

WORK SESSION:

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2022, 10:00 A.M.

Location:

Commissioners Meeting Room, Basement.

**Public meetings are being held both in-person and by conference call. To participate in the meeting please dial 1-408-419-1715 or 1-408-915-6290 and enter meeting number 2468097683#*

Call to Order:

Commissioner Erb called the meeting to order.

Moment of Silent Reflection:

Commissioner Erb called for a moment of silent reflection.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag:

Commissioner Erb requested that those participating in the meeting please stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll Call:

Members Present:

Commissioner Erb, Commissioner Burke, Commissioner Webster, Chief Clerk Hemminger and Solicitor Karn.

Others Present:

Melissa Harpster (Commissioners Office), Cris Fredrickson (EMA 911/E), Judy Rosser (Blair Drug & Alcohol), Melissa Gillin and Trina Illig (Social Services), Jim Pooler (Public Works/Building Maintenance), David Kessling (Public), Angela Wagner (Controller’s Office), Carol A. Dannenberg (Hollidaysburg Community Watchdog), Paul Shaffer (Public Works), Lindsay Dempsie (Finance), Kay Stephens (Altoona Mirror), Sherry Socie (Planning Commission), Rebecca Robinson (Purchasing), and Jim Ott (Sheriff).

Upcoming Meetings:

Wednesday, December 7, 2022	9:00 a.m.	*Retirement Board Mtg. (Commissioners Mtg. Rm.)
	10:30 a.m.	*Salary Board Mtg. (Commissioners Mtg. Rm.)
Thursday, December 8, 2022	10:00 a.m.	*Commissioners Business Session (Commissioners Mtg. Rm.)
Friday, December 9, 2022		
Monday, December 12, 2022		
Tuesday, December 13, 2022	10:00 a.m.	Commissioners Work Session (CANCELLED)
	7:00 p.m.	Airport Authority Mtg. (Blair County Airport)

Public Comment:

Commissioner Erb called for public comment. **There were no comments noted.**

Commissioners Comments:

Commissioner Erb called for commissioner comments.

Commissioner Webster shared a few words on the remembrance of Pearl Harbor Day 1941.

Commissioner Burke had no comments to present.

Commissioner Erb provided the following comments pertaining to 2021 Reimbursement of Court Costs:

“There is almost nothing more frustrating to county government than the unfunded mandates routinely forced on us by higher level of governments.

But I think routinely breaking a pledge to pay an obligation is worse.

Once again, I am expressing this commissioner’s frustration as the Commonwealth continues to ignore its funding responsibilities for the County Courts.

In late October, the County Treasurer’s office received a payment of \$227,299 from the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) representing our 2021 court reimbursement.

A delay of almost 10 months after the expenses had all been incurred is bad enough, but the bigger problem is significantly worse than being extremely delinquent.

In the 1980’s, 2 separate appellate court decisions ruled that the Commonwealth was responsible for funding 100% of the costs of operating and administering local courts.

A compromise of sorts was reached between the Commonwealth and the County Commissioners Association of PA (CCAP) to make district court administrators and their deputies’ state rather than county employees and for the state to pay counties \$70,000 annually per judge to cover their staffing costs and expenses.

That \$70,000 per judge amount hasn’t been increased in the ensuing years while inflation and the actual costs have increased significantly. As measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), inflation increased 141.6% between 1987 and 2021.

So if the reimbursement would have been indexed to CPI (like state officials’ salaries are), counties would be receiving \$169,120 per judge. In theory, Blair County should have received \$350,000 (5 judges at \$70,000) for 2021, but once again AOPC shorted us by \$122,771 just like they had for 2020. Their excuse: insufficient funding was appropriated.

Since I took office almost 7 years ago, the Commonwealth has shortchanged Blair County by a cumulative total of almost \$850,000 using the formula from the 1980’s.

The last time Blair County received the full \$350,000 was for the year 2014, and even then AOPC never sent the funds to us until January, 2016.

But the real shortage is much more than \$122,771.

The total cost of the 5 judges' staffs for salaries, benefits, and other employer-paid expenses in 2021 was \$696,864, making the actual shortfall of state funding \$469,565. Which means AOPC reimbursed us for less than 1/3 of our actual costs.

This is just another burden dumped on Blair County taxpayers by Harrisburg.

It's time for the administration and legislature in Harrisburg to do the right thing, keep their agreement, and fully reimburse counties for their court costs.

Because it is the county taxpayers and more specifically the county property owners who end up bearing the burden that the Commonwealth is shirking."

Consent Agenda:

Resolution #507-2022:

- a. Payment of the following six (6) Warrant Lists:

EFFECTIVE DATE	WARRANT NUMBER	AMOUNT
12/06/2022	221206WW	\$444,303.10
12/06/2022	221206CO	\$ 22,715.91
12/06/2022	221206CY	\$ 15,394.24
12/06/2022	221206TD	\$ 96,346.54
12/06/2022	221206PP	\$ 1,560.00
12/06/2022	221206SS	\$480,703.84

Which include payment of the following invoices:

- Blair Senior Services, in the total amount of \$676.00.
- Payment to Julia Burke.

- b. Ratification of the following nine (9) Warrant Lists:

EFFECTIVE DATE	WARRANT NUMBER	AMOUNT
12/01/2022	221201WC	\$ 6,250.00
12/01/2022	221201HR	\$ 29,149.90
12/01/2022	221201FN	\$117,016.69
12/01/2022	221201HI	\$524,452.24
11/29/2022	221129MW	\$197,410.73
11/29/2022	221129EO	\$ 66,767.38
11/29/2022	221129FS	\$ 2,425.15
11/25/2022	221125RF	\$ 1,828.19
11/25/2022	221125HR	\$ 4,191.86

- c. Ratification of Total Payroll for the Check Dated December 1, 2022, in the total amount of \$854,719.63.

- d. **2022 Budget Transfer:** To cover non-staff sustenance expenses.

From	\$	To
01101GCO-41999 General County Operation's	\$79,030.00	01209PO-45000 Prison

- e. **2022 Budget Transfer:** To cover travel expenses for the Deputy Coroner to attend required training.

From	\$	To
01101GCO-41999 General County Operation's	\$1,070.04	01152-42060 Coroner
01101GCO-41999 General County Operation's	\$ 210.00	01152-42050 Coroner
01101GCO-41999 General County Operation's	\$ 120.52	01152-42040 Coroner

- f. **2022 Budget Transfer:** To cover autopsy and transport services:

From	\$	To
01101GCO-41999 General County Operations	\$41,924.00	01152-44120 Coroner
01101GCO-41999 General County Operations	\$ 4,634.00	01152-44000 Coroner

- g. **Prison:** Requesting approval of one-1 South Hills School of Business Intern, Kathryn Descavish, for the period of March 14, 2023 through June 8, 2023 (330 hours). Internship is for credit only and at no cost to the county.

- h. **Blair County Conservation District Board:** Requesting approval of the reappointment of John Morrow (Farmer Director) to the Blair County Conservation District Board, for the period of January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2026; and for the reappointment of Commissioner Bruce R. Erb, for the period of January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023.

- i. **Employment:** Connie J. Curfman, PT, Tipstaff, Court Administration, \$11.58/hr., effective 12/05/22; Erin M. George, FT, Receptionist/Clerk, Prothonotary, \$11.03/hr., effective 12/05/22; Gladys J. George, FT, Department Clerk 1, Domestic Relations, \$11.03/hr., effective 12/05/22; Samuel L. Harker, FT, Deputy, Sheriff's Office, \$16.00/hr., effective 12/05/22; Catherine A. Livingston, FT, Clerk Typist 1/Receptionist, CYF, \$10.49/hr., effective 12/05/22; Renee L. Mahalko, From, PT, Courtroom Clerk, Prothonotary, \$12.16/hr., To, PT, Receptionist/Clerk, Prothonotary, \$11.03/hr., effective 11/28/22; Jennifer E. Lewis, From, FT, Clerk Typist 1/Filing, CYF, \$10.60/hr., To, FT, Administrative Support, JPO, \$11.58/hr., effective 12/05/22; and Michael E. Sheppard, From, FT, Custodian, Public Works, \$17.39/hr., To, FT, Maintenance Technician, Public Works, \$16.43/hr., effective 12/05/22.

- j. **Resignations:** Brandon M. Ott, FT, Corrections Officer, Prison, \$21.67/hr., effective 11/22/22; Meghan F. Irwin, FT, Deputy Director, Domestic Relations, \$48,359.48/yr., effective 12/05/22; and Bobbie J. Thurman, FT, Casework Supervisor, CYF, \$46,246.46/yr., effective 12/07/22.

Commissioner Burke noted her abstention due to a conflict of interest on the payment of invoices to Blair Senior Services, in the total amount of \$676.00 and to Julia Burke.

Motion by Commissioner Webster, seconded by Commissioner Burke and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 507-2022 with the abstention as noted.

Staff Reports & Special Business:

Blair Drug and Alcohol:

Judy Rosser requested approval for the submission of a FY 22/23 Probation with Restrictive Conditions Intermediate Punishment Treatment Grant (#37214) Budget Modification to the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) to increase the personnel salary budget line \$30,101.50, and increase the benefits budget line \$2,776.50, to support the drug tester positions for the specialty court programs, thus reducing the SCRAM budget line \$10,500.00, and the IOP/OP budget line \$22,378.00.

Mrs. Rosser stated that this grant currently provides funding for treatment services for drug court and DUI court participants. She stated that due to the loss of funding from the PCCD Drug Testing Grant, there is now a need for alternative funding to support the drug tester salaries and benefits.

Mrs. Rosser stated that a budget modification request would be for six (6) months of salary and benefits for the drug tester positions totaling \$32,878.00 (\$30,101.50 salary and \$2,776.50 benefits). To support this budget modification request, the recommendation is to move funding as follows:

Reduce the SCRAM budget line by:	\$10,500.00
<u>Reduce the IOP--OP budget line by:</u>	<u>\$22,378.00</u>
Total Salary & Benefits for drug tester positions:	\$32,878.00

Discussion followed.

Department of Emergency Services:

Cris Fredrickson requested approval of a quote received from Valley Tire-Altoona, in the total amount of \$4,127.60, for the purchase and mounting of six-6 tires for the Comm One (Big Red) vehicle. Price includes dismounting and disposal of the old tires, and will be paid with PEMA Funds.

Discussion followed.

Social Services:

- a. Trina Illig requested approval to advertise for proposals for professional engineering services to provide project design, preparation of bid specifications and project inspections services to a project to be funded under the County of Blair's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.

Mrs. Illig stated that the county as a recipient of CDBG funds from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), and other federal, state and local funds to complete CDBG projects, is requesting authorization to advertise for proposals for professional engineering services to provide project design, preparation of bid specifications and project inspection services for project(s) to be funded under the county's CDBG program.

Discussion followed.

- b. Trina Illig requested approval for the submission of a Budget Modification to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) as follows:

FY 2016 CDBG #C00006602

Reduce	Housing Rehabilitation – Rehab 424-426 W First St., Williamsburg	- \$104,731.00
Increase	Demolition and Clearance – 424 W First St., Williamsburg	+\$104,731.00

FY 2021 CDBG #C000082572

Reduce	Housing Rehab – Owner Occupied Non-Entitlements	-\$110,000.00
Increase	Housing Rehab – Sewer Laterals – D2 Sewer Ext., Allegheny Township	+\$ 10,000.00
Create	Housing Rehab– Water Laterals – Everett Road, Freedom Township	+\$100,000.00

Mrs. Illig stated that the FY 2016 budget modification request is to reallocate the funds between the rehab and demolition activity. She stated that due to the extensive costs after bidding, the rehab work was removed from the scope of work and all that remains is the demo.

Mrs. Illig stated that the FY 2021 budget modification request is to allocate needed funds to the existing D2 sewer extension which identified more applicants (currently 5) than originally anticipated by the engineers. She stated that the last item is to allocate funds to the current Everett Road Waterline Extension project. There are currently seventeen (17) applicants looking for financial assistance to connect to new water system recently completed by Freedom Township.

Discussion followed.

- c. Melissa Gillin requested approval of a County of Blair Demolition Fund Program Disbursement, for the demolition of a property located at 323 1st Avenue, Altoona, PA, in the total estimated amount of \$9,450.00 (municipality \$4,725.00; demolition fund \$4,725.00.)

Ms. Gillin stated that the demolition project falls within the Demolition Fund guidelines, and that sufficient funds remain in the account for future needs.

Discussion followed.

Court Administration:

Nicole Hemminger requested approval of a quote received from George T. Bisel Co., Inc., for the 2023 Crimes Code, Vehicle Code and Landlord/Tenant Publications, for use by the Magisterial District Judges, in the total amount of \$2,176.00.

Chief Clerk Hemminger stated that the total amount of \$2,176.00, includes shipping and handling not to exceed two (2) supplements per year, including a fall and/or spring supplement.

Discussion followed.

2023 Budget:

- a. **Review of Committed Funds:**

Lindsay Dempsie requested approval to reduce General Fund Committed Funds **from** \$259,573 (\$243,583– Post Retirement Healthcare (Valley View), \$15,990 – Worker's Comp Reserve (Valley View)) **to** \$200,723 (\$189,518 – Post Retirement Healthcare (Valley View), \$11,205 – Worker's Comp Reserve (Valley View)).

Discussion followed.

Resolution 508-2022: A resolution approving to reduce the county's General Fund Committed Funds **from** \$259,573 (\$243,583– Post Retirement Healthcare (Valley View), \$15,990 – Worker's Comp Reserve (Valley View)) **to** \$200,723 (\$189,518 – Post Retirement Healthcare (Valley View), \$11,205 – Worker's Comp Reserve (Valley View)).

Motion by Commissioner Erb, seconded by Commissioner Webster and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 508-2022.

b. **2023 General Funds and Reserve Account Budget Introduction:**

Lindsay Dempsie provided a brief introduction and review of the 2023 General Funds & the following Reserve Account Budgets:

Liquid Fuels, Hotel Tax, Bond Fund, Hazardous Emergency Response, Fort Roberdeau, Juvenile Probation Grant, Coroner Vital Statistics, Tax Claim, Workers Comp Trust Fund, Unemployment Comp, Domestic Relation Title IV-E, Recreation Fund, Capital Reserve, Technology Fund, Victim Witness ARD, 911 Project, Juvenile Probation Office, Central Booking, Marcellus Shale Fund, Juvenile Title IV-E, Act 44 Bridge Fund, Juvenile Supervision Fee, Social Services, Offender Supervision, and Blair County Retirement Fund.

The 2023 budget remains as presented on December 1, 2022.

Discussion followed.

Resolution 509-2022: A resolution approving the introduction of the 2023 General Funds & the following Reserve Account Budgets:

Liquid Fuels, Hotel Tax, Bond Fund, Hazardous Emergency Response, Fort Roberdeau, Juvenile Probation Grant, Coroner Vital Statistics, Tax Claim, Workers Comp Trust Fund, Unemployment Comp, Domestic Relation Title IV-E, Recreation Fund, Capital Reserve, Technology Fund, Victim Witness ARD, 911 Project, Juvenile Probation Office, Central Booking, Marcellus Shale Fund, Juvenile Title IV-E, Act 44 Bridge Fund, Juvenile Supervision Fee, Social Services, Offender Supervision, and Blair County Retirement Fund.

Motion by Commissioner Erb, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 509-2022.

Old Business:

Department of Emergency Services:

Cris Fredrickson requested approval of an Agreement by and between the County of Blair, Emergency Management Agency (EMA) and the Blair County Planning Commission (BCPC), for Hazard Mitigation Plan Development for 2025, in the amount of \$105,000.00, for the period of August 5, 2022 through August 6, 2025, to be billed as milestones are completed in the development of the plan. Said expenses will be reimbursed through the Hazard Mitigation Plan Grant.

Mrs. Fredrickson stated that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requires that a Hazard Mitigation Plan be prepared and adopted for each political subdivision. She stated that the Planning Commission is in agreement to provide the professional services necessary for the revision of the county's plan.

Mrs. Fredrickson stated that the term of the agreement is August 5, 2022 through August 6, 2025. She stated that \$13,000.00 of the total amount due of \$105,000.00 is included in the 2022 budget; \$52,000.00 included in the 2023 budget; and the remaining balance due of \$40,000.00 will be included in the 2024 budget. The amount is payable according to the milestones agreed upon in the agreement with the total amount reimbursable through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

Discussion followed.

Adjourn:

Meeting Adjourned,

Nicole M. Hemminger, Chief Clerk