



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES

Thursday, February 14, 2019, 10:00 A.M.

Willowbank Office Building
420 Holmes Street, Room 146
Bellefonte, PA 16823

I. CALL TO ORDER

The public meeting of the Centre County Board of Commissioners was called to order at 10:09 AM on February 14, 2019 by Chair of the Board, Michael Pipe.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

In attendance were Commissioner Michael Pipe, Chair; Commissioner Mark Higgins; Commissioner Steven Dershem; Administrator, Margaret Gray; Deputy Administrator, Bob Jacobs; Executive Assistant, Natalie Bird; Director of Human Resources, Kristen Simkins; Human Resource Analyst, Geri Sorgen.

County personnel present included Mark Kellerman, Norm Spackman, Bryan Sampsel, Dave Lomison, Jodi Neidig, and Sue Hannegan.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

I. MEETING MINUTES

On a motion by Commissioner Higgins, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted to approve the meeting minutes from the Thursday, February 7, 2019 Board of Commissioners' Meeting.

II. ACTION ON PERSONNEL ITEM(S)

A. Tax Assessment – Mark Kellerman requested the promotion of Chelsey Foust to Homestead/Farmstead Coordinator/Field Data Collector and substitute field data collector. She has been with Tax Assessment for three years. On a motion by Commissioner Higgins, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted to approve the three items for Tax Assessment.

- i. Consider approval of the personnel requisition for full-time Homestead/Farmstead Coordinator/Field Data Collector, Tax Assessment, (p.c. #10, non-exempt, replacing C. Etters), at SG-N09, effective February 14, 2019, pay period 4 – Dept. 121.
- ii. Consider approval of the promotion/change in title for Chelsey Foust from full-time Department Clerk 2 (75), Tax Assessment, (p.c. #07, non-exempt), at SG-N06D(04)--\$13.05/hour to full-time Homestead/Farmstead Coordinator/Field Data Collector, Tax Assessment, (p.c. #10, non-exempt, replacing C. Etters), at SG-

N09A(01)--\$14.18/hour, effective February 17, pay period 5. (Salary budget savings for 2019 \$5,254, Annualized salary savings for 2020 \$1,677) – Dept. 121.

- iii. Consider approval of the personnel requisition for full-time Department Clerk 2 (75), Tax Assessment, (p.c. #07, non-exempt, replacing C. Foust), at SG-N06, effective February 14, 2019, pay period 4 – Dept. 121.
- B. Emergency Communications - On a motion by Commissioner Higgins, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted to approve the personnel requisition for a full-time Public Safety Telecommunicator, Emergency Communications 911, (p.c. #34, non-exempt, replacing G. Supplee), at SG-N09, effective February 14, 2019, pay period 4 – Dept. 351.
- C. Correctional Facility - On a motion by Commissioner Higgins, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted to approve military leave for Richard Aikey, Corrections Officer, Correctional Facility, (p.c. #57), effective retro from February 11, 2019, pay period 4 to (estimated) March 30, 2019, pay period 7

Margaret Gray requested that the Board add a Discussion Item to the agenda for the disposition of voting machines.

III. REPORT ON JUDICIAL PERSONNEL ITEM(S)

IV. REPORT ON ROW OFFICE PERSONNEL ITEM(S)

V. DISCUSSION ITEM(S)

- A. Dave Lomison requested the Board approve a letter to transfer a vehicle to Bellefonte Borough – Dept. 532.

Action: On a motion by Commissioner Higgins, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted to approve the vehicle transfer letter.

B. Disposition of Voting Machines

Jodi Neidig stated that ES&S would like to pick up and destroy the old voting machines at no cost. The County is not able to receive new machines until there is room in storage. The Board discussed the option to store the old machines as a backup and then consider disposal. The consensus of the Board was not to dispose of the machines at this point. Jodi explained that the new machines can be delivered on February 25; Margaret recommended finding a storage place for the old machines to make room for the delivery. Sheriff Sampsel offered the basement of the Sheriff's Office and Bob Jacobs suggested using an empty pod at the Correctional Facility. When the County is ready to dispose of the machines, Bob Jacobs recommended contacting NACO to see if the machines could be of use to another State. If they are to be recycled or destroyed, Betsy recommended contacting Joanne Shaffer at Centre County Recycling and Refuse to give an analysis. Jodi will move forward with delivery on February 25.

C. Policies – Margaret Gray introduced three policies for discussion, these are existing policies and Sue Hannegan highlighted the proposed changes.

- i. The Leave of Absence policy has been amended to add six weeks of paid parental leave for the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of a child. This would be offered to full-time employees who are not subject to the provisions of a collective bargaining unit, and have worked for the County for at least twelve months. Leave will run concurrent with FMLA and must be taken within six months of the birth, adoption or foster placement and in no less than one week increments.

Commissioner Dershem asked why this is extended over the period of six months. Kristen Simkins explained that it would allow parents to have additional time at home with the child. This will run concurrent with FMLA and would not extend time off. Sue reported approximately 20 leave requests related to births, adoptions, and foster placements annually among employees. After speaking with Allegheny County, with over 7,000 employees they have not received any grievances in relation to the policy.

Commissioner Dershem expressed concerned that employees are not required to use sick time before this applies. Sue explained that employees are allowed to reserve up to five sick days. Kristen added that the employee would receive six weeks of paid parental leave, and then would use sick and vacation time if they elected to continue FMLA time beyond the six weeks. Commissioner Pipe said families would need to attend wellness visits and appointments; the reserved sick time could be used for those times after they return.

Sheriff Sampsel expressed concern about the scheduling of time off. After discussion, Commissioner Higgins suggested to amend page four where it states “The County and the employee must mutually agree to the schedule before the employee may take leave intermittently or work a reduced hour schedule” to remove “intermittently or work a reduced hour schedule” – Dept. 111.

- ii. The Public Communications policy covers the release of information to the public regardless of its form. It establishes a procedure for creating departmental social media pages or websites and submission of media requests to the Administrator for consideration.

At this time, Sue reported 15 departmental sites that exist. Social media pages are established as a limited public forum provides the option to remove items that are off topic, vulgar, or copyrighted; limitations are included on page 8 of the policy. It is encouraged that terms of use are provided on the page.

Sheriff Sampsel explained the method used by his office to prevent comments on his departmental Facebook page. Kristen Simkins noted that if she were to post a comment on the Sheriff's page, it is still be visible to her connections.

Commissioner Pipe asked who would review the comments and what is the escalation process? Sue stated that any requests should come back to the Administrator or Public Information Officer.

Betsy said the policy promotes Attachment 2 and including this on their page, this applies to every office of the County unless they have their own Right to Know Officer. If this is statement is posted and a message is deleted in violation of the policy, the County is protected under the Right to Know Law.

Margaret noted that the County's Facebook page has informational value. It is important to move forward and have departments implement the policy. Sheriff Sampsel agreed and if necessary, the policy could be revised in the future. It was the consensus of the Board to move forward with the policy as written – Dept. 111.

- iii. The Office Closings policy is expanded to include closings and early release. It also addresses employees who need to be here due to their job description. Although there may be employees in the building, it is closed to the public. Margaret said this was shared with the President Judge. – Dept. 111.

On a motion by Commissioner Higgins, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted to add the Leave of Absence, Public Communications, and Office Closing Policies to the Tuesday, February 19 Board of Commissioners' meeting agenda.

- VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION
- VII. ADJOURNMENT
- IV. QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS
- V. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Commissioner Higgins, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 11:12 AM.

ATTEST:

Margaret N. Gray

Administrator