

## COMMISSIONERS GENERAL SESSION

May 19, 2025

### **Present at the meeting were Commissioners:**

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

### **Present from the Press:** Paul Wyatt

**Present from the Public:** Andrea Bowersox, Noah Cline, Kristie Gantt, Jeff Garman, David Hammar, Darla McNaughton, Michelle Orris, Rich Pluta, Dave Pundock, Faith Pundock, Larry Reisinger, Craig Sheaffer, Alyson Thebes, Brian Weidow

Commissioner Campbell opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. on May 19, 2025 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 she had attended several community events over the weekend and noted the Day in the Park event at Saville Township, Senator Rothman's License Plate Exchange, and a Boy Scout Breakfast. She commented on the community participation at the events.

Commissioner Lyons said that a student agricultural day, sponsored by the Perry Valley Grange, was happening at the Perry County Fairgrounds that day. He commented that Pennsylvania FFA Vice President, Nathan Lesh, Miss Pennsylvania, and Secretary Russell Redding would be in attendance at the educational event for fourth graders from the County schools.

Commissioner Campbell stated that on Saturday a Boy Scout Breakfast was held and former Commissioner Gary Eby was recognized at the breakfast. He further commented that there would not be a meeting next Monday due to the Memorial Day holiday. Commissioner Campbell said that there are at least four different Memorial Day events happening over the upcoming weekend. He further commented that on Friday, a service would be held at the Jacob Stambaugh farm in Elliotsburg, recognizing his revolutionary war participation. Commissioner Campbell said that the event was being put on by the Sons of the American Revolution and the Perry County America 250 Committee.

**Public Comments:** None

**Approval of Minutes:** Commissioner Lyons made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 12, 2025 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 \$654,007.56. Commissioner Lyons seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried unanimously.

**Meeting Business:** Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the scope of work with ATCS for engineering services for the New Germantown covered bridge at a cost of \$11,700. Commissioner Lyons seconded the motion. Commissioner Watson said that the service was to address eroding wing walls underneath the bridge and noted that Maintenance staff would hopefully be completing some of the work. She further talked about the three phases of the project. All agreed. Motion carried unanimously.

**Employee Status:** Commissioner Lyons made a motion to approve the appointments of Jessica Miller and Michelle Carlson to the position of Caseworker Supervisor in the Children & Youth Services Department effective May 20, 2025 at an hourly rate of \$29.21. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion. Commissioner

Campbell said that the appointments were backfilling two positions. All agreed. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the appointment of Robert Samuel Miller to the position of Chief Financial Executive effective June 2, 2025. Commissioner Lyons seconded the motion. Commissioner Watson said this was a tough decision but a good move for Perry County. Commissioner Lyons said he concurred and Mr. Miller's past experiences said a lot. Commissioner Campbell stated he has very strong credentials. All agreed. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Lyons made a motion to approve the appointment of Brandi Clendenin to the position of Fiscal Director effective June 2, 2025 at an hourly rate of \$29.21. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Watson made a motion to accept the retirement of Janet Hensel, Care Manager at the Perry County Area Agency on Aging, effective June 13, 2025. Commissioner Lyons seconded the motion. Commissioner Campbell stated that Ms. Hensel has almost ten years with the County. Alyson Thebes, Director at the Perry County Area Agency on Aging, stated that Ms. Hensel is a Case Aide in her department and said she is leaving to take care of her new granddaughter. She wished her luck. All agreed. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the appointment of Matthew Shaffer to the position of Caseworker 1 at Children & Youth Services effective May 27, 2025 at an hourly rate of \$20.64. Commissioner Lyons seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried unanimously.

**Solicitors Report:** None

**Post Comments:** Marty Smith, Maintenance Director, stated that the Rhinesmith porch project started that morning.

Alyson Thebes, Director Perry County Area Agency on Aging, talked about the funding shortage her department is facing and the impact on services. She stated that funding has fell short since 2017 for providing essential services to older adults, which have caused waitlists for home-delivered meals, personal care, emergency response buttons, and caregiver reimbursements. Ms. Thebes further stated that COVID funding temporarily allowed them to eliminate waitlists, but that will be fully exhausted by July 1, 2025. She said that Agencies on Aging primary receive funding from federal and state sources and noted that the Pennsylvania Lottery is a significant contributor. She commented that despite advocacy for increased lottery funding to maintain current service levels, the final state budget did not include any additional allocation for the local agencies. Ms. Thebes said because of this, her department is implementing service adjustments and will no longer be able to offer services exceeding the requirements outlined in their agreement with the Commonwealth. She further stated that waitlists have been established for required services as well. She commented that her department will continue to seek ways to provide services to older adults in Perry County and they have implemented cost saving measures, but additional cuts are not feasible. Ms. Thebes thanked the Commissioners for supporting her department but cautioned against using taxpayer funds when the dedicated lottery funding could possibly sustain their current services. She urged everyone to advocate for the older adults of Perry County and said to reach out to your local legislators about increasing funding for older adult services in the Senate budget.

Larry Reisinger stated that when the Department of Aging was created, legislation stated that games of chance proceeds were to benefit senior citizens. He said that the casino machines you see at different places, such as the Millerstown Moose, Sheetz, or Rutters, say Pennsylvania Skill. Mr. Reisinger commented that the Department of Aging sued the company that puts the machines in the different locations, but a judge ruled that the legislation said "games of chance" and the casino machines say "games of skill" so the proceeds go to the company not senior citizens. He said that the Governor did propose in this year's budget, a 35% tax on those

games of skill machines. Mr. Reisinger said he could not believe a judge made the decision he did, but again said the Governor is working to make it taxable but was not sure, if passed, where the money would go to.

**Comments from Press:** None

Commissioner Watson made a motion to adjourn at 10:18 a.m. Commissioner Lyons seconded the motion. All agreed. Motion carried unanimously.

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Shannon Hines, Chief Clerk

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William G. Lyons, Secretary