

BUSINESS SESSION: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 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, and Chief Clerk Hemminger.

Members Absent:

Solicitor Karn and Assistant Solicitor Muriceak.

Others Present:

Sarah Chuff (Finance), Rebecca Robinson (Purchasing), Melissa Harpster and Allison Senkevich (Commissioners Office), Bonita Shreve (President of Blair County 2nd Amendment Coalition), Marlyn Graffius (Greenfield Township Resident), Kay Stephens (Altoona Mirror), Bryan King and Carol A. Dannenberg (Hollidaysburg Community Watchdog Group), AC Stickel (Controller), Heather Meck (HR), Paul Shaffer (Public Works) and Keith Calhoun (Domestic Relations).

Public Comment:

Commissioner Erb called for public comment.

Chief Clerk Hemminger stated that there were no public comments emailed to the county to be read into today's meeting minutes.

Blair County 2nd Amendment Coalition President, Bonita Shreve, provided a thank you to Commissioner Amy Webster for her involvement in bringing forth the proposed draft ordinance and agreement for making Blair County a Second Amendment Sanctuary to the Board of Commissioners for review and discussion.

Greenfield Township Resident, Marlyn Graffius, provided a thank you to the Board of Commissioners for listening and provided a brief reading from a written document pertaining to the Second Amendment.

Unfinished Business:

Adoption of Resolutions:

Resolution #47-2022: A resolution approving the completion and submission of the Tier II Chemical Reporting Information to the Pennsylvania State Department of Labor and Industry for the 2021 Reporting Year. Reporting shall consist of the current Tier II Forms, Fee Exemption and Certification Documents.

Motion by Commissioner Webster, seconded by Commissioner Burke and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution #47-2022.

Resolution #48-2022: A resolution approving the Federal Fiscal Year 2021 Emergency Management Performance Grant Agreement (EMPG) between the County of Blair, and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA), in the amount of \$103,930.00, to support the County Emergency Management Agency through the reimbursement of up to fifty-percent of department personnel costs of three-3 full-time positions for the period of 10/1/20 through 03/30/22.

Motion by Commissioner Webster, seconded by Commissioner Burke and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution #48-2022.

Resolution #49-2022: A resolution approving the submission of the Civil Rights Compliance Licensing Renewal Questionnaire to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Human Services by the County of Blair, Department of Children, Youth and Families (CYF).

Motion by Commissioner Burke, seconded by Commissioner Webster and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution #49-2022.

Resolution #50-2022: A resolution approving the agreed-upon procedures for auditing by Young, Oakes, Brown and Company, P.C. of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Human Services (DHS) funds received by the County of Blair, verifying that the amounts reports to DHS are accurately compiled and reflected in the audit books and records of the County of Blair. Fees for these services are included in the audit fee previously approved.

Motion by Commissioner Erb, seconded by Commissioner Webster and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution #50-2022.

Resolution #51-2022: A resolution approving a proposal received from Empire to provide and install new escutcheon door hardware on the Warrant Office door in the total amount of \$2,086.00.

Motion by Commissioner Webster, seconded by Commissioner Burke and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution #51-2022.

Old Business:

Second Amendment Sanctuary Referendum Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement:

Continued discussion.

Commissioner Webster provided a proposed first draft ordinance and agreement for Making Blair County a Second Amendment Sanctuary on Tuesday, February 8, 2022 to fellow commissioners for review.

Commissioner Erb called for discussion.

Commissioner Burke asked Commissioner Webster about the budgetary effect proposed by the proposed ordinance.

Commissioner Webster stated that the proposed ordinance cites county code and the enforcement powers given to the county. She stated that the county's enforcement powers are different from the powers of the 24 municipalities within the county.

Commissioner Burke asked Commissioner Webster who pays for defense should a county employee be accused of violating the ordinance. Commissioner Webster stated that the proposed ordinance indicates that anyone who feels the sanctuary ordinance has been violated can file a private criminal complaint with a district magisterial court or have a criminal complaint filed by the county's district attorney's office.

Commissioner Burke questioned if the proposed ordinance was creating a situation wherein we are creating more work for our courts. Commissioner Webster stated that anytime the county does something for its residents, it generates more work.

Commissioner Burke stated that she has heard from many county residents who are concerned about how the sanctuary affects existing gun laws, such as laws that forbid gun ownership and gun possession based on a criminal conviction or court orders.

Commissioner Webster stated that a sanctuary would not change any existing gun laws.

Commissioner Erb stated that today's discussion provides evidence of just how complex this matter is as well as the many differences in interpretations. He stated that for the people who ask, why isn't anything done yet, today's discussion is clearly why.

Commissioner Erb also stated that the task of approving an intergovernmental agreement for a Second Amendment Sanctuary lies equally with all 25 governing bodies within the county.

Handbook Updates:

- Security and Inspections
 - o Remove the word "New" in first sentence
 - o Commissioner Webster mentioned the possibility of opening an additional employee entrance in the future
 - o Adding the steps it takes to gain access to the front door which is requested by Elected Officials and Department Heads
 - John Baker to be involved in this process
- Separation from Employment and Rehire
 - o Commissioner Burke discussed what the process is for reviewing and updating the people on the "do not hire" list.
 - o Remove second and third sentence under 4(a) Sick Days.
 - o Replace the word "least" with "last" in item #9
 - o In 14(c), need John Baker's input for rewording last sentence "Weeks-long..."
 - o Under section "Rehire", remove wording after employee's background check "past performance..."
- Service Animals
 - o Clean up the format of this section – specifically removing the numbering and replace with letters
 - o In sentence 4(c), add "and all certifications on file with County".
- Short-Term Disability
 - o Switch the paragraphs around for better order
 - o Make the second paragraph consistent with our policy
 - o Add the word "coverage" in the second paragraph after "accident insurance..."

- Smoking
 - o Change title of this policy to “Use of Tobacco Products”
 - o Replace “healthful” with “healthy” in the first sentence
 - o Remove “and visitors” at the end of the first paragraph
 - o Replace “smoking” in the last sentence with “use of tobacco products”
- Solicitation
 - o Add info for distribution of “everyone” email
 - o Add “and everyone emails” after Bulletin boards in the last sentence
- Vacation Leave (revised Non-Union Vacation Policies and Procedures)
 - o Long discussion on expanding the ability to go negative during first year of employment to all exempt-level employees
 - o Under Item #5, change increment to “1 hour”
 - o Under Item #5, replace “earned” with “up to the amount they will earn” in paragraph two
 - o Add “Before going unpaid” at the beginning of the fifth paragraph under Item #5
 - o Replace “may” with “must” and “instead of paid” with “for”
- Vacation Leave (existing policy in Handbook)
 - o Change “7” hours to “35” hours under Vacation Days Earned
- Voting
 - o Agreed to remove this policy from handbook
- Witness Duty – no changes
- Workers Compensation
 - o Heather Meck to get updated info and panel list and after-hours emergency contacts
 - o Add (814) in front of HR department phone number
- Workplace Safety
 - o Have this section vetted through PMA and suggest changes/updates
- Workplace Violence
 - o Have this policy be consistent with what John Baker proposed in the “Prohibited Weapons” policy
- Welcome
 - o Review of new welcome drafted by Commissioner Burke
- About This Handbook
- Employee Handbook Acknowledgement Form

New Business:

None

Adjourn:

Meeting Adjourned,

Nicole M. Hemminger, Chief Clerk