

Lewistown, PA

January 19, 2017

The Board of Mifflin County Commissioners met for their Regular Meeting on Thursday, January 19, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. In attendance were Commissioners Stephen Dunkle and Kevin P. Kodish; Chief Clerk Cathy Romig; Solicitor Steve Snook and Confidential Clerk George Welsh. Chairman Nancollas was absent.

Joe Cannon of The Sentinel/County Observer was the only representative present from the news media.

Guests present were Treasurer Debra Civitts; Planning and Development Assistant Director James Lettiere; Children and Youth Supervisor Megan Stover; Auditor Helen Kirk; Ed Fike; JoAnn Tate; Mary Shingler; Dain Davis and Taylor Boozel and Kylie Wakefield, MCTV.

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Commissioner Dunkle.

The Invocation was given by Commissioner Dunkle.

I. The Pledge of Allegiance was said by all present.

Commissioner Dunkle: Commissioner Nancollas is not with us today, so I thought this would be a great opportunity to demonstrate that here in Mifflin County the 3 Commissioners are not bound by the same partisan warfare that goes on in Washington D.C. and in Harrisburg. The three of us work together as a team regardless of our political affiliation and to that end I thought it would be a great opportunity to let our democratic member of the Commissioners chair this meeting. Take it away Kevin.

Commissioner Kodish: I will be stepping from the Chair to second motions with Commissioner Dunkle making the motions.

II. Approval of Minutes:

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 5, 2017. Commissioner Kodish seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

III. Approval of Bills:

1. General Fund, Accounts Payable:

Cks. #112560 to 112901 and EFTs #22502 to 22581 in the amount of \$1,373,584.89

2. Payroll Account:

Cks. #77471 to 77492 and Direct Deposit Advices #11255 to 11475 in the amount of \$332,830.79

3. 911 Account:

Cks. # 51296 and 51302 to 51290 and EFTs #20308 and 20309 in the amount of \$38,066.20

4. LEPC Account:

Ck. #1357 in the amount of 94.68

5. Liquid Fuels Account:

Cks. # 1628 to 1630 in the amount of \$17,702.39

6. Liquid Fuels Act 89 Account:

EFT #8049 in the amount of \$60.98

7. CDBG Account:

Cks. 1345 & 113 in the amount of \$15,796.10

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle to approve payment of bills as listed above. Seconded by Commissioner Kodish. The motion was unanimously approved.

IV. Treasurer's Report: 01/04/2017 to 01/17/2017

General Account Starting Balance		\$ 5,292,763.54
Deposits – Receipts #84442-84668		418,226.66
Adjustment		3.00
Voided Check		37,547.20
Total Debits		\$ 455,776.86
Bills Paid – Cks. #112560-112901		
EFTs #22502-22581		\$ 1,411,129.09
Transfer to Payroll – Cks. #77471-77492		
DD #11255-11475		332,830.79
Total Credits		\$ 1,743,959.88
Ending Balance – Interest @ 0.640%		\$ 4,004,580.52
Liquid Fuels	0.780% @ JVB	501,093.70
Liquid Fuels – Act 89	0.780% @ JVB	227,267.08
LEPC	0.780% @ JVB	24,139.51
911 Telephone Account	0.780% @ JVB	1,311,689.21
Capital Reserve Account	0.76% @ JVB	
General Account Funds		
Total Capital Reserve		\$ 220,570.64

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle to accept the Treasurer's Report as received, subject to audit. Seconded by Commissioner Kodish. The motion was unanimously approved.

V. Meetings and Events:

Commissioner Dunkle:

Juvenile Youth and Detention Center in Bellefonte: It is a partnership between 5 Counties: Clearfield, Centre, Clinton, Huntingdon and Mifflin.
Mifflin County Soil Conservation Meeting

Commissioner Kodish:

Department Head Meeting
EADS Group Meeting
AAA Board Meeting
Library Board Meeting
Operation Fairness Meeting
MCIDA Board Meeting
Regional Services Corporation Board Meeting
ES&S Meeting

VI. New Business:

A. Request for exoneration of 2016 county portion per capita taxes:

- *Burnham Borough Tax Collector Joan North – 45*
- *Decatur Township Tax Collector Cindy McKnight – 1*
- *Kistler Borough Tax Collector Cynthia Hobbs – 7*

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle to approve the Requests for exoneration of 2016 county portion per capita taxes. Seconded by Commissioner Kodish. The motion was unanimously approved.

- B. *Contract with Patrick J. Zirpoli, LLC, Milanville, PA to provide PREA consulting and training to staff of the Mifflin County Correctional Facility - \$5,000.00*

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle to approve the Contract with Patrick J. Zirpoli, LLC. Seconded by Commissioner Kodish. The motion was unanimously approved.

- C. *Contract amendment with Zelenkofske Axelrod LLC, Harrisburg PA for a fee increase ranging from \$10,500.00 to \$12,600.00 due to the adoption of GASB No. 72 and GASB No. 77 and the Series 2015 General Obligation Bond*

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle to approve the Contract amendment with Zelenkofske Axelrod LLC. Seconded by Commissioner Kodish. The motion was unanimously approved.

- D. *Request for Qualifications for Engineering for the McVeytown Sanitary Sewer Reconstruction Project*

Mr. Lettiere: We went through a competitive request for qualification process. We received 7 proposals. There was ranking and criteria involved with a total of 500 points. Individuals involved were myself, Douglas Marks, Chairman of the McVeytown Borough Authority and the Secretary of the McVeytown Borough. The rankings of the firms involved were: 1st. Gwin Dodson and Forman, 2nd. UniTec Consulting Engineers, 3rd, EADS Group, 4th, Buchart Horn and 4th, Keller Engineering, 5th, Nittany Engineering and 7th, Herbert Rowland and Grubic. McVeytown Borough provided the written recommendation to the Commissioner's Office. They recommended Gwin Dobson and Forman. This is a total reconstruction of all underground sewer lines in the Borough of McVeytown including all public and private laterals. This is a big project. We have totally funded the project with CDBG funds. McVeytown Borough is under a consent order from DEP to make these corrections to correct the sewage problem entering the Juniata River. Jim went on to explain the point system.

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle to approve the Request for Qualifications for Engineering for the McVeytown Sanitary Sewer Reconstruction Project. Seconded by Commissioner Kodish. The motion was unanimously approved.

- E. *Reappointment to the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) for two year terms:*

- *Scott Maurey, Yeagertown, PA*
- *Don Hartzler, Belleville, PA*
- *Debra Bargo, Lewistown, PA*
- *Lisa Swisher, Lewistown, PA*
- *Craig Wheeler, Lewistown, PA*
- *Dale Stahley, Burnham, PA*
- *Judi Smith, Lewistown, PA*
- *Howard Jackson, Lewistown, PA*
- *Robert Schell, Lewistown, PA*
- *Mark Heisey, Thompsontown, PA*
- *Robert Keller, Jr., Belleville, PA*

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle to approve the Reappointments to the Local Emergency Planning Committee. Seconded by Commissioner Kodish. The motion was unanimously approved.

F. Purchase of Service Agreements for use, if needed, by Children and Youth:

- *Sherri Botteicher, Lewistown, PA*
- *Centre County Children's Advocacy Center, Mount Nittany Health, Bellefonte, PA*
- *S&S Trash Service, Burnham, PA*
- *Alternate Rehabilitation Communities, Inc., Harrisburg, PA*

Ms. Stover: Explained details of each agreement.

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle to approve the Purchase of Service Agreements. Seconded by Commissioner Kodish. The motion was unanimously approved.

G. Rescind resignation of Adam Boreman from Probation Officer effective January 4, 2017.

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle to rescind the resignation of Adam Boreman. Seconded by Commissioner Kodish. The motion was unanimously approved.

H. Hiring of Ashley Murphy for LPN at the Mifflin County Correctional Facility effective January 23, 2017

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle to approve the hiring of Ashley Murphy. Seconded by Commissioner Kodish. The motion was unanimously approved.

I. Resignation of Kristen Price from the Human Services Department effective January 27, 2017

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle to approve the resignation of Kristen Price. Seconded by Commissioner Kodish. The motion was unanimously approved.

J. Promotion of Shane Tomlinson from Sergeant to Lieutenant effective January 16, 2017

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle to approve the promotion of Shane Tomlinson. Seconded by Commissioner Kodish. The motion was unanimously approved.

K. Hiring of Thomas Harris for Part-Time Corrections Officer effective January 16, 2017

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle to approve the hiring of Thomas Harris. Seconded by Commissioner Kodish. The motion was unanimously approved.

L. Hiring of Stephen Stepanski for Registered Nurse at the Correctional Facility effective January 16, 2017

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle to approve the hiring of Stephen Stepanski. Seconded by Commissioner Kodish. The motion was unanimously approved.

M. Hiring of Marissa Long for Part-Time Corrections Officer effective January 23, 2017

N. Hiring of Karen Moore for Part-Time Corrections Officer effective January 23, 2017

O. Hiring of Mary Briggs for Part-Time Corrections Officer effective January 24, 2017.

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle for Items M, N and O to approve the hiring of Marissa Long, Karen Moore and Mary Briggs. Seconded by Commissioner Kodish. The motion was unanimously approved.

P. *Promotion of Daris Ciercierski from Caseworker II to Caseworker III in the Children and Youth Services effective January 23, 2017*

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle to approve the Promotion of Daris Ciercierski. Seconded by Commissioner Kodish. The motion was unanimously approved.

Q. *Hiring of Gloria Runk for a temporary employee in the Assessment Office effective January 18, 2017*

Motion was made by Commissioner Dunkle to approve the hiring of Gloria Runk. Seconded by Commissioner Kodish. The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Laub: Is that a full time employee? What is the salary?

Commissioner Kodish: No, just a matter of a couple weeks. She is working on the Operation Fairness Per Capita update. We have a lot of cards that need processed. Cards need to go in before the billing can go out in a couple of weeks. \$10.00 per hour.

VII. Public Comment

Ms. Laub: In the December 15th Public Meeting, Ms. Nancollas mentioned that you were going to use a third party posting service in Tax Claim. I wonder why this is even being considered?

Commissioner Kodish: It is being considered, it hasn't been done. We have to go over everything and evaluate how things are being done here now. We always have to look and see if there is a better way to do things. Is there a less expensive way to do it? What is the best way to do it.

Ms. Laub: Let's talk about costs. Delinquent tax collections when you are required by law to notify people in many different ways. When the Sheriff's Department posts the property that too is added to taxpayer's bill so therefore a cost consideration cannot be considered. If you collect \$20,000.00 in sheriff posting fees and you pay out \$20,000.00. So it is an in/out in the budget. To say that you are going to save money in my opinion is not valid. A Sheriff's Posting is pretty incontestable in court and I am wondering if you do that with another type firm would that give you as strong a position.

Commissioner Dunkle: If we go with this firm, it should give us a stronger position if we were to go to a court.

Ms. Laub: Is the firm you are talking to in Pennsylvania?

Commissioner Dunkle: No, they are based out of South Carolina.

Ms. Laub: Are they going to hire local people to do this?

Commissioner Dunkle: That I don't know. We haven't explored it that far yet. There are a number of counties in Pennsylvania that are now using this firm. One of the things that they do is they make multiple postings and they take pictures. They document the time that it was posted to the exact minute, hour, second and so all the evidence that would be presented in court would be unquestionable.

Ms. Laub: But you know the Sheriff's Office has been doing this for over a decade.

Commissioner Kodish: Who was doing it before that?

Ms. Laub: Patty Wilson, elected official Dan Lynch, employees of the Tax Claim Bureau, that's how it was done in the past. Mr. Dunkle, you and Lisa Nancollas both campaigned to keep jobs and income in Mifflin County I don't see how this is accomplishing that when we have a valid system in place to provide these services.

Commissioner Dunkle: As Kevin indicated, this is something we are exploring at this point. We have not made a decision, but sometimes one has to weigh the professional service one gets with an outside firm against what we are currently using.

Ms. Laub: Are you implying that these County Deputies are not professionals?

Commissioner Dunkle: I am not saying that. You said that.

Ms. Laub: My third question is the actual estimate to bring the Prison into PREA compliance. I have been looking at the budget. I had a very nice concise answer from Commissioner Kodish regarding this. He says to date he thinks they have approved \$5,000.00 for that. He explained there are more things to be done and it will depend on the contract. So what figures did you put in the budget for that? I see a figure of \$125,000.00. Would that be part of it?

Commissioner Kodish: Yes that is part of it. We have to replace the camera system and that will be a minimum of \$100,000.00.

Ms. Laub: The answer I got as there was \$5,300,000.00 in the General Fund give or take as of today. With that said, I am wondering why there had to be a 1.75 mil increase in the taxes. A 1.75 mil increase equates to about \$1,500,000.00 but that does not include the money from Keystone Opportunities. So, I guess my question is: With that kind of money in the checking account, I am seeing \$500,000.00 for the capital murder trial and \$200,000.00 for the PREA compliance, Why the tax increase?

Commissioner Kodish: Well first of all it is the checking account balance. We do not have money in the Capital Reserve Account because the interest percentage for the Capital Reserve Account is lower than the General Checking Account, so it doesn't make sense for keeping money in Capital Reserve making less interest. That is one reason it is higher. Another reason is that some funds that are in the General Checking Account are for a specific use i.e. housing reserve, CDBG in the Planning Office that is money we can't use. A lot of special projects and we are signing bills yet for 2016.

Ms. Laub: That is not significantly different than any other year. It was significantly more than last year. It was significantly more than the year before. I am just trying to have some accountability and transparency and as a taxpayer I have a right to ask questions.

Commissioner Kodish: Sure.

Commissioner Dunkle: The PREA will not stop at \$200,000.00. It will go beyond that. I will state also, that when we asked the Court to give us an estimate for the Capital Murder Trial they indicated that they did not know.

Ms. Laub: The answers from Kevin were very precise and I appreciate that, so that I do understand. I do not understand why we needed a tax increase this year.

Commissioner Kodish: There were some other increases this year, but we emphasized the murder trial and PREA, but there were other big items, ones we don't have all the time like our bond payments which will be up this year \$225,000.00 from last year, health insurance, we even knocked our employees deductibles even with that our health insurance payments are going to be up \$350,000.00. There are other items in the budget that increased.

Ms. Laub: But I do think that it would have been better to put those things into the reason for the tax increase. I understand it costs money to run a government. Explaining things to the public would be appreciated. I was informed by a County Director that it takes 6 weeks for the County's Accounts Payable to run a check. Is that true?

Commissioner Kodish: No.

Commissioner Dunkle: We write checks every week. I would suggest you talk to that Department Head and have them come and speak to us.

Ms. Laub: I was shocked so I will send him along.

VIII. Adjournment

With no other business on the agenda, Commissioner Kodish adjourned the meeting at 9:31 a.m.

Secretary

ATTEST:

Chief Clerk