

July 1, 2021

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 Young, Ridgeway, Kovach, Solicitor McDonald, Chief Clerk Witchey, Treasurer Creveling, Marcie Strachko, Rachael Swartwood, Eric Boughner, and Josh Nespoli. Via Zoom: Eric Stahley, and Gina Feigles-Faar.

A motion was made by Kovach and seconded by Ridgeway to approve the minutes of the prior meeting. The motion unanimously passed.

There was a 10:00 work session held in attendance were Commissioners Young, Ridgeway, Kovach, Solicitor McDonald, Chief Clerk Witchey, Jean Lapinski, Marcie Strachko, Mike Lester, Treasurer Creveling, Eric Stahley, George Ney, Rachael Swartwood, Eric Boughner, Josh Nespoli and Rich Kisner. Via Zoom: Don Coleman, Phil Yoder, Jessie Audette, Wade Mays, Jen Long, and Diane Cizewski. Young called the meeting to order and asked Jessie from Lightsource BP to start the work session and discuss Lightsource's proposal to Columbia County regarding the use of County Land for solar energy. She gave the Commissioners a background of the organization that they are a global company and have over 500 employees worldwide in 14 different countries. She discussed two recently completed projects in Franklin County, one of which allows for sheep grazing and between the two generate around 120 megawatts of energy. She stated that you can do a virtual tour on their website for these two projects and stressed that their organization stresses responsible solar farming that boosts soil health. They also typically hire organizations within 1 hour of the site to construct the project the site also has screening around it that is typically 8 to 10 feet high. The lease agreement is for 25 years with two 5 year extensions and initially they lease the entire property but will reduce that to the site that is fenced in after 3 years. The Commissioners suggested that further discussion regarding the lease and the potential amount going to be paid happen at a future date to discuss Solicitor McDonald's concerns regarding these types of leases. Josh Nespoli then discussed with the Commissioners that Community Strategies Group would like to utilize the State Facility Closure Grant of \$142,000 to acquire the a blighted property (former Geppetto's Store) in Berwick. They are looking to repurpose the property for either renovation or reconstruction. Harry then discussed the American Rescue Funds of which Columbia County is to receive \$12.6 million over the next two years. As of July 1st there are no recommendations however the first item is to replace County lost revenue, also to look at the future of services provided by the County and have those services available via online vs coming into the offices. Other items include medical software for the prison register & Recorder to have all records online. Harry also mentioned that he has met with local manufacturers regarding a workforce development program within the County. The goal is to have better trained employees so that the local manufactures would not leave the area due to the lack of qualified employees. Jean then reviewed bills and available cash Jen long discussed that due to the declining amount of COVID-19 cases and lack of vaccinations that she recommends that this item be removed from the agenda unless there is an uptick of cases or something that warrants it to be placed on the agenda. The agenda was then reviewed and the meeting was adjourned.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Covid-19 update

B. Update on the American Rescue Funds

C. Approve the EDECI round #4 projects as follows:

- Award \$64,500 to Benton Borough for streambank stabilization of an unnamed tributary.
- Award \$11,000 to Orange Township for cleanout of Stonybrook Creek off of Stonybrook Road.
- Award \$40,000 to Fishing Creek Township for streambank stabilization and cleanout of Fishing Creek in the area of convergence with Huntington Creek

Motion by Kovach seconded by Ridgeway; all approved

D. Approve the use of Facility Closure Grant by the Community Strategies Group to acquire the old Geppeto's Building in Berwick pending approval of all boards.

Motion by Ridgway and seconded by Kovach; all approved

E. Approve the resignation of Dave Park from the SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority Board effective July 15, 2021.

Motion by Young seconded by Kovach; all approved

F. Approve the appointment of Matt Weigle of Kydex to the SEDA-COG Joint Rail Authority Board effective July 16, 2021.

Motion by Ridgway seconded by Kovach; all approved

G. Approve Ron Kocher resignation from the Planning Commission Board

Motion by Kovach seconded by Ridgway; all approved

H. Approve the appointment of Paul Lee to the Planning Commission Board to finish out Ron Kocher's appointment

Motion by Ridgway seconded by Kovach; all approved

F. Approve the exoneration of tax/cost/interest for the list of parcels that were campers that were moved from the campground with no permit.

- Parcel #20-06-004-01,120 Cost \$276.86
- Parcel #20-06-004-01,160 Cost \$150.16
- Parcel #20-02-014-00,091 Cost \$321.54

Approve the exoneration of cost for a parcel with a mailing address change that had an incorrect zip code

- Parcel #21-19-009-02,179 Cost \$75.00
- Parcel #21-20-004-04,000 Cost \$200.00

Approve the exoneration of tax/cost/interest of lease hold trailers that were razed/moved with no permit.

- Parcel #12-01A-034-23,145 Cost \$289.72
- Parcel #12-01A-034-18,031 Cost \$89.13
- Parcel #12-03-009-07,247 Cost \$118.80
- Parcel #07-02A-149-00,152 Cost \$118.80

Approve the exoneration of tax/cost/interest to pay off delinquent taxes on a property sold at Sheriff sale difference is due to timing of the receipt of the check.

- Parcel #12-03-002-06,000 Cost \$282.41

Motion by Young seconded by Kovach; all approved

I. Approve J.L. Nick & Associates, Inc. to review Columbia County's existing compensation per job description and also external compensation market pricing and internal job value ranking for each position. Cost not to exceed \$15,000 plus reasonable travel related expenses.

Motion by Ridgway seconded by Kovach; all approved

J. Approve the amendment to the CHIRP agreement with SEDA-COG, the purpose is to expend the remaining balance of the funds in the amount of \$48,226.00 SEDA-COG will be compensated \$160.00 per supplemental payment.

Motion by Ridgway seconded by Kovach; all approved

K. APPROVE THE FOLLOWING HIRES/STEP INCREASES/PROMOTIONS:

- Tyler Patterson, Telecommunicator, ECEN, Transfer to PT, 6/29/21
- Nicholas Snyder, FT CO, Prison, Promotion, 6/27/21
- Natalie Hess, Tax Sale Poster, Tax, Hire, 6/28/21
- Jason Hewes, FT CO, Prison, 4 yr step inc, 6/11/21
- Norman Folk, FT CO, Prison, 2 yr step inc, 5/6/21

- Bryan Davenport, FT CO, Prison 6 mo step inc, 6/12/21
- Blake Barnes, FT CO, Prison, 6 mo step inc, 6/12/21
- Brenndan Weaver, FT CO, Prison, 1 yr step inc, 5/10/21
- Joseph Zook, FT CO, Prison, 1 yr step inc, 5/24/21
- Veronica Ziegler, PT CO to FT CO, Prison, Promotion, 7/4/21
- Kayin Herb, PT CO to FT CO, Prison, Promotion, 7/4/21
- Blake Keefer, PT CO to FT CO, Prison, Promotion, 7/4/21
- Keith Wittig, PT to FT CO, Prison, Promotion, 7/4/21
- Blake Delia, PT CO to FT CO, Prison, Promotion, 7/4/21
- Nina Galyaveyeva, PT CO to FT CO, Prison, Promotion, 7/4/21
- Joseph Meyers, PT CO to FT CO, Prison, Promotion, 7/4/21
- Blake Hartzel, PT CO to FT CO, Prison, Promotion, 7/4/21
- Evan Cochran, PT CO to FT CO, Prison, Promotion, 7/4/21
- Hallie Yacko, PT CO to FT CO, Prison, Promotion, 7/4/21
- Morgan Edwards-Lewis, PT Clerk, Commissioners, Hire, 7/12/21

Motion by Kovach seconded by Ridgway; all approved

L. APPROVE THE DATES OF THE FOLLOWING ELECTED OFFICIALS/COURT EMPLOYEE HIRES/STEP INCREASES/PROMOTIONS:

- Melissa Traugh, Deputy, Prothonotary, Promotion, 6/21/21
- Taylor Shultz, Secretary, DRO, Hire, 7/19/21
- David Adams, Jr, Records Clerk, Prothonotary, Hire, 7/6/21
- Daniel Lynn, Asst District Attorney, DA, Salary Adjustment, 7/4/21
- Brenda Hess, Asst District Attorney, DA, Salary Adjustment, 7/4/21
- Rebecca Reimiller, Asst District Attorney, DA, Salary Adjustment, 7/4/21
- Jordan Ikeler, Clerk, Treasurer, Hire, 7/6/21

Motion by Ridgway seconded by Kovach; all approved

M. APPROVE THE DATES OF THE FOLLOWING RESIGNATIONS/TERMINATIONS/RETIREMENTS:

- Christina Collins, FT CO, Prison, Resignation, 6/24/21
- Lezette Aponte, PT CO, Prison, Termination, 6/21/21
- Adam Field, Caseworker 1, CYS, Resignation, 7/2/21
- Savannah New, PT CO, Prison, Resignation, 6/29/21

Motion by Kovach seconded by Young; all approved

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Letter from the Department of Environmental Protection regarding Gilberton Coal Company's surface mining permit correction for Notice of Intent for Coverage Under the NPDES General permit for Stormwater.
- Letter from the Department of Environmental Protection regarding Jac-Mar Coal Co. surface mining permit correction for Notice of Intent for Coverage Under the NPDES General permit for Stormwater.
- South Centre sent a letter to the Commissioners regarding the South Centre Township Sanitary Sewer Project-American Recovery Act Grant asking the Commissioners to provide a draft agreement.
- The Department of Transportation notified the Commissioners that the bridge replacement on 487 over a tributary to Fishing Creek.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

- Approve bills from 6-25-21 totaling \$683,968.64

Motion by Ridgway and seconded by Kovach; all approved

- Approve American Paper bills from 6-25-21 totaling \$688.18

Motion by Kovach and seconded by Young; abstain by Ridgway, Motion passes

Commissioner Kovach made a motion and a second from Commissioner Ridgway to go into executive session at 2:27 PM to discuss personnel matters in the Public Defenders Office

Commissioner Kovach made a motion to come out of executive Commissioner Ridgway seconded and at 2:37 PM the Commissioners ended their executive session.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

AJOURN:

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

Attest: _____
David J. Withey, Chief Clerk