

## COMMISSIONERS GENERAL SESSION

November 27, 2023

### Present at the meeting were

#### Commissioners:

Brian S. Allen – Chairman  
Brenda L. Watson – Vice Chairman  
Larry F. Reisinger – Secretary  
William R. Bunt – Solicitor  
Shannon Hines – Chief Clerk

#### Present from the Press: Paul Wyatt

**Present from the Public in Person or via WebEx:** Frank Campbell, Kristie Gantt, Jan Gibboney, Dave Hammar, Jesse Kinzer, Wayne Leshner, Bill Lyons, Robbyn Metz, Hilary Nace, Rich Pluta, Dave Pundock, John Sledzinski, Judy Sledzinski, Wes Smith, Michelle Thebes, Rob Troxell, Randy Waggoner, and Kay Zellers

Commissioner Allen opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. on November 27, 2023 with the Pledge to the Flag and a moment of silence. The meeting was conducted in person and via WebEx telephone/video conference in the Commissioners' meeting room. The meeting was recorded by the County and Paul Wyatt.

**Announcements/Updates:** Commissioner Allen stated it was rifle season and reminded hunters to be safe.

**Public Comments:** John Sledzinski, from the Shermans Dale Ambulance Association, stated the following deficits for the association: 2019 - \$36,881.41, 2020 - \$113,497.22, 2022 - \$164,816.60, and noted that these values were after receiving \$200,000 from the township. He also said the current 2023 deficit is at \$69,129.14. Mr. Sledzinski stated that he had received a price of \$272,000 approximately a year ago on an ambulance and said the quote is now \$347,000 without the necessary equipment installed. He said all ambulance companies need the County's help.

Robbyn Metz said that after last week's meeting she had contacted the West Perry Superintendent and school board president regarding the need for first responders. She said West Perry is looking to offer the EMT course for credit to students. She also stated that West Perry is looking at ways to recruit students in the school district to emergency services. Ms. Metz said that the budget data on public display is better than in previous years. She commented that the real estate tax revenue from the 2023 budget to the 2024 proposed budget shows an increase of \$255,000. She asked if this was due to a tax increase or additional properties in the County.

Randy Waggoner, Chief Assessor, stated that the increase is due to an anticipated increase in new construction, not a tax increase. He commended BIU for getting the building permits to the Assessment Department.

Robbyn Metz stated that the proposed 2024 budget shows a fund balance of \$2.61 million being used to balance the budget deficit. She asked what amount was sitting in the fund balance and what it includes.

Wayne Leshner said that the County should get more involved in countywide infrastructure such as water, sewer, broadband, fire, EMS, and county wide planning. He commented that the only thing to draw people to the County is land to build on. He said there is no infrastructure for industry, there is no promotion of tourism, and the EDA is a waste of money. He stated that if the County wants to attract more residents, then infrastructure needs to be a priority. Mr. Leshner said all the boroughs and municipalities operate independently and the County should pull them together. He said everyone complains about taxes but the only way to generate more revenue is to have more residents in the County, or cut services.

**Approval of Minutes:** Commissioner Reisinger made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 20, 2023 meeting. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

**Employee Service Recognitions:** Commissioner Allen presented the following employees with recognitions for their years of service with the County:

- Nathan Turnbaugh (Prison) – 15 years of service
- Ed Rigg (Domestic Relations) – 10 years of service
- Jesse Kinzer (Domestic Relations) – 10 years of service
- Kay Zellers (Probation) – 5 years of service

**Meeting Business:** Commissioner Reisinger made a motion to approve the following appointments to the Perry County Conservation District Board. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

- Scott Flanders – Farmer Director
- Lloyd Byers – Farmer Director

**Solicitor's Report:** None

**Public Comments:** Randy Waggoner, Chief Assessor, said he was made aware that there is a program in Pennsylvania that individuals 60 years and older can work for a school district or municipality and receive a reduction in their real estate taxes. He stated that he reached out to his assessor list serve group about this as he was not aware of the program and found that some counties have implemented this in their school districts. He said he is not aware of this happening in Perry County. Mr. Waggoner said he is making people aware of this possibility and said maybe the school districts should investigate this program.

Wayne Leshner asked for a broadband update. He questioned the total amount of funds needed to provide broadband to the entire County. He also asked how much had been asked for in the County's first broadband application and where would the project start in the County.

**Comments from the Press:** None

Commissioner Watson made a motion to adjourn at 10:25 a.m. Commissioner Reisinger seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried.

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Shannon Hines, Chief Clerk

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Larry F. Reisinger, Secretary