

APRIL 22, 2014 MINUTES

Formally approved May 13, 2014 meeting

FULL BOARD PRESENT: Also present: Walt Peters, EMA Director; Jamie Shrawder, SEDA-COG; Leslie Young, East End Fire Co; Michael Kull, Valley Township Fire Company; Wes Warner, Bureau of Forestry; Frank Dombroski, Tyler Dombroski, Washingtonville Borough; John Moyer, John Buckenberger, Joe Stigerwalt, Steven Finn, Danville Fire Department; Nicholas Fowler, Southside Fire Co.; Greg Molter, Derry Township; Ken Hunter, public; Kathleen McWilliams, Barbara Criswell, Thomas Beaver Free Library; Dan Knorr, Danville Borough; John McLaughlin, Jim Hawkins, Josh Haskins; Karen Blackledge, The Danville News; Chris Krepich, PressEnterprise.

Mr. Finn asked those so inclined to rise for a prayer led by Solicitor Robert L. Marks. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison. The meeting was then opened.

Mr. Gerst moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Mr. Ward seconded. On called vote, all voted in favor.

Mr. Ward moved to accept the Treasurer's report as presented. Mr. Gerst seconded. On called vote, all voted in favor.

General Account Disbursements	\$142,209.63
General Account Receipts	\$487,646.39
General Account Checking .15%	\$1,423,304.82
Capital Reserve Fund .10%	\$30,785.65
Operating Reserve .10%	\$40,130.02
General MMA	\$0.00
Total Checking, MMAs	\$1,494,220.49
Act 13 Highway-Bridge .10%	\$79,285.93
Act 44 .15%	\$4,952.63
Act 78 Checking .15%	\$54,378.97
Children and Youth Checking .15%	\$411,228.19
Domestic Relations Checking .15%	\$125,050.50
Domestic Relations Incentive	\$154,186.96
Flood Mitigation .15%	\$1,836.48
Hazardous Material Account Checking .15%	\$16,619.85
Human & Community Services Checking .15%	\$48,449.10
Improvement Fund Checking .15%	\$7,882.50
Liquid Fuels Checking .15%	\$43,800.81
Liquid Fuels MMA .45%	\$130,000.00
Medical Assistance Transportation .15%	\$66,181.98
Offender Supervision Account Checking .15%	\$12,874.91
Transit Fund Account Checking .15%	\$51,650.79
Wireless 911 .15%	\$85,975.61

Mr. Finn called for public comment. Mr. Knorr reported the borough has been approved for a low-interest Penn Vest grant of \$7.8 million for its sewer interceptor project. Mr. Dombroski thanked the board for the newly expanded recycling program.

Mr. Finn recessed the meeting and opened a CDBG public hearing. Ms. Shrawder said \$211,700.00 in estimated funding is available with applications due May 30. Ms. Shrawder said to date interest has been expressed in a road surfacing project in Derry Township, sidewalk reconstruction and building demolition in Washingtonville Borough, and the purchase of a rescue truck for the Danville Fire Company. There being no further comment, the hearing was adjourned and public meeting reconvened.

Mr. Finn recognized District Forester Wesley Harner from DCNR, and Montour County Fire Chiefs who were present to answer questions related to the county-wide burn ban implemented at their request on April 10. Mr. Harner reported prior to the burn ban implementation, the county had five fires caused by people burning debris compared to one last year. He said spring is the worst time of year for fire as the sun is higher in the sky but there are no leaves on the trees to shade the ground.

Valley Township Fire Chief Kull said just because the area has received rain does not mean the threat of brush fires is gone. The ground materials that fuel brush fires are small, and while the rains soak them with moisture, the strong winds behind the downpours rapidly dry them out. Even with the burn ban, there was a brush fire in Cooper Township caused by sparks from someone target shooting, which is uncommon here. Chief Kull said this year has seen a number of days prone to extreme fire behavior and because of that, it is important to keep the 30-day burn ban intact.

On a question from Mr. Hunter, Mr. Harner said in his district only Montour and Schuylkill have implemented bans. Mr. Hunter asked why more counties didn't follow suit if the threat was so great. Mr. Harner explained that a lot of officials must come to a consensus - from commissioners to fire chiefs - and that some foresters are more pro-active than others in pursuing bans.

Mr. Hunter questioned why the Game Commission recently conducted a prescribed fire in neighboring Columbia County. Mr. Harner said the Game Commission requires approval from the DCNR for prescribed fires, and as part of that process must submit a plan outlining the benefits and objectives, such as promoting wildlife habitat.

Chief Kull said this has been the most active brush fire season in Montour in the last decade. He said if the County sees four brush fires a year, it would be considered an active season. Compare that to Montour's five so far this season and to Schuylkill County's seven brush fires, he said, noting Schuylkill is six times the size of Montour.

Mr. Hunter expressed frustration over what he termed "babysitting" by the federal government now coming down to County Commissioners.

Mr. Harner pointed out burning is regulated by state law in neighboring Maryland and Virginia.

In reiterating their stance that the burn ban is important in protecting both citizens and firefighters as well as property, the Board noted the majority of materials that are typically burned in a burn barrel can now be recycled.

Representing the Thomas Beaver Free Library, Mrs. McWilliams said the Library Board is reluctant to follow through with an earlier proposal to place a referendum for a library tax on the November ballot. Mrs. McWilliams said proponents thought the tax would amount to only be a little more than a dollar on tax bills, but the proposed tenth of a mill library tax would actually be more than \$10.00. The Library Board, she said, feels the public has enough of a burden as it is with property taxes and did not think it could garner the support needed for the County to levy a library tax. She suggested a per capita tax might be a fairer way, but Commissioners said statutorily they did not believe they would be able to levy a per capita tax beyond the \$5.00 that is currently assessed.

Mr. Peters announced that the final public meeting on the County Hazard Mitigation Plan is scheduled for 11 a.m. May 22 in the Commissioners Conference Room of the courthouse.

Under old business, Mr. Gerst moved to approve a Request for Proposals for the County accessibility project at the former County Home building on Woodbine Lane. Mr. Ward seconded. On called vote, all voted in favor.

Mr. Ward moved to approve a change order of \$3,158.00 for the parking lot retaining wall reconstruction. Mr. Gerst seconded. On called vote, all voted in favor.

Mr. Ward moved to approve the submission of a project modification application to the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency for the Victim Witness program. Mr. Gerst seconded. On called vote, all voted in favor.

Under new business, Attorney McLaughlin sought the Board's approval to transfer land owned by the former Redevelopment Authority, and now owned by the County, to Hawkins Chevrolet. He explained as part of an urban renewal project in the 1960s, Danville Borough vacated streets and alleys, and the title for one such parcel – the former West Center Street – should have been transferred to Hawkins, but was missed. Mr. Gerst moved to transfer the title as requested. Mr. Ward seconded. On called vote, all voted in favor.

Mr. Ward moved to approve an addendum to the recycling agreement with Heaps Container Service changing the fee paid to Heaps to \$5,000.00 annually effective April 1. Mr. Ward said he felt the increase was warranted based on the increased services by the recycler. Mr. Gerst seconded. On called vote, all voted in favor.

Mr. Gerst moved to enter into an independent contractor agreement with Helen Appleman to temporarily assist with the administrative services for the Domestic Relations Office at an hourly rate of \$25.00 for up to 25 hours a week for up to six months. Mr. Ward seconded. On called vote, all voted in favor.

Mr. Gerst moved to approve an amendment on behalf of Transit to the business associate agreement with Geisinger Health System. Mr. Ward seconded. On called vote, all voted

in favor.

Mr. Ward moved to approve a request for a \$10,000.00 allocation from tourism tax funds to the Danville Little League. The League brought the 2014 National Club Softball Association North Atlantic Regional Softball Tournament to Danville. In doing so, the League mandated that teams in the tournament must stay at Montour County hotels, and is working to ensure Danville hosts the event in subsequent years.

The League will use the funds for capital purchases as well as field maintenance equipment and repairs. Mr. Gerst seconded. On called vote, all voted in favor.

Mr. Ward moved to use \$14,000.00 in tourism tax funds for work on the Keefer's Mill Covered Bridge. Mr. Ward said the funds will enable a total refurbishment of the historic span. Mr. Gerst seconded. On called vote, all voted in favor.

Mr. Gerst read a resolution making the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Smith-Lever Act, which established Cooperative Extension.

Mr. Ward recognized Bill Zamboni for his tireless efforts in making Zamboni Park a showcase and a beautiful entryway to Montour County. Mr. Zamboni has received two awards from the Philadelphia Horticulture Society and images of the park are featured in the book "Small Town Pennsylvania."

Mr. Gerst moved to pay the following bills: General Account, \$325,828.01; Children & Youth, \$61,296.49; Transit, \$21,610.59; Liquid Fuels, \$46,080.38; Act 78, \$5,251.88; Domestic Relations, \$4,318.40; Human and Community Service, \$1,088.85. Mr. Ward seconded. On called vote, all voted in favor.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:

Holly A. Brandon, Chief Clerk

