

Commissioners:

R. JACK MCKERNAN  
*Chairman*

TONY R. MUSSARE  
*Vice Chairman*

RICHARD MIRABITO  
*Secretary*



MATTHEW A. McDERMOTT  
*Director of Administration  
and Chief Clerk*

J. DAVID SMITH  
*Solicitor*

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**Minutes of the Meeting of  
September 3, 2019  
Board Room, Executive Plaza  
Pine Street, Williamsport**

Commissioner McKernan - Present  
Commissioner Mussare - Present  
Commissioner Mirabito - Present

Solicitor Smith - Present

**1.0 OPERATIONS**

1.1 CONVENE COMMISSIONERS MEETING. The meeting was convened at 10:00 a.m.

**2.0 ACTION ITEMS**

2.1 APPROVE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE CASH REQUIREMENT REPORT: A motion by Mr. Mussare and seconded by Mr. Mirabito and passed (3-0), approved through September 11, 2019, for payment on September 4, 2019 upon review and approval by Commissioners.

Mr. Mirabito made a motion to have a land survey done to determine what land would be appropriate to sell from the area surrounding the golf course. The motion died from a lack of a second stating more information was needed to begin the process and to make a plan going forward.

**6.0 COMMISSIONER COMMENT.** The floor was opened to commissioner comment and none were received:

Mr. Mussare – explained that according to the Lycoming County Comprehensive plan the area around the golf course is considered the new development area and would be a good place to sell some of the acres to developers. It would be beneficial to identify a good scenic area to sell. It is believed that the land could fit in , may be, 300 new homes, be a good boost and help the golf course. The money generated from the sale of the land could be helpful to the Montgomery area and pay down the debt, may be even eliminate the debt. We need to act, I would really appreciate the Commissioners looking at this and getting something

done. We need to act soon to notify the public, membership dues will be due soon.

Mr. McKernan - I certainly don't have any problem with that. We are certainly are not the experts on knowing which area is a good area to develop. We would need to pull people in with different ideas to have something to work with. Perhaps Billy Casper Golf can provide some guidance to go about this. We have a monthly meeting coming up with Billy Casper and we can go over that.

Mr. Mirabito – One step further, if we want to sell the land. We should just sell the land to developers and let them decide how they will develop the land.

Mr. McKernan – Billy Casper Golf has told us that no matter if we scale down the number of holes is not going to cut the overhead much.

Mr. Mussare – We are not talking about selling the golf course, we are talking about the potential 50 acres on the peripheral of the golf course.

More discussion was had about the Par 3 Executive portion of the golf course being sold, selling the land for its maximum value and utilizing hotel tax monies for operational costs. There was discussion that more development was being discussed for the area. It was agreed with by all three Commissioners agreed that some land needs to be sold and that a good plan is needed to move forward on selling the identified land. The sale of the land will not have anything to do with the golf course. The recent success of the golf course on sunny days is very promising. It is important to make some decisions soon to maintain the confidence of the golfers, community and non-profits, memberships will go on sale in December. It was agreed that the restaurant is the main issue.

The Golf Course is booked; this was the best August since Billy Casper Golf took over. Rounds are up 2000 for the month of August, down for the year. Up \$40,000 for the year per the Director.

Mr. Mussare - When we have decent weather it is great. You can compare good and bad days. On good days, the golf course blows all the numbers away, I am seeing families there. BCG is doing a great job attracting and bringing out the families, I am looking forward to seeing what can be done out there.

Mr. Mirabito - expressed his concern for spending property tax dollars on the operating costs of the golf course. It is not fair to the homeowners just getting by to spend money on a golf course. The County is responsible to keep \$50K in the checking account on an as needed basis. We need to find a source of funding for the golf course that does not rely on taxpayer dollars.

**7.0 PUBLIC COMMENT.** The floor was opened to public comment and was received:

Scott Metzger – Throughout my campaign, I have been studying the golf course and met with the experts over there. BCG I have been preaching since day one to sell par 3, it looks horrible, it is 50 acres, it is already hooked up to sewer and water and it has not been maintained. You could sell it to a developer tomorrow and start to put down houses. BCG is doing a good job and the. Paying off the \$3.5 million bond and operating costs are two fold as long as we are not using taxpayer’s money to fund the operating costs. Commissioner Mussare has an excellent idea and needs to be researched. The golf course brings in over approximately \$300,000 for charities and that needs to be considered in the discussion. The restaurant grossed \$100K being closed 18 days. It can do better and needs to be addressed.

Mr. Mirabito – I believe in balance that is fair to everyone and that the burden of the costs of the golf course should not be placed fully on the taxpayers. The hotel tax is a viable alternative, \$500K was used for the Liberty Arena, privately owned, surely some of the \$1.2 million dollars can be used for the golf course. Does this community have the economic wherewithal to support a golf course and balance the need to have a public golf course as an asset to develop a retirement community. As leaders, we need to direct where the collected hotel tax monies are allocated.

Mr. Mussare – Correction— the prior Commissioners had nothing to do with the allocation of \$500K for the Liberty Arena.

Mr. Mirabito – In a sense you are right. There is a legal theory for people who do nothing.

Larry Stout – I think any kind of evaluation really needs to factor in the fundraising of the non-profits. I have to believe it is more than \$300K. The golf course is a major fundraiser for many of the non-profits that hold golf tournaments and the value cannot be discounted if the conversation comes up about selling the golf course.

**8.0 NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING.** Mr. McKernan announced the next regularly scheduled meeting to be held Thursday, September 5, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. at the Executive Plaza, 330 Pine Street, and 1st Floor Commissioners’ Briefing Room.

**9.0 ADJOURN COMMISSIONERS’ MEETING.** The meeting was adjourned at 10:49 a.m.