



## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WORK SESSION MINUTES

Tuesday, October 17, 2023, 2:30 P.M.

Willowbank Office Building  
420 Holmes Street, Room 144  
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 2:35 PM by Chair of the Board Mark Higgins.

In attendance were Commissioner Mark Higgins, Commissioner Amber Concepcion, Commissioner Steven Dershem, Administrator John Franek Jr. and Executive Office Supervisor Erin Good.

County personnel present included Richard Killian, Human Services Administrator Julia Sprinkle, Deputy Administrator Natalie Corman, Faith Ryan and Jeff Doeblor.

Guests present included Janine Sejuitt-Gnall (zoom) and Bobbi Jo Powell with SAM, Inc.

### II. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comment received from the public.

### III. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda.

### IV. 2024 COUNTY BUDGET

#### A. Adult Services

Richard stated there are currently no vacancies in the Adult Services Department. Faith Ryan stated her department had several changes over the last year but is in a good place now. They have matching requirements for DCED and HUD but those are matched with Human Services Block Grant funds.

Faith stated ERAP changes have made the program steadier. The Whole Home Program is moving very fast and they will be working with Habitat for Humanity and other contractors. A full spectrum of individuals are being served through the Whole Home Program. The Emergency Solution Grant (ESG) Program through DCED is very challenging to run and is very specific on who it can serve. Faith stated on October 2<sup>nd</sup> her department has started a time study and weekly reports to determine how much time her staff are working on various programs and projects, which will help develop programs further for the future.

Faith stated ERAP 1 was officially closed on September 30, 2022 and once the first 75 percent of funds are used, the final 25 percent of the funding can be used to housing. Faith was looking to use the final 25 percent, which is about \$2.5 million to be used towards the Whole Home Program. Commissioner Dershem asked if the 25

percent of the funds could be used for emergency home repairs and heating oil expenses. Faith stated as long as the individuals are renters, they should be able to use the funds towards both. Commissioner Dershem also stated older adults should be considered for help with utility bills, etc. Faith stated her department has seen a high increase in seniors with the inflation costs rising. Commissioner Dershem stated we should do more outreach for returning citizens returning to the workforce as well.

Faith stated her department submitted the rapid rehousing program through HUD and out of hundreds of applications, Centre County scored as the top applicant. Faith stated the application involves a lot of moving parts and wanted to recognize and thank her staff for all the hard work.

Commissioner Higgins commented that the grant funding is a much bigger number than what we have worked with in the past. Faith stated the number of grants have gone down a little since there were so many available in 2022, but the amount of funding that Adult Services was awarded has increased.

Faith Ryan and Jeff Doeblen were excused from the meeting.

V. RECESS

The Board voted unanimously to recess the meeting at 3:13 PM.

Dave Lomison joined the meeting.

The public work session of the Centre County Board of Commissioners was reconvened at 3:30 P.M. by Chair of the Board Mark Higgins.

B. Transportation

Richard stated the Transportation Department should have no vacancies by the end of the week. There is one request to upgrade the Fleet Maintenance Supervisor position to an Assistant Director position. Dave stated a new hire within his department will be dedicated strictly for the mail run in the near future, and this will allow staff to have one contact for mail services.

Dave stated his department is up 7,700 trips from last year as well as up \$167,000 in revenue. With the added personnel, his department is able to do more trips for the Centre County community residents. The shared-ride rates have been raised annually for the last three years and will be raised again in March of 2024 instead of July.

Dave confirmed the Medicare ride numbers are about even for 2023. Dave stated he attended a recent Township Meeting regarding CATA Go discontinuing their services in Spring Township. Dave stated these services are beyond what his Department can provide, and a few residents attended and spoke up at the meeting. The deadline to make a decision for CATA Go is February.

Kristen Simkins joined the meeting.

Dave stated the fleet is in good shape and is being used. His department has been utilizing the Penn State In-kind funds, which helps the transportation department when purchasing used vehicles to upgrade our fleet when needed.

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS – UPDATES

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VII. BUDGET MEETING SCHEDULE  
Wednesday, October 18, 2023  
Court Administration – 2:00 PM – Willowbank 146

VIII. QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS

IX. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Commissioner Concepcion, seconded by Commissioner Dershem, the Board voted unanimously adjourn the meeting at 3:59 PM.

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

John Franek Jr.

Administrator