



BLAIR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS AGENDA

Thursday, September 3, 2026, 10:00 A.M.
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 asked everyone in attendance to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

OTHERS PRESENT

Madison Murtoff and Lori Guyer (Commissioners), Lindsay Dempse and Brandon Meck (Finance), Emily States (911), Becky Robinson (Purchasing), A.C. Stickel and Angela Wagner (Controllers), Tricia Johnson (Social Services), Kay Stephens (Altoona Mirror), Beth Gerrits, Bill Reeley, Mary Ann Colledge, Denice Rodaniche, Caleb McCoy, Carol Taylor (Public), and Nate Taylor (Public Access Channel).

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

An executive session was held on 9/2/2026 at 11am with the Commissioners and Assistant Chief Clerk to interview a candidate.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Carol Taylor, a resident of Blair County residing at 1057 Kettle Road in Altoona and President of Indivisible Blair County shared her group's concerns: "I know that the Commissioners are presently considering what to do and how to approach the issue of data centers, because I'm certain members of the community are bringing concerns to you. I want to address what we could do proactively in this area. I've done a little research, and I know you probably have as well, but I thought it might be worth public comments in case any of it would help. Obviously, this area, Blair County specifically, contains a lot of rural farmlands and that is the concern why we are here in Blair County as opposed to various townships or even city of Altoona. Municipalities and Counties can institute a time bound moratorium on new data centers in the area for at least 180 days. They do have that ability. They can develop zoning restrictions and regulations that deal with those facilities. We can build in mechanisms to reject data center applications that do not comply with established city or county goals. So, the most important thing here is to have established goals that deal with the subject matter of land use, air or water pollution, sound pollution, and environmental impacts. So that would include water usage plan, energy mitigation plan, heat mitigation plan, economic development plan, environmental justice goals, and public health goals. We've got to have those County goals in place so that at that point, we are able to regulate if it doesn't comply with the things we've set out in those plans. We would advise it is best if there is an independent review by experts with decision making authority and shift the burden to the developer to prove how projects fit County goals. Make sure there's teeth in enforcement mechanisms throughout the approval process and once in operation, those teeth should include possible revocation of permit or certificate of occupancy. We do not have data centers yet, so a specific approval process needs to be put in place with conditional use permit to apply to zoning for permission to use property for that purpose make that revocable if conditions are not met during the lifespan of the property. So there needs pre-approval and during the approval process and post approval. There are a lot of issues folks are concerned with, water being only one of them. Noise is another issue and mitigation of that energy usage of course on site omissions, what value to the tax payer what value to tax abatements what are we getting for that right and anything involved in the project including financing complete transparency to public about where that financing is coming from and an environmental impact report that it won't displace residents or local businesses. The other thing as far as transparency; who are they going to sell the AI information to? You know there always as individuals both environment concerns and our privacy concerns individual privacy rights. I hope that helps. I want to tell you where I got that information. It also gives various cities and counties who have already enacted such regulations that might serve as a guide. That was NorthStar data policy tool kit. You can look it up, but it gives lots of references for other places that have done similar actions."

Caleb McCoy stated that he is running for public office and has had conversations with people across the political spectrum who are very concerned about Flock cameras. He conveyed that people are concerned about these monitoring cameras that are being placed facing public streets and public settings such as parking lots where they track license plates; car make, model, color, distinguishing features, number of passengers facial hair, color of hair, anything like that. Mr. McCoy stated that it's

very invasive. Mr. McCoy is concerned that entities track all of this and they use AI systems to monitor everyone to create searchable databases, and they sell the information with no accountability. He continued that Flock cameras are frequently sold to local police departments and that is best case scenario; if your local police have a database, then at least there would be accountability. If they sell the information to anybody, there is no restriction. Mr. McCoy said a lot of people are very upset about it and would appreciate it if their privacy could be protected.

Denice Rodaniche, a resident of Altoona. Ms. Rodaniche stated that the speed at which both Flock cameras and data centers are moving concerns her. She worries that there is suddenly going to be pressure from developers that will come out of nowhere and the Commissioners are going to have to make decisions under pressure about something that is not only going to cost us as a county but also be reflected on us as taxpayers. She added that guard rails need to be in place by the time these items are built. To her it boils down to why are they in such a hurry to get these things put out there? Privacy is one thing and she understands security cameras, but why do we need such an expansion of data? Ms. Rodaniche said that the purpose of these data centers is what concerns her, along with the speed of which this is happening, and the request to get these things built. She stated that she recently flew into Dallas airport and for the first time she noticed what she initially thought were a lot of warehouses, were data centers. She does not want to see this happening in Central PA.

Bill Kelly, 312 West 10th St. Tyrone. Mr. Kelly stated that something he wanted everyone to consider is "Once you build one of these things, you are stuck with it." He asked the Commissioner if nothing else, slow it down a little bit so they have control over what could be nasty effects from having this built in the County.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Commissioner Kessling responded that the Board speaks often about the data centers. There is a tremendous amount of information and misinformation out there. As Commissioners they are trying to navigate through all of that. They understand that this is a concern for the people of this County. There are some things you need to understand; this is a municipal decision. The Commissioners have no control over that. The municipalities have the ability to make these agreements, and the Commissioners cannot stop that. For example: The Commissioners came under criticism because there was a proposed solar ray that is going on farmland. They were questioned about why they would allow that. It is private land. The Commissioners have no authority as a government to stop someone from selling their land to these people. The Commissioners have limitations about what we can and cannot do. They are in contact and in discussions with State Representatives and State Senators as they try to navigate these waters to ensure that people are protected. A couple of things like environmental impact were concerning and they are looking at. Like everybody else, they live here too. The Commissioners take our farmland very seriously. With Blair County being second in the state in preserving farmland, Commissioner Kessling believes we have over 9,000 acres of land that is preserved. He stated that the Board of Commissioners understand and recognize that agriculture is the number 1 industry in Pennsylvania, and they agree that we would like to preserve that as much as they possibly can. The Board of Commissioners understand the struggles, but he thinks it is safe to say they are struggling trying to figure out what they can and cannot do and what authority they do and do not have. There are many discussions continuing regarding that. Commissioner Kessling stated that he appreciates the input because obviously the Board likes hearing from their constituents and understands what their fears and thoughts are. And they are certainly going to take that further with the discussions they have.

Commissioner Burke stated that there is a measles outbreak within PA. So far Blair County doesn't have any cases, however all counties around us do, except Cambria County. The Commissioners want people to be aware of that fact and if you are not vaccinated, or you have small children who have not been vaccinated, please talk to your medical providers. Reach out for resources on whether it makes sense for you or those around you to be vaccinated, because measles is extremely contagious and we do not want to see it spreading here. The other topic is mosquito spraying. There is spraying occurring this evening around dusk in Antis Township, Hollidaysburg Borough, and Bellwood. There was a press release that went out and WTAJ reported on it. She knows there are different opinions about if spraying is appropriate or not. Commissioner Burke confirmed testing was done and we have tested West Nile positive mosquitos in these areas. There are also high concentrations of mosquitos in the areas being sprayed. That is why we are asking people to be aware of and cooperate with that measure. She stated that if you know anyone who has had West it is not a nice thing to have, so we do need to control that.

CONSENT AGENDA

Resolution 159– 2026:

a. Ratification of the following seven (7) Warrant Lists:

EFFECTIVE DATE	WARRANT NUMBER	AMOUNT
08/26/2026	260826WX	\$12,283.21
08/24/2026	260824FS	\$1,558.68
08/27/2026	260827HR	\$70,872.67
08/28/2026	260828RF	\$3,145.64
09/01/2026	260901SS	\$164,880.67
09/01/2026	260901CY	\$226,433.75
09/01/2026	260901VW	\$267,048.80

- b. **2026 Budget Transfer:** To cover insurance deductibles from PCoRP:
- | From | \$ | To |
|--|------------|----------------------|
| 01101GCO-44960 General County Operations | \$8,337.00 | 01209PO-44960 Prison |
- c. **2026 Budget Transfer:** To cover County vehicle maintenance:
- | From | \$ | To |
|-----------------------|------------|------------------|
| 01103HW-44830 Highway | \$1,153.02 | 113201-44830 CYF |

d. **Status Notice:**

Type	Effective Date	Name	First Name	Dept	Position	Status	Rate	New Dept	New Position	New Status	New Rate
Employment	08/31/26	Conston	John D (Jack)	Court Administration	Tipstaff	Nonexempt PT	\$13.75	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Employment	08/31/26	Riley	Alexandri N	APD	Probation Officer Aide	Nonexempt FT	\$13.75	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Employment	08/31/26	Wilkinson	Unai A	CYF	Supervisor	Exempt FT	\$231.81/biweekly	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Separation	08/26/26	Thomas	Zyrel R	Prison	Corrections Officer	Nonexempt FT	\$23.50	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Separation	08/01/26	Emerick	Michael S	Public Defender	Assistant Public Defender	Exempt PT	\$281.33/biweekly	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Status Change	08/31/26	Bucher	Emily J	Domestic Relations	Department Support	Nonexempt FT	\$13.36	No Change	Care Manager	Nonexempt FT	\$19.35

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling and seconded by Commissioner Webster and unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS & SPECIAL BUSINESS:

a. **Public Safety/911E:**

Emily Requesting approval of a Professional Services Agreement between the County of Blair, on behalf of the Blair County Department of Emergency Services 911E, and Mission Critical Partners LLC for Consulting Services to the County of Blair, as defined in Exhibit A of said agreement for the period of October 1, 2026 through June 30, 2028, for a not to exceed amount of \$25,000.00.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster and unanimously approved.

b. **Social Services:**

- Tricia Johnson requested approval of the Request for Proposals application for the Blair County Opioid Settlement Trust Fund to be open from September 8, 2026 through October 9, 2026, with all proposals being submitted by 11:59 PM October 9, 2026.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster and unanimously approved.

- Tricia Johnson requested approval of the Advertisement of a Request for Proposals by the Blair County Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee to be published on September 8, 2026.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke and unanimously approved.

c. **Public Works/Highway:**

Paul Shaffer requested approval of an Agreement for Purchases Under Bidding Threshold between the County of Blair, on behalf of Blair County Public Works/Highway Department, and James E. Cherry d/b/a Cherry Communications for the service of CB radios and handheld 2-way radios for the period of August 12, 2026 through August 11, 2027.

Chief Clerk Tiracave requested this item be moved to a later date.

d. **Commissioners:**

Chief Clerk Tiracave requested approval of the 2026-2027 Volunteer AD&D Program renewal application with CCAP for the period of October 1, 2026 through October 1, 2027, as outlined below:

- Medical Maximum \$100,000
- Accidental Death Maximum \$25,000
- Accidental Dismemberment Maximum \$25,000
- Deductible Amount \$0
- Number of Community Volunteers 69 x \$3.45 = \$238.05
- Number of Court Referred Alternative Sentencing Volunteers 0 x \$4.60 = \$0
- Number of Work Release Volunteers 0 x \$4.60 = \$46.00
- Number of Juvenile Tobacco Volunteers 0 x \$2.90 = \$0

Total Premium Due

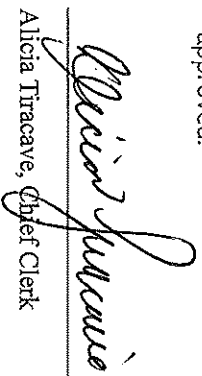
\$400.00

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster and unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS - None

ADJOURN

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster and unanimously approved.



Alicia Tiracave, Chief Clerk