

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2024, 1:03 P.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.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Loia Tiracave and Lori Guyer (Commissioners), Lindsay Dempsey and Brandon Meck (Finance), Angela Wagner and a.C. Stickle (Controller), Brian Walters and Sandy Holencik (Human Resources), Mindy Hostler (CYF), Mark Taylor (Public Safety-EMA), Tricia Johnson (Social Services), Grant Wills (GIS), Robin Patton (Prothonotary), Joe Cox (Juvenile Probation Office), Becky Robinson (Purchasing), Marianne Simisi (Public), Kay Stephens (Altoona Mirror), and Nate Taylor (Public Access Channel).

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT:

Chief Clerk Socie confirmed there were four Executive Sessions held since the last meeting on December 12, 2024.

The first Executive Session was held on Friday, December 13, 2024, with Commissioner Kessling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Burke, Chief Clerk Sherry Socie, Finance Director Lindsay Dempsey, Human Resource Director Melena Koegler, and Human Resource Analyst Kyle Brashar to discuss one open position.

The second Executive Session was held on Monday, December 16, 2024, with Commissioner Kessling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Burke, Human Resource Director Melena Koegler, Chief Clerk Sherry Socie, and Assistant Chief Clerk Alicia Tiracave regarding a vacant position.

The third Executive Session was held on Tuesday, December 17, 2024, at approximately 9:00 a.m. with Commissioner Kessling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Burke, Human Resource Director Melena Koegler, Chief Clerk Sherry Socie, and Assistant Chief Clerk Alicia Tiracave regarding a vacant position.

The fourth Executive Session was held on Thursday, December 19, 2024, at approximately 11:00 a.m. with Commissioner Kessling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Burke, Chief Clerk Sherry Socie, Assistant Chief Clerk Alicia Tiracave, Finance Director Lindsay Dempsey, Human Resources Director Melena Koegler, and Human Resource Analyst Kyle Brashar regarding one open position.

APPROVAL OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES: – 12/03/2024

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

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Kay Stevens asked if the Opioid Settlement Committee recommended more than three (3) applicants for the Opioid Settlement grant funds. She also asked for an explanation on the ARPA funds and why they are not being used and if there is a problem with the Fee Agreement Letter with Gabriel Pera PC that the rates are listed.

Marianne Simisi questioned why there was no one who lived the Opioid experience on the Opioid Settlement Committee.

COMMISSIONER COMMENT:

Commissioner Kessling called for Commissioners Comments.

Commissioner Burke stated that at last week's Board of Commissioners meeting, we were unaware of former State representative Jerry Stern's passing. Jerry Stern was a tremendous public servant for this area, and he served our community very well over the years. We are very sad to lose him.

Commissioner Webster wished everyone a Merry Christmas and asked everyone to reflect on all the gifts God gave us.

Resolution 571 – 2024:

a. Payment of the following four (4) Warrant Lists:

EFFECTIVE DATE	WARRANT NUMBER	AMOUNT
12/17/2024	241217WW	427,186.12
12/17/2024	241210EO	2,130.00
12/17/2024	241217CY	586,621.59
12/17/2024	241217SS	33,930.07

Which includes payment of the following invoices:

- Holidaysburg Borough, in the amount of \$17,610.73.

b. Ratification of the following four (4) Warrant Lists:

EFFECTIVE DATE	WARRANT NUMBER	AMOUNT
12/09/2024	241130PC	22,339.32
12/12/2024	241212HR	8,873.31

12/10/2024	241210TC	95,755.93
12/09/2024	241209FS	2,506.25

- c. Ratification of Total Payroll for the paycheck dated 12/13/2024 in the total amount of \$847,568.32.
- d. **WTAJ:** Requesting approval for use of the Courthouse Courtyard Area for coverage of an event on December 19, 2024, from 3:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- e. **Blair County Conservation District Board:** Requesting approval for the reappointment of Commissioner Amy Webster as Commissioner Representative to the board for the period of 01/01/2025 through 12/31/2025.

f. **Bridge #33/Old Mill Run Bridge Replacement Project:** Requesting approval of ECMS submission Invoice #6, Part 1, Preliminary Design, in the total amount of \$16,786.17, received from Keller Engineers. Expenses are 95% reimbursable and will be paid from the Marcellus Shale Legacy Fund.

g. **2024 Budget Transfer:** To cover Insurance Deductible fees:

	From	\$	To
01101GCO-44960	General County Operations	\$507.75	113201-44960 CYF

h. **Employments:** Shetrom, Kurtis, FT, Custodian (MDJ), Public Works, \$16.81/hr., effective 12/16/2024. Conrad, Brayden, PT, Probation Officer Support, Adult Parole and Probation, \$11.58/hr., effective 12/23/2024. Luciano, Marie, FT, Casework Manager, Children, Youth and Families, \$1872.20 biweekly effective 12/23/2024.

i. **Resignations:** Costrello, Brandan, FT, Corrections Officer, Prison, \$21.53/hr., effective 12/7/2024. Stein, Skyler, Temporary, Telecommunicator Trainee, 911 Center, \$13.88/hr., effective 12/11/2024.

Commissioner Burke noted her abstentions on the payment to Hollidaysburg Borough.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and approved to adopt Resolution 571-2024 with the abstention as noted.

STAFF REPORTS & SPECIAL BUSINESS:
Opioid Settlement Committee:

- i. Tricia Johnson requested approval of an allocation of funds from the Opioid Settlement Fund to the Department of Social Services for reimbursement of expenses incurred for the 2024 SAP networking day in the amount of \$5,000.00.

Commissioner Kessling asked what SAP is.

Ms. Johnson responded that SAP is a state-mandated Student Assistance Program in grades K-12. The 2024 SAP networking day consisted of a day of training on the “One Pill Can Kill” campaign, which is specific to the Opioid and Fentanyl epidemic.

Resolution 572-2024: Approving the allocation of funds from the Opioid Settlement Fund to the Department of Social Services for reimbursement of expenses incurred for the 2024 SAP networking day in the amount of \$5,000.00.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 572-2024.

- ii. Tricia Johnson requested approval of a Purchase of Service Agreement between the County of Blair and Blair Health Choices for Contingency Management Services, in the amount of \$524,560.84 to be paid from the Opioid Settlement Fund.

Ms. Johnson stated that Contingency Management Services is an evidence-based program of behavioral therapy to increase commitment to treatment.

Resolution 573-2024: Approving the Purchase of Service Agreement between the County of Blair and Blair Health Choices for Contingency Management Services, in the amount of \$524,560.84 to be paid from the Opioid Settlement Fund.

Commissioner Burke noted her abstention on the payment to Blair Health Choices.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and approved to adopt Resolution 573-2024 with the abstention as noted.

- iii. Tricia Johnson requested approval of the Purchase of Service Agreement between the County of Blair and Blair Drug and Alcohol Program, Inc. for implementation of Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT) in the amount of \$8,000.00 to be paid from the Opioid Settlement Fund.

Ms. Johnson stated that the Community Reinforcement and Family Training program is a compassionate and non-confrontational evidence-based intervention. Its three main goals are to reduce the affected loved ones’ harmful substance misuse, engage the loved ones in treatment, and improve the family members and loved ones family functioning.

Resolution 574-2024: Approving the Purchase of Service Agreement between the County of Blair and Blair Drug and Alcohol Program, Inc. for implementation of Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT) in the amount of \$8,000.00 to be paid from the Opioid Settlement Fund.

Commissioner Webster noted her abstention on the payment to Blair Drug and Alcohol Program, Inc.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and approved to adopt Resolution 574-2024 with the abstention as noted.

Public Safety – 911E:

- i. Mark Taylor requested approval to cancel the 30-day open burning ban for the County of Blair with the minimum notice of 48 hours to be given prior to the cancellation.

Commissioner Kessling stated that the County does not have the authority to enforce a burn ban.

Mr. Taylor stated that enforcement is through the local police or municipality. Residents need to contact their local municipalities or EMA person to file complaints.

Resolution 575-2024: Approving the cancellation of the 30-day open burning ban for the County of Blair with the minimum notice of 48 hours to be given prior to the cancellation.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 575-2024.

- ii. Mark Taylor requested approval of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA), Statewide Interconnectivity Funding Grant Agreement, in the total award amount of \$1,682,506.42, for the projects listed below:

- \$ 98,876.11 for the SAC CHE Maintenance Project
- \$ 86,870.11 for the SAC Regional CAD Maintenance Project
- \$ 118,890.60 for the SCM ESINet Maintenance Project
- \$ 25,000.00 for Blair NG911 GIS Post Migration Cost
- \$ 18,546.00 for Blair ILEBC Post Migration Legacy Cost
- \$ 1,298,557.60 for SAC Regional Radio Project
- \$ 35,766.00 for SAC Cyber Security Policy Development

Resolution 576-2024: Approving the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA), Statewide Interconnectivity Funding Grant Agreement, in the total award amount of \$1,682,506.42, for the projects listed below:

- \$ 98,876.11 for the SAC CHE Maintenance Project
- \$ 86,870.11 for the SAC Regional CAD Maintenance Project
- \$ 118,890.60 for the SCM ESINet Maintenance Project
- \$ 25,000.00 for Blair NG911 GIS Post Migration Cost
- \$ 18,546.00 for Blair ILEBC Post Migration Legacy Cost
- \$ 1,298,557.60 for SAC Regional Radio Project
- \$ 35,766.00 for SAC Cyber Security Policy Development

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 576-2024.

Public Safety – EMA:

Mark Taylor requested approval of the FFY 2023/2025 Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMIEP) Grant Agreement (C950003917) Amendment, to include Year 3 (2025) approved projects, in the total award amount of \$12,760.00, for the performance period of October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2025.

Mr. Taylor added that year three (3) will be for the PEAC Hazardous Material Software and the commodity flow study.

Resolution 577-2024: Approving the FFY 2023/2025 Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMIEP) Grant Agreement (C950003917) Amendment, to include Year 3 (2025) approved projects, in the total award amount of \$12,760.00, for the performance period of October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2025.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt resolution 577-2024.

Social Services:

- i. Tricia Johnson requested approval of the four (4) Sub-Recipient Agreements for housing assistance under the County's PA Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement (PHARE) Program for 23/24 between the County of Blair and the following agencies:

- Catholic Charities in the total amount of \$10,000.00
- Center for Community Action Agency in the total amount of \$10,000.00
- Blair Health Choices in the total amount of \$10,000.00
- Family Services, Inc. in the total amount of \$10,000.00

Resolution 578-2024: Approving the four (4) Sub-Recipient Agreements for housing assistance under the County's PA Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement (PHARE) Program for 23/24 between the County of Blair and the following agencies:

- Catholic Charities in the total amount of \$10,000.00
- Center for Community Action Agency in the total amount of \$10,000.00
- Blair Health Choices in the total amount of \$10,000.00
- Family Services, Inc. in the total amount of \$10,000.00

Motion by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 578-2024.

ii. Tricia Johnson requested approval for the submission of the CY 2025 Annual Notification Form for Assisted Outpatient Treatment to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, indicating that the County of Blair will not provide Assisted Outpatient Treatment pursuant to Section 301(c) of the Mental Health Procedures Act (MHPA) and for Tricia Johnson to sign said form on behalf of the County of Blair.

Ms. Johnson added that the County does not currently provide assisted outpatient treatment due to capacity issues both in the County and in the judicial court system. There are currently limited counties in Pennsylvania that actually provide assisted outpatient treatment. We manage our capacity as we can, right now, but we are not ready to move forward with this program.

Resolution 579-2024: Approving the submission of the CY 2025 Annual Notification Form for Assisted Outpatient Treatment to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, indicating that the County of Blair will not provide Assisted Outpatient Treatment pursuant to Section 301(c) of the Mental Health Procedures Act (MHPA) and for Tricia Johnson to sign said form on behalf of the County of Blair.

Motion by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 579-2024.

iii. Tricia Johnson requested approval of the FY 24/25 Contract Agreement between the County of Blair and Clear Child Services, Inc. for mental health services funded by the Human Services Block Grant for an amount not to exceed \$28,000.00 for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

Resolution 580-2024: Approving the FY 24/25 Contract Agreement between the County of Blair and Clear Child Services, Inc. for mental health services funded by the Human Services Block Grant for an amount not to exceed \$28,000.00 for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 580-2024.

Prothonotary:

Robin Patton requested approval for the Payment of the Invoice made Outside the County Purchasing Policy received from Kofile for the preservation of three (3) of the Prothonotary's Docket books that are in need of repair in the total amount of \$12,561.00. The first half, in the amount of 6,280.50, to be paid from the Records Improvement Committee fund. The second half to be paid from the Prothonotary's reserve fund.

Commissioner Kessling verified that the funding will be coming out of funds not associated with the general fund.

Ms. Patton confirmed the funds will not be coming out of the general fund.

Resolution 581-2024: Approving the Payment of the Invoice made Outside the County Purchasing Policy received from Kofile for the preservation of three (3) of the Prothonotary's Docket books that are in need of repair in the total amount of \$12,561.00. The first half, in the amount of 6,280.50, to be paid from the Records Improvement Committee fund. The second half to be paid from the Prothonotary's reserve fund.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 581-2024.

Public Works / Highway:

i. Chief Clerk Socie, on behalf of Paul Shaffer, requested approval of the Construction Plans, Bid Specifications, and the Advertisement for the Invitation to Bid for the Salt Storage Building for the Highway Department.

Resolution 582-2024: Approving the Construction Plans, Bid Specifications, and the Advertisement for the Invitation to Bid for the Salt Storage Building for the Highway Department.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 582-2024.

ii. Chief Clerk Socie, on behalf of Paul Shaffer, requested approval of the 2025 Annual Lakemont Dam Inspection Report to be performed by Gwin, Dobson, & Foreman Engineers, Inc.

Resolution 583-2024: Approving the 2025 Annual Lakemont Dam Inspection Report to be performed by Gwin, Dobson & Foreman Engineers, Inc.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 583-2024.

iii. Chief Clerk Socie, on behalf of Paul Shaffer, requested approval of for the Payment made outside of the County Purchasing Policy received from Roberts Pest Control for treatment for flea control in the amount of \$325.00.

Resolution 584-2024: Approving the Payment of the Invoice made Outside of the County Purchasing Policy received from Roberts Pest Control for treatment for flea control in the amount of \$325.00.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 584-2024.

Human Resources:

Sandy Holencik requested approval for the submission of a 2024 PComp Safety Improvement Grant Application to the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) in the total grant amount of \$3,854.25 as outlined below:

- a) Class-A First Aid Refills – 20 each at \$134.95 for a total of \$2699.00
- b) Sting Relief Swabs – 10 each at \$8.80 for a total of \$88.00
- c) Physicians Care Eye Wash Solution – 1 case for a total of \$194.55
- d) Bandages Assorted Sizes – 20 each for a total of \$739.80
- e) BleedStop First Aid for blood clotting for moderate to severe bleeding wounds – 10 each at \$13.29 for a total of \$132.90.

Resolution 585-2024: Approving the submission of a 2024 PComp Safety Improvement Grant Application to the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) in the total grant amount of \$3,854.25 as outlined below:

- a) Class-A First Aid Refills – 20 each at \$134.95 for a total of \$2699.00
- b) Sting Relief Swabs – 10 each at \$8.80 for a total of \$88.00
- c) Physicians Care Eye Wash Solution – 1 case for a total of \$194.55
- d) Bandages Assorted Sizes – 20 each for a total of \$739.80
- e) BleedStop First Aid for blood clotting for moderate to severe bleeding wounds – 10 each at \$13.29 for a total of \$132.90.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 585-2024.

GIS:

Grant Willis requested approval of the quote received from Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) for GIS software maintenance, in the total amount of \$27,160.00 for the period of February 1, 2025 through January 31, 2026.

Resolution 586-2024: Approving the quote received from Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) for GIS software maintenance, in the total amount of \$27,160.00 for the period of February 1, 2025 through January 31, 2026.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 586-2024.

Children, Youth and Families:

Mindy Hostler requested approval of a FY 24/25 Agreement between the County of Blair, Blair County Children, Youth and Families and Evey Black Attorneys LLC for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, at the hourly rate of \$135.00 per hour.

Commissioner Burke requested this item be tabled until the December 31, 2024, agenda so a requested change thoroughly reviewed.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Burke, and unanimously approved to table this agenda item submission for further review of the contract.

Human Resources:

i. Brian Walters requested approval of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the County of Blair and Pennsylvania Counties Health Insurance Cooperative (PCHIPC) to set aside \$576,598.00 of our current reserve for the purpose of funding 90% of our maximum premium rate for participation in the PCHIPC funding model for costs of our self-insured medical plan.

Resolution 587-2024: Approving the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the County of Blair and Pennsylvania Counties Health Insurance Cooperative (PCHIPC) to set aside \$576,598.00 of our

current reserve for the purpose of funding 90% of our maximum premium rate for participation in the PCHPC funding model for costs of our self-insured medical plan.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 587-2024.

- ii. Brian Walters requested approval of the one (1) year renewal of the Administrative Services Agreement between the County of Blair and Luminare Health Benefits for benefits/claims administration effective January 1, 2025, in the total amount of \$260,750.16. Said cost reflects a 0.91% increase from 2024 solely due to a non-negotiable increase in the Cigna Network Access Fee. All other costs remain the same as 2024 rates.

Commissioner Kessling asked the end date of the terms.

Mr. Walters stated the terms are January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025.

Resolution 588-2024: Approving the one (1) year renewal of the Administrative Services Agreement between the County of Blair and Luminare Health Benefits for benefits/claims administration effective January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025, in the total amount of \$260,750.16. Said cost reflects a 0.91% increase from 2024 solely due to a non-negotiable increase in the Cigna Network Access Fee. All other costs remain the same as 2024 rates.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 588-2024.

Commissioners:

- i. Chief Clerk Socie requested approval of the Operation Our Town agreement between the County of Blair, the Blair County District Attorney, and Operation Our Town for donated funds to conduct law enforcement purposes as set forth in this agreement and gives the Blair County District Attorney all necessary cooperation to facilitate said purposes.

Resolution 589-2024: Approving the Operation Our Town agreement between the County of Blair, the Blair County District Attorney, and Operation Our Town for donated funds to conduct law enforcement purposes as set forth in this agreement and gives the Blair County District Attorney all necessary cooperation to facilitate said purposes.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, with a nay vote by Commissioner Burke, and approved by a 2-1 vote to adopt Resolution 589-2024.

- ii. Chief Clerk Socie requested approval to rescind Resolution 98-2024 - Approving a Commitment of \$200,000.00 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds to The UPMC Foundation Contingent as outlined in this resolution.

Resolution 590-2024: Approving to rescind Resolution 98-2024 - Approving a Commitment of \$200,000.00 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds to The UPMC Foundation Contingent as outlined in this resolution.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 590-2024.

- iii. Chief Clerk Socie requested approval to allocate \$200,000 to UPMC Altoona Foundation from Capital Reserve funds towards construction of the Emergency Psychiatric Assessment Treatment and Healing (EMPATh) unit at UPMC Altoona Hospital. Funds are contingent upon UPMC's receipt of \$773,015.00 (over a 2-year period) from Pennsylvania Department of Drug & Alcohol Programs for a substance abuse disorder and crisis stabilization service grant; \$250,000 from the US Department of Health Resources and Services Administration; and an allocation of \$100,000.00 from the City of Altoona towards the construction of this unit.

Resolution 591-2024: Approving to allocate \$200,000 to UPMC Altoona Foundation from Capital Reserve funds towards construction of the Emergency Psychiatric Assessment Treatment and Healing (EMPATh) unit at UPMC Altoona Hospital. Funds are contingent upon UPMC's receipt of \$773,015.00 (over a 2-year period) from Pennsylvania Department of Drug & Alcohol Programs for a substance abuse disorder and crisis stabilization service grant; \$250,000 from the US Department of Health Resources and Services Administration; and an allocation of \$100,000.00 from the City of Altoona towards the construction of this unit.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 591-2024.

- iv. Chief Clerk Socie requested approval to rescind resolution number 373-2023 - Approving of ARPA Funds to be distributed to ABI for the deployment of fiber and wireless towers in the Williamsburg and Juniata Township project area within Blair County.

Resolution 592-2024: Approving to rescind resolution number 373-2023 - Approving of ARPA Funds to be distributed to ABI for the deployment of fiber and wireless towers in the Williamsburg and Juniata Township project area within Blair County.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 592-2024.

- v. Chief Clerk Socie requested approval to allocate \$250,000.00 to Alleghenies Broadband, Inc. in Capital Reserve Funds contingent upon Alleghenies Broadband's receipt of \$2,000,000 from the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority in response to the Capital Projects Funds opportunity for grant funding; \$250,000.00 from Crossnest Broadband LLC; and an allocation of \$250,000.00 from the County of Blair, for the purpose of deploying fiber and wireless towers to over 593 locations in the Williamsburg area and Juniata Township within Blair County.

Commissioner Kessling clarified this is not pulling money from the ARPA funds; it is just re-appropriating it. The commitment is still there.

Resolution 593-2024: Approving to allocate \$250,000.00 to Alleghenies Broadband, Inc. in Capital Reserve Funds contingent upon Alleghenies Broadband's receipt of \$2,000,000 from the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority in response to the Capital Projects Funds opportunity for grant funding; \$250,000.00 from Crossnest Broadband LLC; and an allocation of \$250,000.00 from the County of Blair, for the purpose of deploying fiber and wireless towers to over 593 locations in the Williamsburg area and Juniata Township within Blair County.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 593-2024.

- vi. Chief Clerk Socie requested approval of a Fee Agreement Letter between the County of Blair and Gabriel Fera, PC, for Solicitor Services in a not-to-exceed amount of \$200,000.00 plus out-of-pocket costs, and for the 2025 calendar year. For the remainder of the 2025 calendar year, rates are as follows: Partner Rate: \$225; Senior Associate Rate: \$210; Associate Rate: \$190; Paralegal Rate: \$145.

Commissioner Kessling stated that the rates did not change since last year, they are just listed out.

Resolution 594-2024: Approving the Fee Agreement Letter between the County of Blair and Gabriel Fera, PC for Solicitor Services in a not-to-exceed amount of \$200,000.00 plus out-of-pocket costs, and for the 2025 calendar year. For the remainder of the 2025 calendar year, rates are as follows: Partner Rate: \$225; Senior Associate Rate: \$210; Associate Rate: \$190; Paralegal Rate: \$145.

Motioned by Commissioner Kessling, seconded by Commissioner Webster, and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution 594-2024.

At this time, Commissioner Kessling responded to a question that was posed during "Public Comment" regarding the Opioid Settlement. Commissioner Kessling stated that the money Blair County receives is a lot of money, and the commissioners were looking for the best way to distribute this money for its intended purposes. The commissioners understood that not everyone was going to be satisfied with how this money would be spent. They decided it was best to put together a committee, and the committee would advise the commissioners on what they believed would be the best use of the money. The committee was established, and they have and will continue to bring together ideas to the commissioners on how the money should be spent for its intended uses while following the specific guidelines the money can be used for. The commissioners are trying to do their due diligence in spreading the money out equitably and for the purposes of preventing this horrible disease and the tragic outcomes.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

Adjourn:

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



Henry Socie, Chief Clerk

