

COMMISSIONERS GENERAL SESSION
October 12, 2020

Present at the meeting were

Commissioners:

Brian S. Allen - Chairman
Gary R. Eby – Vice-Chairman
Brenda L. Watson – Secretary
Shannon Hines – Chief Clerk
William R. Bunt – Solicitor

Present from the Press: None

Present from the Public via Phone/Onsite: Karen Anderson, Alane Balchunas, Karen Barclay, Frank Campbell, Jasmine Colbert, Kristie Gantt, Dave Magee, Ann Miller, Roger Miller, Rich Pluta, Jim Scott, Marty Smith, Wes Smith, Randy Waggoner, and Greg Wirth

Commissioner Allen opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. on October 12, 2020 with the Pledge to the Flag and a moment of silence. The meeting was conducted via telephone conference and in person at the Extension Office Meeting Room. The meeting was recorded by the County.

Public Comments: Alane Balchunas stated that the Election Board meeting was cancelled for that day and asked for an update on when ballots would be received by Perry County voters. She stated that voters in neighboring counties had already received and returned their ballots. Ms. Balchunas asked if any ballots had been returned to the County yet and questioned the process in which the ballots were mailed out.

Karen Anderson commented that she has been tracking ballots on the State website and it stated that her ballot was mailed on Thursday, not Friday. She said this just adds to the confusion. Ms. Anderson stated that since the Board of Election meeting was cancelled, she cannot get answers on how election help volunteers are being selected or notified. She also stated that she cannot get an election litigation update since the meeting was cancelled. Ms. Anderson commented that there seems to be a lot of foot dragging in the County regarding the election. She voiced concerns regarding overseas military and federal employees receiving ballots and being able to vote timely. Ms. Anderson stated that her complaints were that the Board of Election meeting was cancelled and that there was not a person to answer all the election questions.

Ann Miller said that on last week's agenda there was polling location changes. She stated that Commissioner Eby had stated that the information was on the website, but she went on the website and the location changes had not been updated. She suggested that the polling locations need to be made more public than just on the website.

Alane Balchunas asked what newspapers the polling locations would appear in.

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 5, 2020 meeting. Commissioner Eby seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Approval of the Warrant List(s): Commissioner Eby made a motion to approve the warrant list dated October 13, 2020 in the amount of 337,504.76. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Commissioner Eby made a motion to approve the warrant list dated October 8, 2020 in the amount of \$316,800, and stated that it will all be reimbursed back to the County through CARES Act Block Grant Funding. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Meeting Business: Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the Juvenile Probation Services Grant. Commissioner Eby seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Commissioner Allen explained the polling location lease agreements and stated that the Newport Borough and Oliver Township leases are for the upcoming election and moving forward. He said that the lease for Tuscarora Township would be for the upcoming election only. Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the polling location lease agreements for Newport Borough, Oliver Township, and Tuscarora Township. Commissioner Eby seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Commissioner Eby made a motion to approve the estimate from Grosser Excavating, Inc. at a cost of \$8,480. Commissioner Allen seconded the motion. Commissioner Watson opposed the motion. Motion carried.

Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the proposal for ClearCount Election System Training at a cost of \$1,500 for Dean Lusby. Commissioner Eby seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Solicitor's Report: None

Public Comments: Alane Balchunas commented on the electronic locking system/intercom that was in previous minutes and in the newspaper. She stated that based on Commissioner Allen's comment the system would be funded through CARES Act funding and it would limit access to the office to stop the spread of COVID-19. She specifically asked if the system will impede access to the Courthouse or the Veterans Memorial Building. Ms. Balchunas also asked if there would be a temperature check with the system.

Karen Anderson asked if everyone working in the County offices are wearing masks. She specifically questioned why Commissioner Allen does not wear a mask. She asked why everyone is not wearing mask, as she stated that she has seen individuals in the Veterans Memorial Building not wearing masks. Ms. Anderson questioned who will be trained on the ClearCount Election System. She questioned how the volunteers will be chosen for the extended hours and election day ballot counting. She also asked if there would be an Election Board meeting next week. Ms. Anderson stated that if there is no Election Board meeting there is no way to get answers and requested that the meetings not be cancelled.

Ann Miller stated that there is a misunderstanding as to why masks are worn. She said that she wears her mask to stop herself from spreading the virus should she be infected. Ms. Miller stated that it seemed unusual that if you have a medical issue, you would not wear a mask since you could still pass the virus on to others.

Karen Anderson asked why does the public have to wear masks but County employees do not. She stated that she could provide the names of the employees she has seen without masks.

Alane Balchunas thanked Commissioner Eby for his comment during the October 5th Election Board meeting regarding campaign sign stealing happening for many years. She commented on the theft and vandalism of Democratic signs and stated that she did not endorse the belief that this was a Perry County value or should it be ignored by Perry County officials. Ms. Balchunas said she now better understood

the Commissioners reluctance to invest in ballot drop boxes due to the vandalism and theft she sees in regards to the signs.

Comments from Press: None

Commissioner Eby made a motion to adjourn at 10:26 a.m. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Shannon Hines, Chief Clerk

Brenda L. Watson, Secretary