

LAWRENCE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
PUBLIC MEETING
MINUTES OF Tuesday , February 23, 2016

The Lawrence County Commissioners' Meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag followed by a Moment of Silence.

The Lawrence County Commissioners' Meeting of Tuesday February 23, 2016 was called to order by Commissioner Dan Vogler, at 10:00 am in the Commissioners' Meeting Room. Office Manager Carol MacDonald called the Roll. Those in attendance were, Commissioners, **Dan Vogler, Steve Craig,; Clarence Nelson, Joe Venasco, Artishia Foster, Michael Occibone, several employees, and Debbie Morris, New Castle News and Eric Poole, Ellwood City Ledger.** It was stated for the record that the meeting is being taped. Those wishing to speak shall be given five minutes. If they need more time, they are to see the Chief Clerk at another time and he will arrange for them to meet with the Commissioners. Those speaking are to state for the record their names, addresses and the nature of their business.

Mr. Del Signore and Mr. Gagliano were attending a meeting out of the office.

ROW OFFICERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS

None

GENERAL PUBLIC

Mr. Nelson asked for an update on the Casino

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. The minutes of Tuesday, February 16, 2016

Moved by **Mr. Craig** seconded by Mr. Vogler to accept and file the minutes. Motion carried 2-0.

WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE

1. Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, dated February 11, 2016, giving Act 14 notification for a Water Obstruction and Encroachment Permit, for work to be done on SR 0956 Section L08 (Neshannock Falls Road) Bridge in Scott Township.
2. Frank B. Taylor Engineering, dated February 15, 2016, giving Act 14 notification for a BWM-GP-11 Permit for work to be done in Perry Township.
3. R Thre3 Design LLC, dated February 18, 2016, giving notification of the amending of the Municipalities Planning Code for Shenango Township.
4. Clearwater Construction, dated February 17, 2016, giving notification of being awarded the contract for the bridge replacement on S.R. 19 Section L05 over an unnamed tributary of the Slippery Rock Creek in Scott Township between the intersections of Eastbrook-Harlansburg Rd and S.R. 19 and S.R. 108.

Moved by Mr. Craig seconded by Mr. Vogler to accept and file the minutes. Motion carried 2-0.

Proclamations and Certificates

None

Staff Report

None

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Mr. Craig had none.

Mr. Vogler gave an update on the Casino

Resolutions to be taken off the table: None

RESOLUTION R-2016-050

Whereas, County taxes on parcels ID# 13001700 and ID# 13014600, located at 220 Fountain Avenue in the Borough of Ellwood City were filed into the Lawrence County Tax Claim Bureau for collection; and

Whereas, First Baptist Church demolished a building located on their property; and

Whereas, First Baptist Church, Ellwood City is requesting that the County taxes by exonerated.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONER, that the County taxes on parcels ID# 13001700 and ID# 13014600 located at 220 Fountain Avenue, Ellwood City, PA be exonerated in the amount of \$1,969.69.

Moved by **Mr. Craig** seconded by Mr. Vogler to approve said resolution. Motion carried 2-0.

RESOLUTION R-2016-051

Whereas, the County desires to enter into an agreement for professional legal services and representation to indigent defendants who are in need of court-appointed counsel for criminal cases; and

Whereas, these cases shall be assigned by and at the sole discretion of the Court of Common Pleas of Lawrence County and shall include matters excluding murder cases assigned by the Court; and

Whereas, a vacancy has occurred due to the resignation of Attorney Aaron Cangey, and as such, vacancy has been filled by court-appointment of Attorney Michael Bonner, Esquire; and

Whereas, such services to the County shall be authorized and executed.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, that:

1. Authorization is hereby given to execute an agreement with an unlimited number of criminal cases, excluding murder cases, as assigned by the Court to the following attorney for professional legal services in criminal cases:

Michael Bonner, Esquire

2. The agreement shall contain the following provisions;
 - a. The compensation for such services shall be \$22,000.00 for the contract period to be paid in eleven (11) equal monthly payments of \$2,000.00 per month. All payments will be made through electronic transfer.
 - b. This agreement shall be in effect for the period retroactive February 8, 2016 through December 31, 2016 unless terminated sooner by either party.
 - c. Murder cases shall not be covered by this agreement.

Moved by Mr. Craig seconded by Mr. Vogler to approve said resolution. Motion carried 2-0.

Moved by Mr. Craig seconded by Mr. Vogler to amend the agenda. Motion carried 2-0.

RESOLUTION R-2016-052

WHEREAS, counties are at the forefront for delivery of crucial human services that protect the most vulnerable individuals, such as child welfare and protective, mental health, intellectual disabilities, substance abuse treatment, homeless assistance, meal programs, lottery funded transportation, and others; and

WHEREAS, the capacity to meet critical service needs has been compromised by a steady decrease in state funding over the past decade, especially the drastic ten percent aggregate cut to the seven human services line items in FY 2012-2013; and

WHEREAS, the Human Services Block Grant has provided much-needed flexibility for the 30 counties eligible to participate, but remains closed to the remaining 37 remaining counties; and

WHEREAS, new mandates and additional program requirements continue to be placed on counties in the face of decreasing state funds; and

WHEREAS, while the rebalancing initiative for child welfare services is portrayed as only an accounting change, the initiative shifts a full quarter of funds for mandated child protective services into the following budget year with no more than a promise of being made whole; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the six-month budget impasse in FY 2015-2016, counties and the providers with whom they contract were forced to make difficult decisions about remaining open and meeting clients' needs while state payments were withheld; and

WHEREAS, many counties tapped reserves, borrowed funds, reduced or suspended payments to vendors or subcontractors, limited staff travel, laid off or reduced hours of employees, among other strategies, to maintain their focus on service delivery and assure that clients felt no harm; and

WHEREAS, in order to continue providing services during the budget impasse, Lawrence County was forced to suspend payments to vendors and contractors, limit staff travel and utilize operating reserve funds;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF LAWRENCE COUNTY that:

1. Lawrence County remains committed to the important role we play in delivery of services to our communities; and
2. Lawrence County stands ready to work in partnership with the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania in support of counties' top priority for 2016, the commonwealth budget and human services funding; and
3. Lawrence County supports restoration of funding of the ten percent reductions to the seven key human services line items that occurred in FY 2012-2013, as without restoration to prior funding levels, all counties find it difficult to serve the state's most needy citizens; and
4. Lawrence County opposes "rebalancing" initiatives for child welfare services that will force counties to reduce funding by a quarter, reduce payments to providers, shorten contract periods, or use county property tax funds to cover the state's obligation until a future budget makes a true allocation; and

5. Lawrence County asks that state leaders continue to work with them to find ways to administer human services programs in a way that ensures both quality and efficiency, including expansion of the Human Services Block Grant to any willing and able county; and
6. Lawrence County will work in concert with the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania and state leaders to develop comprehensive solutions for any future budget impasse or delay to ensure that counties are never again put in a situation where they are forced to cover the state's funding obligations; and
7. that a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Lawrence County legislative delegation, to Governor Wolf, and to the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania.

Moved by **Mr. Craig** seconded by Mr. Vogler to approve said resolution. Motion carried 2-0.

Ordinances

- A. On the Table: None
- B. Remove from Table: None
- C. For final action: None

Fiscal Reports

- A. Proposals: None
- B. Receipt of bids/proposals: None
- C. Fiscal report: None
- D. Report on Quotes: None
- E. Warrant Register: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. The next Commissioners' Public Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 1, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Meeting Room.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by **Mr. Craig** seconded by Mr. Vogler to adjourn the Lawrence County Commissioners meeting dated Tuesday, February 23, 2016 at 10:55 a.m. Motion carried 2-0.