

**MINUTES
COMMISSIONERS' PUBLIC MEETING
July 16, 2009**

The Armstrong County Board of Commissioners' Public Meeting was called to order on Thursday, July 16, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room with the following in attendance: Commissioners Patricia L. Kirkpatrick, Richard L. Fink and James V. Scahill, George J Skamai – Chief Clerk, Mitch Fryer – Leader Times, Josh Walzak – Leader Vindicator, Amanda Hiles– First Deputy, Armstrong County Controller's Office, Rich Palilla – Executive Director, Armstrong County Planning & Development, Carmen Johnson - Assistant Director, Armstrong County Planning & Development, Dave Hogue – Warden, Armstrong County Jail, Mark Campbell - Deputy Warden, Armstrong County Jail, Jim Kuemmerle – Administrator, Armstrong – Indiana MH / MR, Janet Talerico – Executive Director, Armstrong County Area Agency on Aging, Chad Paz – Family Life TV, Tiffany Chaffee - Kittanning Paper, Members of Disability Investigative Group (D.I.G.): William Beranty, William Tatters, Gail Taylor, Bob Wilson, Public Attendance by: Regina Liermann.

Ms. Kirkpatrick announced that this meeting is being recorded.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Mr. Fink, seconded by Ms. Kirkpatrick, and carried unanimously, the minutes for the July 2, 2009 Public Meeting were approved.

CONTRACTS / AGREEMENTS

Agreement for Armstrong County Jail with the Department of Corrections

On a motion by Mr. Fink, seconded by Mr. Scahill and carried unanimously, based on the recommendation of Warden Hogue, and the review of the county solicitor, the County Commissioners acknowledged the agreement between Armstrong County and the Department of Corrections. Warden Hogue stated this contract permits Armstrong County Jail to provide housing for minimum security inmates from the state penitentiary, and receive \$55 per day, per inmate. This will compensate for the loss of revenue from housing inmates for other counties who, due to completion of their own new jails, no longer need to utilize Armstrong County Jail for overflow. The Board of Commissioners recognized Armstrong County Jail as recently been reported to have one of the lowest daily costs of operation. The jail has also received a certificate for 100% compliance from the state. This is the third time they have received certification.

Administrative Entity (AE) Operating Agreement with Public Welfare's Office of Developmental Programs

On a motion by Mr. Fink, seconded by Mr. Scahill and carried unanimously, based on the recommendation of Mr. Kuemmerle, and the review of both counties' solicitors, the Commissioners approved the Administrative Entity (AE) Operating Agreement with Public Welfare's Office of Developmental Programs in concurrence with Indiana County for Armstrong – Indiana MH / MR Program. Mr. Kuemmerle described this as the operational agreement overseeing programs that benefit those with mental retardation.

Area Agency on Aging Contracts

On a motion by Mr. Fink, seconded by Mr. Scahill and carried unanimously, based on the recommendation of Ms. Talerico and the review of the county solicitor, the County Commissioners acknowledged the following contracts for Armstrong County Area Agency on Aging:

1. American Legion Home Association – Dayton Senior Center Lease (July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2012)
2. Armstrong County Health Center (emergency placement) (July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010)
3. Melody Manor (emergency placement) (July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010)
4. Preston Younkens (legal services) (July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010)
5. VNA Services and Foundation, Western Pennsylvania (Home Health Services) (July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010)
6. Concordia Visiting Nurses (July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010)
 - a. Home Health Services
 - b. Home Support Services
 - c. Personal Assistance Services
 - d. Personal Care Services
7. Interim Health Care (July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010)
 - a. Home Health Services
 - b. Home Support Services
 - c. Personal Assistance Services
 - d. Personal Care Services

Ms. Talerico commended the American Legion for supporting the center and offering space at the previous lease rate. The agreements with the Armstrong County Health Center and Melody Manor provide protective placement. The other agreements are standard agreements to provide services for one fiscal year.

2009 EDI Special Projects Grant Contract with US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

On a motion by Mr. Scahill, seconded by Mr. Fink and carried unanimously, based on the recommendation of Ms. Johnson, and pending the review of the county solicitor, the Commissioners approved the 2009 EDI Special Projects Grant Contract with US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Ms. Johnson explained that this is the third agreement as part of the Belmont Complex's grant for \$294,000.

Climax Bridge Project Contract with Francis J. Palo Inc.

On a motion by Mr. Scahill, seconded by Mr. Fink and carried unanimously, based on the recommendation of Mr. Palilla, and pending the review of the county solicitor, the Commissioners approved the Climax Bridge Project Contract with Francis J. Palo Inc. Mr. Palilla described this agreement as services for the demolition and reconstruction of Climax Bridge. The cost of \$1,922,957 will be fully reimbursed by state and federal sources.

Climax Bridge Utility Reimbursement Agreement with Snyder Brothers Inc

On a motion by Mr. Scahill, seconded by Mr. Fink and carried unanimously, based on the recommendation of Mr. Palilla, and pending the review of the county solicitor, the Commissioners approved the Climax Bridge Utility Reimbursement Agreement with Snyder Brothers Inc. Mr. Palilla explained that the gas lines that run along the bridge must be detached and temporarily relocated elsewhere until the bridge is completed. This service is included in the project cost and will be at no additional cost to the county.

ORDINANCES

Tax Abatement Ordinance for West Franklin Commercial 2009-04

On a motion by Mr. Scahill, seconded by Mr. Fink and carried unanimously, based on the recommendation of Mr. Palilla and the review of the county solicitor, the Commissioners approved the Tax Abatement Ordinance for West Franklin Commercial 2009-04. Mr. Palilla described the abatement program as a ten year program starting with 100% abatement and decreasing by 10 percent each year. The abatement is for improvements and new construction only and does not discount taxes on the land or pre-existing buildings. Two residents voiced concerns over the abatements and the effects on property tax. Mr. Palilla cited the example of the Hilltop Plaza that, prior to 1991, was a vacant 40 acre tract of land that earned the county \$600 per year in property tax. It has been developed with businesses that earn the county approximately \$350,000 to \$370,000 annually in property taxes. The abatement will encourage current businesses in growth and improvements, and encourage new businesses to enter the county. The Commissioners concurred and added that it is the county's policy to follow the lead of local municipalities, but that the county does not initiate the tax abatement process.

Tax Abatement Ordinance for West Franklin Residential 2009-05

On a motion by Mr. Scahill, seconded by Mr. Fink and carried unanimously, based on the recommendation of Mr. Palilla and the review of the county solicitor, the Commissioners approved the Tax Abatement Ordinance for West Franklin Residential 2009-05. Mr. Palilla stated that the same guidelines as the commercial ordinance are in effect, however it is valid for twenty years versus ten.

PROCLAMATIONS

Mary Rupp Proclamation

Mr. Fink read aloud the proclamation.

On a motion by Mr. Fink, seconded by Mr. Scahill and carried unanimously, the Commissioners adopted the Mary Rupp Proclamation. The Commissioners will be presenting the proclamation to Mrs. Rupp at Kittanning Care Center during her upcoming birthday celebration.

Disability Investigative Group (D.I.G.) Proclamation

Mr. Tatters invited everyone to the rally and luncheon to be held July 20, 2009 at noon in the Riverfront Park.

Mr. Scahill read aloud the proclamation.

On a motion by Mr. Scahill, seconded by Mr. Fink and carried unanimously, the Commissioners adopted the Disability Investigative Group (D.I.G.) Proclamation. The Board of Commissioners and D.I.G. noted several of the improvements that have been made to increase accessibility around the county.

OTHER BUSINESS/PUBLIC COMMENT

A resident questioned the fees for lock services at one of the Housing Authority's buildings. The Commissioners offered to voice the concerns brought to them, but are unauthorized to govern the Housing Authority. Once they appoint a board member they do not control the board's decisions.

Mr. Scahill described the history of the Climax Bridge, stating that it was slated for repairs in 1952 through 1955. He expressed satisfaction that it is finally being replaced. He then referenced the recently completed Wounded Warrior Walk that he participated in. He stated the 342 mile journey from Philadelphia to New Kensington was a fantastic experience, that he is thankful to have taken part in it, and that he looks forward to sharing his experiences and observances.

Mr. Fink addressed an earlier reference to Senate Bill 850, cautioning for public awareness of what changes the bill would create to state funding, most notably, those of the human service nature. He warned that, while the bill would hold the line on taxes at the state level, funding to human services would be cut leaving the county government to bear the financial burden created by the shortfall.

Ms. Kirkpatrick reminded everyone that Monday July 20, 2009 will be the 40th anniversary of the Apollo Moon landing. Among the national celebrations, there will be a week of activities held locally in Apollo, Pennsylvania. She encourages everyone to participate in celebration of a historic and heroic event.

ADJOURN

On a motion by Mr. Scahill, seconded by Mr. Fink and carried unanimously, the Commissioners moved to adjourn the Public Meeting at 2:42 PM until Thursday August 6, 2009 at 1:30 PM.