

**COMMISSIONERS' MEETING: TUESDAY, August 27, 2024, 1:00 P.M.**

Location: Commissioners Meeting Room, Basement.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Commissioner Kessling called the meeting to order.

**MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION:**

Commissioner Kessling called for a moment of silent prayer for our nation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG:**

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

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Commissioner Kessling, Commissioner Webster, and Commissioner Burke.

**THEIRS PRESENT:**

Lori Guyer (Commissioners), Lindsay Dempse and Brandon Meck (Finance), Sam Dunkle (Court Administration), Tricia Johnson and Cindy James (Social Services), Joe Cox and Molly Wink ( PO), Brian Walters (Human Resources), Becky Robinson (Purchasing), Mindy Hostler (CYF), Glenn Nelson (Fort Roberdeau), Don Weakland (IT), Devin Saylor (Assessment), Rich Huether (Farmland Preservation), Sherry Socie (Blair Planning Commission), Carol Dannenberg (Holidaysburg Community Watchdog), Kay Stephens (Altoona Mirror), and Nate Taylor (Public Access Channel).

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Commissioner Kessling called for public comment.

Kay Stevens requested when the board reaches the topic of the Blair County Trail and Recreation Authority, she would like an update as to where the topic stands.

**COMMISSIONER COMMENT:**

Commissioner Kessling called for commissioner comment.

Commissioner Burke had the opportunity to attend a strategic planning session by the Pennsylvania Counsel of the Arts. There were many exciting discussions about the artistic endeavors happening locally and how we can make the public aware of those opportunities and the grant funding that is available for arts activities.

**ROCLAMATION:**

Commissioner Burke read the following proclamation:

*Proclamation  
2024 Hunger Action Month*

**WHEREAS** hunger and food insecurity are issues of vital concern in Pennsylvania, where, according to Feeding America, over 1.5 million individuals, one in eight Pennsylvanians, and one in every six children experience food insecurity. In Blair County, one and eight neighbors and one in six children are food insecure; and

**WHEREAS** adequate nutritious food has become more expensive and out-of-reach for many neighbors, with food costs increasing more than 27%, leading to record demand for charitable food; and

**WHEREAS** food insecurity, the condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food, is associated with numerous adverse social and health outcomes and is a critical public health issue; and

**WHEREAS** Blair County is committed to taking steps to combat hunger in every corner of our communities and to provide additional resources to those in need; and

**WHEREAS** Blair County is committed to working with the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank to educate people about the role and importance of food banks in addressing hunger and raising awareness of the need to devote more resources and attention to hunger issues; and

**WHEREAS** The Central Pennsylvania Food Bank distributed over 68.5 million pounds of food in Fiscal Year 2024 to Pennsylvanians experiencing food insecurity. In Blair County alone, over 2.3 million pounds of food were distributed; and

**WHEREAS** public and private entities, including policymakers, business leaders, community activists, farmers, concerned citizens, and hunger relief organizations, must collectively work to address food insecurity within the Commonwealth; and

**WHEREAS** the month of September has been designated nationwide as "Hunger Action Month" to raise awareness of the issue of hunger and mobilize our legislature and the public to help end hunger in America;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the Blair County Board of Commissioners, do hereby recognize September 2024 as **HUNGER ACTION MONTH** in Blair County, Pennsylvania, and we call this observance to the attention of our citizens.

**DUTY**, adopted by the Commissioners of the County of Blair, Pennsylvania, this 27<sup>th</sup> day of August 2024.

**BLAIR COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:**

David Kessling, President

Amy E. Webster, Vice-President

Attest:

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Lindsay Dempsey, Chief Clerk

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**Resolution 403-2024:**

a. Payment of the following three-3 Warrant Lists:

EFFECTIVE DATE	WARRANT NUMBER	AMOUNT
08/27/2024	240827WW	407,085.05
08/27/2024	240827SS	477,665.41
08/27/2024	240827CY	56,807.73

b. Ratification of the following three-3 Warrant Lists:

EFFECTIVE DATE	WARRANT NUMBER	AMOUNT
08/23/2024	240823WX	10,944.86
08/22/2024	240822HR	16,411.95
08/19/2024	240819FS	2,519.47

c. Ratification of the Total Payroll for the check dated 8/23/2024 in the total amount of \$856,072.39.

d. **2024 Budget Transfer:** To cover charges from Xerox:

From \$ \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_

01160-44030 Court Administration \$291.00 01160FM-44700 Judge Miller

e. **Resignations:** Kosidlo, Brian K., FT, Maintenance Technician - Equipment Operator, Public Works, \$21.79/hr., effective 08/23/2024. Weber, Amber M., District Court Administrative Support – Blattenberger, Magisterial District Justices, \$12.42/hr., effective 08/26/24. Verbonitz, Douglas S., PT, Telecommunicator, 911 Center, \$16.81/hr., effective 08/25/24.

f. **Employments:** Albright, Brianna L., Dick, Clayton, Gaunt, Sean A., Gindlesperger, Maranda L., Olschewski, Christopher M., Seiler, Lacey A., Smith, Cameron M., West, James. D., and Zink, Amber L., FT, Corrections Officer, Prison, \$21.53/hr., effective 08/26/24. Drennen, Kyle K., FT, Certified Legal Intern, District Attorney, \$22.87/hr., effective 08/26/24. Plouse, Marissa L., FT, Caseworker I, Children Youth & Families, \$20.00/hr., effective 08/26/24.

g. **Status Changes:** Schwartz, Dustin, FT, Temporary Department Assistant, Highway, \$12.50/hr., to FT, Custodian, Building Maintenance, \$16.81/hr., effective 08/22/24.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessler, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 403-2024.

**STAFF REPORTS & SPECIAL BUSINESS:**

**Prison:**

i. Brooke Lafferty requested approval of the award, rejection, or rebidding of the bid received for food and non-food items for the Blair County Prison.

**Resolution 404-2024:** Approving the award of the bid received for food and non-food items for the Blair County Prison.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessler, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 404-2024.

ii. Brooke Lafferty requested approval of the award, rejection, or rebidding of the bid received for milk products for the Blair County Prison.

**Resolution 405-2024:** Approving the award of the bid received for milk products for the Blair County Prison.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessler, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 405-2024.

**Social Services:**

i. Cindy James requested approval of eight-8 FY 24/25 Mental Health (MH) Student Assistance Program (SAP) Letters of Agreement between the County of Blair, Blair County Department of Social Services, UPMC Western Behavioral Health of the Alleghenies (WBHA), and the school districts listed below for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

Altoona Area School District	Holidaysburg School District
Bellwood Antis School District	Spring Cove School District
Bishop Guilfoyle High School	Tyrone Area School District
Claysburg School District	Williamsburg School District

**Resolution 406-2024:** Approving of the of eight-8 FY 24/25 Mental Health (MH) Student Assistance Program (SAP) Letters of Agreement between the County of Blair, Blair County Department of Social Services, UPMC Western Behavioral Health of the Alleghenies (WBHA), and the school districts listed below for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

Altoona Area School District	Holidaysburg School District
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Bellwood Artis School District	Spring Cove School District
Bishop Guilfoyle High School	Tyrone Area School District
Claysburg School District	Williamsburg School District

Motion by Commissioner Kessler, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 406-2024.

- ii. Tricia Johnson, on behalf of Trina Ilig, requested Ratification of signatures on the FFY 2023 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement contract (#C000089766) between the County of Blair and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Community and Economic Development (DCEd) in the amount of \$830,043.00.

**Resolution 407-2024:** Approving the Ratification of signatures on the FFY 2023 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement contract (#C000089766) between the County of Blair and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Community and Economic Development (DCEd) in the amount of \$830,043.00.

Motion by Commissioner Kessler, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 407-2024.

- iii. Tricia Johnson requested approval of the Collaboration/Linkage Agreement between the County of Blair, Department of Social Services, and Peersstar of PA.

**Resolution 408-2024:** Approving the Collaboration/Linkage Agreement between the County of Blair, Department of Social Services, and Peersstar of PA.

Motion by Commissioner Kessler, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 408-2024.

**Blair County Agricultural Land Preservation Board:**

- i. Rich Huether requested approval to rescind Resolution 392-2024 approving the Agreement for the Sale and Purchase of an Agricultural Conservation Easement to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the County of Blair Jointly in Perpetuity and England Family Limited Partnership for 123.9 acres located in Woodbury Township, Blair County, in the total purchase price of \$298,671.30. The Commonwealth shall pay \$209,671.30, and the County shall pay \$85,000.00.

Mr. Huether noted Resolution 409-2024 needs to be rescinded due to a stated incorrect amount that the County will pay.

**Resolution 409-2024:** Rescinding Resolution 392-2024 approving the Agreement for the Sale and Purchase of an Agricultural Conservation Easement to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the County of Blair Jointly in Perpetuity and England Family Limited Partnership for 123.9 acres located in Woodbury Township, Blair County, in the total purchase price of \$298,671.30. The Commonwealth shall pay \$209,671.30, and the County shall pay \$85,000.00.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessler, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 409-2024.

- ii. Rich Huether requested approval of an Agreement for the Sale and Purchase of an Agricultural Conservation Easement to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the County of Blair Jointly in Perpetuity and Penn England Family Limited Partnership for 123.9 acres located in Woodbury Township, Blair County, in the total purchase price of \$298,671.30. The Commonwealth shall pay \$209,671.30, and the County shall pay \$89,000.00.

Mr. Huether noted this agreement is for the England Family Limited Partnership, and the corrected amount the county will pay is \$89,000.00.

**Resolution 410-2024:** Approving the Agreement for the Sale and Purchase of an Agricultural Conservation Easement to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the County of Blair Jointly in Perpetuity and England Family Limited Partnership for 123.9 acres located in Woodbury Township, Blair County, in the total purchase price of \$298,671.30. The Commonwealth shall pay \$209,671.30, and the County shall pay \$89,000.00.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessler, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 410-2024.

**III:**

Don Weakland requested approval of an Addendum to the existing Information Technology Support Services Agreement 2022-2025 between the County of Blair and RBA Professional Data Systems, Inc. for additional optional and requested products and services effective July 1, 2024.

Mr. Weakland added that this Addendum allows the county to purchase additional products and services through RBA and save the county money.

Commissioner Webster and Commissioner Kessler thanked Mr. Weakland for finding these savings for the county and the taxpayers.

**Resolution 411-2024:** Approving the Addendum to the existing Information Technology Support Services Agreement 2022-2025 between the County of Blair and RBA Professional Data Systems, Inc. for additional optional and requested products and services effective July 1, 2024.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessler, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 411-2024.

**Children, Youth and Families:**

i. Mindy Hostler requested approval of the FY 24/25 Agreement for Payment of Legal Services between the County of Blair, Blair County Children, Youth and Families, and Matthew McGregor, Esquire, at \$85.00/per hour, for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

**Resolution 412-2024:** Approving the FY 24/25 Agreement for Payment of Legal Services between the County of Blair, Blair County Children, Youth and Families, and Matthew McGregor, Esquire, at \$85.00/per hour, for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessler, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 412-2024.

ii. Mindy Hostler requested approval of the Addendum of the FY 23/24 Purchase of Service Agreement dated July 1, 2023 between the County of Blair, Blair County Children, Youth and Families, and Evey Black Attorneys LLC, for an extension of the Agreement for 90 days from June 30, 2024, at the hourly rate of \$135.00 per hour.

**Resolution 413-2024:** Approving the Addendum of the FY 23/24 Purchase of Service Agreement dated July 1, 2023 between the County of Blair, Blair County Children, Youth and Families, and Evey Black Attorneys LLC, for an extension of the Agreement for 90 days from June 30, 2024, at the hourly rate of \$135.00 per hour.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessler, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 413-2024.

**Juvenile Probation:**

Molly Wink requested approval of the submission of a Victim of Juvenile Offenders (VOJO) Grant Application to the Pennsylvania Commission of Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), in the total amount of \$33,540.00, for the period of January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025.

Ms. Wink stated that this grant pays for 93% of the salary of the Victim Witness Officer, her cell phone, and some of the office supplies.

**Resolution 414-2024:** Approving the submission of a Victim of Juvenile Offenders (VOJO) Grant Application to the Pennsylvania Commission of Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), in the total amount of \$33,540.00, for the period of January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessler, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 414-2024.

**Fort Roberdeau:**

Glenn Nelson requested approval for the Fort Roberdeau Foundation to retain specifically defined funds, including contributions, memberships, life memberships, donations, and other like contributions. These funds will be held and invested by the Foundation and will be used for site and facility improvements, public events, and the educational mission. Funds intended to be used for the purpose of site and facility improvements shall be transferred to the County prior to the initiation of such improvements.

Mr. Nelson explained the Fort Roberdeau Foundation applied for 501c3 status, which would allow the Foundation to be a charitable organization and apply for a lot of grants.

Commissioner Burke questioned if the Foundation is different than the Board to which the Commissioners appointed.

Mr. Nelson responded the Foundation is different than the Board to which the Commissioners appointed.

Commissioner Burke asked if the Foundation is in relation to the county or if the Foundation was established just to open it up to other opportunities.

Mr. Nelson agreed that the purpose of the Foundation was to take advantage of the opportunities that are available to 501c3 charitable organizations.

Commissioner Burke asked what the benefit is for a membership to the Fort Roberdeau Foundation.

Mr. Nelson responded the benefit would be a discount at the Fort Roberdeau Gift Shop.

Commissioner Burke asked for verification that the County pays for items at the gift shop, and then the Foundation, which is an entirely different 501c3, offers memberships that provide discounts on the items that the County pays for.

Mr. Nelson responded that was correct.

**Resolution 415-2024:** Approving the Fort Roberdeau Foundation to retain specifically defined funds, including contributions, memberships, life memberships, donations, and other like contributions. These funds will be held and invested by the Foundation and will be used for site and facility improvements, public events, and the educational mission. Funds intended to be used for the purpose of site and facility improvements shall be transferred to the County prior to the initiation of such improvements.

Commissioner Burke voted nay on approving the Fort Roberdeau Foundation to retain specifically defined funds.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and approved to adopt Resolution 415-2024.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Commissioners:**

For discussion: the formation of the Blair County Trail and Recreation Authority.

Commissioner Kessling stated that the Board of Commissioners is working towards creating an Authority, but they want to make sure it is worded correctly and finalized.

**Adjourn:**

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adjourn today's meeting.

  
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Sherry Socie, Chief Clerk

