

The regular meeting of the Clearfield County Commissioners was held on Tuesday, November 13, 2018 with Chair Sobel conducting the meeting. The following were in attendance: Commissioners Scotto and McCracken; Kim Kesner, Solicitor; Tom Adamson, Controller; Joe Bigar and Dan Spencer, Clearfield County EMA; Yvonne Lehman, WOKW Radio; Jessica Shirey, gantdaily.com; Jeff Corcino, Progress/Courier; Lisa McFadden, Chief Clerk.

Minutes of the previous meeting of October 23, 2018 were approved by motion of Commissioner Scotto, seconded by Commissioner McCracken; motion carried unanimously.

Controller Adamson presented the following bills for approval: General Fund, \$1,175,486.17; Liquid Fuels Fund, \$3,522.57; 911 Materials Fund, \$286,413.65; Children Youth Services Fund, \$313,437.84; Domestic Relations Fund, \$267,132.84. Approval of the bills by Commissioner McCracken, seconded by Commissioner Scotto; motion carried unanimously.

#### Personnel Changes

New Hires – Tequila Gardner, Part-time Corrections Officer/Jail, effective October 29, 2018

Tiffany Wells, Part-time Corrections Officer/Jail, effective November 5, 2018.

Kelly Livergood, Secretary II/Jail, effective November 8, 2018.

Transfers – Gidget Spencer, Department Clerk II/Prothonotary to Deputy Prothonotary/Clerk of Courts, effective October 30, 2018.

#### Separations/Retirements

Roger Moore, Part Time Corrections Officer/Jail, effective October 31, 2018.

Michael Burgeson, 911 Telecommunicator/911, effective November 16, 2018.

Approval of the personnel changes by Commissioner McCracken, seconded by Commissioner Scotto; motion carried unanimously.

#### Public Comment – None

Old Business - Solicitor Kesner explained that there was a data breach concerning a number of County Children Youth Services and AVANCO was the provider. CCAP made a claim against AVANCO and In connection with the costs of dealing with the breach and a settlement was reached between CCAP and AVANCO and CCAP is asking that all of the Counties involved to approve the settlement. Chair Sobel commented that although he is not happy with the proposed settlement he would agree to accept the settlement. Motion to approve the settlement by Commissioner Scotto, seconded by Commissioner McCracken; motion carried unanimously.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Joe Bigar asked the Board to consider the 2018 State Homeland Security Grant agreement with the Northwest Central Task Force Region. Mr. Bigar explained that this is the annual Homeland Security Grant. Solicitor Kesner approved the document as to form. Motion to approve the grant agreement by commissioner McCracken, seconded by Commissioner Scotto; motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Bigar also presented a Site Land Lease Agreement for consideration with Robert and Thomas Conway t/d/b/a Industrial Electronics. Mr. Bigar stated Industrial Electronics would like to rent space on one of our tower sites for a local utility company. The County will receive a monthly payment of \$265 for the space rental. Solicitor Kesner would like to offer alternative language for the assignment portion of the agreement whereas there cannot be any assignment of the lease agreement without authorization by the County. Solicitor Kesner will provide the preferred language to Mr. Bigar to forward on to Industrial Electronics for consideration. Motion to table the agreement by Commissioner pending resolution of the Assignment clause. McCracken, seconded by Commissioner Scotto; motion carried unanimously.

Joe Bigar asked the Board to consider implementation of CODE RED mass notification system. Code Red is a mass notification system in the event of any major incidents within the County. For example, this past Saturday I-80 was closed due to multiple vehicle accidents. With CODE RED, you could receive immediate notices to avoid those areas and provide alternative routes. Dan Spencer will be in charge of implementing CODE RED and explained that with signing up for CODE RED that a message will be coming from officials as opposed to social media that may or may not be accurate. Motion by Commissioner Scotto to implement the CODE RED notification system, seconded by Commissioner McCracken; motion carried unanimously.

Chair Sobel spoke of the need to advertise for Court Reporting Services as the County currently only has one Court Reporter that is a County employee. The County utilizes two individuals as Court Reporters who are independent contractors, at this time there are no current contracts in place for the service. Motion to approve advertising for Court Reporter services by Commissioner McCracken, seconded by Commissioner Scotto; motion carried unanimously.

Purchase of Service Agreements: Children's Aid Society; Child Advocacy Center of Clearfield County; Appalachian Youth Service, Inc.; Life Span Family Services; The Bair Foundation; Project Point of Light. Motion to approve the purchase of service agreements by Commissioner Scotto, seconded by Commissioner McCracken; motion carried unanimously.

Chair Sobel asked for a motion to approve the lease agreement with EJS Real Estate, LLC. for the office of District Judge Glass. Chief Clerk McFadden advised the Board that she had not received the executed copies from EJS Real Estate at the time of the meeting. Solicitor Kesner suggested authorizing the Chair's execution of the lease agreement upon receiving the signed document from EJS. Motion to approve authorization of the Chair's execution of the lease agreement once received from EJS by Commissioner McCracken, seconded by Commissioner Scotto; motion carried unanimously.

Chair Sobel called for a motion to appointment of Tyler Hicks to the Clearfield County Conservation District. Mr. Hicks is currently an Associate Director and will fill the unexpired term of Mike Kennis until December 31, 2019. Motion to approve the appointment by Commissioner Scotto, seconded by Commissioner McCracken; motion carried unanimously.

Chief Clerk McFadden asked the Board to approve a copier lease with Doing Better Business for a copier to be used in the Sheriff's office. The lease terms are 48 months at a cost of \$89.60/month. Approval of the lease by Commissioner McCracken, seconded by Commissioner Scotto; motion carried unanimously.

Chair Sobel provided the information concerning the solicited proposals for a Tax Anticipation Note for 2019. The following were received:

Northwest Bank Fixed Rate of 3.63% on a tax-free basis

First Commonwealth Tax Free Fixed rate of 3.13%

CNB - Taxable Exempt Rate Fixed at 2.74% with bond counsel being waived or Taxable Rate of 3.92%

CBT Bank - Taxable Fixed Rate of 3.45%

Commissioner McCracken advised that the solicitation that was sent to the lending institutions asked for taxable rates as opposed to a tax free rate so the County could avoid the time and cost of having to utilize bond council. Commissioner McCracken spoke that CBT Bank was the only bank that provided the information that was requested. CNB did offer a Tax Exempt Rate waiving bond council, but Solicitor Kesner advised that more information would need to be clarified with CNB. Solicitor Kesner said he would explore the information with CNB Bank and would report at the next Commissioners meeting.

Chair Sobel began discussion concerning the 2019 Budget and began that the preliminary budget shows deficit of \$1,587,136 with an anticipated tax increase of two mills. Chair Sobel said over the next few weeks they would try to cut the deficit to see what they can do to address the high budget numbers. Chair Sobel also said that there is possibility of staff layoffs within the County. Commissioner McCracken also added that included in the budget is \$190,000 for a proposed lease purchase of new election equipment that the State of Pennsylvania is mandating all PA counties to have in place by 2020 with little funding to help purchase the equipment from the State. Commissioner Scotto agreed that jail and CYS costs are a big part of the increases in the budget. He said expanding the jail is not an option, as the good citizens will be paying for the bad citizens with a large tax increase. The inmate population continues to grow with no trend in site of this going down. Commissioner McCracken agreed that expanding the jail is not a cost savings and will be a huge debt service.

The Commissioners provided the following press release:

#### CLEARFIELD COUNTY FACES HUGE BUDGET DEFICIT FROM INCREASED CRIME AND INMATE POPULATION

The first run budget presented to the Clearfield County Commissioners shows a deficit of \$1,587,136. The County has the option of partially addressing the deficit with a 2-mill increase in real estate taxes, which is projected to bring in an additional \$699,772 in revenue but would still leave a deficit of \$887,364. However, the 2-mill increase puts the county at the maximum 25 mills that can be legally levied for general fund purposes without approval by the Court of Common Pleas.

The 2019 budget shows significant increases in expenses related to the courts and operational costs for the Clearfield County Jail brought on by a steady increase in prison inmate population that started in 2016. Historical trends before 2016 showed typical daily inmate population numbers around 130 that occasionally spiked to around 150. Starting in late 2016, daily inmate population numbers started to rise above 150 eventually getting as high as over 200 inmates during 2018. With inmate population numbers this high, it became necessary to house the overflow population in Jefferson County Prison at a cost of \$55 per day for each inmate. The increased inmate population not only causes significant increased costs at the jail for medical treatment, meals, transport, overtime and out of county housing, it also increases costs and workload for all court and court related departments. Of note are the unprecedented number of homicide trials that are currently pending in Clearfield County. Prosecuting, defending and incarcerating the defendants involved in homicide cases is putting an even greater strain on county finances.

The cost burden of expanding the jail, estimated at \$10 million, as a solution to the inmate population problem would fall directly on Clearfield County taxpayers. The debt service on a \$10 million jail expansion will cause an additional 3 mill debt service tax levy on all annual tax bills that would stay in place until the debt is paid off in 15 to 20 years. In addition to the debt service, a larger jail will increase the daily operational costs including additional staffing and utility costs necessary to run the larger jail facility. It should be noted a jail expansion is not included as part of the 2019 budget. Additionally, the increase in criminal activity causes an increase in cases and corresponding costs for Children and Youth Services. When you see a criminal case, usually drug related, that involves defendants who are also parents, Children and Youth Services will likely be involved and have to remove children and place them in foster care. The increase in crime, coupled with additional cases and involvement by Children and Youth Services is a direct driver of increased costs for Clearfield County Government and, ultimately for county taxpayers.

The following is a list of specific budget line item increases related to the increase in inmate population, crime, drug related deaths and a 47% increase in county general fund allocation to Children and Youth Services:

CATEGORY	2018 Budget	2019 Budget	Increase
Jail Overtime	\$130,000	\$250,000	+\$120,000
Jail Out of County Inmate Housing	\$82,850	\$300,000	+\$217,150
Jail – Food Service / Inmate Meals	\$290,000	\$380,000	+\$90,000
Jail – Inmate Medical Expenses	\$200,000	\$280,000	+\$80,000
Transfer to Domestic Relations	\$379,343	\$467,392	+\$88,049
Transfer to Children & Youth Svcs	\$1,215,697	\$1,785,532	+\$569,835
Courts – Contracted Services	\$85,000	\$110,000	+\$25,000
Courts – Special Counsel Criminal	\$79,000	\$90,000	+\$11,000
Courts – Transcriptions	\$19,000	\$27,000	+\$8,000
Coroner Post Mortem / Autopsies	\$140,000	\$170,000	+\$30,000
Sheriff Overtime	\$12,500	\$15,000	+\$2,500
<b>BUDGET INCREASES DRIVEN BY INCREASES IN CRIME/INMATE POPULATION</b>			<b>+\$1,241,534</b>

Solicitors Report - None

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Scotto, seconded by Commissioner McCracken; motion carried unanimously.