

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2025, 10:04 A.M.

Location: Commissioners Meeting Room, Basement.

CALL TO ORDER:

Commissioner Kessling called the meeting to order.

MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER:

Commissioner Kessling called for a moment of silent prayer.

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, Commissioner Burke, and Chief Clerk Tiracave.

OTHERS PRESENT:

ori Guyer (Commissioners), Lindsay Dempsey (Finance), A.C. Stickel and Angela Wagner (Controller), Tricia Johnson (Social Services), Joseph Cox (Juvenile Probation Office), Sam Dunkle and Jessica Miller (Court Administration), Abbie Tate and Brooke Lafferty (Prison), Becky Robinson (Purchasing), Sherry Socie (Blair Planning Commission), Kay Stephens (Altoona Mirror), and Nate Taylor (Public Access Channel).

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT:

None

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

COMMISSIONER COMMENT:

Commissioner Burke stated that she recently had the surprising honor to sit with the Pennsylvania State Lieutenant Governor on a roundtable on Affordable Childcare. We are thankful to have quality childcare in our area, but unfortunately, there are many people that cannot afford it. She thanked Sheetz for leading the way in providing on-site daycare for their employees.

Commissioner Webster stated that a Tourism Promotion Agency issue came up. Letters were sent to the municipalities requesting they vote to allow the Commissioners to decertify the existing Tourism Promotion Agency. They are not voting to decertify the Tourism Promotion Agency themselves. They are only voting to allow the Commissioners to move to the next step in the process.

Commissioner Kessling expressed that he did not run to put Blair County last. Our desire is to move Blair County into the future. Our population continues to decrease. Blair County lost a 7.2 million dollar grant because we did not have the capacity or sustainability. There are literally hundreds, if not millions, of dollars available through the state and federal government that surrounding counties are taking advantage of that we are not. We can continue to take tax dollars and continue to use them for marketing only, or we can make a new vision and make a change to bring capacity into this county, which would bring more people into this county and create more bed tax. This has to do with a vision. We started with this process to decertify before, and members of the community asked to have a meeting, which was unfruitful. Right when we were ready to call for a vote, another group of individuals asked to have another meeting to talk it out. In my opinion, we wasted several months and had numerous discussions about this, only to find out they had no intention of ever looking at our vision. This is frustrating to us because this group was created by the County and is funded almost entirely by the County, yet they do not want to hear what the County has to say or what the County's vision is. At least for me, I am very frustrated that they want to stay where they are at even though it is not showing any fruit. Our population continues to go down, and we need to look at asset development in addition to that. We are not trying to stop marketing. We are not trying to stop anything that we are doing now; we want to add to it. I am frustrated about it, and I am looking forward to the vote. Hopefully, we can get the majority of the votes. Then by law, after the vote we will have a public meeting before the Board of Commissioners. We have to ask for input for individuals to express their reasoning why not to decertify or to certify the vote. Only after that, the Board of Commissioners will take a public vote.

Consent Agenda:

Resolution 42 – 2025:

a. Payment of the following five-5 Warrant Lists:

EFFECTIVE DATE	WARRANT NUMBER	AMOUNT
02/11/2025	250211CY	532,580.04
02/11/2025	250211WW	350,464.33
02/07/2025	250211TC	163,730.38
02/07/2025	250211SS	49,893.77
02/11/2025	250211SS	49,094.00

Which includes payment of the following invoices:

- Holidaysburg Borough in the total check amount of \$205.00.

b. Ratification of the following seven-7 Warrant Lists:

EFFECTIVE DATE	WARRANT NUMBER	AMOUNT
02/03/2025	250203RF	1,618.60
02/03/2025	250203FS	367.14
02/04/2025	250204TC	235,350.30
02/03/2025	250203FN	117,021.83
02/03/2025	250203HI	640,624.61
02/06/2025	250206HR	13,414.41
02/06/2025	250206RF	3,215.49

c. Ratification of total Payroll for the paycheck dated 1/24/2025 in the total amount of \$893,214.49.

d. **2025 Budget Transfer:** To cover the fees for maintenance on county vehicles:

From	\$	To
01103HW-44730 Highway	\$240.46	01202-44730 Juvenile
01103HW-44730 Highway	\$135.00	01103BM-44730 Building Maintenance

e. **Blair County Convention and Sports Facilities Authority:** Requesting approval for the appointment of Dennis Shreve to the Authority filling the expired term of Dan Taddei. Term is effective February 13, 2025 through 11/12/2025.

f. **Blair County Planning Commission Advisory Board:** Requesting approval for the appointment of Samuel Todd Lewis and reappointment of James Dixon for the period of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2028.

g. **Employments:** Gearhart, Beth, Mosby, Kristen, McConaughy, Cooper, Focht, Aubree, FT, Telecommunicator Trainee, 911 Center, \$13.88/hr., effective 2/10/2025. Frye, Kristyn, PT, Telecommunicator, 911 Center, \$16.30/hr., effective 2/10/2025. Erndl, Alyssa, Oakes, Kevin, Penrod, Jason, Bowmaster, Jordan, Burns, Elizabeth, Miller, Shannon, FT, Corrections Officer. Prison, \$21.53/hr., effective 2/10/2025.

h. **Status Changes:** Claar, Amy, FT, Administrative Support, District Attorney, \$12.28/hr., to Judicial Secretary – Bernard, Court Administration, \$1,289.40 biweekly, effective 2/10/2025.

Commissioner Burke noted her abstentions on the payments to Hollidaysburg Borough and Item e.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and approved to adopt Resolution 42-2025 with the abstentions as noted.

STAFF REPORTS & SPECIAL BUSINESS:

Prison:

i. Warden Abbie Tate requested approval of an Agreement for Purchases Under Bidding Threshold between the County of Blair, on behalf of the Blair County Prison, and Overhead Door Co. of Blair County, Inc. to service all garage doors and garage door operators at the Blair County Prison as set forth in County-approved Purchase Orders.

Commissioner Kessling asked if this was for both the gate and the door.

Warden Tate responded that this is for the garage door in the Laundry, the electric gate that slides to get you to that garage door, and then the sally port. The sally port and the electric gate are still under warranty. Overhead Door Co. is the company that installed both of those gates and they are the company that worked on the very old garage door in the past. She tried to get a quote from another local company and reached out to them several times but did not get a response. She stated in the past, Overhead Door Co. was the less expensive. She is trying to get a back-up plan in place because if the Sally port or electric gate goes down it will cause a lot of problems because these gates get used a couple hundred times a day. If she hears back from the other company, she will be back.

Resolution 43-2025: Approving the Agreement for Purchases Under Bidding Threshold between the County of Blair, on behalf of the Blair County Prison, and Overhead Door Co. of Blair County, Inc. to service all garage doors and garage door operators at the Blair County Prison as set forth in County-approved Purchase Orders.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 43-2025.

ii. Brooke Lafferty requested approval to accept the bids received for the Milk Products for the Blair County Prison and to award or reject per county code thereafter.

Commissioner Kessling asked if the Board of Commissioners previously moved not to do this bid so frequently.

Ms. Lafferty responded that is correct and the milk bid is a five (5) year bid now.

Commissioner Burke stated that Representative Schmidt is reintroducing a bill for all counties not to have to bid milk out. We do not know how likely it will pass, but it is out there.

Commissioner Kessling stated that we all appreciate his efforts considering how often we have to do this

Resolution 44-2025: Accepting the bids received for the Milk Products for the Blair County Prison and to award or reject per county code thereafter.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 44-2025.

iii. Brooke Lafferty requested approval to accept the bids received for the Food and Non-food items for the Blair County Prison and to award or reject per county code thereafter.

Resolution 45-2025: Accepting the bids received for the Food and Non-food items for the Blair County Prison and to award or reject per county code thereafter.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 45-2025.

Social Services:

- i. Tricia Johnson requested approval for the County of Blair Department of Social Services to directly submit Affordable Housing Trust Fund Code Compliance Repair Assistance Program projects, when received, to the Blair County Board of Commissioners for approval.

Commissioner Kessling asked what the process and complications were previously.

Ms. Johnson responded that the code compliance repair applications would come in and would have to go to Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board to be approved as a program after they were vetted to ensure that the requirements were met. The Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board only meets quarterly. That is delaying these repairs by three months. When it is a code issue, that is increasing the possibility of fines. This process would be consistent with other programs we do. It is about consistency and timeliness.

Resolution 46-2025: Approving the County of Blair Department of Social Services to directly submit Affordable Housing Trust Fund Code Compliance Repair Assistance Program projects, when received, to the Blair County Board of Commissioners for approval.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 46-2025.

- ii. Tricia Johnson requested approval for the County of Blair Department of Social Services directly submit Affordable Housing Trust Fund Demolition Program projects, when received, to the Blair County Board of Commissioners for approval.

Resolution 47-2025: Approving the County of Blair Department of Social Services directly submit Affordable Housing Trust Fund Demolition Program projects, when received, to the Blair County Board of Commissioners for approval.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 47-2025.

Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee:

Tricia Johnson requested approval of the Request for Proposal Application for the Blair County Opioid Settlement Trust Fund to be open for 30 days from the date of its posting.

Commissioner Burke asked if this would go in for advertisement on Monday.

Ms. Johnson responded that it would go on Tuesday, because of the holiday. We need to make sure the posting on the County website and the add go in together

Resolution 48-2025: Approving the Request for Proposal Application for the Blair County Opioid Settlement Trust Fund to be open for 30 days from the date of its posting.

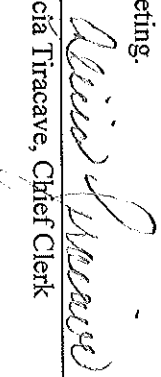
Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 48-2025.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

Adjourn:

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



Alicia Tiracave, Chief Clerk

