

February 19, 2026

There was a Commissioners meeting at 2:00 PM in the Commissioners Conference Room at 700 Sawmill Road, Small Conference Room for the regular scheduled Commissioners meeting. In attendance were Commissioners Brewer, Karschner, Kovach, Solicitor McDonald, Chief Clerk Witchey, Doyle Shadle, Jean Lapinski, Michele Frye, Marcie Strachko, Treasurer Creveling, Matthew Repasky, Ell Adams, Don Coleman, Barb Warunek, and Jill Carlson. Via Zoom: Thomas Frace, Tim Murphy, Jodi Cook, Jessica Brittain, Beth Gilbert, Jenn Long and Chris Anderson.

Commissioner Brewer called the meeting to order and asked that we stand and pledge the flag, he then called for the approval of the minutes of the prior meeting.

Motion by Kovach and seconded by Karschner; all approved

Commissioner Brewer then called for a report of the work session: The work session report is as follows, at 10:00 AM there was a work session held in attendance were Commissioners Brewer, Karschner, Kovach, Solicitor McDonald, Chief Clerk Witchey, Jean Lapinski, Michele Frye, Marcie Strachko, Treasurer Creveling, Otto Kurecian, Betsy Kramer, MJ Mahon, Bobby Christianson, Jill Carlson, Angela Greco, Thea Karas, Patricia Laurey, Shelly Crawford, Ginny Mazzei, Jill Crawford, Ashley Mensch, Rachael Swartwood, Ali Cassidy, Brittney Wright, Bob Stout, and Linda Dietrichson. Via Zoom: Thomas Frace, Tim Murphy, Jodi Cook, Jessica Brittain, Beth Gilbert, Jenn Long and Chris Anderson. Commissioner Brewer asked Ashley Mensch to begin the meeting by discussing the agenda item that she is proposing to receive a grant in order to provide each of her 12 staff members a \$400 retention bonus. Betsy Kramer from SEDA-COG then provided a brief update regarding the four County Greenway Plan and also informed the Commissioners that it should not cost the County any money for the update to the plan. The Commissioners then received quotes and cost estimates from vendors who are willing to provide services regarding the election mail-in-ballots, numerous individuals spoke regarding this and at the end the Commissioners informed the group that mail-in-ballots are at the mercy of the USPS. The tax office then discussed their proposal to change some fees associated with delinquent taxes. The remaining items on the agenda were reviewed with Marcie going over the personnel moves, and Jeannie providing updates on both available cash and bills. After which the work session was adjourned.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS: None

Magistrates Reports – January Report:

	Cases	Collected
Berwick	233	\$5,093.76
Bloomsburg	227	\$6,345.15
Catawissa	296	\$6,414.67
Millville	301	\$6,526.23

Prothonotary:

Clerk of Orphans Courts – January Report:

Total remitted to the County was \$21,304.34  
Total business all sources was \$25,680.45

Clerk of Courts – January Report:

Total remitted to the County was \$38,906.85  
Total business all sources was \$68,503.55

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Approve SEDA-COG to continue to pursue the Four County Greenway Plan on behalf of Columbia County with the expected cost to be \$0

Motion by Karchner and seconded by Kovach; all approved

B. Approve the recommended company Fort Orange Press to process the County's mail in ballots for the Spring Primary Election of 2026

Motion by Kovach and seconded by Brewer; all approved

- C. Approve the Columbia County Family Center to seek a \$4,800.00 grant through OCDEL for retention incentives of \$400 per staff member, contingent upon continued employment through June 30, 2026

Motion by Brewer and seconded by Kovach; all approved

- D. Discussion regarding the potential use of Hotel Tax Funds to repair the Columbia County Courthouse bell tower
- E. Approve resolution 1-2026 changing the costs of the return check fee from \$25 to \$35 and rescinding the tax sale cost to \$0 from \$65 but then adding that \$65 fee to tax sale advertising fee making that go from \$25 to \$90

Motion by Brewer and seconded by Karschner; all approved

- F. Approve the ordinance 1-2026 designating Columbia County Redevelopment Authority as a land bank.

Motion by Kovach and seconded by Karschner; all approved

- G. Approve the exoneration of tax/cost/interest for a lease hold trailers that was moved or razed with no permit

- Parcel 15-11-00601-025 \$19.35
- Parcel 17-13-01500-045 \$19.87

Motion by Kovach and seconded by Brewer; all approved

- H. APPROVE THE FOLLOWING HIRES, STEP INCREASES, and PROMOTIONS:

- Rachel Ray, EMT, Jail, Hire, 3/1/26

Motion by Kovach and seconded by Karschner; all approved

- I. APPROVE THE DATES OF THE FOLLOWING ELECTED OFFICIALS and COURT EMPLOYEE HIRES, STEP INCREASES, and PROMOTIONS:

- Dale Coombe, Deputy, Sheriff, Transferring to part-time, 2/23/26

Motion by Karchner and seconded by Kovach; all approved

- J. APPROVE THE DATES OF THE FOLLOWING RESIGNATIONS, TERMINATIONS, AND RETIREMENTS:

- Justin Mease, FT CO, Jail, Resignation, 1/25/25
- Domenic Garufi, FT CO, Jail, Resignation, 2/18/26

Motion by Kovach and seconded by Brewer; all approved

**CORRESPONDANCE:**

- Woodland Design Associates Inc notified the Commissioners that PPL is performing a line rebuild in Montour and Columbia Counties, in Derry, Hemlock, and West Hemlock Townships.
- Blaschak Anthracite sent notification to the Commissioners regarding their Logan Surface Mine and that they are they are performing a reclamation of 4.93 acres are being replanted with permanent grasses and legumes

- Blaschak Anthracite sent notification to the Commissioners regarding their Logan Surface Mine and that they are they are performing a reclamation of 15.49 acres are being replanted with permanent grasses and legumes
- The Department of Environmental Protection sent information to the Commissioners regarding the surface mining permits associated with the reclamation of the two above listed projects.

**BILLS:**

- Approve the bills for 2/13/26 for \$1,101,820.89

Motion by Kovach and seconded by Karschner; all approved

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None

**AJOURN:**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned on a motion by Karschner and seconded by Kovach. The motion passed.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
David J. Witchey, Chief Clerk