

BLAIR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES

Thursday, November 20, 2025, 10:00 A.M.
COMMISSIONERS MEETING ROOM, BASEMENT

1. 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:

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

4. MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

5. OTHERS PRESENT:

Jen Cutshall, Lori Guyer (Commissioners), Lindsay Dempsey (Finance), A.C. Stickle, Angela Wagner (Controller), Sam Dunkle (Court Administration), Donna Fisher (Blair County Conservation District), Mark Taylor (EMA), Sherry Socie (Blair Planning), Devin Saylor (Assessment), Tricia Johnson (Social Services), Joseph Cox (Juvenile Probation), Becky Robinson (Purchasing), Nick Burket (Public Works – Facilities), Paul Shaffer (Public Works – Highway), Jim Carothers (Treasurer), Nate Taylor (Public Access), Ann Merritts (Holidaysburg Community Watchdog), Connor Goetz (WTAJ)

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT:

None

APPROVAL OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES – 11/13/2025

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt the minutes as prepared.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

9. COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

Commissioner Burke noted that the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee is holding two webinars, on December 5, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., and on December 9, 2025, at 5:00 p.m., for any organizations interested in learning more. She asked that the word be spread to anyone that might be interested in applying and noted that applications will be accepted starting January 15, 2026.

Commissioner Webster wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

10. CONSENT AGENDA

Resolution 526– 2025:

a. Ratification of the following eight (8) Warrant Lists:

EFFECTIVE DATE	WARRANT NUMBER	AMOUNT
11/07/2025	251107RF	\$544.79
11/10/2025	251110FS	\$1,229.76
11/10/2025	251031PC	\$20,782.97
11/04/2025	251104WC	\$2,949.14
11/13/2025	251113HR	\$15,174.55
11/18/2025	251118SS	\$15,328.59
11/18/2025	251118UT	\$7,284.71
11/18/2025	251118WW	\$71,629.66

b. Ratification of total Payroll for the paycheck dated 11/14/2025 in the total amount of \$946,593.89.

c. **2025 Budget Transfer:** To cover the cost of Counseling Services expenses:

From	\$	To
0120220344270 Juvenile Detention	\$2,063.27	01202206-44250 Juvenile Probation
01202203-45040 Juvenile Detention	\$500.00	01202206-44250 Juvenile Probation
01202203-44000 Juvenile Detention	\$716.66	01202206-44250 Juvenile Probation
01202-45020 Juvenile	\$397.11	01202206-44250 Juvenile Probation
01202-44070 Juvenile	\$162.84	01202206-44250 Juvenile Probation
01202-42070 Juvenile	\$847.90	01202206-44250 Juvenile Probation
01202-42000 Juvenile	\$479.89	01202206-44250 Juvenile Probation
01202-42020 Juvenile	\$1,218.00	01202206-44250 Juvenile Probation
01101GCO-41999 General County Operations	\$28,230.35	01202206-44250 Juvenile Probation

- d. Public Works – Facilities: Requesting approval to utilize red and green exterior lights on the Courthouse for the month of December during the holiday season.
- e. Bridge #33/Old Mill Run Bridge Replacement Project: Requesting approval of ECMS submission invoice #18, Part 2, Final Design, in the total amount of \$46,410.45, received from Keller Engineers. Expenses are 95% reimbursable and will be paid from the Marcellus Shale Legacy Fund.
- f. Bridge #73/T-349 Bridge Removal Project: Requesting approval of ECMS submission invoice #3, Part 1, PE Phase, in the total amount of \$10,998.34, received from Keller Engineers. Expenses are 95% reimbursable and will be paid from the Marcellus Shale Legacy Fund.
- g. Commissioners: Requesting approval of the reappointments of David Clary, Stephen Gerhart, and Terry Tomassetti to the Board of Assessment Appeals for terms effective January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2027.
- h. Conservation District: Requesting the approval of the reappointment of R. Alan Gearhart as Farmer Director and the appointment of Ben Postles as Public Director to the Blair County Conservation District Board. Terms are effective January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2029. Additionally, requesting approval of the reappointment of Amy E. Webster as Commissioner Representative to the Blair County Conservation District Board for the term of January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026.
- i. Employments: Archey, Matthew, Clapper, Matthew, Hileman, Nathan, Kisner, Diana, Markel, William, Smith, Robert, FT, Corrections Officer, Prison, \$21.53/hr, effective 11/17/2025. Tomassetti, Terrence, Gerhart, Stephen, Clary, David, Per Unit, Board of Assessment Appeals Member, Assessment, \$150.00 per day, effective 1/1/2026.
- j. Status Changes: Elensky, Derek, FT, Assistant District Attorney II, District Attorney, \$2,839.96 biweekly, to, Assistant District Attorney I, District Attorney, \$2,555.96 biweekly, effective 11/11/2025.
- k. Resignations: Rogers, Mason, FT, Assistant Public Defender, Public Defender, \$1,986.21 biweekly, effective 11/13/2025.
- l. Retirements: Schmitt, Matthew, FT, Corrections Officer Sergeant, Prison, \$25.77/hr, effective 11/16/2025.

Commissioner Webster noted her abstention to item h, her reappointment as Commissioner Representative to the Conservation District Board for the term January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 526-2025 with the abstention as noted.

Court Administration:

Sam Dunkle requested approval of services provided by interpreters on the official Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) list, including interpreter classifications, at the rates set forth by the AOPC Interpreter Certification Program.

Sam Dunkle stated that this is an umbrella contract for all interpreters versus the prior single contracts. Individuals must be certified by the AOPC to serve in the Commonwealth. This will save both time and money, and as new individuals are certified, they can be added to the contract.

Commissioner Burke noted that many of these interpreters are not local and travel from great distances to perform their services. There is a need for local providers and Commissioner Burke encouraged those in attendance to relay this information to anyone that might be interested.

Resolution 527-2025: Approving the services provided by interpreters on the official Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) list, including interpreter classifications, at the rates set forth by the AOPC Interpreter Certification Program.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution 527-2025.

Public Safety – EMA:

Mark Taylor requested approval to accept the Norfolk Southern Safety First Grant in the amount of \$15,000.00. These funds will be utilized for the Blair Emergency Management UAV Drone Program.

Commissioner Kessling questioned if these funds were just for a single drone.

Mark Taylor responded yes and noted that the department needs approximately \$10,000.00 for a second drone. He also stated that the program's policies and procedures are in place, but additional funds are needed for another drone.

Correction: Each drone costs \$25,000.00. With the \$15,000.00 awarded by the Safety First Grant, an additional \$10,000.00 is needed to purchase the first drone. There is no funding available for a second drone.

Mr. Taylor then took a moment to thank Sherry Socie of the Blair Planning Commission for her hard work in assisting EMA with grant applications.

Commissioner Kessling noted that the Safety First Grant is a great asset, and he is glad to see that it came to fruition.

Resolution 528-2025: Approving the acceptance of the Norfolk Southern Safety First Grant in the amount of \$15,000.00. These funds will be utilized for the Blair Emergency Management UAV Drone Program.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 528-2025.

Juvenile Probation:

Joseph Cox requested approval of the Renewal Agreement for Monitoring and Associated Services between the County of Blair, on behalf of the Blair County Juvenile Probation Department, and Track Group for electric monitoring equipment at the rate of \$5.50 per day per device for the period of October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026.

Resolution 529-2025: Approving the Renewal Agreement for Monitoring and Associated Services between the County of Blair, on behalf of the Blair County Juvenile Probation Department, and Track Group for electric monitoring equipment at the rate of \$5.50 per day per device for the period of October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026.

Commissioner Kessling asked if this is a cost increase from last year.

Joseph Cox responded that the rate has been the same for approximately the past two years.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 529-2025.

Public Works – Highway:

Paul Shaffer requested of six (6) Agreements of Sale, Deeds and Temporary Easements for the County Bridge #33 project for the properties listed below, and for David Kessling, Chief Elected Official, to sign said documents:

County	Municipality	Parcel No.	Claim No.	Claimant	Tax Map No.
Blair	Logan Twp.	1	070092700	City of Altoona	14.00-11.-038.00-000
Blair	Logan Twp.	2	0700928000	Marilyn Benedict	14.00-11.-054.00-000 and 14.00-11.-090.00-000
Blair	Logan Twp.	4	0700930000	John Mark McConnell and Ruby Virginia McConnell	14.00-11.-055.00-000
Blair	Logan Twp.	5	0700931000	Briah Stroh	14.00-11B2-035.00-000
Blair	Logan Twp.	6	0700932000	Mill Run Mennonite Church	14.00-11.-038.01-601
Blair	Logan Twp.	7	0700933000	John Smida, an adult individual	14.00-11B2-040.00-000

Resolution 530-2025: Approving six (6) Agreements of Sale, Deeds and Temporary Easements for the County Bridge #33 project for the properties listed below, and for David Kessling, Chief Elected Official, to sign said documents:

County/Municipality	Parcel No.	Claim No.	Claimant	Tax Map No.
Blair Logan Twp.	1	070092700	City of Altoona	14.00-11.-038.00-000
Blair Logan Twp.	2	0700928000	Marilyn Benedict	14.00-11.-054.00-000 and 14.00-11.-090.00-000
Blair Logan Twp.	4	0700930000	John Mark McConnell and Ruby Virginia McConnell	14.00-11.-055.00-000
Blair Logan Twp.	5	0700931000	Briah Stroh	14.00-11B2-035.00-000
Blair Logan Twp.	6	0700932000	Mill Run Mennonite Church	14.00-11.-038.01-601
Blair Logan Twp.	7	0700933000	John Smida, an adult individual	14.00-11B2-040.00-000

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 530-2025.

Finance:

i. Lindsay Dempsie requested approval of the Exclusive Letter of Authorization between the County of Blair and T&F Exploration, LP, to manage the County's natural gas program.

Ms. Dempsie noted that Efficient Energy Solutions used to manage the program, but due to a retirement, it has been moved to T&F Exploration, LP.

Resolution 531-2025: Approving the Exclusive Letter of Authorization between the County of Blair and T&F Exploration, LP, to manage the County's natural gas program.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 531-2025.

ii. Ms. Dempsie requested approval of the Exclusive Letter of Authorization between the County of Blair and F&P Holdings, LP, to manage the County's electric program.

Resolution 532-2025: Approving the Exclusive Letter of Authorization between the County of Blair and F&P Holdings, LP, to manage the County's electric program.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 532-2025.

- iii. Ms. Dempsie requested approval to reduce General Fund Committed Funds from \$160,186 (\$160,186 – Post Retirement Healthcare (Valley View), \$0 – Worker’s Comp Reserve (Valley View)) to \$0 (\$0- Post Retirement Healthcare (Valley View), \$0 – Worker’s Comp Reserve (Valley View)).

Ms. Dempsie noted that the reduction is a result of everyone at Valley View dropping off post-employment benefits.

Resolution 533-2025: Approving the reduction of General Fund Committed Funds from \$160,186 (\$160,186 – Post Retirement Healthcare (Valley View), \$0 – Worker’s Comp Reserve (Valley View)) to \$0 (\$0 – Post Retirement Healthcare (Valley View), \$0 – Worker’s Comp Reserve (Valley View)).

- Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 533-2025.

- iv. Ms. Dempsie presented the 2026 General Funds and Reserve Account Budget Introduction and Introduction of the 2026 General Fund and the following Reserve Accounts:

Special Grants Fund, Liquid Fuels Fund, Hotel Tax Fund, Debt Service Fund, Hazardous Emergency Response Fund, Bond Fund, Fort Roberdeau Fund, Children Youth & Families Fund, Juvenile Probation Grant Fund, Coroner Fund, CYF Agency Fund, Workers Compensation Fund, Unemployment Compensation Fund, Domestic Relation Title IV-E Fund, Recreation Fund, Capital Reserve Fund, Technology Fund, Farmland Preservation Fund, Victim Witness ARD Fund, County Record Improvement Fund, Vehicle Registration Fund, 911 Project Fund, Juvenile Probation Office Fund, Recorder of Deeds Fund, Affordable Housing Trust Fund, Clerk of Courts Automation Fund, Prothonotary Automation Fund, Central Booking Fund, Marcellus Shale Fund, Phare Grant Fund, Employee Wellness Fund, Act 44 Bridge Fund, Demolition Fund, Juvenile Supervision Fee Fund, Community Development Fund, Drug Court Fund, DUI Specialty Court Fund, Social Services Fund, Offender Supervision Fund, and the Blair County Retirement Fund

Commissioner Burke stated that this information is all available on-line and in the Commissioners’ Office should anyone wish to review.

Resolution 534-2025: Approving the presentation of the 2026 General Funds and Reserve Account Budget Introduction and Introduction of the 2026 General Fund and the Following Reserve Accounts:

Special Grants Fund, Liquid Fuels Fund, Hotel Tax Fund, Debt Service Fund, Hazardous Emergency Response Fund, Bond Fund, Fort Roberdeau Fund, Children Youth & Families Fund, Juvenile Probation Grant Fund, Coroner Fund, CYF Agency Fund, Workers Compensation Fund, Unemployment Compensation Fund, Domestic Relation Title IV-E Fund, Recreation Fund, Capital Reserve Fund, Technology Fund, Farmland Preservation Fund, Victim Witness ARD Fund, County Record Improvement Fund, Vehicle Registration Fund, 911 Project Fund, Juvenile Probation Office Fund, Recorder of Deeds Fund, Affordable Housing Trust Fund, Clerk of Courts Automation Fund, Prothonotary Automation Fund, Central Booking Fund, Marcellus Shale Fund, Phare Grant Fund, Employee Wellness Fund, Act 44 Bridge Fund, Demolition Fund, Juvenile Supervision Fee Fund, Community Development Fund, Drug Court Fund, DUI Specialty Court Fund, Social Services Fund, Offender Supervision Fund, and the Blair County Retirement Fund

- Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 534-2025.

Social Services:

- i. Tricia Johnson requested approval for herself, MH/JID Administrator, Blair County Department of Social Services, to sign and submit the calendar year 2026 Department of Human Services Annual Opt-Out Notification Form for Assisted Outpatient Treatment.

Resolution 535-2025: Approving Tricia Johnson, MH/JID Administrator, Blair County Department of Social Services, to sign and submit the calendar year 2026 Department of Human Services Annual Opt-Out Notification Form for Assisted Outpatient Treatment.

- Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 535-2025.

- ii. Ms. Johnson requested approval to authorize Commissioner David Kessling, as the Chief Elected Official, to sign the seven (7) Site Specific Checklist Tier 2 Environmental Review Records for the Blair County Existing Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program for the Units/Programs as listed below:

Program Type	Case Number	Unit Location
Whole Home Repair	#WH230719-01	3005 Spruce Avenue, Altoona
Whole Home Repair	#WH230203-01	152 Dogwood Drive, Hollidaysburg
Whole Home Repair	#WH230324-01	204 W. Whitier Avenue, Altoona
Whole Home Repair	#WH230413-01	1315 4 th Avenue, Duncansville
Whole Home Repair	#WH230213-01	810 56 th Street, Altoona

CDBG-OBO Tyrone Borough	#20-2720	617 Washington Avenue, Tyrone
CDBG-OBO Antis Township	#22-2843	520 Oak Lane, Tyrone

Resolution 536-2025: Authorizing Commissioner David Kessling, as the Chief Elected Official, to sign the seven (7) Site Specific Checklist Tier 2 Environmental Review Records for the Blair County Existing Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program for the Units/Programs as listed below:

Program Type	Case Number	Unit Location
Whole Home Repair	#WH230719-01	3005 Spruce Avenue, Altoona
Whole Home Repair	#WH230203-01	152 Dogwood Drive, Hollidaysburg
Whole Home Repair	#WH230324-01	204 W. Whittier Avenue, Altoona
Whole Home Repair	#WH230413-01	1315 4 th Avenue, Duncansville
Whole Home Repair	#WH230213-01	810 56 th Street, Altoona
CDBG-OBO Tyrone Borough	#20-2720	617 Washington Avenue, Tyrone
CDBG-OBO Antis Township	#22-2843	520 Oak Lane, Tyrone

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 536-2025.

iii. Ms. Johnson requested approval to authorize Commissioner David Kessling, as the Chief Elected Official, to sign the Environmental Review Record and Exempt Status Determination forms for the following FFY 2024 CDBG projects:

- Economic Development Micro-Enterprise Assistance under the FFY 2024 CDBG Program on behalf of Hollidaysburg Borough
- Removal of Architectural Barriers at the Bellwood-Antis Public Library under the FFY 2024 CDBG Program on behalf of Non-Entitlements (Bellwood Borough) and Antis Township

Resolution 537-2025: Authorizing Commissioner David Kessling, as the Chief Elected Official, to sign the Environmental Review Record and Exempt Status Determination forms for the following FFY 2024 CDBG projects:

- Economic Development Micro-Enterprise Assistance under the FFY 2024 CDBG Program on behalf of Hollidaysburg Borough
- Removal of Architectural Barriers at the Bellwood-Antis Public Library under the FFY 2024 CDBG Program on behalf of Non-Entitlements (Bellwood Borough) and Antis Township

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 537-2025.

iv. Ms. Johnson requested approval of the Quote dated November 13, 2025, received from HSS Systems for a software update that provides for an additional Purchase Order Number and a Start Date to the Provider Contract Table in the total amount of \$875.00.

Resolution 538-2025: Approving the Quote dated November 13, 2025, received from HSS Systems for a software update that provides for an additional Purchase Order Number and a Start Date to the Provider Contract Table in the total amount of \$875.00.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 538-2025.

Commissioners:

Alicia Tiracave requested approval to advertise an ordinance signifying the intent to take by eminent domain a fee simple interest of a parcel of land in the township of Logan.

Resolution 539-2025: Approving the advertisement of an ordinance signifying the intent to take by eminent domain a fee simple interest of a parcel of land in the township of Logan.

Ms. Tiracave noted that this parcel is .3 acres and is needed for easement access as part of the work needed for the Bridge #33 project. The owners are deceased and there is no next of kin.

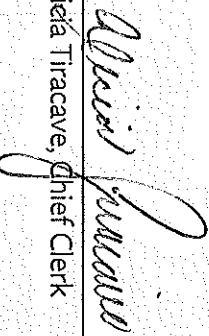
Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 539-2025.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

ADJOURN

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

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alliea Tiracave", written over a horizontal line.

Alliea Tiracave, Chief Clerk