

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING: THURSDAY, MAY 1, 2025, 10:00 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.

EMBERS PRESENT:

Commissioner Kessling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Burke and Chief Clerk Tiracave.

THERS PRESENT:

Kori Guyer (Commissioners), Lindsay Dempse (Finance), Kyle Brashear, Melena Koegler (Human Resources), Trina Illig (Social Services), A.C. Stickle, Angela Wagner (Controller), Sherry Socie (Blair Planning), Julia Burke (Public Defender), Devin Saylor (Assessment), Pete Weeks (District Attorney), Kay Stephens (Altoona Mirror), Carol A. Dannenberg (Holidaysburg Community Watchdog), Erin Kay, Amanda Burkhardt, Keelin Cannon, Sydney Roach (Public)

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT:

None

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Kay Stephens of the Altoona Mirror asked what happens now that the Trail, Park and Recreation authority was decertified.

COMMISSIONER COMMENT:

Commissioner Webster noted that today is Law Day, celebrated by all the attorneys, and where we honor our profession. It is also May Day and the National Day of Prayer. It calls together all Americans in unity to seek God and his plans for our Nation. She then recited from Romans XV. Locally, there is a gathering at Legion Park today at noon, and this evening at the Grace Brethren Church in Martinsburg. Commissioner Webster encouraged all to attend.

PROCLAMATION:

Commissioner Kessling read the following Proclamation:

PROCLAMATION

May is Mental Health Month 2025

“Light it up Green”

WHEREAS, mental health is essential to everyone’s overall health and well-being; and

WHEREAS, all Americans experience times of difficulty and stress in their lives; and

WHEREAS, prevention is an effective way to reduce the burden of mental health conditions; and

WHEREAS, there is a strong body of research that supports specific tools that all Americans can use to better handle challenges, and protect their health and well-being; and

WHEREAS, mental health conditions are real and prevalent in our nation; and

WHEREAS, with early and effective treatment, those individuals with mental health conditions can recover and lead full, productive lives; and

WHEREAS, each business, school, government agency, healthcare provider, organization and citizen shares the burden of mental health problems and has a responsibility to promote mental wellness and support prevention efforts.

THEREFORE, the Blair County Board of Commissioners do hereby proclaim May 2025 as Mental Health Month in Blair County. We call upon the citizens, government agencies, public and private institutions, businesses and schools in Blair County to commit our community to increasing awareness and understanding of mental health, the steps our citizens can take to protect their mental health, and the need for appropriate and accessible services for all people with mental health conditions.

*1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness
1,814,000 adults in PA have a mental health condition*

*1 in 20 U.S. adults experience serious mental illness
447,000 adults in PA have a serious mental illness*

*1 in 6 U.S. youth aged 6 to 17 experience a mental health disorder each year
98,000 youth in PA aged 12 to 17 have depression*

Commissioner Kessling noted the Courthouse will light up green for the month of May in recognition.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to adopt the Proclamation for Mental Health Awareness Month.

Erim Kay thanked the Commissioners for their support and for participating in lighting the Courthouse in honor of Mental Health Awareness Month.

Consent Agenda:

Resolution 209–2025:

a. Ratification of the following five (5) Warrant Lists:

EFFECTIVE DATE	WARRANT NUMBER	AMOUNT
4/25/2025	250425WX	\$7,242.74
4/24/2025	250424HR	\$11,917.32
4/29/2025	250429SS	\$231,258.72
4/29/2025	250429CY	\$494,257.90
4/29/2025	250429WW	\$1,037,363.96

Which includes payment of the following invoices:

* Blair Senior Services in the total check amounts of \$166,253.00 and \$809.72.

b. **2025 Budget Transfer:** To cover the fees for Maintenance on County vehicles:

From	\$	To
01103HW-44730 Highway	\$160.00	01103BM-44830 Building Maintenance
01103HW-44730 Highway	\$130.00	01103BM-44730 Building Maintenance

c. **2025 Budget Transfer:** To cover the fees for county shredding events:

From	\$	To
01101GCO-42840 General County Operations	\$1,931.87	011062-42840 Elections
01101GCO-42840 General County Operations	\$286.70	01105-42840 Human Resources
01101GCO-42840 General County Operations	\$36.91	01152-42840 Coroner
01101GCO-42840 General County Operations	\$64.81	01603-42840 Veterans Affairs
01101GCO-42840 General County Operations	\$51.68	01160-42840 Court Administration
01101GCO-42840 General County Operations	\$13.54	01103BM-42840 Building Maintenance
01101GCO-42840 General County Operations	\$17.23	01112-42840 Controller
01101GCO-42840 General County Operations	\$341.26	01158-42840 District Attorney

d. **County Road 105 and 105A:** Requesting approval for payment #7 to HRI Inc. for the County Road 105 and 105A Rehabilitation project in the amount of \$138,765.40.

e. **Bridge #69:** Requesting approval for payment #4 to Merlo Inc. for Bridge #69 construction in the amount of \$283,299.60.

f. **Social Services:** Requesting approval of one (1) Pennsylvania State University World Campus Student Intern, Heather Perry, for the period of August 25, 2025, through December 12, 2025. Internship is for credit only and at no cost to the county.

g. **Commissioners:** Ratification of a Letter of Support from the Blair County Board of Commissioners to Congressman John Joyce, MD, in support of the Borough of Hollidaysburg's funding application to the USDA's Water and Waste Disposal Grant Program for the Allegheny Street Storm Sewer Project.

h. **Employments:** Smith, Cameron, FT, Clerk Typist II, Children, Youth, and Families, \$14.06/hr., effective 4/28/2025. Bougher, Sarah, FT, Deputy, Sheriff, \$15.52/hr., effective 4/28/2025. Clark, Keysia, FT, Support Staff Manager, Children, Youth, and Families, \$2,018.81 biweekly, effective 4/28/2025. McIntosh, Justin, Moore, Zachary, Pollock, Keiton, Smith, Saje, Bulabon, Lyman, Duke, Karen, and McCool, Sarah, FT, Corrections Officer, Prison, \$21.53/hr., effective 4/28/2025. Piner, Theresa, and Horvath, Eleanor, FT, Caseworker I, Children, Youth, and Families, \$20.60/hr., effective 4/28/2025. Sweeney, Sean, PT, Deputy, Coroner, \$18.42/hr., effective 4/28/2025.

i. **Resignations:** White, Ryley, FT, Judicial Secretary, Court Administration, \$1,309.00 biweekly, effective date 4/14/2025. Adams, Andrew, FT, Corrections Officer, Prison, \$21.53/hr., effective 4/15/2025. Doran, James, FT, Corrections Officer, Prison, \$21.53/hr., effective 4/15/2025.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 209-2025.

District Attorney:

i. Peter Weeks requested approval of the Renewal Agreement between the County of Blair, Blair County District Attorney's Office, and Karpel Solutions for the use of the software program PROSECUTORbyKarpel® hosted through HOSTEDbyKarpel® for the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, as outlined below:

Description	Quantity	Price	Total Cost
PROSECUTORbyKarpel license maintenance	20	\$450.00	\$9,000.00
PBK Annual Hosting	20	\$150.00	\$3,000.00
PBK Annual eDiscovery service	1	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
PBK Annual Interface Maintenance:CPCMS-Court	1	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Hosting Additional Storage	27	\$500.00	\$13,500.00
Total			\$29,500.00

Resolution 210-2025: Approving the Renewal Agreement between the County of Blair, Blair County District Attorney's Office, and Karpel Solutions for the use of the software program PROSECUTORbyKarpel® hosted through HOSTEDbyKarpel® for the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, as outlined below:

Description	Quantity	Price	Total Cost
PROSECUTORbyKarpel license maintenance	20	\$450.00	\$9,000.00
PBK Annual Hosting	20	\$150.00	\$3,000.00
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Hosting Additional Storage	27	\$500.00	\$13,500.00
Total			\$29,500.00

Mr. Weeks noted that since 2019/2020, the discovery process for criminal cases has changed, and each case now includes multiple video files which take up a lot of memory. This software provides everyone the ability to see what happens but takes up a lot of memory.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 210-2025.

- ii. Peter Weeks requested approval of the FY 25/26 Agreement between the County of Blair, Blair County District Attorney’s Office, and Informant Technologies, Inc., for the period of August 1, 2025, through July 31, 2026, in the amount of \$1,490.00.

Resolution 211-2025: Approving the FY 25/26 Agreement between the County of Blair, Blair County District Attorney’s Office, and Informant Technologies, Inc., for the period of August 1, 2025, through July 31, 2026, in the amount of \$1,490.00.

Mr. Weeks added that this is the same software that the Commissioners approved several years ago and now allows detectives to pull an incident number through the 911 center, have a record of their investigation, and have an incident report stored in a proper system so the information can be provided to anyone that needs it.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 211-2025.

Children, Youth, and Families:

- i. Chief Clerk Alicia Tiracave, on behalf of Social Services, requested ratification of a Letter dated April 24, 2025, between the County of Blair, on behalf of Blair County Children, Youth and Families, and Bethanna agreeing to pay for the care of a special needs foster child in the amount of \$54.17 per day.

Resolution 212-2025: Ratifying a Letter dated April 24, 2025, between the County of Blair, on behalf of Blair County Children, Youth and Families, and Bethanna agreeing to pay for the care of a special needs foster child in the amount of \$54.17 per day.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 212-2025.

- ii. Chief Clerk Alicia Tiracave, on behalf of Social Services, requested approval of the FY 24/25 Purchase of Service Agreement and HIPAA Business Associate Agreement between the County of Blair, Blair County Children, Youth and Families, and Bethanna for the period of July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, in the amounts as defined in Attachment E.

Resolution 213-2025: Approving the FY 24/25 Purchase of Service Agreement and HIPAA Business Associate Agreement between the County of Blair, Blair County Children, Youth and Families, and Bethanna for the period of July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, in the amounts as defined in Attachment E.

Commissioner Burke noted that this letter and contract are the result of six weeks of extremely hard work on behalf of multiple CYF employees and all staff and well as local community providers who cared 24/7 for a child because there was not an appropriate placement within the State for the child. We are extremely fortunate a foster family was found for the child and sadly this happens at least once a year. It is a symptom of a bigger problem in child welfare across the state. Staff went above and beyond for the child and she is grateful and proud of the work done. As a state, we need to look at the resources we have, the placements we provide and the stressors on the system as a whole.

Commissioner Kessling stated that this was an extremely difficult placement and it is heartbreaking if you know the story. People don’t know or see or understand the lengths that CYF staff go to in these very heartbreaking cases, and they get beat up a lot. There are very limited places for placement in a case like this and CYF did a very good job. This isn’t good for the individual needing placement and he is very proud of the effort to find appropriate placement.

Commissioner Webster praised the CYF staff and the providers that assisted with this, and gives an example of the difficult work they deal with. They do a magnificent job of keeping kids safe.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 213-2025.

Human Resources:

Kyle Brashear requested approval of a Side Letter Agreement between the County of Blair and SEIU/Local 668 PSSU Children & Youth Services enumerating the addition of Caseworker III positions to the active PSSU collective bargaining agreement.

Resolution 214-2025: Approving a Side Letter Agreement between the County of Blair and SEIU/Local 668 PSSU Children & Youth Services enumerating the addition of Caseworker III positions to the active PSSU collective bargaining agreement.

Commissioner Burke stated that this is part of the settlement with the State regarding licensure. It is the final step in getting the QA Unit set up and the Caseworker III positions will be assigned to that unit to do case file reviews and licensing-related reviews. It is exciting to have this in place and move forward.

Commissioner Kessling noted his excitement that the County is able to move forward with this, and commented that since the internal salary study was done, the office is seeing stabilization, and pressure is being reduced on existing staff.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 214-2025.

Social Services:

- i. Trina Illig requested approval to authorize Commissioner David Kessling, as the Chief Elected Official, to sign the two (2) Site Specific Checklist Tier 2 Environmental Review Records for Blair County Housing Rehabilitation Existing Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program.

- * 147 Wingard Lane, Hollidaysburg
- * 811 Roosevelt Avenue, Roaring Spring

Resolution 215-2025: Authorizing Commissioner David Kessling, as the Chief Elected Official, to sign the two Site Specific Checklist Tier 2 Environmental Review Records for Blair County Housing Rehabilitation Existing Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program.

- * 147 Wingard Lane, Hollidayburg
- * 811 Roosevelt Avenue, Roaring Spring

Ms. Illig added that this will be funded through the CDBG program.

- i. Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 215-2025.

- ii. Trina Illig requested approval to authorize Commissioner David Kessling, as the Chief Elected Official, to sign the two (2) Site Specific Checklist Tier 2 Environmental Review Records for Blair County Housing Rehabilitation Existing Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program.

- * 104 23rd Avenue, Altoona
- * 619 Bell Avenue, Altoona

Resolution 216-2025: Authorizing Commissioner David Kessling, as the Chief Elected Official, to sign the two (2) Site Specific Checklist Tier 2 Environmental Review Records for Blair County Housing Rehabilitation Existing Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program.

- * 104 23rd Avenue, Altoona
- * 619 Bell Avenue, Altoona

Ms. Illig added that this will be funded through the Whole Home Repair Program.

- i. Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 216-2025.

Public Defender:

Julia Burke requested approval to submit an Amendment to the 23/24 Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) Grant #44329 for the FY 24/25 Indigent Defense Grant Program in the amount of \$100,934.00.

Resolution 217-2025: Approving submission of an Amendment to the 23/24 Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) Grant #44329 for the FY 24/25 Indigent Defense Grant Program in the amount of \$100,934.00.

Ms. Burke added that this request is more of a placeholder. The office will still be required to apply for annual refunding through a grant modification request. This is to apply for this year's funding.

Commissioner Burke asked if there was any feedback on how this program has helped the Public Defender's Office.

Ms. Burke replied that it has allowed them to obtain the Justice Text program and to hire both an investigator and legal assistant.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 217-2025.

Commissioners:

- i. Chief Clerk Alicia Tiracave requested approval of an Ordinance signifying the Intention of Blair County Pennsylvania to organize the Blair County Trail, Park, and Recreation Authority under the provisions of the Municipality Authorities Act, as amended.

Resolution 218-2025: Approving an Ordinance signifying the Intention of Blair County Pennsylvania to organize the Blair County Trail, Park, and Recreation Authority under the provisions of the Municipality Authorities Act, as amended.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 218-2025.

- ii. Chief Clerk Alicia Tiracave requested approval to decertify the Convention and Visitors Bureau of Blair County d/b/a/ Explore Altoona as the recognized Tourism and Promotion Agency.

Resolution 219-2025: Approving the decertification of the Convention and Visitors Bureau of Blair County d/b/a/ Explore Altoona as the recognized Tourism and Promotion Agency.

Commissioner Burke noted her abstention on this issue.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and approved to adopt Resolution 219-2025 with the abstention noted.

- iii. Chief Clerk Alicia Tiracave requested approval for the County of Blair to adopt the Pennsylvania Office of Open Records Right-To-Know Law Fee Schedule.

Resolution 220-2025: Approving the County of Blair to adopt the Pennsylvania Office of Open Records Right-To-Know Law Fee Schedule.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 220-2025.

- iv. Chief Clerk Alicia Tiracave requested approval for David Kessling as Chief Elected Official to sign the Chapter 105 General Permit authorizing the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) to file said application, in order to perform work on the Convention Center Boulevard Bridge located on County Road 105.

Resolution 221-2025: Approving David Kessling as the Chief Elected Official to sign the Chapter 105 General Permit authorizing the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) to file said application in order to perform work on the Convention Center Boulevard Bridge located on County Road 105.

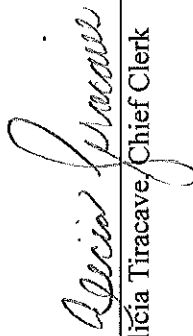
Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 221-2025.

OLD BUSINESS:

NONE

ADJOURN

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


Alicia Tiracave, Chief Clerk

