

Wednesday, September 6, 2017

The first regular meeting of September 2017 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. An opening prayer was offered by Pastor Tim Dunn of the Milford Bible Church.

PRESENT: Commissioners Osterberg, Caridi and Guccini; Chief Clerk Orben; Solicitor Farley.

Public Comments/Questions concerning today's agenda.

Presentation of \$50,000 to Habitat for Humanity from Act 137 Funds which are collected by the Recorder of Deeds. Mike Donlon accepted the check on behalf of the Habitat for Humanity. They are currently building home #26 and currently in the process of getting permits to start #27. Mr. Donlon stated that this has been their most successful year. They built two homes this year, turning one over a couple of weeks ago and insulating and sheet rocking the second house, and currently permitting the third house. He thanked the Commissioners for their continued support. They also built 4 ramps this year at a minimal cost for those who can afford it.

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to approve the September 6, 2017 Commissioners' Meeting Agenda with the amendment to approve \$50,000 check for Habitat for Humanity.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to approve payment from **AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUND (Habitat for Humanity)**, in the amount of \$50,000.00.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to approve the August 16, 2017 Commissioners' Meeting Minutes.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Caridi, to approve the August 16, 21, 24, 28 and September 1 and 5, 2017 Commissioners' Conference Minutes.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to approve payment from **GENERAL FUND (County Bills)**, in the amount of \$105,332.98, 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 exonerations as presented by Cynthia Gehris, Tax Claim Bureau Director, for properties sold at the 2017 Judicial sale

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

PERSONNEL:

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to acknowledge receipt of a letter from Sheriff Philip Bueki advising that he has hired **CLAUDIO TAGLIANI** as a full time Deputy Sheriff, for a 40 hour work week, effective September 5, 2017, 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 **DAWN ACEVEDO** as a full time Aging Care Manager I for the Area Agency on Aging, for a 40 hour work week, effective September 11, 2017, 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 acknowledge receipt of a letter from Denise Fitzpatrick, Prothonotary, advising that she has hired **ARIELLE RILEY** as a part time OVR Clerk for the Prothonotary's Office, available through the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Program for less than 1000 hours a year, effective September 5, 2017, with no benefits. This is a newly created position.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to hire **THOMAS DE ANGELO** as a part time OVR Clerk for the Commissioners' Office, available through the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Program, for less than 1000 hours a year, effective September 11, 2017, with no benefits. This is a newly created position.

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

Commissioner Osterberg explained that the above referenced hires fall under the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. The Commissioners felt that it was important to create positions for individuals that have disabilities. This is the initial step to start as part time in the Prothonotary's Office and the Commissioners' Office. There may be other positions created in Transportation, Board of Elections, etc. or other offices that need staffing. It is important to reach out to the community and offer employment opportunities to individuals with disabilities. The Commissioners met with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation last year and are very excited about this program and look forward to working with these individuals.

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:

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to table bids received for the CDBG Matamoras Borough Firehouse Re-siding Project until October 4, 2017.

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

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to advertise for bids for the 2017-18 winter snowplowing and ice control for the following roads as one bid: Brooks Road, Old Owego Turnpike from Raymondskill Rd. to Route 6, Stone Quarry Road by Eureka and Tower Road.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to appoint Justin Genzlinger to the Pike County Hotel Tax Board to fill an unexpired term ending 12/31/17.

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 JE04 between Joyce Electrical and the County of Pike, for a 1KVA 208V Primary to 240V Secondary Transformer to feed the Sewage Pump Station, relating to the Courthouse addition project, for an additional \$703.98.

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 Juvenile Court Judges' Commission Financial Statement of Funds Expended under Grant-in-Aid for Juvenile Probation Services for July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017, the Letter of Compensation and the Juvenile Probation Services Grant Agreement, on behalf of the Juvenile Probation Office.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to execute the 2018 PCCD Grant Application for the Pike County Children 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 authorize the Chairman to execute the Lease Agreement between North Jersey Health Care Properties and the County of Pike, on behalf of the District Attorney related to the Pike County Children Advocacy Center, subject to Solicitor's review.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Guccini and seconded by Commissioner Caridi, to execute the Lease Agreement between the Lackawaxen Township Volunteer Fire Department 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 Agreements for Professional Services between the following individuals and the County of Pike, on behalf of the Area Agency on Aging: Dorothy Dexter, Lori Zecchino, Annette Merola, Carolyn Jakobsen and Ray Evans.

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 Rental Assistance Contract #33, on behalf of the Human Development Office.

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

MOTION: by Commissioner Caridi and seconded by Commissioner Guccini, to execute the Act 148 FY 16/17 Fourth Quarter Certification Statement on behalf of Children & Youth Services.

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

MISCELLANEOUS:

Erin Stroyan of CMP Mental Health/Developmental Services introduced Northeastern Suicide Prevention Initiative's (which encompasses mainly Lackawanna, Wayne and Pike Counties) President Kathy Wallace. Ms. Wallace spoke on the 'SHARE THE JOURNEY' walk which will be held on September 23, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. This Suicide Prevention Awareness and Remembrance Walk will held at the Wallenpaupack High School. There will be no fee to participate in the walk, but donations are certainly appreciated. They try to provide a lot of resources, opportunities for people who have lost someone to suicide to come and remember their loved one that was lost; and also to prevent suicide. They try to focus on the way they lived their lives and not the way they died. They educate the public about myths associated with suicide. This is the main fundraiser for Wayne and Pike, which goes through a committee who decides what to do with the funds raised. Last year they funded Kevin Hines, a national advocate, and young man who jumped off the San Francisco Bay Bridge to speak. They embrace people with lived experience, and not someone who thinks about what suicide is or isn't. They learn from people who have actually lived attempts and lived to talk about it. All donations will remain in Wayne and Pike Counties. Rural counties are more at risk as suicide hits rural counties more than cities. They are all volunteers, no one is paid, so all money goes to suicide prevention and supporting those who have lost someone to suicide. Jill Gamboni representing Pike County Alliance for Prevention Program donated \$100 to the walk. Commissioner Caridi stated that a veteran committed suicide last week, and Ms. Wallace explained that last year a suicide prevention specialist from the VA speak at the walk, and they will be available again this year.

Jonah Talbott of CMP Drug & Alcohol Commission, spoke about the 'RECOVERY WALK' which will be held on September 16 in Milford Memorial Park. The walk is meant to celebrate those people who are living in long term recovery, and one of the ideas behind this is that all of knows somebody who is either in recovery or who knows somebody who is in

recovery and has been in recovery for a long time. The D&A Commission recognizes that addiction is a disease, and that this disease can be managed like any other kind of disease. They are trying to remove the stigma that goes along with it, that somebody who is an addict is somehow a failure, or morally wrong or bankrupt. The walk is a celebration of those who are in long term recovery. The walk this year is going to be held at Memorial Park, on Saturday, September 16 at 10:00 a.m. There will be a couple of speakers who will talk about their recovery and how that has affected their lives and looking at the positive aspects of their recovery. There will be many vendors and provider agencies who can give the public information as to the services available in this area. Catholic Social Services will be represented, who is the provider agency for counseling services, along with Pyramid Health Care, and various other groups that will be available for information. They just really want to emphasize that addiction is a disease that can be managed and people live successfully with that disease. Ms. Wallace thanked Mr. Talbott for their efforts especially since addiction and suicide are relative to each other.

Commissioner Osterberg announced the Pike County Opiate Task Force Kick Off Meeting, organized by the CMP Drug & Alcohol Commission, will be held on September 27 at 10:00 a.m. at the Training Center. It is important that a County wide task force is formed to bring everyone together, such as Parents for Prevention, Hope4Pike, etc. to discuss the issue in Pike County and gather information. The state is asking the County to do this through grants and through Jamie Drake of CMP D&A, so that we can reach out to the state and tell them what the issues really are in Pike County. We all know the issues but the state likes numbers, what it is truly affecting and how many people and families, whether it is in Children & Youth or Probation, or it's just out in the general population. It does not necessarily have to be people that are incarcerated. There are many families out there who are suffering through all of this who are not in the criminal justice system, but they need our help just as much, and we need them to know that we are here to give them the assistance that they need. The meeting is open to everyone. Invitations were extended to many different groups, the wardens, the probation officers, the schools, doctors, etc. throughout the County so that they can come and be a part of this. There is a role to be played by everyone. Hope4Pike and Parents for Prevention have a role, so Commissioner Osterberg asked to press to publicize the event because it is important to start with this task force. This crosses everything, from mental health, and it is affecting every one of our lives whether we know it or not. Just stop for a few minutes and think about your neighbors and you'll know someone, more than just know them, you're probably pretty close to them whose family is suffering through this addiction issue. This is just another tool the County is looking to put in place so that we can address this as a community because that is what it is going to take for us to fix this.

Heather Day, Vice President of Hope4Pike, along with Sue Ficken, gave a brief history of the organization. Hope4Pike was started just over a year ago because there is this nationwide epidemic and they need to be very specific in the areas they work in. They hope to support those who are impacted by addiction, whether it is someone suffering from it themselves, family members, etc. They want to provide awareness, education and support to the local community. They have also started support groups facilitated by a D&A Counselor. Anyone is able to attend these meetings. Personally to Heather Day, it is important to have this program as she has people that she is close to suffering with addiction. She is astonished everyday about someone she would hear that she would have no idea. There is a huge stigma associated with addiction, always assuming that it is a certain type of person that has these issues, but it affects anyone of any walk of life. It is good to see that there are so many other organizations here trying to work on the same issue. Support for Pike meets the second Wednesday of every month, typically in the Jenn Murphy Studio. Hope4Pike meets the first and third Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. in the Upper Mill. That is more of a business type meeting. Anyone is welcome to attend to discuss how they can help or support the community and what is it that they can do. Any volunteers are always welcome. They have worked with John's of Arthur Avenue doing pizza vouchers to raise money, and also with CMP D&A, They will also be involved in the Recovery Walk. Also sometime in November they are working with the local school district to have Tony Hoffman, a famous BMX driver who has suffered with addiction, to tell his story to the high school. It will be required for Delaware Valley high school students to attend. They will also have the speaker at an event open to the public. They worked with the school district to raise money toward that. They are still in the process of getting their 501-C3 as well. They have a facebook page and their website is www.hope4pike@gmail.com.

Commissioner Guccini followed up on the Opiate Task Force by stating that after the organizational meeting, the idea is that the University of Pittsburgh will actually send a coordinator at no cost to help organize the group and come up with specific goals and objectives so they are not just having meetings talking and not accomplishing anything. There is a zeroed in goal that everyone is trying to reach.

Commissioner Osterberg announced that "September is Hunger Awareness Month" and the United Way of Pike County are collecting food donations for the local food pantries, especially with winter coming and it is the most needed with the holidays. Having too much food is never a problem. The United Way is partnering on September 30th for the first time, with the Cub Scouts and the Boy Scouts to have a food drive in front of Key Foods. They hope to expand that to other supermarkets in the future. United Way is made up of volunteers in the community so it takes time and effort to organize such events. There are many people in the community that need assistance and have much less than we have. We need to recognize that. The County Commissioners fully recognize that with all of the things you see on the agenda. Commissioner Osterberg asked the press to spread the word and if you need more information please contact the United Way in Milford.

Penn State Extension –September 7-21, 2017 Events. Commissioner Osterberg said last month they focused on the eclipse. It was extremely well attended with 200 people. It gave good exposure to 4H and the Penn State Extension, which is the best kept secret in Pike County and we should not allow that to occur because they do a lot of good things. Again, reaching out to families and children to enjoy our community.

PRESS & PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Wayne Witkowski asked what the dollar amount for the CAC Grant application. Commissioner Osterberg replied that it is for \$40,000. He also asked for an explanation of the Lackawaxen Lease Agreement, which is a renewal of the current lease agreement for a senior center.

Someone asked about the exonerations which were in the amount of \$20,000 for 11 properties.

Another question was asked about the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and how it works and how is someone eligible. Commissioner Osterberg explained that the employees are vetted to the County so that we receive the right employee to be able to handle task that we have. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation is shown what the jobs are, which in this case is office staff to do scanning, and they bring the person who they feel is capable of doing those jobs. We will train the person to do the position, and the vision is that these could become permanent jobs. We will start out slowly with part time employment. It was asked if anyone else makes \$10 per hour, to which Commissioner Osterberg responded that is the starting wage in the County. There is no difference for anyone else hired in the County. Another question was if there was a certain eligibility to enter the program. Commissioner Osterberg said we are using the OVR as a kind of employment office. As jobs are developed, we will identify them as coming out of OVR. There are other counties that do this. There have been jobs in the County that have worked through the high school. There is a person right now working through the high school. These are more for the individuals that have graduated from high school and now they need employment in the community. We think this is important and we will see how it works. We have these positions and we have these individuals in our community and we need to realize that they need to find employment.

Wayne Witkowski supports this program because he knows of high school graduates out there and they have been trying to get jobs and they have disabilities. They have gone to the standard supermarkets and they don't get hired. They are discouraged and frustrated about it and looking for resources and this is certainly a welcomed help for them. Commissioner Osterberg said that this is another issue in our community that we need to address. There are a lot of individuals who are suffering from handicaps that once they graduate from high school they are lost. So if we can in a small way get some of them to be not lost and find a position someplace in our community, they are more than willing to work. We just need to give them the opportunity and these are the opportunities that we found so far. There may be others, but we need to take small steps as we move forward. Commissioner Caridi commented that the important point is that these jobs are not make work welfare type jobs, there is an actual need to do this work, whatever the job description is. That was transmitted to OVR and OVR looked at it, matched the skill sets, and have people that are capable of performing those jobs. It's not like we are giving a job away to someone, someone is earning that job. Someone from the audience who works with special needs individuals in school district applauded this effort. This has been a school district problem and parent problem in the past and the fact that the Commissioners embraced this, she applauded them and said it is very much needed. Commissioner Guccini indicated that some were done through the school in Transportation and Election Offices and they received glowing reports from the Department Heads on the quality of work. Someone asked if the County gets funding for this. Commissioner Osterberg said there are some training dollars in the beginning. There are two different options with this program. They can send a trainer and that person would train the person to do the job. The Commissioners felt it was more important that current staff would train, because in that case the County would take their employee to train the trainer to train the person. The employees that are going to be supervising these individuals understand fully what they need to do. Yes, OVR helps with the initial dollars to train them, but the Commissioners felt there would be a better relationship between us and the new employee if we did the training. Eventually the County will pay them, but initially there is OVR funding for us doing the training. If OVR did the training then there would be no funds. Funding will come through the treasury as with any other employee.

Wayne Witkowski mentioned, with regard to the food drive, that some parents are frustrated and angered because the qualification standards for lunch and breakfast assistance have toughened over the past couple of years. The standards, as explained to him, is that you need to be in dire poverty now to get assistance. He said that perhaps the food pantries can help to that end. Some schools charge \$4.00 per day, which does not seem like a lot, but it is \$80 per month per child. Some of these people are on low wages they are making too much to qualify.

ADJOURNMENT: THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE PIKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2017, AT 9:00 A.M., AT THE PIKE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING.