

LAWRENCE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
PUBLIC MEETING
MINUTES OF Tuesday, January 28, 2025

The Lawrence County Commissioners' Meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag followed by a Moment of Silence.

The Lawrence County Commissioners' Meeting of Tuesday, January 28, 2025, was called to order by **Commissioner Daniel Vogler**, at 10:00 AM at the Lawrence County Commissioners Meeting Room. Deputy Chief Clerk, Vanessa Bayless called the roll. Those in attendance were **Commissioner Dan Kennedy, Commissioner Chris Sainato, Scott Baldwin, Anita McKeever, Jen Elliott, Steve Cardella, Robert Bullano, Amy DiMuccio, J. Craig Cox, Brian Burick, Amy Stapleton, Jim Bish and Debbie Wachter from the New Castle News**. It was stated for the record that the meeting is being taped. Those wishing to speak shall be given five minutes. If they need more time, they are to see the Deputy Chief Clerk at another time, and she will arrange for them to meet with the Commissioners. Those speaking are to state for the record their names, addresses and the nature of their business.

ROW OFFICERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS

None

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bob Bullano from Neshannock Twp. commended the Commissioners for running for a public office. His concern is too many naysayers about the downtown area. He really wants the county to move forward and businesses to bloom in the City and all municipalities in the County.

FISCAL/CONTRACTUAL

- A. Repository Property: None
- B. Advertise for bids/proposals: None
- C. Receipt for bids/proposals: None
- D. Warrant Registers:
 - 1. January 16, 2025
 - 2. January 22, 2025

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to approve and file said warrant register(s). Motion carried 3-0.

MINUTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

- A. Approval of Minutes:
 - 1. January 21, 2025

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Sainato to approve and file said minutes. Motion carried 3-0.

B. Presentation of Written Communications: None

REPORTS

A. Staff Reports: None
B. Commissioner Reports: DK, DV, CS

Commissioner Kennedy stated last Friday-Leadership Lawrence County was held at the Courthouse. The Chamber did a great job. Commissioner Sainato and Commissioner Kennedy spent Friday afternoon in Ellwood City and got some things accomplished.

Commissioner Vogler had no comment.

Commissioner Sainato echoed Commissioner Kennedy's comments on Leadership Lawrence County. The group also toured the courtrooms and the jail.

NEW BUSINESS RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION R-2025-15

WHEREAS, the Lawrence County Court of Common Pleas has contracted with Thomson Reuters for print subscription items for use in the Judicial Law Library and for use by the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas;

WHEREAS, the Lawrence County Court of Common Pleas is lapsing items, Thomson Reuters has determined it necessary to revise and update the current agreements for print subscriptions; and

WHEREAS, Thomson Reuters will provide print materials under the subscription at a set monthly cost for the items under the subscription for the Judicial Law Library and for use by the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, that:

1. The attached contract, under account number 1000436881, with Thomson Reuters, is hereby approved;
2. The monthly cost and term of the contract is as follows:
\$1,669.14 per month, for year one;
\$1,802.67 per month, for year two.

3. The appropriate County Officials are authorized to sign the necessary agreement forms.

The comms. thanked the Judge, Amy DiMuccio and JoEllen Thomas for their hard work in the savings of this contract. The Judge stated the group met many times regarding different contracts for the Courts.

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Sainato to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION R-2025-16

Resolution of the County of Lawrence authorizing Lawrence County Social Services, Inc. (LCSS) to apply for funds in the amount of \$750,000 with the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, the HOME Applicant is desirous of obtaining funds from DCED for affordable housing activities fundable under Title II of the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12701 et. seq and the implementing regulations at 24 CFR Part 92 and;

WHEREAS, the County of Lawrence will continue to implement the agreement with LCSS for the administration and delivery of the HOME grant funds if awarded by DCED and;

WHEREAS, the County of Lawrence will enter into a Cooperation Agreement with Mercer County, PA for the multi-county owner occupied housing rehabilitation program prioritizing low- income families with children under the age of 6 years and residing in pre-1978 housing.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that a housing need exists that has been identified in the local or state Consolidated Plan and the proposed housing activity addresses this need.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the HOME Applicant has conducted the required citizen participation process.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the HOME Applicant will assure the provision of the other necessary funds to make the activity feasible.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the HOME Applicant will reimburse the commonwealth for any expenditures found by DCED to be ineligible.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the appropriate officer of the HOME Applicant is directed to execute a certificate attesting to the adoption of this Resolution and to furnish a copy of this Resolution to DCED.

Jennifer Elliott gave an update on reapplying for the funds of \$750,000.00.

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION R-2025-17

WHEREAS, the Mental Health and Developmental Services is responsible for the diagnosis, care, treatment, and rehabilitation of the mentally disabled, and

WHEREAS, Lawrence County, through its Mental Health and Developmental Services desires to contract for certain services; and

WHEREAS, the Mental Health/Intellectual Disability Act of 1966 and the Department of Human Services fiscal regulations provide for the purchase of office equipment and services, and

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Lawrence County Board of Commissioners, that:

1. The agreement listed in item 2 shall be approved for the period of January 1, 2025 thru June 30, 2025.
2. Authorization is hereby given to execute the following contract(s):
Peak Potential Therapy Solutions, LLC. (Base) - as detailed in attachment designated 2025-_____.

Program description and rates are also listed within the attachment.

Be it further resolved that payments be made from the MH/DS fund.

RESOLUTION R-2025-18

WHEREAS, the Mental Health and Developmental Services is responsible for the diagnosis, care, treatment, and rehabilitation of the mentally disabled, and

WHEREAS, Lawrence County, through its Mental Health and Developmental Services desires to contract for certain services; and

WHEREAS, the Mental Health/Intellectual Disability Act of 1966 and the Department of Human Services fiscal regulations provide for the purchase of office equipment and services, and

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Lawrence County Board of Commissioners, that:

1. The agreement listed in item 2 shall be approved for the period of January 1, 2025 thru June 30, 2025.
2. Authorization is hereby given to execute the following contract(s):

SOAR Pediatric Developmental Therapy, LLC (Base) - as detailed in attachment designated 2025-_____.

Program description and rates are also listed within the attachment.

Be it further resolved that payments be made from the MH/DS fund.

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Sainato to approve Resolutions R-2025-17 and R-2025-18. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION R-2025-19

WHEREAS: the current Tax Claim Bureau vendor informed the county they can no longer support or update their outdated software; and

WHEREAS: proposals were requested for new software needed to operate the Lawrence County Tax Claim Bureau;

WHEREAS, Government Software Services, Inc. is the vendor that can accommodate the needs of the Tax Claim Office in a timely manner with significant savings to the County; and

WHEREAS: the cost of new software for the Tax Claim Bureau shall be a one-time charge of \$10,000.00 for installation and training; then monthly fees of \$1,550.00, with \$1,200.00 for ongoing support and \$350.00 for hosting fees; and

WHEREAS, the total cost for 2025 shall be \$27,050.00; and

WHEREAS, the contract shall be from February 1, 2025 through December 31, 2027; and

WHEREAS, all other terms and conditions are in the attached Agreement; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, that the County shall enter into a contract with Government Software Services, Inc.

The current provider ESG was bought out by Vision Government Solutions. The current software is outdated and no longer supported. Two (2) companies applied, (1) company is too busy and the other, GSS did reply in a timely manner and is cheaper

and readily available to start the software February 1st. The Commissioners thanked Brian and his staff for his hard, quick work as soon as he started as the Tax Claim Director.

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

R E S O L U T I O N R-2025-20

WHEREAS, County Ordinance No. 203 of 1996 titled *Increasing the Recording Fees of Deeds and Mortgages to Support and/or Enhance the County of Lawrence Local Affordable Housing Efforts* authorized the Recorder of Deeds to increase the fees charged for recording deeds and mortgages; and

WHEREAS, 85% of the additional revenue is set aside in a separate account to be used to fund affordable housing efforts in Lawrence County; and

WHEREAS, DON Enterprises, Inc. would like to continue the First Time Low-Moderate Homebuyer or Prospective Homeowner Closing Cost Grant Program for persons obtaining homes in Lawrence County; and

WHEREAS, these potential homeowners are often unable to obtain their first home due to insufficient funding for closing costs and a grant program of \$40,000.00 would greatly assist in fulfilling their home ownership dream; and

WHEREAS, DON Enterprises, Inc. staff will administer this program; and

WHEREAS, this program allows the administering organization a fee for these activities;

WHEREAS, DON Enterprises, Inc. intends to charge a \$200 administration fee per grant, e.g. approximately \$3,600.00 will be identified for the administration of the program and a total of approximately \$36,400.00 will be available for the approved participants of the program; and

WHEREAS, approximately 18 new homebuyers or prospective homeowners will benefit from the program and DON Enterprises, Inc. expects the funding will be expended within 24 months of its initiation and DON Enterprises, Inc. would be willing to accept the sum of \$40,000.00 to hold for eligible participants; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, that DON Enterprises will be allocated \$40,000.00 from the Affordable Housing fund to be used for the First-Time

Low/Moderate Homebuyers or Prospective Homeowner Closing Cost Grant Program.

The commissioners stated what a great program this is and thanked Anita McKeever for her hard work on the program.

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Sainato to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION R-2025-21

A RESOLUTION OF THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS AUTHORIZING AN ALLOCATION FROM THE ACT 137 FUNDS TO MISSION BARN

WHEREAS, Lawrence County Ordinance No. 203 of 1996 authorized the Recorder of Deeds to increase the fees charged for recording deeds and mortgages and to set aside a portion of those fees in a separate account to be used to fund affordable housing efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Mission Barn is an independent non-profit corporation that works closely with The United Methodist Church in providing modular access ramps to individuals who need assistance in accessing their homes; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, that the Mission Barn of 181 Columbus Drive, New Castle, PA, 16101, is hereby awarded \$15,000.00 from the Affordable Housing Fund to be used for the construction of access ramps to those in need throughout Lawrence County.

The Commissioners stated this is also a great program.

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION R-2025-22

WHEREAS, Section 1784 of the County Code, *Supplemental Appropriations Transfer of Funds; Appropriation Limits*, authorizes the Board of Commissioners, by resolution, to make supplemental appropriations for any lawful purpose from any funds on hand or estimated to be received within the fiscal year and not otherwise appropriated; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Board of Commissioners to adjust the existing FY2025 Budget; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS to amend the 2025 Lawrence County Budget as follows:

INCREASING CDBG Revenues Revenue Fund Account: 56331000.331000.14228 by \$91,470.00; and

INCREASING CDBG County Admin Expense Fund Account: 56418000.999900.57247 by \$38,000.00; and

INCREASING CDBG Ellwood City Admin Expense Fund Account: 56418000.999900.57248 by \$18,270.00; and

INCREASING CDBG Shenango Admin Expense Fund Account: 56418000.999900.57249 by \$19,400.00; and

INCREASING CDBG Union Admin Expense Fund Account: 56418000.999900.57250 by \$15,800.00

Reason: CDBG FY22 Admin Funds

Moved by Mr. Kennedy seconded by Mr. Sainato to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

TRANSFERS (ADMINISTRATIVE)

- A. Opioid Contingency to Opioid Allocations for \$178,000.00

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to approve said Transfer. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTIONS ON THE TABLE

- A. Resolutions on the table: None
- B. Resolutions to be taken off the table: None

ORDINANCES

- A. Discussion: None
- B. On the Table: None
- C. For Introduction: None
- D.** For Final Action: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. The next Commissioners' Meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 4, 2025 @ 10am in the Commissioners' Meeting Room.

B. There will be a Lawrence County Planning Commission Meeting on Wednesday, February 12, 2025 @ 12:00 Noon @ The Neshannock Municipal Building.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Debbie Wachter asked how much is in the Affordable Housing Fund?

Joe Venasco replied around \$88,000.00 with December's allocation received yet. This balance is before the (2) allocations made today.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to adjourn the Lawrence County Commissioners' meeting dated Tuesday, January 28, 2025, at 10:55 am.