

**COMMISSIONERS GENERAL SESSION**  
**January 18, 2021**

**Present at the meeting were**

**Commissioners:**

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

**Present from the Press:** Jim Ryan

**Present from the Public via WebEx/Phone:** Karen Anderson, Alane Balchunas, Karen Barclay, Donna Cohick, Gene Cohick, Jason Finnerty, Rich Fultz, Jan Gibboney, Dave Hammar, Ryan Hostetter, Michelle Jones, Wayne Leshner, Kim McMullen, Ann Miller, Rich Pluta, Bob Ressler, Cindy Roney, Marty Smith, Wes Smith, Melanie Wertz, and Greg Wirth

Commissioner Eby opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. on January 18, 2021 with the Pledge to the Flag and a moment of silence. The meeting was conducted via WebEx telephone and video conference. The meeting was recorded by the County.

**Public Comments:** Rich Fultz, EMA/911 Director, provided an update on COVID vaccinations and testing. He stated that the Pennsylvania Department of Health is currently moving through phase 1A and 1B. He commented that the phase criteria are ever changing and information on the phases is available on their website. He said that the federal government has entered into retail contracts with Rite Aid Corporation and TopCo to provide vaccinations to the general public once that step is reached and vaccinations are available. Mr. Fultz stated that a drive-thru testing site is being planned in the County with AMI and information will be forthcoming once details are finalized. He again reiterated that information changes rapidly. He commented that there are commitments from all four school districts and a VFW regarding using the locations as a mass vaccination site, but said that would be part of phase 2 and details have not been provided yet.

Karen Anderson thanked the Commissioners for adding the new WebEx format to the meeting.

Rich Pluta stated that he is personally against tax increases, especially at the state and federal levels. He commented that many times the higher levels of government cut costs by passing down programs without funding to the local municipalities. He stated that many programs at the County level are mandated by the state and federal government without funding to cover the costs. Mr. Pluta stated that a private business would raise prices in order to meet increased costs. He commented that his understanding is that the County reserve funds are set aside for projects that will be needed by the County, and taking away from the reserves, takes away from those projects and not adding to them. He stated that the long-range alternative is to increase the tax base, but balancing that with retaining open spaces is difficult. He commented that the Commissioners are looking at intelligent options to increase the tax base and said the Commissioners are doing what need to be done for the County.

Melanie Wertz thanked the Commissioners for the COVID vaccine update as part of the meeting. She asked where in the County the COVID information will be. Mr. Fultz stated that the information will be posted on the website and the EMA social media pages. He also said media releases will go out as well.

Ann Miller asked if phase 1B was already implemented. She also questioned if phase 1B included people 75 years and older. Mr. Fultz stated that phase 1B has started but that there is not a definitive day that phase 1B began, as it is a rolling process. He said that it depends on how quickly vaccines are distributed as to how the vaccination process moves forward. He also stated that individuals 65 years and older have been added to the phase 1B criteria, but it is still vaccine availability dependent. Mr. Fultz recommended communicating with your primary care physician or UPMC regarding getting the vaccine, but again said it will be dose dependent. He said it is a very fluid process and information is not available as to when different phases begin. Mr. Fultz said to call your doctor or a vaccine facility to get on a list for the vaccine. Ms. Miller asked if she could go through her primary care physician or other places to get on a vaccine list, but not through the County. Mr. Fultz confirmed this. He also said that Newport Family Practice, West Perry Pharmacy, and Perry Physicians are authorized to give the vaccine and stated that you can contact them to possibly get on the vaccine list.

Wayne Leshar said that you can pre-register for the vaccine on the West Perry Pharmacy website and they will contact you when you are eligible for the vaccine. He said he understand that everyone loves open spaces but there needs to be planning for developments in the County. He stated that industry is not coming into the County and putting additional funding into industry is not the best option. He recommended encouraging housing to increase the tax base and raise revenue. Mr. Leshar said municipal water and sewer would be a big help and urged review of municipal infrastructure. He said that the only way to raise revenue in the County to increase the tax base or raise the current rates.

**Approval of Minutes:** Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2021 meeting. Commissioner Eby seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

**Warrant List(s):** Commissioner Allen made a motion to approve the 2020 warrant list dated 1/13/2021 in the amount of \$286,927.17. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the 2020 warrant list dated 1/19/2021 in the amount of \$245,793.20. Commissioner Allen seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Commissioner Allen made a motion to approve the 2021 warrant list dated 1/19/2021 in the amount of \$153,877.52. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

**Meeting Business:** Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the reappointments of James Turner, Danny Kirk, and Robert Shaffer to the Perry County Planning Commission Board. Commissioner Allen seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Commissioner Watson made a motion, based on her conversations and review of the agreement, to approve the SEDA-COG Professional and Administrative Services Agreement for the administration of the 2020 Perry County CDBG-CV grant in the amount of \$24,100. Commissioner Allen seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Commissioner Allen made a motion to approve the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency 9-1-1 Statewide Interconnectivity Funding Grant agreement. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried. Rich Fultz explained that this is an annual grant from Act 12 funds which provides for maintenance on the CAD system and other radio/phone maintenance.

**Employee Status:** Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the resignation of Judy Janis, Part Time Clerk, in the Prothonotary/Clerk of Courts Office effective January 22, 2021. Commissioner Allen seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the transition of Cody Parson from Part Time Correctional Officer to Full Time Correctional Officer at the Perry County Prison effective February 14, 2021. Commissioner Allen seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the transition of Dylan Hoover from Full Time 911 Dispatcher to Part Time 911 Dispatcher in the 911 Center effective January 31, 2021. Commissioner Allen seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Commissioner Allen made a motion to approve the appointment of Ryan Nace to the position of Dispatcher Trainee in the 911 Center effective January 26, 2021 at an hourly rate of \$11.84. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the appointment of Cory Matter to the position of Full Time Maintenance Worker in the Maintenance Department effective January 19, 2021 at an hourly rate of \$16.13. Commissioner Allen seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

**Solicitor's Report:** None

**Public Comments:** Karen Anderson asked how long the three individuals that were reappointed to the Perry County Planning Commission have served. Jason Finnerty provided the tenure of the individuals. Ms. Anderson commented that it is important to consider new individuals for boards as new ideas and change are good.

Ann Miller stated that Pennsylvania Interim Vaccine Plan provides good information on how the program is rolling out and is a living document that changes regularly. She asked Mr. Fultz if phase 1B has been communicated to people. Mr. Fultz again reiterated that the vaccination process is fluid and phases transition without definitive dates. He stated that unless you hear information from the Department of Health that a phase has begun, assume it is a moving target.

Wayne Leshner said that he was looking to serve on the planning commission, but the issue is that each township has their own planning commission. He said that the township planning commissions do not have to consider the Perry County Planning Commission comments when making decisions. Mr. Leshner said the process needs to be tightened up as townships go out on their own and the County cannot do anything about this.

**Comments from Press:** None

Commissioner Eby commented that the meeting today is the first step in creating a more robust meeting and further technology is being looked into to better communications during the meetings. He thanked the public for their patience throughout the process. He said that anyone with comments or questions can reach out to the Commissioners' Office. Commissioner Eby stated that a Salary Board meeting would follow.

Commissioner Watson made a motion to adjourn at 10:50 a.m. Commissioner Eby seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

