 7, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. In attendance were Commissioners Mark Sunderland, Robert Postal and Kevin Kodish; Solicitor Stephen Snook, BMZ Law and Chief Clerk Cathy Romig.

There were no members present from the news media.

Guests present: Treasurer Deb Civitts; Public Safety Director Phil Lucas; Chief Probation Officer Nick Wolfkiel; Steen Peterson; Tim Nilson; Mike Coldren and Roger Herto, MCTV

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Sunderland.

I. Invocation: The Invocation was given by Commissioner Kodish.

II. Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was said by all present.

III. Approval of Minutes:

Motion was made by Commissioner Postal to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 30, 2020. Commissioner Kodish seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

IV. Approval of Bills:

1. General Fund, Accounts Payable:

Cks. #128249 to 128295 and EFTs # 26350 to 26433 in the amount of \$307,205.50

2. Payroll Account:

Cks. # 78878 to 78885 and Direct Deposit Advices # 31657 to 31878 in the amount of \$299,304.37

3. 911 Account:

Cks. #51964 to 51967 and EFT #20693 to 20695 in the amount of \$5,275.57

Motion was made by Commissioner Postal to approve payment of bills as listed above. Commissioner Kodish seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

V. Treasurer's Report:

TREASURER'S REPORT

04/29/2020-05/05/2020

General Account Starting Balance	\$1,139,500.96
DEBITS	
Deposits Receipts #101520-101763	1,195,547.98
Transfer from 911	0.00
Transfer from Capital Reserve	0.00
Transfer from LEPC	0.00
Transfer from Act 152	10,000.00
Voided Checks	51.60

Interest	886.78
TOTAL DEBITS	\$1,206,486.36
CREDITS	
Bills Paid CK #'S 128249-128295, EFT'S # 26350-26433	307,205.50
Transfer to Payroll CKS 78878-78885, DD 31657-31878	299,304.37
NSF CHECKS	0.00
TOTAL CREDITS	\$606,509.87
<u>Ending Balance (Interest @ 0.360% as of 05/05/2020)</u>	<u>\$1,739,477.45</u>

Liquid Fuels

Invested at JV Bank @ 0.360% as of 05/05/2020 \$388,823.79

Liquid Fuels - Act 89

Invested at JV Bank @ 0.360% as of 05/05/2020 \$326,657.79

911 Telephone Account

Invested at JV Bank @ 0.360% as of 05/05/2020 \$370,150.16

LEPC

Invested at JV Bank @ 0.360% as of 05/05/2020 \$39,547.20

Local Use Fund

Invested at JV Bank @ 0.360% as of 05/05/2020 \$427,927.04

Capital Reserve Account

Invested at JV Bank @ 0.950% as of 05/05/2020 \$11,238,600.11

Report Subject to Audit

Motion was made by Commissioner Kodish to approve the Treasurer's Report as received, subject to audit. Commissioner Postal seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

VI. Meetings and Events:

*Chairman Sunderland: Board of Elections Meeting
Retirement Board Meeting
COVID-19 Meetings
Various Internal Meetings*

*Commissioner Postal: SEDA-COG Natural Gas Co-Op Meeting
JVBDS Executive Committee Meeting
Senator Corman Town Hall Meeting
Election Cyber Security Meeting
COVID-19 Meetings
Various Internal Meetings*

*Commissioner Kodish: Board of Elections Meeting
Retirement Board Meeting
COVID-19 Meetings
Various Internal Meetings*

VII. Public Comment:

None to report.

VIII. New Business:

A. Update from Phil Lucas, Director of Emergency Management

Mr. Lucas cautioned that some of the numbers about to be discussed were produced at different times. The official COVID-19 case counts as of yesterday were as follows: Centre County – 113 positive/1 death; Huntingdon County - 60 positive; Juniata County – 86 positive/1 death; Mifflin – 45 positive; Snyder County – 33 positive/1 death. Hospitals – Centre County has 5 COVID-19 patients; Blair County has 6 patients with 4 on ventilators; Mifflin County has 2 patients, both on ventilators. The surprising numbers coming out are those from prisons. SCI Rockview has two corrections officers with COVID-19; SCI Huntingdon has 32 corrections officers and 108 prisoners with COVID-19. Yesterday, the number of prisoners testing positive was 26. We are working regionally with the Department of Health and the Department of Corrections in planning how to deal with the numbers from SCI Huntingdon. It is the correctional facility with the most prisoners infected. Because of the rural nature of our area, we are making plans for those prisoners who need hospitalized. Some have been transported to the Altoona area, Mount Nittany Medical Center and they'll eventually be coming here to Geisinger-Lewistown Hospital. Most of the patients will be going to UPMC facilities in the western region. Speaking with all of the hospitals in the region, all are positioned very well. Most are moving towards opening up to full services, allowing elective surgeries. There are designated areas within the hospitals set for COVID-19 patients and those are essentially empty with only one or two patients. This may adversely affect when our region gets moved to "yellow." Well over 65% of the deaths in the State are in nursing homes. Mr. Lucas didn't have the current number of deaths in PA, but believes it's in the low 3,000, with 2,100 of the deaths originating from nursing homes. That continues to be the largest risk across the State. The Department of Health has not provided much information, but we should plan on social distancing and wearing masks through spring and most of the summer. All of the initial reports, not from the Department of Health but from media sources, suggest we should expect that as businesses open, and as we have cold and flu season through fall, we'll wind up going through this same process again.

Commissioner Postal mentioned the Commissioners signed an appeal to the Governor to consider moving Mifflin County from "Red" to "Yellow" before the decision was made last week because they felt Mifflin County would be grouped into a region with surrounding counties with much higher numbers. That appeal was to no avail. He hopes to be able to open up our small businesses safely and responsibly in the near future.

Mr. Lucas mentioned that each of our counties are having small increases in their numbers daily. Other than SCI Huntingdon, we've not seen any significant cluster activity throughout the region as we had in Juniata County initially. Even there, the cases have slowed down. Snyder County has been holding steady. Social distancing and wearing masks have made a difference. Hopefully, the SCI Huntingdon issue doesn't adversely affect us and the cluster is contained.

B. Election Update

Commissioner Kodish announced the Primary Election was moved to June 2, 2020 because of the COVID-19 situation. It is a very fluid situation at this point. Mifflin County will be consolidating several polling precincts. When the consolidation is finalized, information will be provided to the media. All registered voters will be notified by mail as well. He stated that Huntingdon County has 58 voter precincts and have

consolidated them down to 26. Here in Mifflin County there are 26 precincts that we'd like to consolidate down to 15 or 16. Hopefully, this will be finalized in the next couple of days. We don't anticipate any turmoil at the polls because with the new mail-in option, our Election Office has received well over 2,000 applications for ballots. You can complete a mail in or absentee ballot application online at votespa.com. You can also print an application from that site or you can contact the Department of State and request an application by emailing ra-voterreg@pa.gov or calling 1.877.VOTESPA. You can also print the application under the Voter Registration Department tab on the Mifflin County website or pick up a printed application at the Courthouse. These applications are in the foyer. The Courthouse foyer is open to the public for that reason. You can also call the Elections/Voter Registration Department at the Courthouse at 717.248.6571 option 1, who will mail you an application. The mail in application is for no excuse, absentee voting. An absentee application is only for people who will be absent from the municipality or have a physical disability preventing them from going to the polls. If you choose to become a permanent mail-in or absentee, you will receive a ballot for the primary and the general election. In the following years, you will automatically receive a mail-in or absentee application. The last day to register to vote in the primary is May 18, 2020. The last day to apply for a mail-in or absentee ballot is May 26, 2020. The Election Office hopes to have the majority of the ballots sent out by the end of next week. You can return these through the mail or return them in person at the Courthouse once it's open. You have until 8:00 p.m. on election night to return those ballots. Only the voter can bring in their own ballot, they cannot bring someone else's. For more information, you can also attend a Department of State webinar held each Tuesday 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. through May 26, 2020. Participants must register in advance. This information has been posted on Mifflin County Alerts and the Mifflin County Election pages or the News and Announcements on our website. You can also find it on the Department of State website at votespa.com. As far as safety at the polls, the State and the County will be providing poll workers with gloves, disinfectant, masks and hand sanitizer. With the amount of mail-in ballots, we do not expect the polls to be as busy. Voters will be asked to be respectful of the poll workers as many fall into the high-risk category and maintain social distancing guidelines, as well as wearing masks when voting. It is also suggested to bring your own black ink pens.

C. EMS Week Proclamation – May 17 – 23, 2020

EMS Week Proclamation

To designate the Week of May 17-23, 2020 as Emergency Medical Services Week

WHEREAS, Emergency Medical Services is a vital public service; and

WHEREAS, the members of Emergency Medical Services teams are ready to provide lifesaving care to those in need 24 hours a day, seven days a week; and

WHEREAS, access to quality emergency care dramatically improves the survival and recovery rate of those who experience sudden illness or injury; and

WHEREAS, emergency medical services has grown to fill a gap by providing important, out of hospital care, including preventative medicine, follow-up care, and access to telemedicine; and

WHEREAS, the Emergency Medical Services System consists of emergency medical responders, emergency medical technicians, advanced emergency medical technicians, paramedics, prehospital registered nurses, prehospital physician extenders, prehospital EMS physicians, emergency medical dispatchers, firefighters, police officers, educators, administrators, emergency department personnel, trained members of the public, and other out of hospital medical care providers; and

WHEREAS, the members of Emergency Medical Services teams, whether career or volunteer, engage in thousands of hours of specialized training and continuing education to enhance their lifesaving skills; and

WHEREAS, the emergency medical service providers within Mifflin County, as have their brothers and sisters throughout the nation, demonstrated exemplary dedication to mission and concern for overall public health and safety in preparing for and responding to potential pandemic related incidents relative the COVID-19 virus; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to recognize the value and the accomplishments of Emergency Medical Services providers by designating Emergency Medical Services Week.

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the Mifflin County Commissioners in recognition of this event do hereby proclaim the week of May 17-23, 2020, as

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WEEK

*With the theme, **EMS Strong: Ready today. Preparing for Tomorrow**, and encourage the citizens of Mifflin County to join us in observing this week and recognizing our local EMS agency/agencies and providers.*

Proclaimed this 7th day of May 2020

Motion was made by Commissioner Postal to approve the Proclamation designating May 17 – 23, 2020 as EMS Week. Commissioner Kodish seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Nilson accepted the Proclamation on behalf of the Seven Mountains EMS Council and the local service providers. In Mifflin County there are approximately 163 providers answering calls. In 2019, the County services responded to just under 10,000 emergencies.

D. Proclamation – May is Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Month

PROCLAMATION MOTORCYCLE SAFETY AND AWARENESS MONTH

MAY 2020

***Whereas,** the safety of all Pennsylvania motorists is an issue of the highest consequence and all highway users should unite in the safe sharing of roadways throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and*

***Whereas,** motorcycle riding is a popular form of recreation and transportation for thousands of people across the Commonwealth and our nation; and*

***Whereas,** the Commonwealth's licensed motorcyclists are required to keep their vehicles inspected and obey current laws relative to operator safety equipment; and*

***Whereas,** in efforts to reduce the number of motorcycle crashes and fatalities, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation encourages all motorcyclists to take advantage of free training courses through Pennsylvania's Motorcycle Safety Program and pledge to be one less fatality by visiting www.LiveFreeRideAlive.com; and*

***Whereas,** it is especially important that the citizens of our Commonwealth be aware of motorcycles on the streets and highways and recognize the importance of staying alert, practicing safe driving techniques, and promoting motorcycle safety; and*

***Whereas,** during the month of May, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, the Alliance of Bikers Aimed Toward Education of Pennsylvania (ABATE), and the Pennsylvania Motorcycle Dealers Association (PMDA) will continue their advocacy of motorcycle safety.*

Therefore, in recognition of motorcycle safety on our Commonwealth's roads and highways, we, the Commissioners of Mifflin County do hereby proclaim May, 2020 as MOTORCYCLE SAFETY AND AWARENESS MONTH. We encourage all motorcyclists to continue their efforts to promote safety and motorcycle awareness and all drivers to share the road and respect the unique safety needs of motorcyclists.

Proclaimed this 7th day of May 2020

Motion was made by Commissioner Kodish to approve the Proclamation designating May as Motorcycle Safety and Awareness Month. Commissioner Postal seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Peterson said this is a very trying time. The ABATE group had to cancel the Motorcycle Awareness and bicycle giveaway this year, which was upsetting since it has become such a big event in the community. One thing he mentioned is that many people have not been driving during the pandemic. When people get back on the road, his concern is that people won't be looking for motorcycles. ABATE will continue to promote motorcycle safety.

E. Request for exoneration of county real estate tax bills and relieve the Tax Collectors from collecting these bills:

- Parcel No. 18,05-013WB,001 located in Menno Township – school was added to the incorrect parcel and will be re-billed with the August supplemental billing - \$76.48*

Motion was made by Commissioner Postal to approve the requests for exoneration. Commissioner Kodish seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

F. Requests for refund of a portion of County real estate taxes:

- Parcel No. 21,19-0801 located in Wayne Township – fire destroyed house - \$247.27 (2019)*
- Parcel No. 19,08-0117 located in Oliver Township – structure removed - \$105.24 (2018)*
- Parcel No. 21,08-0108 located in Wayne Township – mobile home removed - \$520.05 (2018)*

Motion was made by Commissioner Kodish to approve the requests for refund of a portion of County real estate taxes. Commissioner Postal seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

G. Program Modification Request for the Mifflin County Intermediate Punishment Plan requesting an additional \$4,741.00

Mr. Wolfkiel mentioned this request was due to staff changes. The end date of the project is June 30, 2020.

Motion was made by Commissioner Kodish to approve the Program Modification Request for the Mifflin County Intermediate Punishment Plan requesting an additional \$4,741.00. Commissioner Postal seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

H. Notice of Intent – Requesting Election Security Grant Funds

Commissioner Postal discussed these are funds that have been allocated to Pennsylvania through Federal appropriations. Pennsylvania gets \$15.1 million under election security

and \$14.15 million under the CARES Act. It will be distributed to Counties per formula. Mifflin County is eligible for \$20, 506.39 under election security and \$17,572.19 under the CARES Act Grant. It hasn't been decided whether to draw down all of the money. The Commissioners are exploring what is and isn't eligible. This is an intent to draw down some of the money.

I. Notice of Intent – Requesting CARES Act Grant Funds

Motion was made by Commissioner Kodish to approve both Items H. Notice of Intent – Requesting Election Security Grant Funds and I. Notice of Intent – Requesting CARES Act Grant Funds. Commissioner Postal seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

J. Resolution No. 36 of 2020 authorizing Emergency Management Director, Philip Lucas to submit a Public Assistance Grant Agreement

Mr. Lucas explained this grant agreement application allows us to access federal and state funds as part of the emergency declaration for the COVID-19 response. Typically, disaster relief funds of this nature are limited for counties and non-governmental organizations for the two days surrounding the most significant impact of the emergency. Due to the scope of the pandemic being nationwide and for an unknown period of time, the federal government has elected to allow this application to cover a period extending from March 1, 2020 and open-ended until the declaration has been declared closed by the federal government, which could be several months. At this point, we're making the application for emergency protective measures at the county level and for all county agencies. School districts, lower level government, townships, boroughs and some non-governmental organizations that provide support in emergency actions such as food banks, emergency sheltering and that type are also eligible to apply for funding. Our goal is to apply for actions taken from March 26, 2020 backwards and then maintain a list of emergency actions taken from that point forward and apply for the reimbursement of those funds periodically. We believe we'll be eligible to receive 75% of eligible costs back from the federal government and state.

Motion was made by Commissioner Postal to approve Resolution No. 36 of 2020 authorizing Emergency Management Director, Philip Lucas, to submit a Public Assistance Grant Agreement. Commissioner Kodish seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

K. Personnel:

- *Resignation of Deputy Coroner Michael Shoop effective May 1, 2020*
- *Hiring of Cole Kellison for Probation Officer effective May 18, 2020*

Motion was made by Commissioner Postal to accept the above personnel items. Commissioner Kodish seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

IX. Adjournment:

With no other business on the agenda, Chairman Sunderland adjourned the meeting at 9:27 a.m.

Secretary

ATTEST:

Chief Clerk