

Commissioners:

R. JACK MCKERNAN
Chairman

TONY R. MUSSARE
Vice Chairman

RICHARD MIRABITO
Secretary



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**Minutes of the Meeting of
September 5, 2019
Board Room, Executive Plaza
Pine Street, Williamsport**

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

Solicitor David - Present

1.0 OPERATIONS

1.1 CONVENE COMMISSIONERS MEETING. Mr. McKernan convened the Commissioners Meeting 10:05 a.m.

1.2 APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS. A motion by Mr. Mussare and seconded by Mr. Mirabito and passed (3-0), approved the minutes of the previous meeting as they are recorded.

1.3 RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY). Mr. McKernan opened the floor to public comment on agenda items only, and were received.

Mr. David Stone – I read in the paper the plan to extend the river walk and I came to thank the County for their continued support of the Riverwalk.

2.0 ACTION ITEMS

2.1 APPROVE UPDATE TO TDA AND TOTALS REPORT. A motion by Mr. Mirabito and seconded by Mr. Mussare and passed (3-0), approved RMS- Reclassify one (1) Work Crew Foreman in Support Services pay grades 5/6 to Industrial Maintenance Specialist, Pay grades 7/8. This position will provide flexibility and contribute to the long term projects.

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2.2 APPROVE REVISION OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES. A motion by Mr. Mirabito and seconded by Mr. Mussare and passed (3-0), approved Policy 410 Promotion and Reclassification.

2.3 APPROVE FOLLOWING PERSONNEL ACTIONS. A motion by Mr. Mussare and seconded by Mr. McKernan and passed (3-0), approved:

- Information Services – James Bigelow – as full time replacement PC Technician - pay grade 7 - \$18.08 per hour effective 9/16/19.

A motion by Mr. Mirabito and seconded by Mr. Mussare and passed (3-0), approved:

- Maintenance – David J. Eitel – as full time reclassification Maintenance III/HVAC – pay grade 8 - \$25.00 per hour effective 9/8/19.

A motion by Mr. Mussare and seconded by Mr. McKernan and passed (2-1), approved.

- Courts – Judge Tira – Ekaterina S. Ferguson - as a full time replacement Executive Secretary – pay grade 5 - \$32,670.68 annually effective 9/8/19.

Mr. Mirabito - Casted the no vote. Please see attached comments.

Mr. McKernan - We have talked with the courts about this, I am convinced in speaking with Judge Butts. We can read the job descriptions that need to be done by the secretaries, but it is the items not on the job description that get done, after hours, before hours, on the weekends and these things that are getting done are for one particular judge. If they can figure out a way to shorten staff, I would love to see them do it. At this point in time, the President Judge believes the best thing to do is hire the executive secretary for Judge Tira and so, I will be voting in favor of this.

Mr. Mussare - I went over to the courts and talked with all of secretaries, 3 out of the 4, and Judges, capable or willing to share their responsibilities with the Judges. I appreciate my colleague for what he is trying to do, as far as reductions in staff. However, you cannot compare the private sector to the court system, to some degree however, their responsibilities are very different. They are extremely busy. There are so many diversionary programs in the courts, drug, vet, DUI courts and more. There is so much paperwork for our citizens going back and forth through the courts and prothonotary's office. Mistakes made, can have adverse effects on citizens. This is not a position I believe that we should combine. There are more responsibilities for court secretaries than in a business environment. \$32K is about the average executive secretaries make in Lycoming County. This is not an overpaid position. The real meat and potatoes to save our tax payers money is Pension Reform. We need to try to reform the defined benefit. I understand I am not on the employees' side on this. We don't have a problem spending \$200K+ a month to fund these pensions. I do have a problem, when the private sector does not have the same benefit. Those are real dollars that can be saved.

I can't get my colleague to agree so that we can save millions and lobby the legislators to fix the issues that have the potential to save not only the County, and but the municipalities millions of dollars, too. \$32K a month is small potatoes. Let's deal with the real issues of prevailing wages, pension reforms and health care. We can't come up with a consensus on that. We need to control the prices of prescription drugs and wellness. Our county employees did a great job signing up; more than 50% joined the wellness program. After doing my due diligence, I have no problem voting yes.

A motion by Mr. Mussare and seconded by Mr. McKernan and passed (3-0), approved:

- Sheriff – John F. Ferster – as new position part time Deputy Sheriff – pay grade PDS - \$18.34 per hour effective 9/9/19 not to exceed 1000 hours annually. (from anniversary date, not fiscal year)

Note: This position helps fill in the approved 5000 hours and is on an as needed basis.

A motion by Mr. Mirabito and seconded by Mr. Mussare and passed (3-0), approved:

- District Attorney –DUI Center – David C. Pletz - as part time replacement Special Detective – paygrade DET - \$15.64 per hour effective 9/9/19 not to exceed 1000 hours annually. This position is paid for by the DUI Fund.

A motion by Mr. Mirabito and seconded by Mr. Mussare and passed (3-0), approved:

- Domestic Relations – Forrest Duffy – as full time replacement Domestic Relations Officer – DRO - \$42,836.33 annually effective 9/23/19.

Mr. Mirabito - At year end of 2015, Domestic Relations department had 24 full-timers, now have they now have 22, eliminating two positions in that department.

2.4 APPROVE LIST OF APPROVED CONTRACTS BELOW \$10,000. A motion by Mr. Mussare and seconded by Mr. Mirabito and passed (3-0), approved. See attached.

2.5 APPROVE AMENDMENT TO AGREEMENT DCNR-RIVER WALK EXTENSION C2P2 GRANT AMENDMENT -2019. A motion by Mr. Mussare and seconded by Mr. Mirabito and passed (3-0), approved to extend the Riverwalk another .4 miles for a total of 2.8 miles from Maynard Street to Susquehanna Park and into the Newberry community.

Mr. Mussare - While on the Riverwalk, I have often asked people where are they from? Many of them are not from here; they travel here to take advantage of

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Pine Creek and other areas. It is an asset. It is a quality of life, keeps us healthy. Thank you, Mya you get us a lot of grants and much of the project was funded by grants. The Riverwalk is a great asset.

Mr. Mirabito – Mr. Mussare, what you are saying is it is economic development. Thank you, Mr. Stone, I know you have also been instrumental in getting grants/organizing the nonprofit for the pajama factory, the WATS program, and extending the grant money the Courts received to purchase bicycles.

2.6 AWARD A PURCHASE AGREEMENT TO WOOD'S CRW CORPORATION. A motion by Mr. Mussare and seconded by Mr. Mirabito and passed (3-0), approved. for the purchase of these new final drive repair parts. The estimated cost for these new repair parts is \$21,079.28

Mr. McKernan recessed the Commissioners' Meeting at 10:40 a.m.

3.0 SALARY BOARD

3.1 CONVENE SALARY BOARD. Mr. McKernan convened the Salary Board at 10:40 a.m. Controller Krista Rogers was present.

3.2 APPROVE UPDATE SALARY SCHEDULE. A motion by Mr. Mussare and seconded by Mr. Mirabito and passed (4-0), approved.

- RMS – Reclassify one (1) Work Crew Foreman in Support Services pay grades 5/6 to Industrial Maintenance Specialist pay grades 7/8.

3.3 ADJOURN SALARY BOARD. Mr. McKernan adjourned the Salary Board at 10:42 a.m.

Mr. McKernan reconvened the Commissioners' Meeting at 10:42 a.m.

5.0 REPORTS / INFORMATION ITEMS.

5.1 LCRMS is requesting bids for Recycling Truck Scale System Rebuild. (Jason Yorks)

6.0 COMMISSIONER COMMENT.

Mr. Mussare – Tomorrow is the 5th anniversary of the GEO Re-entry and there will be a graduation class. I was looking at the prison statistics. We have 11 empty beds, over 30 open beds in PRC, no female overcrowding- no overcrowding at all in the prison. We are also holding 14 Federal Inmates at \$80 a day 365 days a year that is about \$408,000 in revenue a year. 11 Federal Inmates per day is about the avg. and that is \$321,000 a year. Our mission was to reduce recidivism; the second mission was to reduce our prison population. The re-entry program has definitely accomplished the second and stopped us from investing \$45-\$50 million into a new prison, no one wanted it. This another good example of how the Courts work with

the Commissioners to save the taxpayers money overall. The benefits are extraordinary and much appreciated.

Mr. Mirabito – stated he would like to discuss GEO Reentry at greater length at another time.

Mr. McKernan – Also on a positive side, Chris Brewer was here this week to speak with us, the bond will be refinanced in the next two weeks. Standard and Poor's reaffirmed the County's A+ Rating. They believe we are on the right course and that the County is being managed properly and fiscally responsible. That is a good thing. We have had an A+ rating for many years.

7.0 PUBLIC COMMENT. Mr. McKernan opened the floor to public comment and the following were received:

Larry Stout – Representing the Clinton Township VFD and the 911 Memorial Coalition, next Wednesday the annual 911 Memorial ride will take place on Sept 11th. It has been held since 2002, when a group of bikers decided to spontaneously ride around Williamsport on their bikes to memorialize those lost. Father John Manno was one of them; he has been a part of the coalition. He later hopped on Fred and ended up driving all the way to NYC to assist the First Responders. This year it will be very special, the ride will be devoted to Father Manno. There will be no key note speaker; people will be giving tribute stories about Father Manno and his influence in our lives and community. His bike, Fred, will be hauled around the 42 mile course. This is the largest 911 motorcycle ride in the nation. Last year, we had over 5,000 riders. It is a magnificent event that touches so many people's hearts in our county, almost magical. Crowds of people line up along the entire course waving flags, having picnics for the hours long event. One year, I rode with my brother in law and it rained the entire time and even then there was no gap of people. People stood out in the rain. There are so many people. Another note, I would like to acknowledge Grandparents Day, taking place this Sunday. A lesser known holiday that needs to be acknowledged in an effort to bring our families together more.

Bill Keller- Let's sell the Golf Course. Once sold the money should go to the people. People keep coming in here asking for money, just say no to them.

8.0 NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING. Mr. McKernan announced the next regularly scheduled meeting as a work session on Tuesday, September 10, 2019.

9.0 ADJOURN COMMISSIONERS' MEETING. Mr. McKernan adjourned the meeting 10:58 a.m.

STATEMENT BY COMMISSIONER RICK MIRABITO SEPTEMBER 5, 2019 MINUTES

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MR. CHAIRMAN,

PLEASE INCLUDE THESE REMARKS IN THE MEETING MINUTES FOR SEPTEMBER 5, 2019, REGARDING MY VOTE ON THE APPOINTMENT OF THE SECRETARY POSITION IN THE COURTS.

LET ME BEGIN BY STATING THAT I RECOGNIZE THAT THE COURTS ARE AN INDEPENDENT BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT.

THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS IS AN INDEPENDENT BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT, TOO. OUR FIDUCIARY RESPONSIBILITY IS TO FUND OR NOT FUND POSITIONS. I BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD STAND UP FOR WHAT WE BELIEVE IS NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE A BALANCED BUDGET.

THIS IS NOT AN EASY DECISION. ON THE ONE HAND WE HAVE A NEW JUDGE AND I EMPHASIZE THAT MY DECISION IS NOT BASED ON THE PERSON BEING HIRED BUT ON THE POSITION AS IT FITS INTO COUNTY GOVERNMENT.

ON NOVEMBER 3, 2017, THIS BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS PASSED A RESOLUTION ASKING FOR A REDUCTION OF POSITIONS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY. WE PASSED THE RESOLUTION IN RESPONSE TO BUDGET CONCERNS AND BASED ON FEEDBACK WE HAD RECEIVED FROM EMPLOYEES.

IN JANUARY 2009, THE COUNTY HAD 500 FULL-TIME POSITIONS. BY YEAR END IN 2015, JUST BEFORE THIS NEW BOARD TOOK OFFICE, THE COUNTY'S FULL-TIME POSITIONS HAD GROWN TO 552. AS OF AUGUST 2019, WE HAVE 540 FULL-TIME POSITIONS.

IN A MEMO ISSUED BY THE BOARD IN DECEMBER 2017, THE BOARD ASKED THE COURTS TO ELIMINATE 2 FULL TIME POSITIONS. SINCE THE BOARD ISSUED THE MEMO, THERE HAS NOT BEEN ANY OFFER OF A REDUCTION OF FULL-TIME POSITIONS BY THE COURTS. RECENTLY WE DID NOT FILL A FULL-TIME SUPERVISORY POSITION IN APO, BUT THIS POSITION HAS NOT BEEN REMOVED FROM THE TDA AND THE REASON WE DID NOT FILL IT IS THAT THE CANDIDATE THE COURT WANTED TO HIRE DID NOT WANT TO ACCEPT THE POSITION AT THE RATE SET FOR IT.

I HAVE SEVERAL CONCERNS ABOUT FILLING THIS POSITION.

FIRST, THE BUDGET DEFICIT CONTINUES TO BE AN ISSUE THAT WE MUST CONFRONT. YESTERDAY WE RECEIVED A REPORT THAT OUR MEDICAL AND

PRESCRIPTION NET CLAIMS FOR THE ROLLING 12 MONTHS PRIOR IS UP 47%. WHILE THIS MAY BE A BAD YEAR, IT IS REAL DOLLARS THAT WE WILL HAVE TO REPLACE.

SECOND, I AM PROPOSING THAT THE PRESIDENT JUDGE HAVE A PRIVATE SECRETARY AND THE REMAINING 4 JUDGES SHARE 3 SECRETARIES. WHILE I DO NOT WANT TO MICROMANAGE THE COURTS, WHEN NO OFFER IS MADE TO REDUCE FULL-TIME POSITIONS, I AM LEFT WITH NO ALTERNATIVE.

THIRD, TECHNOLOGY HAS CHANGED AND THE WORK THAT HAS BEEN PERFORMED BY SECRETARIES HAS CHANGED. THE JOB DESCRIPTION STATES, IN ORDER OF JOB DUTIES, THE FOLLOWING:

“serving as a receptionist; answering telephone calls and written correspondence; scheduling meetings, hearing, conferences, etc.; assisting the public; communicating with juror, litigants, private attorneys, public defenders....”

FOR ALL OF THE ABOVE REASONS, I AM A NO VOTE ON THE REPLACEMENT OF THE SECRETARIAL POSITION.

THANK YOU.