

Wednesday, March 21, 2018

The first regular meeting of March 2018 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, Caridi and Guccini; Chief Clerk Orben; Solicitor Farley.

Public Comments/Questions concerning today's agenda.

Motion: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to recess the Commissioners' Meeting to hold a Retirement Board Meeting.

Vote: Commissioners Osterberg, Caridi and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

A RETIREMENT BOARD MEETING WAS HELD.

Motion: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to reconvene the Commissioners' Meeting.

Vote: Commissioners Osterberg, Caridi and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to approve the March 21, 2018 Agenda.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to approve the February 7, 2018 Commissioners' Meeting Minutes.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to approve the March 8 and 15, 2017 Commissioners' Conference Minutes.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Caridi and Guccini voted 'aye' except for Commissioner Caridi who abstained from the March 15, 2018 minutes due to his absence. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to approve payment from **GENERAL FUND (County Bills)**, in the amount of **\$210,677.92** subject to further review.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to approve payment from **DEBT SERVICE FUND (Interest Due)** in the amount of **\$410,300.63**.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to approve payment from **SRCP DEBT SERVICE FUND (Interest Due)** in the amount of **\$76,299.20**.

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

PERSONNEL:

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to hire **WENDY WILLIAMS** as a full time Caseworker I for Children & Youth Services, for a 40 hour work week, effective March 19, 2018, with benefits after 90 days. This is a replacement position.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to hire **ALEXANDER LEVITIN** as a full time Caseworker I for Children & Youth Services, for a 40 hour work week, effective March 19, 2018, with benefits after 90 days. This is a replacement position.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to hire **ZACHARY MORGAN** as a full time Caseworker I for Children & Youth Services, for a 40 hour work week, effective March 26, 2018, with benefits after 90 days. This is a replacement position.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to promote **EDWARD CALABRESE** from Caseworker II to Caseworker Supervisor for Children & Youth Services, for a 37 ½ hour work week, effective March 19, 2018. This is a replacement position.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to promote **CHRISTOPHER INGULLI** from Resource Conservationist to Administrative Manager for the Conservation District, for a 40 hour work week, effective April 2, 2018. This is a replacement position.

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

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

Vote: Commissioners Osterberg, Caridi and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

A SALARY BOARD MEETING WAS HELD.

Motion: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to reconvene the Commissioners' Meeting.

Vote: Commissioners Osterberg, Caridi and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to adopt Resolution No. 18-04, C.A.S.U.A.L. Day, March 29, 2018, which was read by Commissioner Guccini. Commissioner Osterberg commented that the three scariest words anyone can hear is 'you have cancer'. When you hear those words, it changes your entire perspective on life and how you look at things in the world. He asked that everyone keep all those individuals who are suffering from cancer in their prayers and thoughts. Commissioner Guccini added that you should get screened.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to adopt Resolution No. 18-05, Pennsylvania 811 Safe Digging Month, April 2018.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to appoint Vincent Flatt as a representative of Delaware Township to the Road Task Force to fill an unexpired term ending December 31, 2020.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to advertise for bids for the Pike County Corrections Facility Cooler and Generator Enclosure Electrical Systems Project.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to advertise for bids for the purchase of groceries and frozen foods for the Correctional Facility.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to authorize the Chairman to execute Change Order TM03R between Troy Mechanical and the County of Pike, for an additional \$6,901.13 for a new ductless system for the Prothonotary's Office, relating to the Courthouse Addition Project.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to authorize the Chairman to execute Change Order TM04R between Troy Mechanical and the County of Pike, for an additional \$2,177.18 for a new electric unit heater for the Judge's parking area, relating to the Courthouse Addition Project.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to authorize the Chairman to execute the Lease Agreement between Safe Haven of Pike County and the County of Pike for use as a Child Advocacy Center, on behalf of the District Attorney's Office.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to execute the PCCD Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program Application for the Pike County Re-entry Program for the amount of \$15,000, on behalf of the District Attorney's Office.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to execute the PCCD Intermediate Punishment Treatment Grant Program Application for the Pike Criminal Addiction Response Effort (PikeCARE) for the amount of \$161,386, on behalf of the Probation Office.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to execute the Professional Services Agreement between Belle Reve Senior Living and the County of Pike, on behalf of the Area Agency on Aging.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to execute the Assessment Services Agreement between Aging Well PA and the County of Pike, on behalf of the Area Agency on Aging.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to authorize the Chairman to execute Pike County Senior Rental Assistance Contracts #30 and #32, on behalf of the Human Development Office.

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

MISCELLANEOUS:

Kelly Gaughan introduced Martha Dubensky from GAIT, who have been providing services to children with developmental disabilities through the use of horses for several years in Pike County. Ms. Gaughan is very pleased to introduce a new program coming to GAIT known as Horses for Heroes. This program is for veterans and first responders who have suffered from post traumatic stress disorder. It is using equine psychotherapy. Laurie Bryceland has joined GAIT and will speak a little more about the program, and Shawn Harrigan from American Legion Post #139, who has been instrumental in spreading the word to veterans. Laurie Bryceland gave an overview of the program. The need is very great for a program which offers an effective alternative to clinical therapy for PTSD, job stress, depression, anxiety, fatigue, military sexual trauma and burnout. Horses for Heroes offers an opportunity for veterans, active duty, law enforcement, first responders and their families to benefit from equine assisted therapy and activities which are proven to be extremely effective in each of these areas. One of their biggest goals is to reduce the number of veteran suicides from 22 a day to zero. There needs to be programs that are more appealing than the traditional clinical setting or support group. Many first responders are still suffering mentally, emotionally and physically from the effects of 911 and the months spent at Ground Zero. They also face tremendous job related stress on a daily basis which affects them and their families. Ms. Bryceland shared some statistics relating to equine therapy showing the significant improvement of veterans by working with horses. There are several programs at GAIT which offer opportunities for participants who may be interested in learning how to work with horses on the ground, train horses, learn about horse behavior and of course to ride horses. There is also a mental health professional on staff to work with individuals and the horse they have partnered with in a private session that offers additional mental and emotional support if needed. Thanks to a partnership with VetStock America, community support and grants, GAIT is able to offer Horses for Heroes Program at no cost, as well as beginner rider lessons at a deep discount for participants. There is also a program called Operation Night Catch, which is specifically designed to offer support for children who have a loved one who is currently deployed. Their goal is offer Horses for Heroes for as long as there is a need. In order to do that they need financial support as well as participants and volunteers to be part of the program. If anyone is interested in sponsoring Horses for Heroes, a wonderful advertising package is being offered for business and a whole lot of thank you's for individual sponsors, including your name on their tshirts and their banner at their upcoming community event at May 19th at GAIT. Their goal is to raise \$15,000 by May 19th, which will allow 20 participants 10 weeks of sessions each. The more funds raised the more people they can help. They are currently at \$5,600 not including grants, so please help spread the word about the need for sponsors and this program, and by encouraging potential participants to check out Horses for Heroes, which is currently up and running. The following are some upcoming events: Saturday, April 14, GAIT Mini-open house and tour from 11 to 1; Sunday, April 22, VetStock is hosting a spaghetti dinner fundraiser for Horses for Heroes at the American Legion in Milford from 1 to 4:30 – takeout also available; Saturday, May 19, from 1 to 4, Community Event with music, food, pony rides, petting zoo, face painting, professional portraits with horses, silent auction, demonstrations with the horses and hopefully some veterans and first responders showing off their new skills. Martha Dubensky said that GAIT has been part of the community for over 20 years and they are delighted to have Laurie as a full time staff member. Ms. Dubensky is a mental health professional and is counselor with Northeast Behavioral Services. There are other centers throughout the country that have tried to do a program like this and have been very successful. They have a herd of horses that are amiable and easy to work with, and yet there are still animals, so there is a lot of learning to work with a horse. There needs to be a partnership between the individual and the horse in order for the horse to do what you want it to do. To learn how to work with another entity will help everyone in their own life work with their family unit. Commissioner Osterberg said that he was just at a County Commissioners' Association conference and there were discussions about expanding dollars through social security for children that are in foster care and children that are in risky households. They talked about a California evidenced based programs, and if they fall into that criteria funding from social security that these children get can be used to pay for these programs. They are also talking about this for drug addiction. Commissioner Osterberg suggested that they look into this. GAIT is a national program located on Foster Hill.

Jessica Grohmann, Assistant Planning Director, announced that the County will be receiving almost \$202,000 Ag Land Preservation Funding for 2018 to be used for Ag Land Preservation programs. They can help a farmer or landowner who has ag production on their property to preserve and maintain that ag activity in the County in perpetuity. The \$201,993 is met and matched by County certification of \$7,574. So from the small amount that the County puts in from Clean & Green Rollback Tax Interest the County receives almost \$202,000. They have two years to use the funds from the state. Farmers and landowners who may be interested in the program should contact Jessica. Currently there are 4 ag security areas in the County – Greene, Lackawaxen, Westfall and Dingman Townships – are the only areas where a farmer can qualify for the program as of now. Funding is determined from real estate transfer values and ag production values. Farmers are encouraged to fill out the census of agriculture forms that go out, to make sure that the state knows what they are producing for agriculture.

Angela Smith of Penn State Extension gave a brief run-down of the March 21-April 9, 2018 events. This week is Agricultural Literacy Week presented by the Friends of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau for agricultural professionals throughout all of the Counties to go into elementary school programs and speak

with youth about the importance of agriculture. They provide a book every year and this year's book is Tyler Makes Pancakes. She went into three classrooms in the Delaware Valley District, as well as three of the early learning centers to read and present each classroom with a book, and do some activities to help the kids learn about agriculture and the importance of farming. Last week was PA 4-H Week that was kicked off with Capitol Days by meeting legislatures in Harrisburg and talking to them about the importance of 4H. There was a Facebook promotion last week about the clubs and activities of 4H. A horse and pony club meets up at GAIT. This is a great program for children. Another leader recruitment workshop will be held on April 5th at 1 pm and 6 pm for anyone interested in becoming a leader. Delaware Valley was finally able to get their Strengthening Families Program running. There were 12 families registered. Between Wallenpaupack and Delaware Valley there are 30 families registered for this spring.

Commissioner Osterberg mentioned that, in the last couple of weeks with all the snowstorms, everyone has been under a great amount of stress and our Emergency Management Coordinators Tim and Bernie were right on top of it and did all that they could possibly do considering the devastation and destruction that occurred in this County. We need to better prepare ourselves for emergencies. When you only have these emergencies every couple of years we all become a little lax on what we really need to have in our homes to be prepared. He reached out to Penn State and asked them to come up with some type of emergency preparedness class. People need to be reminded that we live in a very rural county, and when the power goes out you have no water, your septic does not work, you may not have heat and assistance may not be able to get to you right away. There are many people in the community that need urgent care while many of us can survive on our own if we would just be prepared. In the future you will hear about a program with Penn State Cooperative Extension and also with a representative from PEEC and Tim Knapp and Bernie Swartwood. People move here not fully understanding how rural this County is, and in this last unprecedented storm, these roads were completely blocked. There will be an after-action meeting with the power companies and Senator Baker who toured the County. A meeting was held at the Training Center and the State Police had taken a helicopter across the County and videotaped it. Before the video was shown, everyone was complaining about this and that, but when they saw the video, it put it right into perspective that this was not what was anticipated. People thought that there were a few lines down here and there and they are just going to put the wires back up. But when you go down Rte. 434 and there are 35 trees laying across the road, and people need to cut through it and wait for the power to be turned off, then it put it more into perspective. Commissioner Osterberg is asking the power companies for better communication. There are enough drones out there to fly over and show this to residents so they know the severity of what is going on, and that they should not be on the roads in some cases like 434. There were people riding over the wires, and it is extremely dangerous. This is why there should be an Emergency Preparedness Program. The Commissioners also mentioned the Code Red Program. They went to the shelters and spoke to some of the individuals there who had no idea about the Code Red Program. The Commissioners will be asking Tim Knapp to conduct some presentations at the senior expos so that their land lines can be registered with the Code Red Program. People who are registered found it to be extremely helpful. Commissioner Caridi stated that the Emergency Management Agency was open for a week with call takers. They also had representatives from PPL also available. Angela Smith of Penn State commended the Emergency Management Agency for their willingness to work with Extension and 4H. They did conduct an Emergency Preparedness Event last October that they plan on running again in September for Emergency Preparedness Month. They will be hosting two-day Emergency Preparedness programs this summer at the Matamoras Fire Department and at the Training Center.

Commissioner Guccini explained that item #10 on the agenda is a renewal of the PCCD Intermediate Punishment Treatment Grant Program for Pike Criminal Addiction Response Effort. This program was instituted last year through the District Attorney's Office that offers intensive supervision and treatment for certain DUI and drug offenders who might otherwise spend time in jail. These funds are used for a specific Probation Officer and for treatment programs to keep those offenders out of jail. The criteria for getting into that program is up to the District Attorney's Office to try to address those specific drug and alcohol issues.

Commissioner Guccini also explained item #9 on the agenda is a new grant application through the PCCD Byrne Justice Assistance Program for the Pike County Re-entry Program. He thanked Mike Mrozinski from the Planning Office for preparing this grant application through the federal government. Commissioner Guccini said that Mike spent a lot of time preparing this grant. The idea of this \$15,000 grant is to try to get a consultant to help put together a formal Re-entry Program. The term re-entry actually refers to dealing with inmates getting close to being released in term of all of things they will need such as a place to live, a job interview, decent clothing for an interview, drug and mental health treatment, etc. While the jail already has some programs to help people out, a formal re-entry program is for very specific partnerships with both governmental agencies and private non-profits to have a plan for everyone who is about to be released to try to reduce recidivism rates and relapsing and committing new crimes and winding up back in the system.

PRESS/PUBLIC COMMENT

Wayne Witkowski of Pike County Dispatch asked about the entities who are relocating to the Community House. Commissioner Osterberg stated that Economic Development, the Chamber of Commerce, Pike Autism Services and United Way have relocated to the Community House this past week. The Visitors' Center will be a work in progress after the other entities settle in. There are discussions between the Chamber and Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau who are partnering to establish the Visitor's Center. The public is welcome to walk through and see the beautiful enhancements to the Community House through a \$200,000 LSA grant. The Greater Pike Foundation will also be relocating to the Community House sometime in the summer.

Wayne Witkowski asked about the progress of the Courthouse Expansion Project. Commissioner Osterberg said that the project is still on schedule and moving along. Most of the work is being conducted inside at this point.

Mr. Ellinson, a resident of Greeley, member of Sanctuary Church and employee of Kahr Arms, commented about the blessing ceremony and the demonstration of their right for self-protection. With the political climate and events that have happened recently in America, the gun issue has become a very big issue for people. Their events at the Best Western and the Sanctuary Church has attracted national attention. Within that media coverage, 90% was fair and actual, but he wanted to address the other percentage. There has been what he considers to be hate speech and he believes it is very important for the community that we do not bring in the atmosphere of hatred. They have been accused of being a church that murders people, that they kidnap people, traffic people and guns. They have seen comments on social media and newspaper comments saying the church should not be allowed to exist. He shared two experiences that he encountered because of hate speech. He was picked up by an organization called Free Minds, a deprogramming organization who worked on his parents for three years to convince them to their way of thinking. He was picked up of the streets in Bolden Valley, Minnesota and thrown in the back of a Minneapolis Police Paddy Wagon and brought to the Minneapolis Jail. On the ride there was someone in the back who threatened to murder him, who said he would kill him right here and right now but those guys would see it so I'm going to wait until we are in the holding cell, and when we get to the Jail you're dead mother fucking moonie. That's what he experienced for about 15 minutes on the way to the Jail. Two police officers then took him into the station and that guy told him once again, you got about 5 more minutes moonie. Fortunately, they took him to a side room and not to a holding cell, where on the other side of the glass were his mother, father and brothers, who said the police are very nice and they are going to release you into our custody, if you'll just agree to go with us. He knew that this was a classic kidnapping/deprogramming situation. His parents did not go along with it, partly because he was an adult and they respected his right for his own religious belief and it would have been charged \$10,000 to take him away and do what they were going to do. This was going on a lot in the 1970s and 1980s. Two years later he was working in a town in Minnesota and the deprogrammers had an event in the local high school about two weeks before he got there and the atmosphere was really negative and he was confronted as he was working in an A&W parking lot raising money with carnations. Two thugs assaulted him verbally and accusing him of breaking into someone's house and raping them. He started running away but they tackled him and physically abused him and unleashed a hate tirade. The police did arrive and the thugs ran away. He was in Reverend Moon's congregation and he heard him speak many times and once he was speaking about what they should do if they are persecuted. He said if you are in a situation where you are facing persecution you should, first of all, thank God that he is letting him experience a little bit of what our Lord and Savior experienced. Those words came strong to his mind and he followed those words. He decided not to press charges, as if nothing happened. He continued by stating that the woman at the rally who said they are not Christians, he acted the way Reverend Moon taught him to act towards his fellow man even though they were misunderstood what he was about and the essence of his religion. He said they are a Christian organization, but these people don't know anything about their church or Reverend Moon. There has been such a media blitz ever since he came to America and that's why he is calling it hate speech. He does not want to see it begin to grown right here and right now, because right now in people's homes they are talking about all these f'n moonies are in our neighborhood. He has kids and grandchildren who are going to be in school. He doesn't want them to face anyone like those guys who beat the hell out of him. Some of you will hear these things and if it's in your conscience and in your hearts, you can say no. Some of you know the Church leadership, you know Sean and Justin Moon, are they murderers and kidnapers? This is his request to his public comment: Please don't let this hatred grow, because it will if the truth isn't exposed. Truth is the medicine that heals all things. These are a bunch of freaking lies that were ginned up by people so they could charge exorbitant fees to deprogram and destroy their religious rights. This isn't just about the First or Second Amendment Rights. Don't let those lies or reinforce those lies that they are something that is evil and a threat. Commissioner Osterberg said that they do not advocate any hate, they advocate everyone's rights to believe in how they want to believe and how they want peaceful protests. The Commissioners role when these things occur in our community is to be sure that the residents are safe. Each of us have our own beliefs and we should be able to speak about our own beliefs. It's when it comes to the far sides of everything where people may be in danger that we get very concerned and that's what the Commissioners always talk about. This can go on and should go on, but we must be respectful to each other and not tell stories. Commissioner Caridi asked that while everyone has the right to speak and they try to afford everyone ample time, in the future, please refrain from any expletives to set an example. He realizes that it was an emotional topic, but it gives a lot more credibility to his story and what he was trying to present without the expletives. Mr. Ellinson did apologize to the Commissioners.

ADJOURNMENT: THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE PIKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4, 2018, AT 9:00 A.M., AT THE PIKE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING.