

Wednesday, July 2, 2014

The first regular meeting of July of the Pike County Commissioners was called to order by Commissioner Caridi at 9:00 a.m. at the Pike County Administration Building, followed by the "Pledge of Allegiance" to the flag. Father Paul Mullen of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Milford offered the opening prayer.

PRESENT: Commissioners Caridi, Osterberg and Wagner (via telephone); Chief Clerk Orben; Assistant Solicitor Beecher.

Public Comments/Questions concerning today's agenda.

MOTION: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to approve the July 2, 2014 Agenda.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to approve the June 18, 2014 Commissioners' Meeting Minutes.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to approve the June 18, 23, 25 and July 1, 2014 Conference Minutes.

VOTE: Commissioners Caridi, Osterberg and Wagner voted 'aye', except Commissioner Osterberg abstained from the June 23 Conference Minutes and Commissioner Wagner abstained from the July 1, 2014 Conference Minutes due to their absence. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to approve payment from **GENERAL FUND (County Bills)**, in the amount of \$179,325.12, subject to further review.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to approve payment from **HAZARDOUS MATERIAL RESPONSE FUND (Meals)**, in the amount of \$67.49.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to approve payment from **PC EMPLOYEES' HEALTH INS. FUND**, in the amount of \$65,030.92.

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

PERSONNEL:

MOTION: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to acknowledge receipt of a letter from Warden Craig Lowe advising that he has hired, with Prison Board approval, the following individuals as full time Correction Officers for the Correctional Facility, for a 40 hour work week, effective July 7, 2014, with benefits after 90 days: **STEVEN COLLINS, JANINE FEAKINS, CHRISTOPHER MARZAM, MYKEL MELLOR, DANIELLE MENDITTO, ERIC MORALES, MOISES OLIVO, JENNA RITTENHOUSE, SEAN SCERBO, JOSEPH SERRANO, KIRSTI SMITH, MICHAEL TRAINOR AND PATRICIA VETRANO.**

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

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

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

A SALARY BOARD MEETING WAS HELD.

Motion: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to reconvene the Commissioners' Meeting.

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

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to authorize the Chairman to execute the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund 2012 Quarterly Progress Report, on behalf of the Pike County Library.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to execute the Agreement between Scott Eyler Construction and the County of Pike, on behalf of the Area Agency on Aging, for the handicapped accessible adaptation and rehabilitation to a property located in Greentown, through the HOME Program.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to accept the proposal from Morgan Site Contractors in the amount of \$16,998 for the CDBG Shohola Township Rohman Park Additional Parking Project.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to authorize the Chairman to execute the Amendment to the Contract for Professional Services between Marvin A. Brotter Consulting Services and the County of Pike, on behalf of the Human Development Office CDBG program.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to execute the 2014-15 Pike County Human Services Plan, on behalf of the Human Development Office.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to authorize the Chairman to execute the Senior Rental Assistance Subsidy voucher from Delaware Run for June and July 2014 in the amount of \$3,626, on behalf of the Human Development Office.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to authorize the Chairman to execute the Transit Advertising Agreement between Celtic Hospice & Home Health and KKPR Marketing & Public Relations Inc. and the County of Pike, on behalf of the Transportation Office.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to authorize the Chairman to execute the Non-Binding Letter of Intent between the Waymart State Correctional Institution and the Correctional Facility, as recommended by the Prison Board, for the emergency evacuation of inmates.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to execute the Geocaching Agreement between the Lackawaxen Township Supervisors and the County of Pike, on behalf of the Scenic Rural Character Preservation Board, as recommended by the SRCP.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Osterberg and seconded by Commissioner Wagner, to execute the Pocono Counties WIA Financial Agreement for Employment and Training and Related Administrative Services between Carbon, Monroe, Pike and Wayne Counties, on behalf of Workforce Development Agency.

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

MISCELLANEOUS:

Presentation of the SRCP Geocaching Series by Jessica Grohmann, Assistant Planner and Kevin DeVizia. Mr. DeVizia explained that geocaching is a fast growing game where people who are adventure seekers and love the outdoors use GPS enabled devices to problem solve and find geocaches hidden in different places on public lands with permission. The geocache containers are waterproof and come in a wide range of sizes with a log book that the person who found it signs it as proof that they found it. They then go on to find more. Mr. DeVizia said that four years ago, funded in part by the Pike County Conservation District, a project was started called the Seven Wonders of Pike County. The geocaching took people around Pike County to see some of these sites. This is a great way to explore the outdoors and areas that are unknown to some people, such as Grey Towers, Childs Park, Dingmans Falls, Historic Lackawaxen, etc. The Seven Wonders of Pike County also talks about the geology of the area. Jessica Grohmann announced that a new Pike County SRCP Series has been launched to introduce people to the nine public accessible sites funded through the SRCP, such as Akenac Park, the Santos property, etc. After finding the geocache on any of these SRCP sites, people may be eligible to receive a trackable SRCP geo-coin, which is a big to-do in the geocaching world. Two people from Maine already won a geo-coin. The County's website for this geocaching is www.srcp.pikepa.org or for more information on geocaching please visit www.geocaching.com. People come from all over to Pike County for geocaching, which also promotes tourism.

The Commissioners have put together an update on the Courthouse Expansion. Commissioner Caridi said that the Commissioners are trying to take a positive approach to explain the history behind the development of this project, contrary to some of the misconceptions that perhaps exist either by default or by design out in the public. The Commissioners think that it is important that everyone knows just how much energy, mental and physical, the Commissioners are putting into this project, and the different avenues that were pursued to be sensitive, not just to the historical preservation of Milford Borough, but also to the taxpayers of the County. Commissioner Osterberg read the following statement which was also available in hard copy for the press/public.

"The Pike County Commissioners find it necessary to correct the record as to the history of the planning and construction of a new court house annex. This document is written to show a time line of events and the transparency we have shown in proceeding with this project.

1. Since 2011 there have been at least 26 articles in local papers discussing the new court house annex. These articles covered the initial financing to the design and location.
2. Over the last year our engineer and architect have met with members of the Historic Preservation Trust of Pike County – Tom Hoff, Bill Kiger, Ed Brannon, Rich Pedranti and Dick Snyder.
3. The Commissioners have had discussions and meetings with various members of the community.
4. The Commissioners have completed two (2) space needs studies. The first in 2008, by Kimball's and Associates, analyzed a five (5) year based need. This study called for a 2008 projected space need of 38,190 square feet with a five (5) year projected space need of 46,782 square feet. The cost of this study was \$35,000. This proposal was rejected due to the overall cost of the project and the Commissioners' consensus that the space needs requested were too aggressive. At the Commissioners' request, this study was reevaluated by McGoey, Hauser and Edsall with current information and interviews of department heads and it was determined to realistically satisfy current space needs and future space needs 30,285 was adequate and affordable.

This new addition allows for Children and Youth in the current Administration Building to expand, and allows for the relocation of the County Planning Department and Work Force Development Agency back to the Administration Building from Shohola, resulting in a savings of \$49,807.80 in rent annually.

5. With the historic district in mind, we have hired an additional historical architectural firm, namely EYP, from Albany, NY. A nationally recognized architectural firm with strong ties to historically sensitive communities. This was suggested by the community, the ARB and the Milford Borough Council members so that a historically sensitive design would be reviewed and be compatible to the community in total. EYP has commented on the design and our architect is consulting with this firm to include its suggestions to address the historic design of the addition. We desire this building to be historically correct in the community it serves.
6. The Commissioners have attended six (6) Milford Borough meetings explaining the project.
 - a. August 26, 2013 – ARB Meeting
 - b. January 6, 2014 - Milford Borough Council Meeting
 - c. January 13, 2014 - Milford Borough Planning Commission Meeting
 - d. April 4, 2014 – Milford Borough Council Meeting
 - e. April 14, 2014 – Milford Borough Planning Commission Meeting
 - f. April 28, 2014 – ARB Meeting

All minutes are available for review upon request

7. The Commissioners have completed a cost analysis for different options as recommended by the public. All have proven to be cost prohibitive to the taxpayer. The increase was between 1.3 to 1.5 million dollars. This was presented to the Milford Borough Council. To construct the addition any smaller does not satisfy the current or future needs of the County.

These documents are available upon request

8. The Board of Commissioners and the Engineer met on site on May 13 with two (2) members of the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission for two (2) hours to explain our position and this project. We also gave a tour of the project and the historic courthouse. We have subsequently responded to its requests for additional information.

This correspondence is available upon request.

In conclusion, we have tried to balance the historical sensitivity to the community, current security guidelines from the AOPC (Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts) for property protections for a modern day court system, and intend to be respectful by pursuing this project through the duly elected municipal officials. Lastly and importantly, we have always held in the forefront of our minds the cost effectiveness of the project with the use of taxpayer dollars on behalf of all 58,000 county residents.

The Commissioners asked Sheriff Bueki to speak about the necessity of this project from his prospective. Sheriff Bueki explained that there was a similar argument when the Correctional Facility was being built about the size of the facility. Residents said that there should be no more than 100 cells; it was a waste of money; and it was too big. As of today, there are 200 County inmates and over 130 INS prisoners. The Sheriff noted this argument was proven wrong because it is already three times the size that was needed. It was also very unusual to have female inmates. There may have been 10 female inmates in a 10 year span. As of this morning, there are 48 female inmates in the Pike County Correctional Facility. This is being caused by drugs and a heroin epidemic. A recent effort with the District Attorney's office Drug Task Force has retrieved 1,200 packets of heroin on distribution levels very close to the Administration Building. The Sheriff said it is very organized, highly structured and highly dangerous. These are people from inner cities, with most of the heroin coming from Patterson and Newark. They are dangerous and serious people who think nothing of taking an officer's life. This is what is dealt with by the Sheriff's Office on a daily basis which is not mentioned in the newspapers. When he sees articles in the newspapers that suggest reducing the Sheriff's Office space in the new courthouse by 40% he feels it is absolutely ridiculous. He went on to say that the size of the muster room, which is 12' x 18' and smaller than the Commissioners' meeting room (at the time of the meeting holding 20 people) is supposed to hold 27 officers and was reported in the newspapers as being extravagant training room. He said that the Commissioners have been very prudent with their plans. The Sheriff said that he sat down with the architect and drew the plans, which are according to state law and guidelines which he must follow. He cannot interact males and females, cannot interact protective housing with non-protective housing, cannot even have line of site between a juvenile offender and adult offender, which means that you cannot walk the juvenile past an adult cell if they can look at each other. These are state mandates. The plans for the new courthouse barely make what the Sheriff can deal with now. He does not know where the statistics are coming from that newspapers are reporting that they have 40 to 50% larger space than is needed. The plans are very well done, and conservatively done, while looking out for the taxpayers. Commissioner Caridi asked that the Sheriff explain what he is going to deal with tomorrow with 29 bodies in the Sheriff's office. The Sheriff brought a list with him that he could not share because of privacy, but did say that all the names on the list are inmates that are coming tomorrow. There are 29 coming for court, with 15 who cannot be next to each other, 5 in protective custody, 4 that are extreme escape risks, 3 suicidal, 4 keep separate because of the drug crimes that cannot be discussed with one another, female inmates who cannot be together because of an incident at the Correctional Facility, and another female who is in protective custody.

Last week there were 6 adult females chained in a bathroom with a 4 foot bench, toilet and sink. He said this is an inhumane way to treat people who have to be there for 6 to 8 hours. On top of that, the Sheriff's Office issues 11,000 gun permits each year, all the precious metal licenses, run all the pawn shops and over 2,000 civil complaints. There are at least 100 to 200 lawyers going into the Sheriff's Office. Last year there were 470 PFA's. They are the cases that rose to the point where a threat of bodily injury is apparent. Then the weapons need to be confiscated and the person evicted. The Sheriff said this County needs a secure environment to house these people. There is now a secured vault for confiscated items, and the drug take back program which has also turned out to be a huge success. The Sheriff explained, at the request of Commissioner Caridi, that he was fully suited up today because when you take someone down with 1400 bags of heroin and look into their past and they are from New York and New Jersey, maybe they were involved in a homicide, maybe they did 10 years for murder, maybe they are attached to gang members. They are coming to Pike County to make big money and distribute heroin. They are organized and have major contacts in the city. The Sheriff's argument for the Courthouse expansion is to get the offenders in and out of the Courthouse with no exposure to the public by not parading them across the street. There are 4 deputies at this time in the street with shotguns because of the threat posed by these offenders. State Troopers are also out there right now. Commissioner Caridi said they had to

move a very high profile offender this morning and that's why they are on high alert. The Sheriff said in the past two weeks, they have had two major heroin busts between Milford and Matamoras. The Sheriff said that he read in an article where Ms. Fey said can you blame the Sheriff for wanting a new facility rather an antiquated building. He said that he is retiring in three years, so this is for the safety of everyone in the County. He wants everyone to understand what the County is facing. It has nothing to do with historical, or looks or buildings. The County is in an emergency situation now. The more time goes by the more likely it will be that someone will get hurt or killed. Last week two officers were hurt in an altercation with offenders in the Sheriff's Office. For the month of June, 130 male and 48 females were moved.

Commissioner Caridi said that when he served as Warden, the local population even in the summer ranged around 60 and today we have hit 200. He felt it important that the Sheriff speak because he has the experience and knowledge of how much is going on now in this area.

Commissioner Osterberg commented that it is important to understand that the Commissioners have put a lot of thought into this plan and some of the decisions that have to be made are not easy decisions. They are hard decisions. These are communities that we all live in. He particularly lives right in this community. As the Sheriff was saying the space that is needed is the space that is needed. That is the space study from 2008. It was not just four pages of paper and we go interview people. This was a full blown space study where everyone was interviewed for a current space needs and for a five year need, and here we are six years later. The Commissioners understand that they don't have the money to build to that capacity, but the other side is that maybe at this point we don't really need it, but we don't have the money and that is important in this economy. As the Sheriff is trying to explain, we need to do this. Commissioner Osterberg went on to say that they are making issues about some space in the basement, that there is a muster room and a training room, but it is not like these are huge rooms. These are needed spaces for security. Probation needs to be there, because the same people that the Sheriff is dealing with today, one day they will be dealing with them in Probation. It does not mean that they have become good people, so they need to be in a secure environment. The Commissioners are trying their best to make this building be as appropriate to the Borough as they can, which is why they hired these architectural firms.

Commissioner Caridi clarified a letter that was written to the editor that the County borrowed \$22 million for this project. That is so inaccurate. The County borrowed \$8 million for the Courthouse and \$2 million for the continued funding of the SRCP program which the Commissioners were authorized to do through a referendum in 2005. That bond issue was only \$10 million. However, what they did not state in that letter to the editor that took a summation of \$22 million was that the County took previous bond issues and refinanced them at a lower rate, just as you would refinance your home mortgage. The County saved \$200,000 a year in debt service from refinancing. They bundled the bond issues together and went from 6% interest down to 3% interest. That's why it added up to \$22 million.

Treasurer Gilpin also commented that Standard & Poors just upgraded the County's rating because of good decisions that the Commissioners have made.

Commissioner Osterberg added that just currently they are in the process of refinancing another bond issue and saved \$160,000 by moving some money around. Commissioner Caridi said that there are two taxable bond issues that were issued years ago for \$5.25 million and by refinancing at the current rate of interest of 1.5% from 6.5% they can pay it off in 26 months. It is a huge savings.

Commissioner Osterberg said that some of the newspaper articles make like the Commissioners are doing this behind closed doors and hiding. He assured the press that they are not. They are up front, answer questions, go to Borough Council meetings. The Commissioners go to the meetings where the elected officials that represent the residents of the Borough attend. Their meetings are open. The Commissioners are not hiding anything from them, and the public is aware of the meetings they have been to. Commissioner Caridi also offered that the Commissioners' conferences are all open to the public, and that several people from the press have occasionally frequented those meetings and know what's going on. It is not glamorous or sexy, and therefore, does not make headlines. The Commissioners are business people and they are running a big business.

Commissioner Caridi wanted to inform everyone of an incident while serving on the Planning Commission for Pike County, consisting of nine members, and at the last meeting, one member was absent, but there were two municipal leaders, one from Lackawaxen and one from Shohola, and there was a request to have the Courthouse expansion put on the Planning Commission agenda. There statement made at the meeting at the Library, which Commissioner Caridi did not attend, and that he prohibited the Courthouse expansion discussion at the Planning meeting because it was said he desired to be arcane and secretive. It is the wrong venue. When the Planning Commission of Pike County receives a submission it first has to go to the municipality in which the submission of construction will take place, meaning the Milford Borough Council. The Commissioners have not made a formal submission. Once the formal submission is made, then they will send the plans to Conservation, the Pike County Planning Commission, and other entities for review. It is at that time that the Pike County Planning Commission will review the project. They review it for subdivision and land development ordinance compliance and zoning compliance. To bring it to the Planning Commission before the Commissioners have respectfully presented it the municipal leaders, would be an insult to the people that were elected to represent the residents either in the Borough or whatever municipality. Commissioner Caridi again said the Commissioners are going through the prescribed process for land development to the Milford Borough Council, the Milford Borough Planning Commission and the ARB. At that time, when it is submitted formally, it will go to the Pike County Planning Commission. It was not an effort to be secretive, but rather an effort to respect the municipal leaders and let them get it first as the process prescribes.

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

Someone asked if the Commissioners would entertain a plan that would save the Kenworthy House if possible. Commissioner Caridi responded that that question was posed for the past three or four months, to which the Commissioners said to bring your plan forward and they would take a look at it. The engineers have talked to the people that have said there is another plan available. The Commissioners have received copies of what was presented at the Historic Preservation meeting, and it is very easy to draw on a block of paper a rectangle. That does not mean that it fits the space needs analysis that the County needs. It needs to be understood what goes in to the building that the County is required to build. That building has to meet levels of security, not only for the Judge, but for the staff, the public and the inmates. It is not the most efficient, but that is the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Court's guidelines, and the Commissioners don't have a choice but to follow these guidelines. The Commissioners have said yes to Mr. Ebbert who sat at the meetings and kept telling them about a plan, and the Commissioners told him to bring it forward. If there is something there that can benefit all the people of Pike County and be a compromise and resolution to the rancor that is out there, the Commissioners would certainly look at it and entertain it, but they can't wait. Every month and year that the Commissioners wait, the money that was borrowed will be insufficient to complete this project. The Commissioners are hoping to have all the approvals and bid specs prepared and go out publicly by December. If this is not bid in January and February and get them back, it will cost 10% to 20% more because that is when the contractors have more work next summer as opposed to the winter.

Commissioner Osterberg said that he believes that Mr. Lamoreaux has looked at that projection, keeping in mind that to build this building any smaller does not satisfy the current needs or even the future needs of this County. Mr. Lamoreaux has done a scenario of that with keeping the building. Some of this may be new to some of the audience, but these ideas were put out there during the meetings that the Commissioners have had over the year with the Preservation Trust. Mr. Lamoreaux did a study on it. Commissioner Osterberg said they did not do a full blown study because that would cost more money. Mr. Lamoreaux did a drawing which was presented to the Borough Council in April showing that the building behind the Kenworthy building would be a four-story block building. The other issue was that it was going to cost between another \$1.3 and \$1.5 million to save the Kenworthy building. Commissioner Osterberg appreciates the Kenworthy Building. He commented that he did not write 5 history books on the architecture of this County and this area because he did not have an interest in it, but he also understands that there comes a time when economics has to play a role in this. He said if we can work together with EYP and the County's architect, we can build a building there that can satisfy the needs of the County and also be something that the people of the Borough and the County can be very proud of and like to look at. To say that the building should be saved at whatever cost, is not very practical. The Commissioners have a fiduciary responsibility to the residents of the entire County. To just say that the County is going to spend \$1.5 million extra to save that 4 bedroom house is not very practical. Commissioner Osterberg said that he didn't think any businessman in his right mind would think about doing that. We need to satisfy the safety and security issues, and he believes that the proposed project is the one that the Commissioners are going to put forward to the Borough Council and to the ARB.

Commissioner Caridi also explained that while the Sheriff talked about moving inmates in Court, the Sheriff is, by Court Order, in charge of the security of the entire County Complex. He and his staff have to protect the Judges, the jurors, the public, as well as the inmates, and the people sitting in this facility.

Sheriff Bueki said that lately he has been reading that some feel that due to the decrease in population the County does not need this facility, but he said he supplied the statistics and doesn't know where the 40% decrease came from. Commissioner Caridi stated that there is a 1.4% decrease in population, but at the same time crime is going through the roof.

A person asked why all this was not said to persuade those opposed. Commissioner Osterberg confirmed that all this information was presented at the Borough Council meeting, the Planning Commission meeting and the ARB meetings at two different times. This was also presented in Commissioners' meetings on numerous occasions, and has been in 26 newspaper articles. Commissioner Caridi did say that the press is usually in attendance at the Commissioners' meetings, and the Commissioners have had between 4 to 6 presentations with renditions and explanations and they can verify it month after month, so it has been publicly promoted. Sheriff Bueki has actually given a physical tour of the building. Commissioner Caridi reminded everyone that the Commissioners have to be respectful of the elected municipal officials. They are the ones who get the project first. If those people who are in disagreement want to go and attend those meetings and voice their opinion to their elected officials, then that's the public venue that they should avail themselves to.

Commissioner Wagner (via telephone) said that he and Commissioner Osterberg live in the Borough, and obviously sensitive to the opinions of people that live in the Borough, but if you look at the majority of people that really have stepped forward and are objecting to this project, are all people that live in or next to the Borough. Commissioner Wagner has had to keep in mind over the 17 years that he has been in office, that the Commissioners don't just represent the Borough, they represent all the people that live in Pike County. Commissioner Wagner said the Commissioners are accused all the time of just taking into consideration what's good for Milford. This is a County issue, and the Commissioners need to take into consideration the people that live in Greentown, Palmyra, Lackawaxen, etc. He doubts that those municipalities want to spend another \$1.5 million or more.

An audience member who was at the meeting at the library, clarified that there is nothing but the utmost respect for what the Commissioners do and the challenges they face in the County. Sheriff Bueki also agrees with that statement, but is upset that they want to cut the plans by 40%. The plans as of right now will barely satisfy the security issues that the Sheriff has now. The person again clarified that there was not a single speaker on the panel nor in the audience that voiced a concern with building a new courthouse. The issue was with the site, and the esthetics and the impact on the Milford Borough economy and trickle down the economics the impact of the County at large. She said that Milford Borough is Pike County's billboard. People choose to relocate, buy ice cream cones and vacation properties in Pike County as a result of their visit to Milford. She said if we build a big box in front of the Courthouse in the center of this gorgeous place that we call home, it is almost a nail in the coffin for everyone in the County. The implication is far more

than \$1.5 million. The Sheriff answered by saying if people drove by his office today they would see. She would argue that the maintenance costs are there. The Sheriff explained what he meant was that seeing all the security and the guys standing on the corner. She said no one is disputing the need to bring everything inside to containment and make everyone secure which is obviously a matter of public safety. The Sheriff said that they actually had ladies with kids walk down the middle of the sidewalk this morning and they had to be stopped. She said that is not the concern and that it is unfortunate that the Commissioners, the Borough Council and the Sheriff were not at that meeting to hear directly the concerns and to field those concerns. Commissioner Caridi replied that those same people who you talk about that made their concerns were also at the Commissioners' public meetings and then they met with the County's architects and engineer. The woman said that the concern is that there is a proposal. Commissioner Caridi added that those concerns can be voiced again as he just stated earlier at the Borough Council meeting. The biggest concern is why aren't the Commissioners concerned with maintaining the historic integrity of Milford. Commissioner Caridi asked the woman to take a copy and read the document that was just read by Commissioner Osterberg. She said she doesn't understand why the Commissioners are expecting the Historic Preservation Trust to present the plan for a new courthouse versus from the beginning of that design process. The parameters should have been specified that they want to maintain the integrity and do not want a big box on Broad Street. Commissioner Caridi said they spent \$10,000 for an international and nationally renowned architectural preservation architect to satisfy the historic needs and preservation of this Borough. She does believe the concern exists.

Commissioner Osterberg asked if she really thought that that is a big box building. She said she does. Commissioner Osterberg then asked if she thought this was a big box building. She said this is not, no. Commissioner Osterberg showed her a photo of this building when it was built on the day it was dedicated, which shows it as a big box. He said this is the thing that he believes people are missing is that there comes a time in this town when things must change. There was an 1860 bar that sat just about where she was sitting right now and next door was a house that was probably older than that. He said things in this town have got to evolve. They have already had this discussion. He offered more history that a number of months ago someone wrote in the local paper that the Penn Star Bank building was an architectural wonder of Milford Borough. It was built in 1989. The house that was on that site now sits down on the end of East Catherine Street at this moment. There were the same discussions about the library, that if a certain design wasn't built the entire economics of Milford Borough was going to disappear. Commissioner Osterberg said the value of his home was going to become nothing and everyone was just going to evaporate from coming to Milford. The Courthouse building, as long as the right architect is chosen, can make itself as much as an iconic building as the size of Forest Hall, Bloomgardens, the Fauchere, the Tom Quick and the Administration Building. It can be something that everyone can all be proud of, but this needs to be worked on together, because as was said earlier, the County needs the space. To spend \$1.5 million to save a 4 bedroom wooden structure is not practical. He said he loves that building as much as everyone does. He lives directly across the street around the corner from it. He knows the importance of this. He sat on the Borough Council for 25 years and helped form the ARB. The ARB was not formed so that every building in this town from 1999 until forever would be standing. That is not a reasonable expectation. If the building needs to be lost, it has to be lost for a good reason and this is a really good reason, because the County needs the security in the Courthouse and it needs to be replaced with something that is sensitive to the needs of the community. Without the ARB, then somebody can knock any building down and build anything. People look at this ARB and say the ARB is there, we have to serve and protect every structure in this town.

Someone asked if the ARB says "no" will the Commissioners still knock down the Kenworthy building. Commissioner Osterberg answered that if the ARB says "no" then they will have to go to court. There are other buildings that are being discussed that should not be removed. They are not in the ARB district, but they are telling us they should not be knocked down because they are in the National Historic District. He continued that now every house that sits in the residential zone that lies in the National Historic District, if you own the house and you want to knock it down to build something new, then you can't do it.

The same person said that his question was specific, if the ARB says "no" where do you stand then. Commissioner Osterberg again answered that they would have to go to court when we cross that bridge, because then the question will be where is the Courthouse going to be built in this town. Some people think that the County should just erode back into the residential zone. As a resident of this town, Commissioner Osterberg finds it highly offensive. So if the ARB doesn't allow this then where is the other location? The other location is back and he doesn't think it is right. There is zoning in this town. That is not a commercial zone. He will wait to see if the ARB turns them down and then he can be asked that question.

The woman asked if that is the precedent that the Commissioners want to set, that if you show reason for it, it is justified to raise a historic property. Commissioner Osterberg asked if the Milford Inn was knocked down and if the house next door to the Milford Inn knocked, was the house next to Tom Hoff's house knocked down? Commissioner Osterberg explained economics by saying the Milford Inn could have been rehabilitated and next door was a three bedroom house that sat on the same property. Newton Wellness Center came into this town right after the ARB was formed and proposed to build that building. There were newspaper articles and rancor back and forth that this was going to destroy the town. He said now let's talk about economics in the Borough with 550 ratables. The Milford Inn was probably paying real estate taxes to the County, the school and the Borough in the range of \$6,000 or \$7,000, maybe \$10,000. Newton Wellness Center pays \$60,000 a year. The school needed the money, the Borough absolutely needed the money, this Borough was near bankruptcy and the County needed the money, so while the Milford Inn was lost, there was a building that was erected on that property that added to the tax base, did not destroy anything in this Borough, in fact, probably added to the economic engine because you have many doctors and health care services. Commissioner Osterberg said that if they had said that was setting a precedent, then we would still have the Milford Inn.

The woman said that to that end, it is public information that the County owns several properties, adjacent properties in Milford Borough that were removed from the tax rolls.

Commissioner Wagner said this is a mute discussion. I don't know who the young lady is in the audience is, but you're not going to convince her and she's not going to convince you even if you talk for another three hours. This will be presented to the ARB and Milford Borough Council. They make the decisions. If they make the decision against it, so be it, then we go forward in another direction, but that's where you have to go, you have to take it to them because they are the ones in the long run that will wind up being sued. The County can't be sued for anything. We don't make any decisions. We are just presenting these to the Borough Council and the ARB and they make the decision, so you could sit and talk for another three hours and you're not convince anybody on either side.

The woman asked what the intentions of the Malhame building, the Wilson Oil building and the old dry cleaners? Are the County Commissioners against approaching the County government as more of a campus environment and does that space study take into account that the County does own several properties within proximity of the proposed Courthouse and it could not take on some of those things i.e. with Probation that you don't want to mix with your general population. Commissioner Caridi explained that the purchase of the Malhame building was done in anticipation of construction of the courthouse expansion. The courts would have to be relocated to do business someplace which is mandated. If there was not an adequate facility to put judges, jurors and holding cells where would they hold court. That building was renovated to temporarily house the courts, and when the courthouse expansion is finished, the courts can be relocated back to the new addition and the Malhame building can become County office space if its needed, or divest it as a capital asset. She then asked if that building and the PennDot building can't alleviate some of the square footage that the County is proposing. Commissioner Caridi responded that the guidelines for the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts states specific offices and responsibilities that should be co-located. Someone asked if those guidelines were available, to which Commissioner Caridi advised them to call the AOPC or the engineer, because they have built courthouses elsewhere in New York State as well as Pennsylvania. Commissioner Osterberg said it also comes down to a redundancy of services by having courtrooms in different buildings you have different offices that have to be mimicked in both buildings. There is a courtroom there already and all that is being done is adding another courtroom to it so that all of the court services can be in one structure. Commissioner Caridi explained that there is one entry point for the public, one for the inmates, everyone is segregated, the Sheriff has control over the environment, as opposed to two locations.

Charles Reynolds commented that in 2004/2005 the Commissioners put together a committee to discuss the courthouse expansion, which he believe Dick Schneider and an architect by the name of Peter Poland were members of. A presentation of suggestions as well as a list of survey questions were put together for space needs was offered. One of those presentations was with the Kenworthy building still there with the expansion behind it. Commissioner Caridi corrected him and said the expansion was behind this building, which would mean closing the alley and incurring the same costs that the County would if they closed the alley behind the Courthouse. Commissioner Caridi said there was a lot of communication going back and forth and a lot of history behind the bullet points. The Commissioners rejected that study because it was 46,000 square feet and was excessive. The County could not afford that so it was dismissed, and asked the engineer to reinterview people, look at the equipment space needs, number of personnel and throw away the wish list. We have to get real with what this county can afford and that's where we are at right now. That was Kimball & Associates that actually did that space needs and when they came in with the numbers, it was in the \$40 million range, which was ridiculous and unaffordable.

Someone asked if there would be a revised design softening some of the architecture available. The Commissioners said that there will be when it is completed. EYP and the architect are working on that currently. Commissioner Caridi said part of this construction was allocated \$1.5 million to meet the historic and architectural upgrade and preservation of the current courthouse that fits the guidelines of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission who went and toured the courthouse. The County is working with them to make sure the courthouse is restored in the same historic fashion. The County should be embarrassed by the condition of the courthouse. It needs a lot of help. The bond issue is the money available to do that.

Another question about a quote that said late last year the County went before the ARB with plans and Kevin Stroyan had given the thumbs up to initially..... Commissioner Osterberg said he didn't know if that was accurate, and that he does have all the meetings, and a question was asked at that meeting if there any people here that find anything here that is blatantly wrong, and there were no comments. He added that he should read the minutes to the meetings because he thinks they are very important to see the direction that the County was steered in in the very beginning that the President of the Preservation Trust at that time sat in the audience and said, "I am very impressed with what you're doing, I didn't expect this to happen". Commissioner Osterberg said when we get messages like that from the President of Preservation Trust at the ARB meeting, where do you think that steers us? That was last year. Now all of a sudden there is a complete reversal in the other direction that we are going to destroy the Borough, destroying the architecture, destroying the economic engine of the Borough. He asked does anybody really think that with all the people that were here this weekend for the music festival, that if that building is built between now and next year, those people aren't coming back? Do you really believe that? I don't. I think they are coming back because of what we offer here in Milford and this building can be something, as this building is, an icon for the community if we would all just sit and work together, because as we have been trying to explain to you, this space is needed, and we only have x amount of dollars. He said somebody made a comment, a local paper, that with the County, money is no object. That is easy for them to say because it is all your money. The Commissioners do have a fiduciary responsibility to spend this money prudently. Commissioner Caridi said it sounds like they are promoting themselves, but Pike County is in such good economic shape that the bond rating has been increased by Standard & Poors. How many other counties and states have insurmountable pension problems and financing problems. He said you don't hear of that in Pike County. They are very prudent with the expenditure of dollars, which reflects in your pocketbook.

ADJOURNMENT: THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE PIKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014, AT 9:00 A.M., AT THE PIKE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING.