

**Thursday, November 5, 2020**

The first regular meeting of November 2020 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; Chief Clerk Orben; and Solicitor Farley.

*Public Comments/Questions concerning today's agenda.*

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve the November 5, 2020 Agenda.

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

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve the October 21, 2020 Commissioners' Meeting Minutes.

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

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve the October 22, 27, 30 and November 4, 2020 Commissioners' Conference Minutes.

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

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve payment from **GENERAL FUND (County Bills)**, in the amount of **\$826,888.83**, subject to further review.

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

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve payment from **PIKE COUNTY EMPLOYEES HEALTH INSURANCE FUND**, in the amount of **\$625,991.42**.

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

**PERSONNEL:**

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to acknowledge receipt of a letter from Sheriff Kerry Welsh advising that he has hired **NATASHA GRIMILA** as a full time Deputy Sheriff for the Sheriff's Office, for a 40 hour work week, effective November 30, 2020, with benefits after 90 days. This is a replacement position.

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

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to acknowledge receipt of a letter from Recorder of Deeds Sharon Schroeder advising that she has hired **MARIE YORKE** as a Clerk for the Recorder of Deeds Office, for a 37.5 hour work week, effective November 2, 2020 with benefits after 90 days.

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

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to acknowledge receipt of a letter from Warden Craig Lowe advising that he has hired, with Prison Board approval, **JARED RITCHIE, LOUIS CHEVERE-ALICEA AND THOMAS ROBERTS** as full-time Correctional Officers for the Correctional Facility, for a 40 hour work week, effective October 29, 2020, with benefits after 90 days.

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

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

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

**OLD BUSINESS: None.**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to authorize the Chairman to execute Change Order #1 between Grimm Construction and the County of Pike, for an \$800 contract credit due to unused contingency item regarding the John Street Complex Roof Replacement project.

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

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to authorize the Chairman to execute the PCCD Subgrant Award Notification for the Pike Criminal Addiction Response Effort (PikeCARE) for \$89,064, on behalf of the Probation Office.

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

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to execute the Amendment to the Agreement for Professional Services between Diana T. Myers & Assoc. and the County of Pike, on behalf of the Area Agency on Aging, to increase consulting hours.

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

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to execute the Non-Binding Letter of Intent between the State Correctional Institution at Waymart, Wayne County and the County of Pike, on behalf of the Correctional Facility, as recommended by the Prison Board, for the emergency evacuation of inmates to SCI Waymart.  
**VOTE:** Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to execute the Planned Equipment Maintenance Agreements between Cummins Inc. and the County of Pike, on behalf of the Correctional Facility, as recommended by the Prison Board for the generators located in the kitchen and Correctional Facility building.  
**VOTE:** Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to authorize the Chairman to execute the Licensed Training Provider Agreement between the American Red Cross and the County of Pike, on behalf of the Correctional Facility, as recommended by the Prison Board.  
**VOTE:** Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to authorize the Chairman to execute Senior Rental Assistance Contracts #35, #39, #41 and #45 on behalf of the Human Services Office.  
**VOTE:** Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to authorize the Chairman to execute the Affordable Housing Fund Payment Voucher payable to Delaware Run for the Senior Housing Subsidy for November 2020 for \$2,089, on behalf of the Human Services Office.  
**VOTE:** Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to authorize the Chairman to execute the Environmental Review for the CDBG Tenant Rental Assistance Program Activity Project, on behalf of the Human Services Office.  
**VOTE:** Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to authorize the Chairman to execute the Agreement for Engineering Services between McGoey, Hauser & Edsall and the County of Pike, for services related to the Winona Falls Road over Sawkill Creek Bridge Rail Repairs.  
**VOTE:** Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

**MOTION:** by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Osterberg, to authorize the Chairman to execute the Agreement for Engineering Services between McGoey, Hauser & Edsall and the County of Pike, for services related to the replacement of Spring Brook Road Bridge over Rattlesnake Creek in Dingman Township.  
**VOTE:** Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

**MISCELLANEOUS:** None.

## **PRESS & PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS**

A member of the public addressed Chairman Osterberg saying he initially presented a question to be presented today. Yet with more thought, instead of presenting a question he would like to present a recommendation for a possible solution. Historically, the County as well as the country, going all the way back to 1787, we the people of the United States ...general welfare and ensured domestic tranquility. Jump forward to the 1970's and we evolved, or morphed, into a "me" generation and as first written down by Mr. Tom Wolf, who arrived back in the 1970's and Christopher Lasch who talked about the rise of narcissistic culture. Yet those comments about the "me" generation, the baby boomers, brings up the discussion of individualism versus collectivism which is addressed in society in its' groups in government. I've personally been observing the impact of the CDA Act (Community Decency Act) as well as the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment whether it be on-line social media, in the press and elsewhere, which reenforces the reality that we're living today in a very, very individualistic society, primarily the people my age-baby boomers and the "me" generation. The County has done great things as it relates to the task forces and you've gotten awards recently with respect to those task forces - the Tick Borne Diseases, Opioid Task Force, Elder Abuse and the Re-entry Coalition groups that relate to the penal system and the Correctional Facility. What I've noticed and have been commenting on for probably the last 5 plus years, back to 1977 when we first entered Pike County, we obviously don't have a hospital and we lost the urgent care in Milford for this general 3 municipalities. My recommendation is to create a Health Advisory Board that can meet quarterly or whenever the Commissioners decide, that takes information from the 4 task forces and congeals it and massages it and analyzes it for the Commissioners so that the Commissioners can better address the mental and physical health of your constituents. I looked at several health advisory board concepts or types and, ironically, this is not to kowtow to you Commissioner Osterberg, Penn State has a really good one for their student campus. It is called a "Health Advisory Board" and I massaged their goals to address environmental factors that reduce risk. That's something already being done by the Tick Borne Diseases Task Force, yet it could be expanded to other avenues. Putting it' efforts around health, wellness and safety. The Elder Abuse Task Force, the Re-entry Coalition - the next goal is to promote awareness about healthy lifestyles. It could be access or a link to the task force as well as Elder Abuse and to advise the Commissioners on coordinating care for Pike County residents. A lot of these boards meet monthly, Massachusetts, Washington State, a lot of them can be found outside of the Northeast. Yet, I did find this one at Penn State to be quite interesting to possibly engage. This time of year, post-election, there are a lot of sensitivities politically, yet my vision or my thought process is if the County can communicate to its' constituents that, yes we're aware that we don't have a health system strongly in place here in Pike County, a hospital, urgent care - we do have a very close monitoring by the 3 County Commissioners, the Solicitor, the Chief Clerk and an entire County staff on post for the physical health, e.g., the Tick Borne Task Force and other infectious diseases, Elder Care with Robin Skibber, and the Re-Entry Coalition with the Warden. If quarterly,

the chairs of those task forces meet and compile a director's or chairman report to the 3 of you plus Mr. Farley and Mr. Orben, I think by networking coordination you may be able to develop a more effective or awareness driven set of metrics to help you as Commissioners drive forward and be cognizant of that information, no hospital, but we are fully aware how you, as residents of Pike County, are mentally and physically.

My last comment, as a Thanksgiving gift and Christmas gift, I am ensuring the esteemed group in front of me that this is the last time you will ever hear from me again for several reasons. I wanted to do this as a parting gift.

Reporter Chris Jones asked about the election process – where it stands? Commissioner Osterberg answered that on Tuesday, everything went extremely smoothly, not just for us three, but for all of the people coming out of the Board of Elections, particularly Nadeen Manzoni. Everyone was well trained. We got here at 7AM, the process started slow and once they got the idea of how to do it there were no glitches and no complaints. There were barely any phone calls into the office – other years the phones would be ringing off the hook. This year, there were hardly any phone calls into the office. More issues had to do with traffic because there were so many people at the polls requesting that the State Police and Sheriff Kerry Welsh and his deputies could help direct traffic, which they did. I don't think there was any issue in the County about unrest. What went on in here – all of us were amazed by 8PM, every single one, which was about 13K mail in ballots, were all processed. By the time they were finished with that, the precincts started to show up here to do what is normally done here prior to these mail in ballots. We were out of here by 11PM. Now tomorrow, she (Elections Director, Nadeen Manzoni) will have to wait for ballots to come in – State law says that anything that's post-marked until Tuesday at 8PM can come in tomorrow until 4PM. She will then begin the process of canvassing the vote, going through those ballots that came in here through the mail – not being dropped off. I'm watching the news and I know everyone else is, what went on here in Pike County was extremely smooth. Every vote was counted, we looked at everything. The ones that were naked, ones that were unsigned, ones that were signed, maybe missing some information.

Report Chris Jones asked then you obviously dropped in on Tuesday night? Commissioner Osterberg answered we were here the entire time. The three of us were here at 7AM. I stayed until 11PM, Ron and Steve may have gone home by 9PM. Any calls were answered by Nadeen and her staff. We were just here when maybe there was a question about a naked ballot, and what we were going to do with it, when there was a question about an over-vote. Another part of our job is when a ballot comes in from overseas that are sent out as mail in ballots. Nadeen will be better to explain this to you. Those ballots come in on regular paper and cannot be scanned. We then have to take those ballads, and we're being watched-there are watchers in here, and we make up a new ballot with their markings on it so that they can get processed in. Both of those ballots are then attached together so there is a record that we followed the instructions of the voter. That's the role that we pretty much needed to do during the day.

Reporter Chris Jones asked what is the "make-up" of the watchers? Commissioners Osterberg said the candidates chose and they had a certificate showing they were representing those individuals. They stand in the back and watched exactly what we were doing.

Reporter Chris Jones asked about the "drop-slot" inside the building – he said he saw a lot of people coming in, what was the breakdown? A rough percentage between that and mail-in? Commissioner Osterberg said he did not know the breakdown and that he should ask Nadeen. Chris Jones asked if she is downstairs now? Commissioner Osterberg answered yes.

Commissioner Schmalzle said it is important to note that it was a historic election in Pike County like it was across the Country. The voter turnout was exceptional. To have an event like something like that without incident takes leadership. We hope that we provided leadership, but the leadership is really from the Elections Office and Nadeen. More importantly, is to thank the volunteers and the people that worked that day. Above that, all the people that came out to vote that day and exercise their right and they did it kindly, civilly and organized and I think the whole group of voters from both sides should be commended for playing their role and doing their job that day and getting out and voting. Numbers will come out and it will be the largest turnout in Pike County in history.

Commissioner Guccini echoed that and when Nadeen told me she expected to have these votes counted by 8 o'clock I didn't believe her. Not because of her or her staff, just the sheer number. But she was right – they were processed quickly, carefully and with the observers. I can't say enough good things about her and her staff. The County employees who volunteered to work in 3 shifts to process them, open them and scan them, it pretty much went like clockwork. Commissioner Osterberg added that some of them stayed from 7AM to 11PM. Nadeen and her staff obviously, but the other people that, I'll call it volunteered, but we allowed employees of the County instead of doing their daily job to come here and help out the Board of Elections because we needed all hands on deck. They did a fine job.

A member of the public asked if anyone saw Channel 4 on Sunday morning? Melissa Russo corresponded for WNBC and did a Port Jervis-Pike County quasi-comparative analysis. From my perception, Pike County was painted very negatively. She interviewed some local officials, as well as local residents from both parties. Of course, I already did a mail in ballot, but came up on Tuesday. From what I observed on Tuesday at the polling stations plus walking around town, I have to concur with Commissioner Schmalzle on the civility from members of both parties. From a resident, taxpayer standpoint, Pike County shined versus what was marketed by WNBC on Sunday.

Reporter Chris Jones asked about "#4 under New Business" the deal with Waymart, give us a little background on this contingency thing? Commissioner Osterberg said that is a contingency plan that is always in place that the Correctional Facility has to have in place. An agreement with another facility just under chance that something would happen at our facility in case we had to evacuate.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE PIKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2020, AT 9:00 A.M. IN THE PIKE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING.**