

Wednesday, July 18, 2018

The second regular meeting of July 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, Schmalzle and Guccini; Chief Clerk Orben; Solicitor Farley.

Public Comments/Questions concerning today's agenda.

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

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

A RETIREMENT 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.

MOTION: by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve the July 18, 2018 Agenda.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve the July 3, 2018 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 July 3 and 12, 2018 Commissioners' Conference Minutes.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Guccini voted 'aye'. Commissioner Schmalzle abstained from the July 12, 2018 minutes due to his absence. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve payment from **GENERAL FUND (County Bills)**, in the amount of **\$263,596.06**, 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 **PC EMPLOYEES' HEALTH INSURANCE FUND**, in the amount of **\$64,471.32**.

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

PERSONNEL:

MOTION: by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to acknowledge a letter from Warden Craig Lowe advising that he has hired, with Prison Board approval, the following individuals as full time Correctional Officers at the Correctional Facility, for a 40 hour work week effective July 23, 2018, with benefits after 90 days:

DUSTIN RAMONDINO, DAVIDA RUSSELL and GABRIEL SALAS.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to promote **BENJAMIN MITCHELL** from Caseworker 1 to Caseworker 2 for Children & Youth Services retroactive to July 9, 2018.

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 appoint Mary Little to the Carbon/Monroe/Pike Drug & Alcohol Commission for a three year term from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2021.

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 Change Order #1 between Grimm Construction Inc. and the County of Pike, for an additional \$22,209 for the added scope of work for the Correctional Facility Generator and Cooler Building.

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 Grant Award Notification for the Special Victim Advocate Program for \$164,576, on behalf of the District Attorney's Office.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to execute the Booking Center Agreement between BTM Software Solutions and the County of Pike, on behalf of the District Attorney's Office, for services related to the Central Booking Center.

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 Accurint for Government Subscription Agreement between Lexis Nexis and the County of Pike, 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 PA Board of Probation & Parole Grant-In-Aid Application and Agreement for 2018-19, 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 authorize the Chairman to execute the Medical Assistance Transportation Program Participation Grant Agreement and Assurance of Compliance, on behalf of the Transportation Office.

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 Pike County Rental Assistance Contract #36, on behalf of the Human Development Office.

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

MISCELLANEOUS:

Nicole Chinnici of the Tick Task Force reviewed the status of the Milford Borough Study and current County Study to date pertaining to the surveillance of ticks that is being done by East Stroudsburg University on behalf of the County. The ticks in the pilot study in Milford Borough were tested for 6 different tick borne diseases. Overall infection rate was 51% of the ticks were carrying a tick borne disease. 37% consisted of Lyme disease and the remaining consisted of other tick borne diseases. 11% of the ticks were co-infected which means that typically these individuals have a tick bite are co-infected and transmitted to the individual, Their disease manifests different, so their symptoms are worse and they tend to stay sicker longer. Some of the diseases can not be treated with antibiotics. They have to be treated with different courses of different drugs because they are not bacterial infections. They also found that out of the three areas that they collected from, the infection rate was highest in the residential area. This means that individuals in their back yards mowing or gardening are at higher risk for disease than those hiking in a forested area. They are currently working to extend the study across the County collecting 1000 ticks through the summer and into the fall.

Commissioner Osterberg stated that this information is not to alarm people, but to educate people. This type of information will also be useful to the doctors in the region. The State was supposed to do this throughout the state. This is funded through Act 13 Marcellus Shale monies. Delaware Valley School District Foundation (funded by the teachers) also donated \$5,000 and the Bar Association donated \$2,500 toward these studies. If anyone does get bit by a tick they can send it to ESU for testing. Ms. Chinnici answered questions from the press and public.

Belle Reve Senior Living Peer Graduates – Congratulations to John Chapman, Ken Dammers, Lucille Fenner, Joan Stohr, Warren Thumm and Jane Woods. Commissioner Osterberg read that Peer is a program available to all residents of nursing homes, personal care and assisted living facilities. Peer educates residents on residents' rights, provides self-advocacy training and empowers residents to act for themselves. It is important to have these types of program for our seniors considering that the County just had an event helping seniors understand that they can be victims of crime and/or abuse. Joan Edel, Aging Care Manager Supervisor at the Area Agency on Aging, stated that the ombudsman would go into the facility and they would advocate for the residents and speak with the residents. The Peer Program was created 8 to 10 years ago where the ombudsman would train individuals in the community who were capable or interested in advocating for their peers. There will be a graduation ceremony today at 1:00 p.m. at Belle Reve.

Penn State Extension –July 16-31, 2018 Events. Commissioner Osterberg stressed that we should be fully aware of the spotted lanternfly are as close as Monroe County. They are moving up the Delaware River and those counties have been put in quarantine situation for the spotted lanternfly. It is devastating as to what it can do to the crops in this state, which is an \$18 billion dollar industry when it comes to grapes and fruits and hardwoods and all other types of agricultural products. He urged the press to continue to report on this so that if people see this they report it immediately so that Penn State Extension and the Department of Agriculture are aware of where they are. They are hoppers, and do not fly. They were originally located in Berks County and have made their way through every county in the past five years below and including Monroe.

PRESS/PUBLIC COMMENT

Christina Byrne of Safe Haven spoke about the misunderstanding that Safe Haven is no longer operating in Pike County. She assured everyone that they are continuing their 27 year tradition of serving Pike County victims, survivors, their families and all of the community outreach education and prevention awareness. Their hope is to end the cycle of violence and have children grow up in a violent free community. She announced that Safe Haven recently received a grant from the PA Commission on Crime & Delinquency to specifically do outreach to the more rural areas of the County. They are meeting with all of the Township Supervisors so that it is determined how Safe Haven can best meet their residents' needs and specifically talking about mobile outreach services for people who are unable to come into Milford to access services at their main office location.

Chris Jones of the Dispatch stated that there were four township meetings this week and every meeting led off with supervisors talking about the meeting that the County had on July 10th regarding ALS. He asked about the timeline and process to get legislatures on board. Commissioner Osterberg explained that on July 26th there will be a group meeting of all township officials. One of the short term solutions is for the townships work on how to fund BLS, which is involved in all of the stations throughout the County. Milford Borough and Westfall are BLS units. The townships should think about how they can fund together to make this into a paid with volunteer solutions on the side. As a solution from the townships, it was recommended at the end of that meeting that the COG (Council of Governments) get together and discuss this. The solution from the County side of it was that if each of them put in so much into a pool of money, they could then start paying for some full time staff in the ambulance services that are located at the 10 stations throughout the County. That may give them 12 hours of BLS services that are paid for and maybe the rest of the time is handled by volunteers. The longer term solution is if the legislatures and Harrisburg allowed townships to increase their millage from a half a mill for ambulance services (as of now they are limited to a half a mill unless they go to referendum). Lackawaxen did that and put in 2.5 mills, but Lackawaxen is a pretty large community with 9,000 parcels. When you compare Lackawaxen to Milford Borough's 550, even if Milford Borough put in 2.5 mills, it still would not be enough to have a really paid staff. One mill in the borough is \$20,000. If they are allowed to increase the mills, then they can continue to build on the 10 units that they have in sections of the County. Commissioner Schmalzle noted that even though the townships have the ability to charge the ½ mill, most are not even doing that. He believes that the first order would be to try to get all the townships to at least take that first step. There was a concerted effort to get the 2.5 mill, but it passed overwhelmingly and quite easily. That has somewhat fixed the problem in Lackawaxen which is a good example of how it can work. He also noted that from a County level, we do not have the ability to do that as a full County because there is not legislation in place. It has to be done at the township and borough level first although that may change in the future. It could be more regional which, in his opinion, would be a better option, but that would not happen quickly. The Commissioners are sharing the report with the group Senate Resolution 6 which is a state-wide group of individuals that are looking at the problem throughout the entire Commonwealth. Commissioner Osterberg continued that the last part of it would be if it would become regional and the County was able to tax for it. Then they have the economy of scales, and it was determined that if they could generate \$5 million, they could fund all of the 10 ambulance units. All of the EMS taxes that are being collected locally would disappear and it would be county-wide. That would be more of a larger project, but first the legislatures have to approve that the Counties have the ability to do that, not mandate, but give them the option to work with the townships to raise funds. The Commissioners are trying to generate a phone conference with the Commissioners that sit on that group so they can see not so much what the issues are in Pike County but to explain how we gathered the information to develop this report. The thing that will speak the loudest in Harrisburg is for multiple Counties to report their issues. The legislators are open and aware of the situation.

Chris Jones asked if there will be any fanfare, ribbon cutting when the Courthouse opens. Commissioner Osterberg said it has not been decided yet, but may be after all departments are moved into the new Courthouse. The public may be able to tour the public areas at that time, but the offices will be used and occupied. The Sheriff will be the first to move to make sure the building is secure.

Derik Dellinger, volunteer and President of the Pike County Chamber of Commerce, introduced Marlyn Kissner, Executive of the Carbon County Chamber of Commerce and also the Executive Vice President of the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce. The Pike Chamber is a very small Chamber with one staff member and limited resources. They had the opportunity recently to partner with the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber. They are one of the five or six biggest Chambers of Commerce in the Country. This is a great opportunity for businesses in Pike County who are looking to expand further into Monroe, Carbon and Lehigh Valley as well. Ms. Kissner is coordinating the Northern Region with Carbon/Monroe/Pike. She has had the opportunity to meet some of the community leaders in the County. Ms. Kissner stated that she is here as a resource and partner to help and offer services. They want to see businesses thrive and assist the local Chamber, which is what they did in Carbon County.

ADJOURNMENT: THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE PIKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 1, 2018, AT 9:00 A.M., AT THE PIKE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING.