

## COMMISSIONERS GENERAL SESSION

April 8, 2024

**Present at the meeting were  
Commissioners:**

R. Franklin Campbell – Chairman  
Brenda L. Watson – Vice Chairman  
William G. Lyons - Secretary  
Shannon Hines – Chief Clerk  
William R. Bunt – Solicitor

**Present from the Press:** Paul Wyatt

**Present from the Public:** Gabrielle Brandt, Mary Ann Brownawell, Jeff Garman, Sarah Geesaman, Jason Harvey, Wayne Leshner, Darla McNaughton, Robbyn Metz, Michelle Orris, Rich Pluta, David Pundock, Faith Pundock, Larry Reisinger, John Sledzinski, Marty Smith, Wes Smith, Randy Waggoner, Brian Weidow, Melanie Wertz, Josh Wilson

Commissioner Campbell opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. on April 8, 2024 with the Pledge to the Flag and a moment of silence. The meeting was recorded by the County and Paul Wyatt.

**Updates/Announcements:** Commissioner Watson stated that communication regarding the County's two broadband applications were expected in the coming week. She said this is the second time she has been informed the information would be made public and noted the County had two applications up for consideration, one with Comcast and one with Brightspeed.

Commissioner Lyons said that a constituent from western Perry County has come in to the office to let him know that she would be receiving home repairs through the HOME Program. He said she had seen an advertisement about the program last year and filled out an application for the program and had recently been contacted by SEDA COG to alert her she would be eligible for repairs to her home.

Commissioner Campbell noted, that in last week's newspaper, a comprehensive article about the Winter Weatherization Program was featured. He said it is good to see these programs help residents in the County. He also noted the success of the Youth Art Day and said there were over 600 pieces of artwork submitted by students from the four County schools.

Commissioner Watson stated that a meeting recently took place with ACTS engineering staff regarding the roll out of several municipal bridge rehabilitation/repair collaboration projects. She said the projects involve bridges in Jackson Township, Tyrone Township, Oliver Township, and Newport Borough. She commented that this pilot program is going well so far and thanked ATCS for their work on the program thus far.

Commissioner Campbell thanked Paul Wyatt for his article on the Winter Weatherization Program. He also noted, as a courtesy to all participants, that the meeting was being recorded. Commissioner Campbell stated that the Board of Commissioners believe that the public comment periods are for the public to offer their opinions of items of interest to the public regarding County government. He said it is not a question-and-answer period and commented that questions may be submitted to the Commissioners at [commissioners@perryco.org](mailto:commissioners@perryco.org). He said the Commissioners will respond to the questions which they believe are of importance to the general public and to residents in need of County services.

**Public Comments:** Sarah Geesaman, Voter Registration/Election Director, stated that mail-in and absentee ballots had gone out in the mail last week and will continue. She also said drop boxes are located in the Freedom Building and the Courthouse entrance.

Faith Pundock stated that she was in attendance to apologize to Commissioner Watson. She said at last week's meeting she was out of state and was upset by the laughter she heard in regards to a tax increase. Ms. Pundock

said she feels for single moms and the elderly and this is where her comment came from. She said she did not realize she was not on mute and said she wishes should could take the comment back.

Larry Reisinger commented that he represented Perry County at a 3-day Aging Conference in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. He said the focus of the conference was Alzheimer's and stated that it was a good event.

Wayne Leshar stated that it is interesting that it was stated that the Commissioners' meeting is not a question-and-answer session and the Commissioners will decide what questions to answer. He said the reason he participates in the meeting is because he does not feel the Commissioners know what they are doing. He commented that questions are asked to get answers. Mr. Leshar said the Commissioners neglected to say the ZA helped with the financial overview. He stated that when he filed a right to know for the most recent statement of financial position, he received an audit from 2021. He said the highest paid department head cannot produce a financial statement. He asked who the Commissioners rely on to make financial decisions. Mr. Leshar also asked what mess the County is in if they cannot produce a current financial statement. He said the current Commissioners legacy is a \$107,000 department head raise and noted that Commissioner Watson's legacy is a 37% tax increase. He stated that on last week's financial overview all funds show as allocated but there are no plans for those allocations.

Robbyn Metz stated that she is with Wayne Leshar on these issues. She asked who is advising the Commissioners on the financial statement that was presented last week. She also said there must be a plan for the allocations and asked who is helping develop those plans and when will the plans be seen. Ms. Metz said all questions should be posted on the County website because tax payers should see the answers. She commented on a right to know she filed asking if the County budget is audited and she was told no, but she noted that a 2021 audit was provided which she said makes not sense. She said that she is in favor of a feasibility study, but she stated that a lot of the information needed should already be in house and someone in house should be able to put that information together. Ms. Metz also commented that it was concerning that the Commissioners want a new building and it is already named in the feasibility proposal.

Gabrielle Brandt said she has the same concerns as Robbyn Metz and Wayne Leshar. She thanked them for putting time in to participate in meetings and ask questions.

Melanie Wertz commented that she had recently saw the financial report that was put out last week and asked what the \$3 million dollar allocation to economic development was for and if the money would be going to the Economic Development Authority. She asked if she is going to get an answer to her question and said she had submitted a question to the Commissioners and she did not receive an answer. Ms. Wertz asked where the mail-in ballots were as they should be mailed out by now. She said she is very disappointed that questions are not being answered.

**Approval of Minutes:** Commissioner Lyons made a motion to approve the minutes of April 1, 2024 meeting. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of the Warrant List(s):** Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the warrant lists totaling \$351,216.38. Commissioner Lyons seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried unanimously.

**Meeting Business:** Solicitor Bunt opened the one engineering proposal for the Liverpool Area Recreation Association pool project. The following proposal was received:

- Aquatic Facility Design Inc. (Millersburg, PA) - \$32,500 and an additional service fee of \$135/hour plus IRS mileage

Solicitor Bunt recommended that the proposal be provided to the Association's attorney for review before acting.

Solicitor Bunt opened bids for three County vehicles. The following bids were received:

- Chad Hall - \$402 - Dodge Caravan  
\$302 - Chevrolet Tracker  
\$402 - Chevrolet Impala
- Kevin McMullan - \$300 - Chevrolet Impala
- Jeff Smith - \$400 - Dodge Caravan  
\$500 - Chevrolet Tracker  
\$750 - Chevrolet Impala

Commissioner Lyons made a motion to accept the highest bids on each vehicle. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried unanimously.

**Employee Status:** Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the appointment of Adam Briggs to the position of Business Manager at the Prison effective April 9, 2024 at an hourly rate of \$23.27. Commissioner Lyons seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried unanimously.

**Solicitors Report:** None

**Public Comments:** Sarah Geesaman, Voter Registration/Election Director, stated that today was the last day to register to vote, update your address, or change your party. She further commented that April 16 is the last day to apply for a mail-in or absentee ballot.

John Sledzinski commented that the vehicle prices seem low unless the vehicles are not drivable. He said taking them to an auction could result in getting a higher price.

Wayne Leshner said that he knows the Commissioners do not want to be blind sided by questions, but they should prepare themselves and get knowledgeable. He said he hopes someone is advising the Commissioners on financial decisions as the Commissioners do not have the expertise to do it alone. Mr. Leshner commented that the Commissioners have one of the best former bankers in the United States and he is being used to sell dog licenses. He stated that he wished the Solicitor would have done the same due diligence on the salary increases as he did with the vehicle bids. Mr. Leshner said he hopes his question or anyone's questions are worthy to get answered. He stated that the Commissioners need to take the good with the bad in the job and if they cannot do that they should leave.

Robbyn Metz commented that she will be submitting more questions and said if they are not posted on the County website, they will be posted on the Facebook Free Speech page. She said people in the County should be questioning the Commissioners and answers should be provided. She said that she had filed a right to know asking for job description of elected positions and the response was no such files exists. Ms. Metz stated that she will be filing another right to know to ask exactly what the duties of the Treasurer are.

Melanie Wertz again asked what the \$3 million-dollar economic development allocation on the financial overview document was for. She questioned why the Commissioners cannot provide answers to questions. She said she cannot believe the Commissioners will not answer the questions of their constituents.

**Comments from Press:** None

Commissioner Lyons made a motion to adjourn at 10:35 a.m. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried unanimously.

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Shannon Hines, Chief Clerk

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William G. Lyons, Secretary