

Commissioners:

SCOTT L. METZGER
Chairman

MARC C. SORTMAN
Vice Chairman

MARK MUSSINA
Secretary



MATTHEW A. McDERMOTT
*Director of Administration
and Chief Clerk*

CHRISTOPHER H. KENYON
Solicitor

Telephone (570) 320-2124
Fax (570) 320-2127

COUNTY of LYCOMING
48 WEST THIRD STREET
WILLIAMSPORT, PA 17701

www.lyco.org
county.commissioners@lyco.org

**LYCOMING COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20th, 2025
10:00 A.M.**

**Present: Commissioner Metzger, Commissioner Sortman, Commissioner Mussina,
Director Matthew McDermott, and Solicitor Christopher H. Kenyon**

1.0 OPERATIONS

- 1.1 Opening Prayer
 - 1.2 Pledge of Allegiance
 - 1.3 Convene Commissioners' Public Meeting
 - 1.4 Approve the Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0**
- 1.5 Public Comment on Agenda Items Only **None**

2.0 REPORTS

- 2.1 Nicki Gottschall– Vote to ratify accounts payable cash requirement report for invoices due through 2/26/25 to be paid on 2/19/25 in the amount of \$1,618,373.96.

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

Recess Commissioners' Public Meeting for the Salary Board

**3.0 SALARY BOARD- SALARY BOARD MINUTES CAN BE FOUND ON
LYCO.ORG>ELECTED OFFICIALS>CONTROLLER**

- 3.1 Convene Salary Board.
- 3.2 Vote to approve the Salary Board minutes from the February 6th meeting.
- 3.3 Vote to approve the following Salary Board Actions:
 - Delete one (1) part-time Victim Witness Coordinator – Adult
 - Add one (1) full-time Victim Witness Coordinator – Adult
 - Place one Assistant District Attorney position on hold. The money that is budgeted for this position will be used to make up for the shortfall from the grant for the additional full time Victim Witness Coordinator salary and fringe benefits.

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 4-0

- DPS Bonus Structure – a temporary bonus structure (6-month period, ending September 1, 2025) will be put into place in the amount of \$60.00 per shift for salaried employees.

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-1

3.4 Adjourn Salary Board.

Reconvene Commissioners' Public Meeting

4.0 PERSONNEL ACTIONS

4.1 Mike Hagen – Approve the following Personnel Actions as conditional offers of employment, subject to the successful completion of a background check and all other employment conditions as outlined in Attachment (A).

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.0 ACTION ITEMS

5.1 Nicki Gottschall – Vote to approve the payment schedule for the Actuarially Determined Employer Contribution (ADEC) for the retirement fund in the amount of \$1,037,000.00. This shall be paid monthly starting in April. (2025 approved budgeted item)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.2 Kristin McLaughlin– Vote to approve the subrecipient Agreement Amendment #2 with Jersey Shore Area Joint Water Authority (ARAP Funds) to extend the termination date from 3/30/25 to 9/30/26. (2025 approved ARPA funds budgeted item)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.3 Forrest Lehman – Vote to approve the invoice from Clear Ballot to provide four years of preventative maintenance and warranty coverage for a central scanner that is part of the certified electronic voting system in the amount of \$10,000.00. (2025 approved budgeted item)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.4 Mya Toon – Vote to approve Resolution # 2025-04 approving the acceptance of donated power tool equipment from Washington Township in the amount of \$1,089.91 to be used by the Pre-Release Center.

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.5 Mya Toon– Vote to approve the Agreement with Diane Welch, GED Instructor in the amount of \$7,000.00. (2025 approved budgeted item)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.6 Mya Toon – Vote to approve the Addendum to the Agreement with Digital Assurance Certification, LLC in the amount of \$500.00 per year for additional services. (2025 approved budgeted item)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.7 Mya Toon - Vote to ratify the approval for the Grant Award for Lycoming County Victim Witness Services from PCCD in the amount of \$122,201.00.

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.8 Jason Yorks – Vote to approve the Amendment to the Agreement with Quality Air Mechanical to extend the terms of the Agreement to December 31, 2025. (2025 approved budgeted item)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.9 Jason Yorks – Vote to approve the Amendment to the Agreement with Tulepehocken Mountain Spring Water, Inc. extending the terms of the Agreement to December 31, 2025. (2025 approved budgeted item)

Mr. Sortman motioned to table this item. Mussina 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.10 Jason Yorks – Vote to approve the Amendment to the Agreement with Cummins Inc. extending the terms of the Agreement for a period of six months. (2025 approved budgeted item)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.11 Jason Yorks –Vote to approve the Amendment to the Agreement with Professional Petroleum Service Company extending the terms of the Agreement to December 31, 2027 (2025 approved budgeted item)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.12 Jason Yorks – Vote to approve the Amendment to the Agreement with Equipment Depot of Pennsylvania, Inc. extending the term of the Agreement to March 31, 2025. (2025 approved budgeted item)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.13 Ken George – Vote to approve the Agreement with Icon Fire Solutions, LLC. In the amount of \$850.00 to replace the basement Zone Flow Switch on the Fire Sprinkler System at TSP. (2025 approved budgeted item).

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.14 Ken George – Vote to approve the Agreement with Icon Fire Solutions, LLC. In the amount of \$445.00. (2025 approved budgeted item)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.15 Monica Fox – Vote to approve Amendment #1 to the Subrecipient Agreement with Montoursville Borough for the reallocation of \$1,837.30 CDBG FFY 22 funds.

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.16 Maleick Fleming – Vote to approve the Amendment to the Agreement with Barton & Loguidice. (2025 approved budgeted item)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.17 Kelsey Green – Vote to approve the MOU with Hepburn Township for the PHARE 2015 Acquisition /demolition of one property in the amount of \$165,000.00. (2025 approved budgeted item)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

6.0 COMMISSIONER COMMENT

Commissioner Vice-Chairman Marc Sortman’s read the following statement on behalf of the Lycoming County Commissioners Office:

“I apologize that I am reading this statement, but I did not want to miss anything. I am making the following statement on behalf of the three commissioners on the landfill, as I am the commissioner that oversees the facility.

There have been several news articles on the landfill losing money, these articles incorrectly have blamed prior board of commissioners, landfill staff and our controller's office for these losses. None of these are true.

Let me start with an apology to our staff at the landfill for them learning of the evaluation from the news media and not a statement from our office. This was not fair to them. I reiterate that these losses are not caused by their job performance. Next, I would like to clarify the losses are in no way created by the controller's office. The controller's office oversees county spending with checks and balance and ensures any payments made are legal and justified. It is not their responsibility to manage the profitability of a department or business unit. The law suit between the former commissioner's board and the controller’s office did not create a loss, it created a lack of reporting, due to waiting for an outcome of what the commissioner's finance team and the controller’s offices responsibilities would be. As soon as the current board came in and accepted the court's ruling on responsibility, I assure you the retired controller, Krista Rogers and her team went to work to get the banking balanced and reporting audited. She immediately created a time frame to accomplish these tasks. Under the current controller Nicki Gottschall, these time frames are still in place, and we will be up to date by September of 2025. In the meantime, the commissioners needed to re-build their financial management team to get working on the responsibilities needed done

In early October of 2024 the commissioners were informed by retired controller Krista Rogers and our new Financial Manager, Mya Toon that the county had run out of money to get through the end of the year. Together these two-offices discovered short falls in our finances. One that stood out was the landfill. We are combing through years of profit and losses and the current controller and financial management team are determining if we are operating at a loss or profit.

During this evaluation, our landfill manager, Jason Yorks with his team of managers, are working diligently to find ways of cost cutting and making the operation more

efficient. This will be ongoing along with the evaluation of the direction of the land fill over the next 10-12 months.

In closing, I want to let the public know there is no one person or department to point blame. You have the word of this commissioner's board, we will do what is right for the tax payer in the end.”

Mr. Sortman asked if either the Controller or Financial Manager would like to respond to what he said:

Mya Toon, Financial Manager, responded and apologized to Controller, Nikki Gottschall, expressing disappointment in the articles for not reflecting her true intentions. Mya explains that her written statements were misconstrued, leading to a false narrative that affects everyone involved. She clarified that her references to the team include the financial team and the controller's office, emphasizing their teamwork over the past year on county issues. Mya believes people misunderstand their responsibilities, often confusing budget and finances. She stresses the importance of teamwork in handling these aspects. Finally, Mya states that she has asked news agencies for an apology and article corrections to accurately represent her and the county.

Mr. Metzger explained that at the beginning of the year, teams were formed and timelines were set. Krista had plans for March 2024 and September 2025, and their offices worked diligently to catch up. The past few years have been difficult due to staffing shortages. Staffing has been a challenge, but Mr. Metzger is confident the current teams will guide them forward. They aim to avoid rash decisions, especially regarding the landfill, which will take approximately a year to evaluate for profitability. This does not reflect on the hardworking employees. Spending and equipment costs need review, which will be addressed moving forward. Commissioner Sortman summarized it well, as they were upset with the article for blaming those not at fault. They have a capable team ready to make things right and have faith in them and he thanked them.

Mr. Mussina agreed that they have a team in place capable of steering the county in the right direction. However, there are always hot-button topics in the county. For a while, it was the airport; currently, it's the landfill. When Mr. Mussina and Mr. Sortman ran for their positions, they attended meetings and consistently heard that the landfill was profitable. However, upon further investigation, their team discovered that the landfill is actually losing money. It was only fair for taxpayers to ask why they were told the landfill was profitable and why the county was operating a potentially loss-making landfill. He believed it wasn't the fault of any single person but rather a result of the complexities of government operations. The county, with its multiple departments and numerous employees, is not as large as federal or state governments, but still complicated. Understanding how they reached this point is important, but more crucial is deciding the best path forward. They are still trying to determine the landfill's profitability and the best way to move forward. This is

their focus for 2025. Regardless, their priority is to make the best decision for the taxpayers.

Mr. Sortman followed up by mentioning that a year and a half ago, during their campaign, they frequently heard from Lycoming County residents that spending needed to be cut and taxes should not be raised as many could barely afford to live as it is. He acknowledged that they are working on it, but it involves a lot of pain and constant clarification, not only to the staff of Lycoming County but also to other elected officials, that there are no additional funds available. They barely managed to pay their bills at the end of last year and are currently relying on a loan until tax dollars come in during March and April, which will immediately be paid back. Without the cuts and changes they have implemented, such as requiring purchase orders before making purchases and ensuring they buy from the least expensive place, they would not have managed. The procurement team and controller's office must perform their roles effectively, ensuring legal compliance and maintaining checks and balances. He emphasized that some practices from 20 years ago no longer apply and that they need to change the way the government operates. They were elected to make these changes, and they are committed to doing so. Just as people worldwide are calling for a reduction in government spending, their agenda will focus on reducing expenses.

7.0 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Speakers who wish to address the Board of Commissioners will be limited for no more than three (3) minutes on any particular item. The speaker must state his/her name and address for the record. Any deviation from this rule must be approved by the Board Chairman.

Larry Stout from Montgomery shared his thoughts on the landfill issue, saying it's more than just about money. He recalled a 70s controversy with the Organizations United for the Environment (OUE), led by his mother-in-law, that fought to make the landfill the best it could be. Larry mentioned the landfill's operators are attentive to neighbors' concerns. He praised Jason and his team for being fantastic neighbors and their positive impact on the community.

Former commissioner Jack McKernan expressed his comments about the landfill. He read over his timeline of internal position changes from November of 2022-December of 2024. He expressed concern over the timeliness of reports not available as requested from the Controller's office. He also shared his input on decisions made within the county.

YOUTUBE COMMENT

Rob@ActionTogether: That's awesome!

Thomas Adams: Good morning Lycoming County. in the Spirit for public health, mental and physical, I hope people are aware of the dangers of Governor Shapiro's effort to legalize marijuana. I refer people to the article in Tuesday's Sun-Gazette, featuring Joe Hamm. Another bit of information in regards to marijuana use; it is estimated that has up

to ten times a carcinogenic rate than cigarettes. Is there a for the county to keep such activity out if this horrendous idea becomes reality? I hope as commissioners you will have discussions with county health officials concerning this. Also, to communicate the other commissioners in the state to discuss possible actions. I realize this may not be passed, but our Governor doesn't seem to care about our state constitution. Thank-you for all you do, and have a great day and weekend



Rob@ActionTogether: Hi is this the article you're referring to? It references Rep Hamm doing his own research into the rising amount of overdoses in Colorado. But it doesn't say where he got that information. I just want to make sure we're seeing the same thing.


TheLocalMusician: Thomas, I'm not sure of the source being cited there, but both the National Institutes of Health and the American Lung Association would disagree with such. Both contain some known carcinogens...But tobacco contains more

Rob@ActionTogether: TheLocalMusician, the link I pasted above seems to be the article from Tuesday Thomas was referring to. It references Rep Hamm doing his own research but it doesn't explain how he did it. It states mainly his opinion that every drug overdose case in Colorado has been "tied to the legalization of marijuana"

Thomas Adams: It's also proven to be a gateway drug and is open to being easily mixed with other drugs. Normally, people don't smoke as much pot as tobacco, this is how they claim cigarettes are more carcinogenic.

TheLocalMusician: Again, disproven. ALCOHOL is the actual gateway drug. Also, that's not a proper comparison if the two compared are not in the same scale.

Rob@ActionTogether: Yo Local Musician do you want to hang out?

TheLocalMusician: Maybe Later, 

8.0 NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next Commissioners Public Meeting will be held on Thursday, February 27, 2025 at 10:00 A.M. in the Commissioner's Board Room, 3rd Floor, 33 West Third Street, Williamsport, PA 17701.

To view this meeting click the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1edl6Zj8aMg>

ATTACHMENT (A)

PERSONNEL ACTIONS:

Planning and Community Development - Jenny Picciano, Director, pay Grade 14, Full-Time,
\$89,520 per year, 75 Hours per Pay Period, Effective date: February 16, 2025.

Adult Probation – Sara Johns, EBP Coordinator/Acting Pretrial Probation Officer
Supervisor, 9, Full Time, \$33.416566 per hour, 80 Hours per Pay Period, Effective date:
February 3, 2025.

Adult Probation – Kennedie Bahr, AP2, Union, Full Time, \$24.5346 per hour, 80 hours
per Pay Period, Effective date: February 16, 2025.

Pre-Release Center – Riley Hoy, Resident Supervisor, Union, Part-Time, \$19.20 per
Hour, Not to exceed 1000 Hours Annually, Transfer Date: February 16, 2025.

Prison – Nicholas Vognetz, Correctional Officer, Union, Full-Time, \$20.00 per Hour, 80
Hours per Pay Period, Anticipated Start Date: February 24, 2025.

Prison – Monica Laird, Lieutenant, 10, Full-Time, \$30.777327 per Hour, 80 Hours per
Pay Period, Anticipated Transfer Date: March 30, 2025.

Domestic Relations – Nathaniel Casper Miller, pay Grade 4, Full-Time, \$15.46524 per
Hour, 75 Hours per Pay Period, Anticipated Transfer date: February 16, 2025.