

WORK SESSION: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2023, 10:00 A.M.

Location: Commissioners Meeting Room, Basement.

**Public meetings are being held both in-person and by Zoom. To participate in the meeting please dial-1-301-715-8592 or-1-646-876-9923, enter meeting number 966 3545 3323, and enter the meeting passcode 423423.*

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:

Helen Schmitt (Public), Pete Weeks (District Attorney), Kay Stephens (Altoona Mirror), Jay Whitesel (Prison), Sherry Socie (Planning Commission), Rebecca Robinson (Purchasing), Brandon Meck and Lindsay Dempsie (Finance), Brooke McCready and Mindy Hostler (CYF), David Kessler (Public), Mark Taylor (EMA/911), Tricia Maceno-Johnson and Trina Illig (Social Services), Sue St Martin (Tax Claim), Kermit Alwine (Sheriff's Office), Allison Senkevich and Melissa Harpster (Commissioners Office).

Upcoming Meetings:

Tuesday, November 14, 2023	2:00 p.m.	*Public Budget Meeting (Commissioners Meeting Room)
Wednesday, November 15, 2023	10:00 a.m.	Board of Assessment Appeals (Conference Room 2B, 2 nd Fl.)
	2:30 p.m.	*Salary Board Meeting (Commissioners Meeting Room)
Thursday, November 16, 2023	8:30 a.m.	*Prison Board (Commissioners Meeting Room)
	9:30 a.m.	*Records Improvement Committee (Commissioners Meeting Room)
	10:00 a.m.	*Commissioners Business Session (Commissioners Meeting Room)
Thursday, November 16, 2023	2:00 p.m.	*Public Budget Meeting (Commissioners Meeting Room)
Friday, November 17, 2023	2:00 p.m.	*Public Budget Presentation (Commissioners Meeting Room)
Monday, November 20, 2023		
Tuesday, November 21, 2023	10:00 a.m. Cancelled	*Commissioners Work Session (Commissioners Meeting Room)
Wednesday, November 22, 2023		
Thursday, November 23, 2023	Thanksgiving	Courthouse Closed
Friday, November 24, 2023	Day after Thanksgiving	Courthouse Closed
Monday, November 27, 2023		
Tuesday, November 28, 2023	10:00 a.m.	*Commissioners Work Session (Commissioners Meeting Room)

Executive Session Announcement:

Chief Clerk Hemminger announced that the three-3 Commissioners, HR Director Katherine Swigart, Labor Council John Baker and herself met in Executive Session beginning at 9 am on Monday, November 13, 2023 to discuss one Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: 10/24/23, 10/26/23, ~~10/31/23 & 11/2/23~~

Chief Clerk Hemminger stated that the board would only be taking approval action on the meeting minutes of 10/24/23 and 10/26/23 and that the 10/31/23 and 11/2/23 meeting minutes would appear on the Business Session Agenda of 11/16/23 for approval action.

Commissioner Erb called for corrections or changes to the meeting minutes of 10/24/23 and 10/26/23. There were no corrections or changes noted.

Motion by Commissioner Webster, seconded by Commissioner Burke and unanimously approved to accept the minutes as prepared.

Public Comment:

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

Commissioner Comments:

Commissioner Erb called for commissioner comments.

Commissioner Burke had no comments.

Commissioner Webster extended a thank you to all who assisted with the recent election and to all who voted.

Commissioner Erb shared the following statement concerning Court Cost Reimbursements for 2022:

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

Perhaps influenced by my 40-year career in banking, I think routinely breaking a pledge to pay an obligation is worse.

For the final time, 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 \$226,853 from the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) representing our 2022 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 has not increased in the ensuing years while inflation and the actual costs have increased significantly. As measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), inflation increased 157.6% between 1987 and 2022.

So if the reimbursement would have been indexed to CPI (as state elected officials' salaries are), counties would be receiving \$180,320 per judge.

In theory, Blair County should have received \$350,000 (5 judges at \$70,000) for 2022, but AOPC shorted us by \$123,147, which is \$376 worse than the County was shorted for 2021. Their excuse: insufficient funding was appropriated.

Since I took office almost 8 years ago, the Commonwealth has shortchanged Blair County by a cumulative total of almost \$973,000 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.

However, the real shortage is much more than \$123,147. The total cost of the judges' staffs for salaries, benefits, and other employer-paid expenses in 2022 was \$665,912, making the actual shortfall of state funding \$439,059. Which means AOPC reimbursed us for slightly over 1/3 of our actual costs.

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

It is 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 520-2023:

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

EFFECTIVE DATE	WARRANT NUMBER	AMOUNT
11/14/2023	231114TC	\$126,732.99
11/14/2023	231114SS	\$617,186.63
11/14/2023	231107CY	\$ 11,346.40

Which include payment of the following invoices:

- Thomas and Chandra Jandora, in the total amount of \$1,550.00.
- Blair County Community Action Agency, in the total amount of \$32,487.28.
- Blair Senior Services, in the total amount of \$2,219.16.

b. Ratification of the following fourteen-14 Warrant Lists:

EFFECTIVE DATE	WARRANT NUMBER	AMOUNT
11/07/2023	231110FP	\$256,890.65
11/07/2023	231107WW	\$ 4,334.59
11/07/2023	231107CO	\$ 32,136.07
11/09/2023	231109HR	\$ 12,885.87
11/06/2023	231106FS	\$ 2,731.51
11/02/2023	231102ML	\$ 29,325.29
11/02/2023	231102HR	\$ 5,736.37
11/01/2023	231101VZ	\$ 5,300.62
11/01/2023	231101WT	\$ 60,041.25
11/01/2023	231101FN	\$117,021.73
11/01/2023	231101HI	\$530,861.96
10/31/2023	231031RA	\$ 18,851.13
10/30/2023	231030FS	\$ 1,235.90
10/27/2023	231027RF	\$ 2,869.78

c. Ratification of Total Payroll for the Check Dated 11/03/23, in the total amount of \$822,676.84.

d. **2023 Budget Transfers:** Fees Nygren Training Solutions for the 10/27/23 class.

From	\$	To
01105-42070 Human Resources	\$245.83	012011-42070 APO
01105-42070 Human Resources	\$245.83	762011-42070 APO
01105-42070 Human Resources	\$245.83	01112-42070 Controller
01105-42070 Human Resources	\$245.83	34156-42070 Domestic Relations
01105-42070 Human Resources	\$245.84	08607-42070 Fort Roberdeau
01105-42070 Human Resources	\$245.84	01113-42070 GIS
01105-42070 Human Resources	\$1,475.04	01209PO-42070 Prison
01105-42070 Human Resources	\$245.84	01157-42070 Public Defender
01105-42070 Human Resources	\$245.84	75504-42070 Social Services

e. **2023 Budget Transfers:** Fees from Justifacts for October 2023.

From	\$	To
01101GCO-42000 General County Operations	\$352.50	01107-42000 Assessment
01101GCO-42000 General County Operations	\$291.88	013201-42000 CYF
01101GCO-42000 General County Operations	\$133.25	01112-42000 Controller
01101GCO-42000 General County Operations	\$169.70	01155-42000 Costs & Fines
01101GCO-42000 General County Operations	\$943.75	01209PO-42000 Prison
01101GCO-42000 General County Operations	\$24.25	01153-42000 Prothonotary
01101GCO-42000 General County Operations	\$233.95	01151-42000 Sheriff

f. **2023 Budget Transfers:** Fees from Conemaugh Nason Occupational Health.

From	\$	To
01101GCO-42000 General County Operations	\$45.00	762012-42000 APO Satellite
01209PO-42000 Prison	\$45.00	08607-42000 Fort Roberdeau
01101GCO-42000 General County Operations	\$50.00	01209PO-42000 Prison

g. **2023 Budget Transfers:** Legal fees for the month of October 2023.

From	\$	To
01101GCO-44080 General County Operations	\$7,657.25	01209PO-44080 Prison

h. **2023 Budget Transfers:** Transferring funds to the correct Org.

From	\$	To
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- i. **Bridges 87, 88, 89 & 92 Project CR 101:** Requesting approval for the payment of Contractor's Application #15 received from Francis J. Palo, Inc., in the total amount of \$35,040.18.
- j. **Employment:** Sabrena L. Beyer, FT, Department Clerk I, Domestic Relations, \$11.03/hr., effective 11/13/23; Adam C. Karichner, PT, Probation Officer Support, APO, \$11.58/hr., effective 11/20/23; Natasha M. Hughes and Aden M. Dressler, FT, Caseworker I, CYF, \$17.29/hr., effective 10/31/23 and 11/06/23, respectively; Sabrina K. Horn, FT, Mapper/UIP Coordinator I, Assessment, \$16.30/hr., effective 11/06/23.
- k. **Employment Status Changes:** Christopher M. Miller, From, FT, Temporary Department Assistant, CYF, \$10.60/hr., To, FT, Clerk Typist I/Clerical Stats, CYF, \$10.60/hr., effective 10/06/23; Melena M. Kogler, FT, Human Resources Manager, HR, \$51,560.34/yr., \$1,983.09/bi-weekly, +10% increase (+\$198.31 bi-weekly) out-of-class wage as Interim Facilities Manager, maximum 13 pay periods or hire of job incumbent; Cassandra D. Hamel, FT, Administrative Support, Emergency Management, \$12.16/hr., + 5% increase (+ \$.61/hr.) under pay policy from 10/21/23 to 11/03/23 upon return of Cris Fredrickson; Virginia K. Christy, From, FT, Mental Health Program Specialist, Social Services, \$18.25/hr., To, FT, Mental Health Program Specialist CASSP, Social Services, \$20.80/hr., effective 10/28/23; Matthew P. Schmitt, From, FT, Corrections Officer-Sergeant, Prison, \$25.21/hr., To, FT, Lieutenant (out-of-class role), working 35 hours/week as lieutenant with adjusted rate; +5% increase (\$1.26/hour) per collective bargaining agreement until replacement is hired for lieutenant, also working 5 hours/week as sergeant at usual wage; Shannon N. Tucker, From, FT, Supervisor/Casework, CYF, \$51,672.92/yr., To, FT, Casework Manager, CYF, \$54,256.68/yr., effective 11/04/23; Toni K. Walker, From FT, Probation Officer Aide I, APO, \$11.75/hr., To, FT, Parole and Probation Officer, APO, \$16.30/hr., effective 11/04/23; Elissa S. Walter, From, FT, Probation Officer Aide I, APO, \$11.98/hr., To, FT, Specialty Courts Administrative Assistant, APO, \$13.41/hr., effective 11/04/23; and Justin A. Detwiler, From, FT, Temporary Department Assistant, CYF, \$11.68/hr., To, FT, Fiscal Assistant, CYF, \$11.68/hr., effective 11/8/23.
- l. **Resignations:** Tara A. Guilbault, FT, Custody Processer, Custody, \$11.58/hr., effective 11/10/23; Debra J. Conner, FT, Temporary Department Assistant, (Assignment Ended), Elections, \$11.00/hr., effective 11/09/23; Fred A. Guyer, PT, Tipstaff, Court Administration, \$11.58/hr., effective 11/17/23; Devin M. Bennati, FT, Assistant Public Defender, Public Defender's Office, \$50,737.44/yr., effective 11/17/23; Aidan J. Walker, FT, Corrections Officer, Prison, \$21.05/hr., effective 10/26/23; Bryan Melendez, FT, Juvenile Probation Officer, JPO, \$16.30/hr., effective 10/30/23; Isaac Z. Little, FT, Corrections Officer, Prison, \$21.05/hr., effective 10/31/23; Skyler D. McCaulley, FT, Temporary Department Assistant, Fort Roberdeau, Assignment Ended, \$11.00/hr., effective 10/31/23; Megan F. Frankenberry, FT, Corrections Officer, Prison, \$21.05/hr., effective 10/31/23; Gabriel P. Good, FT, Corrections Officer, Prison, \$21.05/hr., effective 10/30/23; Isaac B. Good, FT, Corrections Officer Prison, \$21.05/hr., effective 10/30/23.
- m. **Terminations:** Christopher, M. Ellmann, FT, Corrections Officer, Prison, \$22.16/hr., effective 11/01/23.
- n. **Retirements:** Christopher S. Tatar, FT, Chief Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff's Office, \$52,912.60/yr., effective 11/10/23.

Commissioner Burke noted her abstention due to conflicts of interest on the payments of invoices to Thomas and Chandra Jandora and Blair Senior Services.

Commissioner Erb noted his abstention due to a conflict of interest on the payment of invoices to Blair County Community Action.

Motion by Commissioner Webster, seconded by Commissioner Burke and unanimously approved to adopt Consent Agenda Resolution 520-2023 with the abstentions as noted.

Staff Reports & Special Business:

Department Of Emergency Services:

Mark Taylor requested approval of a Contract between the County of Blair, on behalf of the Department of Emergency Services and ComPros, Inc., (CoStars #4400027239) for new radio equipment and installation services listed in Appendix A of said contract, in the total contracted amount of \$5,528,368.50, to be paid in quarterly installments through project completion.

Mr. Taylor stated that ComPros, Inc. is a CoStars vendor. He stated that the contract is for the purchase of new radio equipment and installation services as the department's current equipment is reaching its end of life.

Discussion followed.

Social Services:

- i. Tricia Maceno-Johnson requested approval for the payment of an invoice received from David Binus Catering, for catering twenty (20) dinners for the October 2023 Social Services Advisory Board Meeting, in the total amount of \$240.00.

Mrs. Johnson stated that the invoice would be paid from grant funds and not from the general fund.

Discussion followed.

- ii. Tricia Maceno-Johnson requested approval for the submission of the CY 2024 Annual Notification Form for Assisted Outpatient Treatment, to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, indicating that the County of Blair will not provide Assisted Outpatient Treatment pursuant to Section 301(c) of the Mental Health Procedures Act (MHPA).

Mrs. Johnson stated this is an annual submission.

Discussion followed.

- iii. Trina Illig requested approval for submission of a FY 23/24 Pennsylvania Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement (PHARE) Grant Application to the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA), in the total amount of \$290,000.00. \$40,000.00 for the Housing Assistance Program; and \$250,000.00 for the Housing Rehabilitation Program.

Mrs. Illig stated that the county is designated as a grant recipient for the Marcellus Shale Impact Fee. She stated that the allocations for PHARE funding are to address housing needs in counties with unconventional gas wells that have adopted the local impact fee.

Mrs. Illig stated that the county has prepared an application totaling \$290,000.00. She stated \$40,000.00 is allocated for the Housing Assistance Program and \$250,000.00 is allocated for the Housing Rehabilitation Program.

Mrs. Illig stated that the increase in rehabilitation request has expired for FY 22/23.

Discussion followed.

- iv. Trina Illig requested approval of updates to the Blair County Section 3 Policy and Action Plan, implementing new regulations to 24 CFR 75, and to the Department of Community and Economic Development's (DCED's) Compliance Guide Section 23.

Mrs. Illig requested that the board consider approving the revisions to the County's existing Section 3 Policy and Action Plan which implements new regulations to 24 CFR 75, and DCED's Compliance Guide Section 23, which took effect in July of 2021.

Discussion followed.

Children, Youth and Families:

- i. Mindy Hostler requested approval of a FY 23/24 Purchase of Service Agreement and a HIPAA Business Associate Agreement between the County of Blair, Blair County Children, Youth and Families and Kids First for the period of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

Discussion followed.

- ii. Mindy Hostler requested approval of a FY 23/24 Purchase of Service Agreement and a HIPAA Business Associate Agreement between the County of Blair, Blair County Children, Youth and Families and George Junior Republic in Pennsylvania for the period of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

Discussion followed.

- iii. Mindy Hostler requested approval of a FY 23/24 Purchase of Service Agreement and a HIPAA Business Associate Agreement between the County of Blair, Blair County Children, Youth and Families and Families United Network, Inc. for the period of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

Discussion followed.

- iv. Mindy Hostler requested approval for the submission of the ACT 148, 4th Quarter Expenditure Report, to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, for actual expenditures and revenue for the period of April 1, 2023 through June 30, 2023.

Discussion followed.

Tax Claim:

Sue St Martin requested approval to waive interest fees due to a clerical error to subdivided Clean & Green parcel #19.00.12...009.11.000, previously owned by David and Sophie Curely, in the total amount of \$223.70.

Ms. St Martin stated that the referenced Clean & Green parcel was split and should not have been. She stated that the settlement company indicated that the property seller is not willing to pay the \$223.70 balance due to Tax Claim's clerical error.

Ms. St Martin asked that the board consider the request to waive the interest fees.

Discussion followed.

Victim Witness:

Pete Weeks requested approval for payment of an invoice received from Copy-Rite Banner Zone, LLC, for the purchase of one (1) banner for the Victim Witness Office, in the total amount of \$127.50. Said amount to be paid from grant funds.

District Attorney Weeks stated that the banner would be used at job fairs and other such events. He stated that the banner purchase would be from grant funds.

Discussion followed.

District Attorney's Office:

Pete Weeks requested approval for payment of an invoice received from Dr. Kevin D. Whaley, North Dakota University of Medicine and Health Sciences, for expert witness services/case information, in the total amount billed of \$15,000.00, plus travel fees. Said retainer based on an estimated total with total adjusted as needed when services are complete.

District Attorney Weeks stated that Dr. Whaley from the Pathology Vendor Forensic DX is to testify as fact and expert witness at the Paine/Lewis Trial scheduled for December 4, 2023. He stated that the travel fees would be paid through the general fund.

Discussion followed.

Prison:

- i. Jay Whitesel requested approval of a quote received for an Annual Service Agreement between the County of Blair, on behalf of the Blair County Prison and Tek84, for the Tek84 Whole Body Scanner, in the total annual amount of \$8,995.00, for the period of 01/01/24 through 12/31/24. Said agreement covers repair parts, labor, shipping, one-1 preventative maintenance visit, software system review, and one-1 radiation safety survey.

Mr. Whitesel stated that Solicitor Karn reviewed the agreement and all requested revisions to the agreement were accepted by Tek84.

Discussion followed.

- ii. Jay Whitesel requested approval of a Service Agreement between the County of Blair, on behalf of the Blair County Prison and GL & GL Enterprises, Inc., d/b/a Allegheny Glass & Mirror (subcontractor), for glass and glazing service calls, on an as needed basis, at the standard fee for services rendered rate of \$85.00/per hour; overtime/holiday fee for services rendered rate is not applicable. Said agreement shall commence on the date of agreement signing and unless otherwise terminated, shall remain in effect for eighteen (18) months with automatic renewal unless either party terminates said agreement with proper notice.

Mr. Whitesel stated that the service agreement is to repair or replace broken security glass at the prison on an as needed basis at the rate of \$85.00/per hour. He stated that there is no applicable overtime or holiday fee for services rendered.

Discussion followed.

Human Resources:

Nicole Hemminger requested approval for ratification of a Collective Bargaining Agreement between the County of Blair and SEIU Local 668 (Professionals Unit) for the term of January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2025.

Chief Clerk Hemminger stated that Human Resource Director, Katherine Swigart, submitted the Collective Bargaining Agreement to the Board for review prior to today's meeting. Chief Clerk Hemminger provided a brief outline of the significant changes to the agreement and asked the Board if they had any questions, issues or concerns pertaining to the changes.

Discussion followed.

Resolution 521-2023: Approving ratification of a Collective Bargaining Agreement between the County of Blair and SEIU Local 668 (Professionals Unit) for the term of January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2025.

Motion by Commissioner Burke, seconded by Commissioner Webster and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 521-2023.

Public Works/Highway:

Nicole Hemminger requested approval for payment of an invoice received from Brumbaugh Transmission Service, for repair service to the flywheel of CYF Car #35, in the total amount of \$960.00.

Chief Clerk Hemminger clarified that the car has not yet been repaired. She stated that the request is merely for approval of a quote received for service.

Discussion followed.

Bridge #70/South Poplar Run Greenfield Township:

Nicole Hemminger requested approval of a thirty-eight (38) day (no cost increase) time extension received from Francis J. Palo, extending the completion date from November 6, 2023 to December 14, 2023, due to delays in gas line relocation, and for additional curb cuts needed from the bridge deck arch.

Chief Clerk Hemminger stated that the no cost time extension is at no fault of the contractor Francis J. Palo. She requested that the Board consider taking action on today's request due to a pending ECMS submission request.

Discussion followed.

Resolution 522-2023: Approving a thirty-eight (38) day (no cost increase) time extension received from Francis J. Palo, extending the completion date from November 6, 2023 to December 14, 2023, due to delays in gas line relocation, and for additional curb cuts needed from the bridge deck arch.

Motion by Commissioner Webster, seconded by Commissioner Burke and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 522-2023.

Building Maintenance/Facilities:

Nicole Hemminger requested approval of a County of Blair Agreement for Purchases under Bidding Threshold between the County of Blair and Electric Motor & Supply, Inc., for products and/or services with respect to motors and other county owned equipment at the rates set forth in Exhibit A attached hereto of said agreement.

Chief Clerk Hemminger stated that the agreement is primarily for products and services for doors at the prison, but could be used throughout the county where necessary.

Discussion followed.

Commissioners Office:

Bruce Erb requested approval of a Letter of Support for the submission of a grant application to the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) by Antis Township, in the amount of \$240,925.00, for upgrades and enhancements to the existing trails and the new segment to be built in the spring and summer of 2024 from the Park to Becker Road.

Commissioner Erb stated that the submission of the grant application by Antis Township has no impact on county grant funding and is at no cost to the county.

Discussion followed.

Old Business:

None

Adjourn:

Meeting Adjourned,

Nicole M. Hemminger, Chief Clerk