



## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WORK SESSION MINUTES

Tuesday, September 28, 2021, 11:00 A.M.

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

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### I. CALL TO ORDER

The public work session of the Centre County Board of Commissioners was convened at 11:01 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., and Executive Office Supervisor Natalie Smith.

County personnel present included Ray Stolin, Liz Lose, Chad Joyce, Terry Fisher, and Travis Walker.

Guests present included Kim Stank, and Corey Troutman.

Representatives from the news media included Halie Kines.

### II. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments received from the public.

### III. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

#### a. Review Approved Allocations as of September 26, 2021.

Kim Stank reported that Centre County has committed \$6,064,200 of the County's \$31,490,000 APRA Allocation, and \$4.5 million has been expended.

#### b. Proposed ARPA Allocations

##### i. Microsoft Office 365 license – expedited migration, \$31,000 not budgeted in 2021.

Administrator Margaret Gray reported that this would allow migration to be completed a year earlier. Office 365 allows employees to work remotely should the County need to transition to a more off-site workforce.

Chief Information and Records Officer Chad Joyce reported that the contract with CDW-G for the expedited Office 365 Licenses was approved at today's Board of Commissioners meeting.

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- ii. Temporary walk-in freezer pod at the Correctional Facility in the amount of \$21,672.

Margaret reported that the Board approved the rental contract with Polar Leasing Company, Inc. at today's Board of Commissioners Meeting. Due to the current significant shortage of truck drivers, the freezer will allow the Correctional Facility to hold additional supplies between deliveries. The total allocation of \$22,241 includes site prep for installation of the freezer.

Deputy Administrator John Franek, Jr. stated the Correctional Facility staff have indicated interest in using this for a long term solution considering the unit's additional benefits to the Facility's regular operation.

Commissioner Dershem suggested that after a field test for one year, which is the term of rental contract, then the County can consider the purchase of a unit for long term use.

- iii. Consider creation of a fund for miscellaneous County administrative and programmatic expenses eligible for ARPA reimbursement not to exceed \$20,000.

Margaret reported that departments have submitted requests that meet the requirements of ARPA. Identifying a fund for these requests would allow expenditures to be considered on a quicker rolling basis. Corey Troutman agreed that a fund would help make this process more efficient.

- iv. Broadband Plan Proposals – Summary of Responses

Margaret noted that Director of Planning & Community Development Ray Stolinas, and Assistant Director Liz Lose were asked to reach out to Consultants to provide a project proposal to determine the strategic needs of broadband countywide before entering into a single project.

Liz reported that on August 12, 2021 letters were sent to a short list of firms requesting they submit project proposals by September 16, 2021. The County received proposals from three companies, CTC Technology, Design Nine and Lewis Strategic. Lewis Strategic's proposal did not align with the requested scope of work.

The Board discussed the proposals provided by Design Nine and CTC Technologies. Design Nine came recommended out of the Southern Alleghenies and has excellent GIS expertise. Design Nine and CTC Technologies have a similar scope of work, however, CTC Technologies has the Cohen Law Group as a supporting subcontractor and has testified in front of Congress.

The Board requested to meet with the Consultants to further discuss the proposals before a decision is made.

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- v. United States Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grant Opportunities

Commissioner Higgins stated that the EDA has allocated funds from their ARPA allocation as follows: \$750 thousand for travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation, and \$240 million for competitive tourism grants. Commissioner Higgins has contacted Happy valley Adventure Bureau (HVAB) Executive Director Fritz Smith to create a proposal for a potentially State level grant. Other projects that may be considered for this are Rowland Theatre, Curtin Village, Harvest Fields Mountain Bike Paths, Nittany Valley Performing Arts Center, and the Bellefonte Borough Waterfront.

If HVAB's application is successful, Fritz has asked if the Board will consider a partial funding match. Commissioner Higgins will advise HVAB through the process and will verify if the selected project is eligible for ARPA funds.

- vi. Consultant proposal to conduct a feasibility study for a health department \$11,925.

Administrator Margaret Gray reported that there has been a lot of interest and commentary regarding Centre County's need of a Health Department. State College Borough has had similar comments and is interested in expanding their Health Department.

Delaware County does not have a dept and has engaged a consultant to conduct inventory of health services across the county and what it means for part or all of the County to have a health office. This Consultant resides in State College and is willing to conduct the study for \$24,000, which would be shared between Centre County and State College Borough. CO and SC Boro. The Consultant would look at all portions of the County, talk with stakeholders and present findings about need for this type of service.

Commissioner Dershem stated he is not in favor of expanding Centre County Government any further and is therefore not in favor of this.

The Board discussed the benefits and draw back of the proposal. The assessment would allow insight into what services are available within the County. However, this does not include a strategy for moving forward.

The Board will take a vote on this proposal at the Tuesday, October 5, 2021 Board of Commissioners meeting.

- c. RTK Software

John identified the annual cost of this software would be approximately \$10 thousand. The goal of this is to create a system where people could frequently submit requests through software to not only stream line requests, but to encourage social distancing by giving individuals a digital option for these requests.

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IV. QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS

V. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Commissioner Higgins, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 12:16 PM.

ATTEST:

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Margaret N. Gray  
Administrator