

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 26, 2016

Commissioner Chairman Michael A. Baker called the regular meeting of the Indiana County Commissioners to order at 10:30 a.m. in the Commissioners Hearing Room.

ROLL CALL

Chairman Michael A. Baker, present
Commissioner Sherene Hess, present

Commissioner Rodney D. Ruddock, present

Also in attendance were Solicitor Michael T. Clark, Chief Clerk Robin Maryai and others. Members of the news media present were Randy Wells, Josh Widdowson and Greg Reinbold.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Baker led those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

APPROVE MINUTES...OCTOBER 12, 2016

A motion was made by Ms. Hess, seconded by Mr. Ruddock and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of October 12, 2016 as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

There was an Executive Session held on October 19, 2016 at 9:30 a.m. to discuss Personnel Matters.

AGREEMENT...SCHILLING & KEITH / TAX CLAIM

At the request of Frank Sisko, Chief Assessor, a motion was made by Mr. Ruddock, seconded by Ms. Hess and unanimously carried to approve a contract with Schillinger & Keith to do title searches in conjunction with the Tax Claim/ Judicial Tax Sale in the amount of \$135.00 per parcel. It is noted that this is a pass-through cost as part of the sale.

SAVIN MAINTENANCE AND SERVICE AGREEMENT / DISTRICT ATTORNEY

At the request of Patrick Dougherty, District Attorney, a motion was made by Mr. Ruddock, seconded by Ms. Hess and unanimously carried to approve the SAVIN Maintenance and Service Agreement between Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, the Pennsylvania District Attorney's Institute and Indiana County in the amount of \$2,813.73. The cost is based on bed capacity at the Indiana County Jail and is split between the District Attorney's Office and the Indiana County Jail. PA SAVIN provides around the clock access to the custody status of offenders in county jails, state prisons, or under state parole supervision in the Commonwealth. PA SAVIN also provides automated telephone, email and/or text message notification of any change in an inmate's incarceration status including release, transfer to other prisons, escape, and any custody changes.

CONTRACT MODIFICATION # 1 – 2014 INDIANA COUNTY CDBG ENTITLEMENT

At the request of LuAnn Zak, Office of Planning and Development, a motion was made by Mr. Ruddock, seconded by Ms. Hess and unanimously carried to approve a contract modification to the 2014 Indiana County CDBG Entitlement contract. The motion also includes approval for

Commissioner Baker to sign all necessary documents for the submission of the modification to DCED for final approval. The original 2012 CDBG contract allocations and proposed modifications are as follows:

Budget Code/Activity	Original Allocation	Proposed Modification	Revised Allocation
03 Public Facilities: Alice Paul House Building Project	\$ 215,000.00	-\$215,000.00	\$ 0.00
03J Water/Sewer Improvements: Fulton Run Alternative Sewer System	\$ 0.00	+\$200,000.00	+\$200,000.00
14A Rehab: Single- Unit Residential	\$ 0.00	+\$ 15,000.00	+\$ 15,000.00
Program Administration	\$ 46,099.00	\$ 46,099.00	\$ 46,099.00

The required public hearing was conducted on October 18, 2016 for the proposed modification and no adverse comments were received. All required citizen participation requirements have been met for the contract modification. Upon receipt of approval the required paperwork will be submitted to DCED.

RESOLUTION – 2016 INDIANA COUNTY CDBG PROJECT SCOPE AND 3-YR PLAN

At the request of LuAnn Zak, Office of Planning and Development, a motion was made by Mr. Ruddock, seconded by Ms. Hess and unanimously carried to approve a resolution of the County of Indiana approving the project scope and three-year plan of the County-wide needs priorities for the 2016 Non-Entitlement CDBG application. Indiana County will submit the Alice Paul House Building Project for funding. The 2016 Indiana County Entitlement is \$255,209.00 and is due to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development by November 18, 2016. All citizen participation requirements for project development and selection were completed as required.

EASEMENT...PEOPLES TWP LLC / AIRPORT

At the request of Tom Robertson, Airport, a motion was made by Mr. Ruddock, seconded by Ms. Hess and unanimously carried to approve a gas pipeline easement agreement with Peoples TWP LLC for the installation of an underground gas pipeline on Airport property.

OFFICIAL RETURN BOARD

At the request of Robin Maryai, Chief Clerk, a motion was made by Ms. Hess, seconded by Mr. Ruddock and unanimously carried to approve the following to serve on the Official Return Board for the November 8, 2016 General Election:

- Democratic – Margaret J. Karp and Margaret Preite
- Republican – Phyllis C. Spicher and Darla Coble

REMINDER – LAST DAY TO APPLY FOR AN ABSENTEE BALLOT

Chief Clerk Robin Maryai announced that the last day to apply for an absentee ballot for the November 8, 2016 General Election is November 1, 2016.

POLLING PLACE LOCATION NAME CHANGE – WHITE #3/1

Chief Clerk Robin Maryai announced the name change of the polling place location at White #3/1 is now New Hope Church, 74 S. Ben Franklin Rd., Indiana, PA. It was formerly the Calvary Evangelical Free Church.

COURTHOUSE CLOSED...FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2016 VETERANS DAY HOLIDAY

Commissioner Baker announced that the Courthouse will be closed on Friday, November 11, 2016 in observance of the Veterans Day Holiday.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Ruddock announced that on October 18, 2016 he visited the state Capitol to seek support from lawmakers for an alternative to county property taxes, one of the 2016 priorities of the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP). County government relies on the real property tax for nearly all of its locally generated tax revenues. As they continue to face declining state and federal funding and increasing mandates and service demands, this means counties have nowhere to turn but local property owners to make up the difference. For that reason, counties are seeking statutory authority for options such as the sales, personal income or earned income tax that can be used to reduce their reliance on the property tax.

Commissioner Ruddock said he made the trip to Harrisburg with other members of CCAP's Assessment and Taxation Committee and leadership team to begin laying the groundwork for advancing this important priority in the 2017-2018 session. In meetings with both House and Senate members, county officials encouraged legislators to support comprehensive property tax reform.

Commissioner Ruddock said "We have been calling for taxing options for counties so that we can decide locally which revenue sources work best for our communities. It is time for counties to have a seat at the table in these discussions as well."

Commissioner Ruddock explained that county officials believe local taxes should be equitable and no one should have to pay more than their fair share. But because of the significant differences among Pennsylvania's 67 counties — such as social and income demographics, the balance between commercial and residential property taxpayers, and the economic base — the fairest tax in one county might not be viable in another county. Taxing options would allow counties to match the relative strengths of different taxes to their local situations.

Commissioner Ruddock said "Any property tax solution that does not consider counties is not comprehensive reform of the property tax system, and will leave Pennsylvania residents with an inadequate result."

Commissioner Ruddock said there also are discussion underway in Harrisburg on how best to correct inconsistencies and inequities in property reassessments in Pennsylvania. The Legislature's Local Government Commission introduces House Resolution 1053 to form a task force that would provide guidance and support to a working group of representatives from

several organizations. Those representatives would develop and implement remedies to modernize and improve the efficiency, transparency and fairness of the property assessment process in the Commonwealth.

Some of the purposes for the task force would be:

- Developing and implementing contracting standards for contracting with private appraised firms in conducting county reassessments.
- Developing and implementing an operations manual to be used by counties when conducting a countywide reassessment or when valuating property.
- Developing and implementing a county self-evaluation tool for counties to determine their need for a countywide reassessment, and readiness for reassessment in terms of data and resources.
- Requiring public disclosure or transparency of the key elements of a county's chosen system for property valuation and assessment, including how properties are valued and assessed.
- Developing and implementing a training program for persons employed to collect, compile, compare or handle data associated with the valuation of property for purposes of reassessment.
- Investigating the fairness and efficiency of the assessment appeals process.
- Examining current legal requirements for property valuation, assessment and appeals in this Commonwealth and identifying any advisable changes.

The task force would be composed of House and Senate members and two appointees by the governor, one from the Department of Community and Economic Development and one from the Department of Revenue. The task force would provide guidance and support to a working group of representatives from the Local Government Commission, CCAP, the Assessors' Association of Pennsylvania the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee, and State Tax Equalization Board. Mr. Ruddock said the proposed time frame for HR 1053 calls for the goals to be accomplished over a period roughly from 2017 to 2020.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING...NOVEMBER 16, 2016 AT 10:30 A.M.

The next regular scheduled Commissioners' Public Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 16, 2016 at 10:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to come before the Board at this time, Commissioner Baker adjourned the meeting at 10:58 a.m.

Sherene Hess, Secretary

Michael A. Baker, Chairman