

Wednesday, February 3, 2021

The first regular meeting of February 2021 of the Pike County Commissioners was called to order by Commissioner Osterberg at 9:00 a.m. at the Pike County Administration Building, followed by the "Pledge of Allegiance" to the flag.

PRESENT: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini (via Zoom); Chief Clerk Orben; Solicitor Farley.

Public Comments/Questions concerning today's agenda.

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to approve the February 3, 2021 Agenda.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to approve the January 20, 2021 Commissioners' Meeting Minutes.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to approve the January 25 and 28, 2021 Commissioners' Conference Minutes.

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

PERSONNEL:

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to acknowledge receipt of a letter from District Attorney Ray Tonkin advising that he has promoted **SARA LOEB** to the position of Victim/Witness Director and Grants Manager, for a 40 hour work week, effective January 25, 2021. This is a replacement position.

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

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

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

A SALARY BOARD MEETING WAS HELD.

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to reconvene the Commissioners' Meeting.

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

OLD BUSINESS:

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to award the bid for frozen foods and groceries for the Correctional Facility as follows: Mivila - \$113,490.76; Sysco - \$39,516.66; and Bernard - \$12,142.92.

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

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to adopt Ordinance No. 31-2021, authorizing and directing issuance of General Obligation Debt in the amount of \$5,000,000 for the Bridges Replacement/Renovations Projects.

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

Commissioner Osterberg explained that this is the bond issue that we are going to use with the \$5 Registration Fee money to repair and renovate bridges. This includes five bridges that we spoke about at the last meeting. This bank loan will be a construction loan so that we can then move forward in drawing the money down over the next three years so that we can repair and replace those five bridges. Commissioner Osterberg asked loan counsel, Jen Caron, if there was anything she would like to add. Attorney Caron reiterated what Commissioner Osterberg said and continued it is just a short term financing in the maximum principle amount of \$5M. The Dime Bank provided a favorable proposal for a tax exempt interest rate of 0.78% through maturity that will be fixed through March 1, 2024. We will basically, assuming enactment today, prepare the DCED documentation and file that with the Department of Community and Economic Development, while we await the twenty day approval process from DCED. We will prepare the closing documents and work with Dime Bank to effectuate the closing, which is scheduled for mid-March. Commissioner Osterberg added that it is important to note that it is the \$5 Registration Fee funds that is going to pay for this. This is not any general funds coming out of the County tax dollars. This is coming from the \$5 Registration Fees, which by law when we enacted it, must be spent on infrastructure such as bridges and roads. We generate approximately \$350K a year from collection of the \$5 Registration Fees. The calculations have been done that, once this turns into a bond, we will have enough money coming in every year to pay that with \$350K. That's the whole \$5M which will become an actual bond or some portion of it for three years. We have three years to spend this money. We need to spend it all or we'll bond whatever that balance is. We do generate enough money to make what I'll say is the yearly payment. Reporter Chris Jones asked what the rate was – 0.70%? Commissioner Osterberg replied 0.78% on the construction loan, that's not to say that will be the amount on the bond that this will transform into in 2024. We don't know what that rate is. Commissioner Schmalzle added that the other detail in this is the matching funds. There's \$2M out there through the \$5 Registration Fee Program to match the funds. Reporter Chris Jones asked that previously there was another Ordinance or Motion when you authorized the borrowing? Commissioner Osterberg explained that at the last meeting (or a couple of meetings ago), we authorized the RFP to go out to the banks to ask them to give us their rates. Now that those rates have come back, we were awarded that through The Dime Bank.

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to advertise for bids for the Pike County Training Center Burn Building Lining Replacement Project.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to authorize the Chairman to execute the Affordable Housing Fund Payment Voucher payable to Delaware Run for Senior Rental Subsidy for February 2021 in the amount of \$2,693.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to authorize the Chairman to execute the Inspection Agreement between Beach Lake Sprinkler and the County of Pike, on behalf of the Area Agency on Aging.

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

MISCELLANEOUS – Mikki Weiss – Commissioner Osterberg wanted to make sure it was in the meeting minutes that Mikki Weiss passed away a number of weeks ago. Mikki Weiss was instrumental in developing the Tick Borne Diseases Task Force. We cannot let her passing go without recognizing her for her dedication to the County. We send our sympathy to her family. There will be some activity in her memory through the Tick Borne Diseases Task Force moving forward into the Spring. They are working on some type of remembrance or ceremony.

Questions and comments were opened to the Public and the Press.

Reporter Chris Jones asked about the drive through clinic which was styled as a "pilot" program – tell me more about that. Commissioner Osterberg stated that it was a trial, pilot program orchestrated through the Department of Health, Wayne Memorial Hospital being a major player in that because they received the vaccines. Pike County and EMA (Emergency Management) do not receive vaccines. The Department of Health recognized that, because we are a rural county, we need to provide some type of vaccination center – a massive vaccination center. This was put together rather quickly and we didn't know about it until Wednesday, even how many vaccines we were getting. We didn't even know how the portal was going to work so that there could be an effective way of efficiently giving appointments to residents, that is why it was done through the Aging Office. Moving forward and we're hoping this can be replicated on a larger scale, the Aging Office will not be doing the appointments. It just happened to be that because of their population, that it worked best that we along with Timmy from EMA. We are grateful to the Department of Health and the Regional Director, who worked with the school and I know since that time I believe they have done a couple of other pilots now that they learned from the first one. I know they did one in Forest and they might have done one in Sullivan - same thing, smaller counties. The Department of Health and PEMA are involved in this. Reporter Chris Jones asked if this is going to go anywhere? Commissioner Osterberg answered we're hoping it does. From this we have developed a website for people to register with their emails, on our website, so that as soon as we get information about any future clinics or whatever information we have, can be shared with the community. We're keeping our fingers crossed they bring more vaccinations here.

Reporter Chris Jones asked what kind of communication do the Commissioners have with the school system, the app on there? Commissioner replied again, that was communication through the Department of Health with the Delaware Valley School District. We were invited because Timothy Knapp and Bernie Swartwood (Emergency Services Coordinators of the County) were involved and orchestrated all of the players. Reporter Chris Jones said that their School Board reporter was there two nights before and teachers were thinking that they were somehow going to be wrapped into this – this created even more, I don't know, frustration. Commissioner Osterberg said if you remember what happened, Monday or Tuesday, the State expanded "1A" to include people 65 years of age or older and that changed the whole dynamic and we weren't part of that discussion with the school or the Department of Health – we weren't there for that. Commissioner Schmalzle added that they thought that, as a County, we were finished with "1A". There was a possibility of "1A" moving to "1B" and that new news from the State changed all that. It expanded "1A" to include millions of people, so they had to stay in "1A" which pushed the teachers, which are "1B", out. If they didn't change it, there would probably be vaccines available for them. The announcement from the State changed that. Commissioner Osterberg stated that Wayne Memorial Hospital is working with Delaware Valley schools. There is a lack of vaccines. Reporter Chris Jones stated there is frustration and people commented "where was this advertised"? It just seems like, this is my opinion, it's best to avoid these frustrations because it's just going to make people say the heck with it. Apparently, the County was just sort of a middle man – just blindsided with it all. Commissioner Osterberg said that they didn't even know they were getting any vaccines until Wednesday, late in the day. Reporter Chris Jones said the take away is there is a registration if this type of even is announced? Commissioner Osterberg said it is important that when people put their email into the Pike County website: www.pikepa.org, that is only for information, that is not to register for a vaccine. We are directing people on that site to contact Wayne Memorial Hospital, Lehigh Valley, St. Luke's and the drug stores. We are telling them to go to their sites and fill out the needed paperwork prior to them announcing they have vaccines so you're in their system.

MOTION: by Commissioner Schmalzle and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, 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, FEBRUARY 17, 2021, AT 9:00 A.M., AT THE PIKE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING.