



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES

Thursday, April 29, 2021, 10:00 A.M.

Virtual – Zoom

I. CALL TO ORDER

The public meeting of the Board of Commissioners was convened at 10:22 AM by Chair of the Board Michael Pipe.

In attendance were Commissioner Michael Pipe, Commissioner Mark Higgins, Commissioner Steven Dershem, Administrator Margaret Gray, Deputy Administrator John Franek Jr., Executive Office Supervisor Natalie Smith, Staff Assistant Jillian Savage, Director of Human Resources Kristen Simkins and Controller Jason Moser.

County personnel present included Human Services Administrator Natalie Corman, David Lomison, Ryan Smeltzer, Magisterial District Judge Allen Sinclair, Sheriff Bryan Sampsel and Travis Walker.

Guests present included 8145481055.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments received from the public.

III. MEETING MINUTES

Minutes from the Thursday, April 22, 2021 Board of Commissioners Meeting.

Action: *On a motion by Commissioner Higgins, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes from April 22, 2021.*

IV. PROCLAMATION

Proclamation 12 of 2021 – Proclaiming May 2-8, 2021 as National Tourism and Travel Week.

Action: *On a motion by Commissioner Higgins, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted unanimously to adopt proclamation 12 of 2021.*

V. COVID-19 PLANNING AND RESPONSE

A. COVID-19 Hospitality Industry Recovery Program (CHIRP)

i. Update on the CHIRP Grant Program

Commissioner Higgins reported that grant award checks were mailed yesterday to the 67 CHIRP grant recipients from the first round of applications. Centre County awarded the remainder of the CHIRP funds

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES

THURSDAY, APRIL 29, 2021

PAGE 2

during the second round of applications. The program will no longer be accepting applications for Centre County.

Commissioner Higgins announced that begin at Noon on Monday, May 3, the Small Business Administration will be accepting applications for the Restaurant Revitalization Fund. Under the American Rescue Plan, restaurants and similar businesses whose sales were at least 33% to the general public are eligible to apply.

ii. Approval of CHIRP Grant Recipients

B. COVID-19 Vaccine Guidelines

Director of Human Resources Kristen Simkins reported that while Centre County employees are strongly encouraged to receive a COVID vaccine, it is not required.

COVID Medical Leave may be used by employees who miss work to receive a COVID vaccination, or have symptoms related to the vaccine within the first 24-hours. Employees wishing to use COVID Medical Leave for vaccine related reasons will need to provide Human Resources with a copy of their vaccination card for verification.

Vaccine data collected by Human Resources will be kept confidential. This data will be used for decisions regarding reopening County buildings to the public. Commissioner Dershem stated that he is not supportive of the collection of vaccine data. While it may be informative, it is intrusive.

Kristen reported that Human Resources is hoping to hold an Educational Campaign starting next week to provided information on the vaccines to employees.

On a motion by Commissioner Higgins, seconded by Commissioner Pipe, the Board voted 2-1 to approve the COVID-19 vaccine guidelines for Centre County Government, with Commissioner Dershem opposed.

VI. PERSONNEL ITEMS

On a motion by Commissioner Higgins, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted unanimously to approve Personnel Items A-E, including the amendment to Item D.

- A. Children & Youth Services - Appointment for Jane Yi, full-time Caseworker 1 – C&YS, Children & Youth Services, (p.c. #37, non-exempt, replacing C. Black), at SG-N11A(01)--\$15.59/hour, effective May 17, 2021, pay period 11. Salary budget savings for 2021 \$2,923 - Dept. 511.
- B. Correctional Facility – Personnel requisition full-time Corrections Officer, Correctional Facility, (p.c. #42, non-exempt, replacing J. Muthersbaugh), at SG-N10, effective retro to April 19, 2021, pay period 9 – Dept. 333.
- C. Elections - Appointment for Cimberly A. Besecker, Temporary Elections Worker, Elections, (p.c. #42, non-exempt, new), at SG-N02U(21)--\$15.11/hour, effective April 30, 2021, pay period 10 – Dept. 131.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES

THURSDAY, APRIL 29, 2021

PAGE 3

- D. Financial Management – Consider approval of the new job description for the position of Chief Financial Officer, Financial Management, SG-S66, effective April 29, 2021, pay period 10 – Dept. 113.

On a motion by Commissioner Higgins, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted unanimously to amend item D. Financial Management to; Consider approval of the revision to the job description for the position of Director of Financial Management to change the title to Chief Financial Officer, Financial Management, SG-S66, effective April 29, 2021, pay period 10. A new job class code will be created for the change in job title to preserve historical information – Dept. 113.

- E. Risk Management – New job description for the position of Chief Risk Officer/Director of Workplace Operations, Risk Management, SG-S56, effective retro to April 25, 2021, pay period 10 – Dept. 112.

VII. REPORT ON JUDICIAL PERSONNEL ITEMS

MDJ Centre Hall 49-3-04

- i. President Judge Pamela Ruest has approved the personnel requisition for full-time Office Supervisor 2, MDJ-Jordan, (p.c. #02, non-exempt, replacing K. Reese), at SG-S45, effective April 20, 2021, pay period 9 – Dept. 256.
- ii. President Judge Pamela Ruest has approved the personnel requisition for full-time Magisterial District Court Secretary, MDJ-Jordan, (p.c. #11, non-exempt, replacing J. Miller), at SG-N08, effective April 16, 2021, pay period 9 – Dept. 256.

VIII. REPORT ON ROW OFFICE PERSONNEL ITEMS

Sheriff – Sheriff Bryan Sampsel has approved the personnel requisition for part-time Security Officer, Sheriff, (p.c. #15, non-exempt, replacing B. Greene), at SG-N08, effective April 20, 2021, pay period 9 – Dept. 211.

IX. NON-PERSONNEL ITEMS

A. Commissioners

- i. Administrator Margaret Gray presented a letter of engagement with Babst Calland, Clements and Zomnir, P.C. to jointly represent the County of Centre and the counties identified with respect to the litigation filed in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania titled Ercole A. Mirachi vs. Kathy Boockvar et al, and docketed to Civil Action 21-0126. The hourly rates for this representation are \$235, \$240, or \$305, as determined by assignment of legal counsel – Dept. 111.

Commissioner Dershem asked if this fell outside of Betsy Dupuis' role as County Solicitor. Margaret stated that the payment for Betsy's time is outside of the retainer paid for the County Solicitor, as there will be others working on this matter, as well as the representation of several counties.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES

THURSDAY, APRIL 29, 2021

PAGE 4

Action: *Commissioner Higgins, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted unanimously to approve the letter of engagement with Babst Calland, Clements and Zomnir, P.C.*

- ii. Deputy Administrator John Franek Jr. asked the Board to consider authorization to re-enroll Centre County's electric accounts in the Spring 2021 COSTARS Electric Procurement event, allowing Penn State's Facilities Engineering Institute to include Centre County's electric accounts in a consortium Request for Quotes (RFQ). The current enrollment period ends December 2021. Provided a price per kWh is received that is less than the provider of last resort, the new term will begin January 1, 2022 – Dept. 111.

John reported that for the past three years the majority of Centre County's electric accounts have been enrolled in a consortium through Penn State's Facilities Energy Institute, which secured COSTARS pricing for the County's electric needs. The Energy Institute has reached out to all consortium members to determine who wishes to participate in the next RFQ, and if additional accounts or changes are needed for the finalized RFQ, to be issued on May 17. If authorized, the County has identified nearly 40 accounts in total to be considered for inclusion in the RFQ.

The County has until May 7 to opt in or out of the next RFQ process with the Energy Institute. It is recommended that the Commissioners defer this decision be tabled until the Board of Commissioners meeting on Thursday, May 6th, to allow time to gather more information.

Action: *Commissioner Higgins, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted unanimously to table the re-enrollment of Centre County's electric accounts in the Spring 2021 COSTARS Electric Procurement event until May 6th.*

B. Human Services

- i. MH/ID/EI – Human Services Administrator Natalie Corman asked for the Boards approval for the submission of a grant renewal application to the Office of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) for the First Episode Psychosis program. Funding would provide an opportunity to create a Coordinated Specialty Care for individuals experiencing their first episode with symptoms of a significant mental illness with psychosis symptoms. Individuals supported by this program can range in age of 14-30 years old. The total grant amount is \$180,000, which is State funded for the period of July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022 – Dept. 561.

Action: *Commissioner Higgins, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted unanimously to approve the submission of the grant renewal application to OMHSAS.*

X. DISCUSSION ITEMS

XI. C-NET REQUESTS

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES

THURSDAY, APRIL 29, 2021

PAGE 5

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION REPORT

Administrator Margaret Gray reported the Board met in executive session on Tuesday, April 27 from 1:08 PM to 1:37 PM to discuss personnel matters.

XIII. QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Commissioner Higgins, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:54 AM.

ATTEST:

Margaret N. Gray
Administrator