

Wednesday, October 6, 2021

The first regular meeting of October, 2021 of the Pike County Commissioners was called to order by Commissioner Osterberg at 11:00 a.m. at the Pike County Administration Building, followed by the “Pledge of Allegiance” to the flag.

PRESENT: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini (Commissioner Guccini present on telephone); Chief Clerk Orben; Solicitor Farley.

Public Comments/Questions concerning today’s agenda - none

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to approve the October 6, 2021 Agenda.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted ‘aye’. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to approve the September 15, 2021 Commissioners’ Meeting Minutes.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted ‘aye’. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to approve the September 22 and 29, 2021 Commissioners’ Conference Minutes.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted ‘aye’. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to approve payment from the **GENERAL FUND (County Bills)**, in the amount of **\$911,869.06**, subject to further review.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted ‘aye’. Motion carried.

PERSONNEL:

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to acknowledge receipt of a letter from the Courts that they have hired **SARAH JOHNSON**, as a Probation Officer for the Adult Probation Office, for a 40 hour work week, effective October 18, with benefits after 90 days. This is a replacement position.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg and Schmalzle voted ‘aye’. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to hire **TATYANA SHPOLYANSKY** as a Housekeeper in the Maintenance Department, for a 40 hour work week, effective October 4, 2021, with benefits after 90 days. This is a replacement position.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg and Schmalzle voted ‘aye’. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to recess the Commissioners’ Meeting to hold a Salary Board Meeting.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg and Schmalzle voted ‘aye’. Motion carried.

A SALARY BOARD MEETING WAS HELD.

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to reconvene the Commissioners’ Meeting.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg and Schmalzle voted ‘aye’. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to award the bids for frozen foods and groceries for the Correctional Facility as follows: Mivila - \$57,832.82; Sysco - \$25,170.79; Bernard - \$13,120.12; Driscoll - \$71,044.81; and Keyco - \$20,157.62.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg and Schmalzle voted ‘aye’. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to open bids received for the 2021 winter snowplowing and ice control for the following roads as one bid: Brooks Road, Old Owego Turnpike from Raymondskill Road to Route 6, Stone Quarry Road by Eureka and Tower Road.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg and Schmalzle voted ‘aye’. Motion carried.

At this time Commissioner Guccini joined meeting via telephone.

Solicitor Tom Farley opened the one and only bid received: Lattimore Construction – Brooks Road, Stone Quarry Road by Eureka and Tower Road: \$886 per application which is plowing and sanding and \$375 per application for sanding only. For Old Owego Turnpike: \$460 per application (plowing and sanding); and \$256 per application for sanding only.

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to table the awarding of the bid for the 2021 winter snowplowing and ice control until the October 20, 2021 meeting

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted ‘aye’. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION: by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to adopt Resolution No. 21-36, Domestic Violence Awareness Month, October 2021.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried
Resolution 21-36 read aloud by Commissioner Schmalzle.

Commissioner Osterberg said they have representatives from Victims' Intervention Program here. Executive Director of VIP, Michele Minor Wolf said we are having a domestic violence vigil in front of the Courthouse on the lawn area on October 27, 2021 from 12:30 PM to 1:00 PM. We read the names of all of the victims that we are aware of, whose lives were taken due to domestic violence in Pike County over the years. We will also display our silent witness project at that time. We have silhouettes with a shield that will cover the victims' names that were killed, with the date of birth and date of death. We're only going to have that displayed while we're out there. It will probably be less than half an hour. Please join us if you can. We do have a survivor that's going to be speaking. If you could come out and share that moment with us, that would be great.

Executive Director Wolf asked when you hear domestic violence victim, what do you most typically think of? What comes to your mind? Commissioner Osterberg answered wife, female typically, I'm sure it affects males, but I would say the prevalence is females. Michele said that is true. We do typically see more females than men probably 90% - 95%, but we do provide services to male victims, whether they're adolescent-teens or adults. Michele continued that this represents Daniel, that is not his real name, and he's a teenager. She then read this scenario (his typical day): Daniel wakes up late for school and his girlfriend is waiting in the driveway and wants to know what took so long. She tells him it's his fault that they're going to be late for school. Daniel's hope for a peaceful day now dissolves into that familiar feeling of stress. After school, Daniel has soccer practice. His phone rings as soon as he walks off the field – it's his girlfriend checking in. He receives 10 more text messages from her while he's changing and heading home. Before he walks through the door, his girlfriend calls again – she knows how long it takes to get from school to home. It's a good thing he thinks that he didn't go with his friends to grab pizza – he knows that his girlfriend would be annoyed if she didn't know where he was. This brief feeling of joy, because he did so well at soccer practice, is replaced by a feeling of sadness. Daniel's once happy emotional well-being slides further into depression. There's a holiday dance coming up, Daniel remembers going with his friends and what a good time it used to be. Lately, hanging out with his friends has become a nightmare. His girlfriend always makes things miserable by judging his friends. At practice, his teammates make fun of him for always listening to her and she constantly texts and calls. Daniel's social network begins to shrink, and the feeling of isolation increases. Daniel decides to go shopping for the holiday dance with his best friend. Daniel is glad that he found a suit that looks good and thinks his girlfriend will like it. Later that day, she comes over to see what he picked out. When he puts it on she becomes furious and demands he take it back because she doesn't like it. She says it makes him look cheap and ugly. Daniel's enthusiasm for picking out that suit for the dance turns to aversion. Assertiveness over making his own decisions and choices turns to passivity. Daniel and his girlfriend are spending the day together at a college open house. Daniel arranges to meet with one of the colleges' representatives to discuss his options for attending school. On their way home from the open house, Daniel's girlfriend says that she's sorry for flying off the handle and that she really does love him. Daniel's sense of confidence over this relationship has turned into self-doubt. His self-acceptance about the ups and downs of this relationship now becomes self-blame. Daniel's parents go out for dinner while Daniel decides to stay home. He calls his girlfriend to come over and hang out. He's looking forward to hanging out because he made her everything she likes for dinner. When they're done eating, Daniel asks her what is wrong? She freaks out and says that it wasn't what she wanted for dinner and throws the plate across the room. Daniel, who once trusted his partner, now lives in constant fear, his control over life is replaced by his persistent feeling of confusion. The college representative comes to see Daniel at his house to discuss his options for starting college. He is thrilled that the college is so interested in him attending. When his girlfriend comes over, he's excited to tell her about his being accepted to his top-pick school. She says why would they want you? You do nothing but screw up everything and you'll never amount to anything without me! Daniel's sense of competence now turns to learned helplessness and his sense of self worth has turned, over time, to a feeling of worthlessness. Daniel wants to go to bed, tired from another week of trying to meet his girlfriend's every demand. His girlfriend makes fun of him and calls him weak. She complains about him not wanting to spend time with her and that he is sick all the time. Daniel's once good physical health declines further towards illness. Daniel started out a very vibrant, complete being and ended up a grey shadow of his former self and in multiple pieces. This is what emotional abuse does to a person.

We have those same situations, whether it's an adult female, adult male, teenage girl, teenage boy, these are all of the things that get stripped away from the victim. Sometimes people will say "why doesn't he or she just leave"? This is why – because there is so much more involved than physical abuse. There's the tearing down of your original, complete being. Michele asked if there were any questions?

Reporter Chris Jones asked her name and title. Executive Director of Victims' Intervention Program – Michele Minor Wolf.

Michele said these are just one of the services we provide. We work with domestic violence, sexual assaults, human trafficking and other serious crimes - just to show you there's a wide-range. Domestic abuse does not discriminate by age, race, economic status, gender or anything. If you would want further information, you can reach us at **VIPEMPOWERS.ORG** or give us a call at **(570) 296-HELP**. Thank you

Commissioner Osterberg asked if there were other events that they are planning this month? Michele responded yes. We are having a Glow Run at Wallenpaupack High School Track and Field on October 16, 2021 at 5:30 PM. It's free, with a \$10 donation you get a tee-shirt. We designed it, it glows on the front and we have glow paint that you just design the back of it if you so choose. It's a walk or a run around the track because it's going to be at dusk we're not using the woods there. We're going to have music, glow games and it's family/child friendly and we're going to have snacks and all that kind of stuff. Please come out and join us.

Commissioner Osterberg said to get us that information (flyer) and we'll see that Krista and Shannon promote it as much as we can in the County and the services you provide in all of Pike County. Thank you.

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to appoint Justin Genzlinger to the Lake Wallenpaupack Watershed Management District Board of Directors to fill an unexpired term ending December 31, 2022.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to execute the amended Contract between Serving Seniors, Inc. and the County of Pike, on behalf of the Area Agency on Aging.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried

Resolution 21-31 read aloud by Commissioner Schmalzle

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to authorize the Chairman to execute Change Order No. 1 between Tectonic and the County of Pike, for an additional \$3,790 for change in time exerted in the field for the Springbrook Road over Rattlesnake Creek project.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to approve the Human Services Payment Vouchers from ERAP funds for \$24,626.45, PHARE funds for \$19,469.75 and HSDF funds for \$905.04, on behalf of the Human Services Office.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried

Resolution 21-31 read aloud by Commissioner Schmalzle

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to approve the Affordable Housing Fund Payment Voucher payable to Delaware Run Associates for October 2021 housing subsidy in the amount of \$2,095, on behalf of the Human Services Office.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MISCELLANEOUS:

- Conservancy Initiatives and Funding Gaps Presentation – Steven Schwartz and Trey Talley, Delaware Highlands Conservancy, with Jessica Yoder of Pike County Community Planning – Steven Schwartz thanked the Commissioners for having them and said he would be sharing a PowerPoint Presentation. He said that he and Trey Talley are here from the Delaware Highlands Conservancy to talk about conservation in Pike County and how the American Rescue Recovery Program funding that the County and all the Townships have received, may be useful for that (conservation) as well as for many other things. PowerPoint Presentation was then shown. After the PowerPoint Presentation, Steven Schwartz said that the Santos Property is at the top of the agenda in Pike County, which is a great property on the river that needs a bit of a boost to get to the next step. ARP funding may be the thing that can help them. Contact information was then given and left information with the Commissioners. He then asked if anyone had any questions. Commissioner Osterberg said just some comments. Commissioner Osterberg said we asked you to attend the meeting just so we are clear when we talk about the Santos Farm. There are two parcels that are called the Santos Property. There's the part on the high side that's commercially owned and privately owned. The property that we talk about in the County, in figuring out how we can get access to it, is the property that the County purchased 12 or so years ago, which lies below that. You can't see it from the road and the vision has always been to develop that into a County park. There is a whole plan that was done back in 2011 with a steering committee and it's always laid dormant and part of that has to be with the fact that the access to the property is pretty steep grade and it takes money. It may give us an advantage here to work with Delaware Highlands and other organizations to use some of the recovery money to build that road. We need to talk to the Township (Milford) about this, but once we have the road in place, all the things that were in that plan which was amphitheaters, community gardens, trails and a boat launch, river access, if you haven't been down on that property, you should go down because it's really a beautiful piece of property that lies along the river. We don't have any true access to it. Once we're able to build this road, Jessica (Yoder) can speak to this, then it opens up the gates for other funding to be able to do the development part of it, but we need to get an access road in there. It's not the road on the top on the flat side that's the problem and the access off of Route 209, it's when you get all the way to back – it drops off pretty steep and it needs to be that we have public access. It needs to be 2 lanes in and out. If we're going to have events down there, people need to get in and out safely in both directions. That's

why we asked you to come here, we think that we could probably work through this and speaking with Robb Ruiz, he is handling the recovery money, about how we can implement some of this money to build that road. There's a couple of private developers out there who are willing to help in building that road with materials. I think we could probably put together a partnership together with a group of people to see that occur. Again, we know we need to go to the Township (Milford) and talk to them. The Township (Milford) was part of the whole study 12 years ago, in fact I think some of them sat on that steering committee – they are fully aware of it. It's been one of those things that's laid on the bookshelf collecting dust because the lack of funding. Maybe now, we have the opportunity – we're glad you are here.

Steven Schwartz thanked the Commissioners for having them and said we are ready, willing and able to help in any way we can.

Reporter Chris Jones asked what kind of money is available for this use from that recovery fund?

Commissioner Osterberg answered that the road, we've been told, is going to be around \$200K, depending on the quality of the road. The road that we envision would be built, Jessica's (Pike County Planning) had some survey done and some engineering firms go down there who were part of the original study 12 years ago, and they've estimated that it's in \$200K-\$250K price tag. That's always been the stumbling block for County Commissioners prior to us. Where are we getting that money? You can say "go out and get a grant to do it" – we've tried. You're not going to get a grant to build a road. You need to figure out how you get the money to build a road and once you build a road, now there's all of these other available funds from DCNR, DCED and maybe other organizations that Delaware Highlands can identify for us. Then we develop the property into the uses that were laid out in that plan and that study done 12 years ago.

Reporter Chris Jones asked how did the County get this land? Commissioner Osterberg answered that the County bought this property before I was here, but I was on the Borough Council. The Santos were selling their property and this land was, we always felt, needed to be protected, because of where it lies. Commissioner Osterberg as Jessica Yoder if it was in the flood zone? Jessica responded yes.

Commissioner Osterberg continued there was concern of what could really be done down there. I believe back in that time, the National Park was looking to purchase it initially. National Park could not find the funding, the County had already secured the SRCP funding, which they were collecting on a tax. The SRCP Board back at that time, looked at it and came to an agreement with the Santos family and purchased the property. I forget the price tag, but it wasn't all County money. Jessica (Yoder) said no, it was matched with DCNR. Commissioner Osterberg said Jessica was very integral to that. It was a percentage of County dollars matched with DCNR funds. It's 88 acres, a beautiful piece of property. It's bordered by National Park Service land. If you remember, the school was going to be built on one end of this, not on our property, but on another parcel. That property, over the last 8 years has been subsequently sold to the Parks Service. There's another parcel of Parks Service land that lies directly behind the Milford Township building and then there's another parcel that's down on the end of Robert's Lane (at the end of Robert's Lane) to the right there's another parcel. There's a piece of land that sits right behind where the Santos commercial development is going to be relocated. It's right along the river, it's a beautiful parcel. We think that we can figure something out here to see this happen. I know there's a lot of organizations in our County that would like to see that property develop into something. Commissioner Osterberg then offered to share the 50 page plan with Chris and said they spent a lot of time and effort in developing this plan.

- PennState Extension Calendar of Events – October 15-31, 2021

Questions and comments were opened to the Public and the Press - none

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to adjourn the Commissioners' Meeting.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT: THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE PIKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2021, AT 11:00 A.M., AT THE PIKE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING.