

## **HEARING AND PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING EMS ORDINANCE**

**MARCH 26, 2025 – 10:30 A.M.**

Commissioner Keith explained that at an upcoming meeting, the County Commissioners will be considering an ordinance for enactment that would authorize incorporating an authority under the Municipality Authorities Act to administer emergency medical services on behalf of participating municipalities in the County. The Authorities Act requires that a hearing be conducted prior to considering such an ordinance. On behalf of the Commissioners, Commissioner Keith called the hearing to order regarding the County's proposed incorporation of an authority to administer EMS throughout the County. Notice of this hearing was advertised in both the Indiana Gazette and the Indiana Law Journal in accordance with the Authorities Act. Before opening this up to the public Commissioner Keith made the following remarks.

"As we know, due to many circumstances, and Indiana County is not alone in this problem but also across the entire nation, our emergency medical services are in a crisis. Many ambulance services are closing. They are closing because of lack of revenue and there are many ways revenues can be generated but actually are not being fulfilled to keep these services open. I have heard of ambulance boards meeting at 5 or 6 in an evening and announced at 7 or 8 their services will be closing at midnight. That is how quick it happens. That leaves a void and that void has to be picked up by the nearest ambulance service which also puts a strain on that service also.

Two and half years ago we started the process. Our solicitor, Mr Budash has slapped my hands many times because coming into as commissioner, I tried to take on this authority throughout the county under the county. But realizing under the restrictions of the statute of the commonwealth, counties are not allowed to do that. Because that is a structure of local government. It is a requirement that township and boroughs are to provide such a service and has been for many years.

We started a steering committee and it was comprised of many different people throughout the county and they had ideas of how an authority can act on behalf of Indiana County. There are other EMS Authorities in the Commonwealth, Lancaster, Erie and others are starting up. But you have to understand that Indiana County is rural, our wants and needs of service are different from other counties. Even our county government is different than other counties as I have found out.

I have said from the beginning that however this is going forward, Emergency Services will provide a level of service at an affordable cost throughout the county. But remember, we have 84,000 plus people here and they all need service and we need to make sure that it continues. Citizens Ambulance is the provider for all of Indiana County and can you imagine if something happens to that service. We have to find a way to maintain that service and Citizens Ambulance has always provided excellent service to the county for many years and they will continue to do so.

This authority will be municipality owned by the boroughs and townships who actually participate in the authority which gives them a say in the service. They will be able to state what they want for the boroughs and townships. We will also be transparent to the entire public and local government community which means the meetings will be open to the public. The financials will be open to the public. To the end it will provide a sustainable fund to ensure the emergency services can continue to operate throughout Indiana County."

I'll conclude my remarks with the following: despite great progress to date, formulating a detailed plan including costs cannot occur until the Authority is incorporated and the Board is seated. Before this Authority would become operational, a detailed plan will be made public and a substantive hearing will be conducted.”

### **PUBLIC COMMENT...ORDINANCE FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADMINISTERING EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES TO MUNICIPALITIES IN INDIANA COUNTY**

Commissioner Keith reminded those making public comments they have 3 minutes.

Jesse Shotts, Washington Township Supervisor commented he has been involved with this issue since he was newly elected in 2024 and has attended every meeting of the working sessions. To push this single narrow agenda without considering that the Authority is not a one-size fits all solution to the county that is comprised of many diverse municipalities. Rushing through this process to quickly grab the money from every household is not a resident conscious decision. The Authority that is being sought is already in existence at the people's most accessible level of township and boroughs. This is where the seed should be planted to that a solution can take root.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business regarding the EMS Ordinance.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business coming before the Board at this time, a motion was made by Commissioner Dunlap, seconded by Commissioner Hess to adjourn the public comment period of the meeting at 10:41 a.m.

### **COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES** **MARCH 26, 2025**

Commissioner R. Michael Keith called the regular meeting of the Indiana County Commissioners to order at 10:41 a.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

### **ROLL CALL**

Chairman R. Michael Keith, present  
Commissioner Bonni S. Dunlap, present  
Commissioner Sherene Hess, present

Also, in attendance were Solicitor Matthew T. Budash and Chief Clerk Robin Maryai.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

### **APPROVE MINUTES**

A motion was made by Commissioner Dunlap, seconded by Commissioner Hess and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of March 12, 2025.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSIONS**

There were no Executive Sessions.

## **PROCLAMATION...PENNSYLVANIA 4-H MONTH**

After a proclamation was read, a motion was made by Commissioner Hess, seconded by Commissioner Dunlap and carried unanimously to proclaim March as Pennsylvania 4-H Month throughout Indiana County and encouraged the citizens to acknowledge and celebrate 4-H for its valuable service and continued efforts to empower youth with a foundation of success for a lifetime.

## **PROCLAMATION...WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD**

After a proclamation was read, a motion was made by Commissioner Keith, seconded by Commissioner Dunlap and carried unanimously to proclaim April 5 -11, 2025 as the Week of the Young Child in Indiana County, and encouraged all members of the community to participate in celebrations, educational events, and activities that recognize the importance of early childhood education and the well-being of our youngest residents.

## **PROCLAMATION...CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH**

After a proclamation was read, a motion was made by Commissioner Dunlap, seconded by Commissioner Hess and carried unanimously to proclaim the month of April to be Child Abuse Prevention Month in Indiana County and urges all citizens to work together to help reduce child abuse and neglect and engage in activities that strengthen families and provide a healthy environment for children to learn, grow and thrive in our community.

## **PROCLAMATION...SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH**

After a proclamation was read, a motion was made by Commissioner Keith, seconded by Commissioner Dunlap and carried unanimously to proclaim the month of April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month and urges all citizens to play a role in the elimination of violence in our community.

## **PROCLAMATION...PENNSYLVANIA 811 SAFE DIGGING MONTH**

After a proclamation was read, a motion was made by Commissioner Hess, seconded by Commissioner Dunlap and carried unanimously to proclaim April as Pennsylvania 811 Safe Digging Month and encouraged all Pennsylvanians to visit the Pennsylvania 811 website at [www.paoncall.org](http://www.paoncall.org) for information about digging safely.

## **BIDS (032125)...BUTTERMILK FALLS RESURFACING PROJECT...PARKS & TRAILS**

At the request of Ed Patterson, Parks & Trails, a motion was made by Commissioner Keith, seconded by Commissioner Dunlap and carried unanimously to approve the low bid from Quaker Sales Corporation in the amount of \$83,458.50 for the Buttermilk Falls Road and Parking Lot Resurfacing Project. This will be funded from a DCED Local Share Account Grant. It is noted that one other bid was received in the amount of \$86,307.77.

## **BIDS 032125)...PINE RIDGE PARK, PINE LODGE ROAD AND PINE RIGE MAINTENANCE BUILDING SEAL COATING...PARK & TRAILS**

At the request of Ed Patterson, Parks & Trails, a motion was made by Commissioner Hess, seconded by Commissioner Dunlap and carried unanimously to approve the low bid from Quaker Sales Corporation in the amount of \$35,886.80 for the Pine Ridge Park Seal Coating of

the Roads Project. This will be funded by the Liquid Fuels Account. It is noted that one other bid was received in the amount of \$45,207.68.

**CONTRACT AGREEMENT – 2024 CDBG INDIANA COUNTY AND INDIANA COUNTY “OBO” INDIANA BOROUGH AND CENTER TOWNSHIP / PLANNING**

At the request of LuAnn Zak, Office of Planning & Development, a motion was made by Commissioner Hess, seconded by Commissioner Dunlap and carried unanimously to enter into an agreement with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the 2024 Community Development Block Grant Entitlement contract for Indiana County and Indiana County “on behalf of” Indiana Borough and Center Township. The total contract amount is \$582,578.00. The funding allocation for each entitlement entity is as follows:

- Indiana Borough: \$202,202.00
- Center Township: \$ 97,587.00

Approval also allows for Commissioners Keith and Dunlap to complete the on-line e-contracting procedures for contract execution and to sign all required paperwork.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING DELEGATION OF SIGNING AUTHORITY FOR OPEN CDBG ENTITLEMENT INDIANA COUNTY AND INDIANA COUNTY “OBO” INDIANA BOROUGH AND CENTER TOWNSHIP CONTRACTS AND THE HOME PROGRAM / PLANNING**

At the request of LuAnn Zak, Office of Planning & Development, a motion was made by Commissioner Dunlap, seconded by Commissioner Hess and carried unanimously to approve resolutions authorizing the delegation of the signing authority for the invoicing of the 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 CDBG Entitlement Programs for Indiana County and Indiana County “on behalf of” Indiana Borough and Center Township and the 2021 HOME Program contract. The delegation of the signing authority is for Teresa Bachy the Deputy Director of Fiscal & Administration to review and sign all invoices for the CDBG and HOME contracts prior to submission to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) for approval. The signing authority request is to comply with the Commonwealth’s newly revised paperless invoicing process. The resolution includes a commitment from the Board of Commissioners to notify DCED of any changes in personnel and an acknowledgement that the ultimate responsibility of the overall management of the grants remains with the County.

**IRLF LOAN – INDIANA COUNTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION – EXTEND MATURITY DATE / PLANNING**

At the request of Teresa Bachy, Office of Planning & Development, a motion was made by Commissioner Dunlap, seconded by Commissioner Hess and carried unanimously to requests an extension of the maturity date for the \$150,000.00 Infrastructure Revolving Loan Fund (IRLF) loan to the Indiana County Development Corporation (ICDC) until January 21, 2026. The ICDC utilized the IRLF loan for eligible project costs at two priority economic development initiatives, specifically at the Windy Ridge Business & Technology Park (White Township) and the 119 Business Park / Joseph Land Development (Center Township) to leverage funding through the Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) and the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD). The \$150,000.00 loan to the ICDC will provide interim financing for the engineering, design and permitting required to successfully deliver these projects. No other terms of the IRLF loan will be modified.

### **ORDINANCE...COUNTY DEMOLITION AND REHABILITATION FUND AND IMPOSING FEE**

At the request of Matthew Budash, County Solicitor, a motion was made by Commissioner Keith, seconded by Commissioner Hess and carried unanimously to approve an Ordinance establishing a County Demolition and Rehabilitation Fund and imposing a fee to be collected by the Indiana County Tax Claim bureau from purchasers at sales under the real estate tax sale law and by the Indiana County Sheriff from judicial sales in mortgage foreclosure actions. Effective as of June 25, 2025, which is not less than ninety (90) days after the effective date of this Ordinance, the Indiana County Board of Commissioners authorizes and directs the Indiana County Tax Claim Bureau and the Office of the Indiana County Sheriff to collect a fee in the amount of two hundred fifty dollars and no cents (\$250.00) from each and every purchaser of real property from a tax sale or a mortgage foreclosure sale, respectively, in addition to the purchase price of the property and all other associated fees and costs. Each and every separate parcel of real estate sold at a tax sale or mortgage foreclosure sale shall be subject the purchaser's obligation to pay the said fee in the amount of two hundred fifty dollars and no cents (\$250.00). These funds shall be deposited into a Demolition and Rehabilitation Fund and Indiana County may reserve up to five percent of the gross proceeds for administrative and oversight.

### **BOARD APPOINTMENTS...LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

At the request of Robin Maryai, Chief Clerk, a motion was made by Commissioner Hess, seconded by Commissioner Dunlap and carried unanimously to approve the following appointments to the Local Emergency Planning Committee:

Michael Dunn, Local EMS Representative  
Thomas A. Stutzman, EMA Representative  
Jon Pina, LEPC Chairman/ Commissioner Representative  
Michael Grimes, Local Healthcare Representative  
Mark Bertig, Media Representative  
Timothy Stewart, Fire Chief's Association Representative (new appointment)

Terms will expire February, 2027

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

### **NEXT REGULAR MEETING...MARCH, 2025 AT 10:30 A.M.**

The next regular scheduled Commissioners' Public meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at 10:30 a.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business coming before the Board at this time, a motion was made by Commissioner Dunlap, seconded by Commissioner Hess to adjourn the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

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Sherene Hess, Commissioner

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R. Michael Keith, Chairman