



County of Lackawanna

Lackawanna County
Government Center
at The Globe
123 Wyoming Ave
Scranton, Pennsylvania
18503

Meeting Minutes

Board of Commissioners

Wednesday, April 3, 2019

10:00 AM

Commissioner's Conference Room

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:05am.

Present 3 - Patrick M. O'Malley, Jerry Notarianni and Laureen A. Cummings

Reading and Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Patrick O'Malley, seconded by Commissioner Laureen Cummings, to Dispense with the Reading and Approve as Prepared. The motion carried by the following vote.

Aye: 3 - Patrick O'Malley, Jerry Notarianni and Laureen Cummings

Proclamation Presentation

[19-0084](#)

"Good Works in Lackawanna County" presentation to The Poets.

Presented

[19-0085](#)

Proclamation declaring "National Library Week, April 7th -13th" in Lackawanna County.

Presented

Deputy Director Introduction

John Gleeson, joined Economic Development in March, background in business, sales and marketing.

Comm Cummings- Privileged to have you at the county. Look forward to see what ideas you have for that department, and am interested to see how you can improve upon some issues.

Comm. Notarianni- I had to ask Comm. Cummings who Mr. Gleeson was this morning- hope it works out well.

Comm. O'Malley- congratulations Mr. Gleeson, and good luck at the county! I hope it works out well for you.

Opportunity for the Public to Address the Board (Agenda Items Only)

No comments

Resolutions[19-0082](#)

Approving Current Payables

Attachments: [3H50A083](#)[3H50A080](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Patrick O'Malley, seconded by Commissioner Lauren Cummings, that this Resolution be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote.

Aye: 3 - Patrick O'Malley, Jerry Notarianni and Lauren Cummings

[19-0073](#)

Entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with Geisinger Community Medical Center

Attachments: [MOU GCMC- Lackawanna County](#)[6 27 18 88400-2 Drug Pricing GWV](#)[6 27 18 88400-1 Drug Pricing GMC](#)

A motion was made by Patrick O'Malley, seconded by Lauren Cummings, that this Resolution be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote.

Matt Krah, Geisinger- 340B program give discounts right back to the patients- one example, we offer a food bank, proper food planning for diabetic patients; a robust charity care at Geisinger, we do not turn anyone away for care, and working to directly discount medications. For items not reimbursable by Medicare. These funds go directly to support the patient.

Don Frederickson- County is a sponsor/pass through for the program?

Matt- program regulated by Hersa totaled funded by the drug companies, pharmaceuticals who participate in Medicare programs, no tax payer funds involved. In order to qualify, we have to have a MOU with local government.

Aye: 3 - Patrick O'Malley, Jerry Notarianni and Lauren Cummings

[19-0074](#)

Adopting a Political Firing Policy

A motion was made by Commissioner Patrick O'Malley, seconded by Commissioner Lauren Cummings, that this Resolution be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote.

Comm. O'Malley- this was part of my platform when I ran, it's a horrible circumstance when you get fired for no reason whatsoever.

Comm. Cummings- I didn't realize that commissioner was effected by this in the past- no one should be terminated because of being affiliated with commissioners- their work performance should be evaluated- not who they know- I do believe in the past 4 years, there have been issues, and this has made me want to write this up, and no one should be forced to help any

candidate, because they work here. I hope it continues, for any administration that continues in the future.

Rick Jones- 2007-2014 there were 32 political firings that generated nearly 2 million in paid damages and 1.6 million in legal expenses. In the past 4 years, beginning in 2015, there have been zero political firings- with zero paid damages and zero legal fees. Our insurance premium doubled with dozens of claims.

Comm. Notarianni- this is actually already a state law right, you can't do this?

Comm. O'Malley- thanks to Rick, great job. This is a horrible situation, when they are fired just because. I will vote for this. We have very qualified directors and deputies and assistants. No reason to just fire people, what it does to families, what it impacts, I truly believe it's wrong. If someone gets fired, it's going to be because they did something wrong, and against the rules.

Aye: 3 - Patrick O'Malley, Jerry Notarianni and Laureen Cummings

[19-0075](#)

Authorizing the Filing of a PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Grant Application

Attachments: [Resolution DCNR Trail](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Patrick O'Malley, seconded by Commissioner Jerry Notarianni, that this Resolution be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote.

Aye: 2 - Patrick O'Malley and Jerry Notarianni

Nay: 1 - Laureen Cummings

[19-0076](#)

Entering into an Agreement with Mtish, Kunkel & Associates for Design Services for the North Pocono Trail Project

Attachments: [20190312153540329](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Patrick O'Malley, seconded by Commissioner Jerry Notarianni, that this Resolution be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote.

Don Frederickson- we will get a completely rehabbed bridge, that is OURS, in part of the planning, and PennDot will pay for it.

Aye: 2 - Patrick O'Malley and Jerry Notarianni

Nay: 1 - Laureen Cummings

[19-0077](#)

Entering into a Cooperative Agreement

Attachments: [2019 Gypsy Moth](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Patrick O'Malley, seconded by Commissioner Laureen Cummings, that this Resolution be Adopted. The

motion carried by the following vote.

Aye: 3 - Patrick O'Malley, Jerry Notarianni and Laureen Cummings

19-0078

Entering into Agricultural Conservation Easements

Attachments: [Solicitor Request](#)
 [County only Agreement-J&E Matechak](#)
 [County only Agreement-Vail #1](#)
 [County only Agreement-Vail #2](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Patrick O'Malley, seconded by Commissioner Laureen Cummings, that this Resolution be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote.

Aye: 3 - Patrick O'Malley, Jerry Notarianni and Laureen Cummings

19-0079

Approving the Hazardous Materials Response Fund Grant

Attachments: [HMRG Grant Application 2019-20](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Patrick O'Malley, seconded by Commissioner Laureen Cummings, that this Resolution be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote.

Aye: 3 - Patrick O'Malley, Jerry Notarianni and Laureen Cummings

19-0083

Entering into a Radiation Emergency Response Grant Agreement

Attachments: [RERF Grant Application](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Patrick O'Malley, seconded by Commissioner Laureen Cummings, that this Resolution be Adopted. The motion carried by the following vote.

Aye: 3 - Patrick O'Malley, Jerry Notarianni and Laureen Cummings

19-0080

Appointments to the Lackawanna County Disability Action Committee

A motion was made by Commissioner Patrick O'Malley, seconded by Commissioner Laureen Cummings, that this Appointment be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote.

Aye: 3 - Patrick O'Malley, Jerry Notarianni and Laureen Cummings

Opportunity for the Public to Address the Board

Charles Brewer, Secretary Greenfield Twp: supervisors meeting last night- storm water fee coming to the county- we call it the rain tax- properties in municipalities with separate storm systems must pay the fee or tax, no one is exempt, with impervious surfaces, that rain flows from. This comes from the Chesapeake Bay watershed plan. The county isn't exempt-will be a devastating effect on everyone. Letter drafted to AG Shaprio, about unfunded mandate. I am requesting something similar from your office, to represent all

of our residents, from devastating our county.

Atty John Brazil- this letter, you are asking the AG to ask the Federal Gov to fund the mandate, if you're throwing it on the local communities, you have to fund it.

Comm. O'Malley- Motion to send the letter. Comm. Cummings-Second the Motion. Vote 3-0.

Sarah Lancaster, Scranton- storm water tax- goes by square footage?
Recycling. Habitat for humanity. Garbage fees- City of Scranton- I need help;
railroad issues, new streetlight.

Joan Hodawanitz, Scranton- no new legal fees, cases going to court. Thank god for the Scranton Times they have done more to expose abuse and fraud in the city and the county then anyone else. Norton- city school board- over 30,000 he owed, he then scurried down here to pay- unpaid garbage fees, over 16 million for the city of Scranton. Senior county official was among the people on the list, had not been paying garbage fees, I am here to vet my anger about that, I have been paying my taxes and fees since I was 17 years old, and have paid for others in my family that could not afford. I want to know, am I paying for people not paying for their fair share of the tax burden? Nothing is going to happen to people that don't pay their fee- their garbage will still get picked up- a senior county official hasn't paid. What would be the actual tax bill if everyone paid their fair share? That would be a substantial reduction would it not.

Comm. Cummings-fair share, would be to tax everyone the same.

Joan- tax scoff laws, people that work the system, that have the means to pay that don't, we pick up the slack for those that break the law.

When you hire a county employee are there background tests? Drug testing? etc. you should start checking to see if their taxes are paid, and why. I have no problem with someone who has an emergency, and establishes a payment plan. But for someone to just ignore it- I have a problem with that. When you have an annual performance review, their salary is coming out of my taxes, you better pay your taxes and fees. I was so poor as a child, but we paid our taxes. How can a senior county official, she has enough to do estate planning to put her name on with her brother, but not pay her taxes. The standard for public employees, especially those in a leadership position, you especially don't say "well my brother is going to handle it".

You hire someone, you vet them- you make sure they don't owe taxes, they don't owe fees- you should check it- everything is online. People will remember this, and will look, this is an election year. Ken Smith said the same thing, his brother didn't pay his restaurant taxes, and we got rid of him. She has to pay her taxes, has to pay her fees, I don't want to hear her excuses, you should all be embarrassed.

"My name is on it, and I feel a responsibility for it, to say that this has slipped through the cracks is a little bit of an understatement. She said the properties are in both her and her brother's names for the purposes of estate planning, but that her brother handles the taxes and fees and that she doesn't see any bills. She said she should've been more diligent." Well ain't that the truth. You don't have a personal policy to vet people? You as a public employee should have an ethical and a legal moral obligation to pay, and pay your fair

share. I'm tired of picking up the slack for deadbeats- they're deadbeats because they have been getting away with it because they know they can. We need more citizen watch dogs- it's not enough for a few citizens to attend all meetings.

Commissioners' Other Business

Comm. Laureen Cummings- Conservation Board- Seedling Sale proceeds go towards a really great scholarship. Rain barrel workshop- April 10th. Thank you to Greenfield Township for the work you're doing. The hope horn statue moving- Thank you for the support and the arts community- thank you to Maureen McGuigan for all of her hard work, professionally, and at the least amount of cost.

I understand all of this is news today, I can tell you I didn't think at one time I could afford to pay my taxes, pay for my house, but I'm not saying that's what is happening here. Scranton really needs to figure out the garbage fee collection.

Thank you to Keith Williams for all his work.

Comm. O'Malley- this Sunday is the Scranton half marathon. McDade Easter egg hunt.

We will let that individual resolve their issues.

Adjournment

A motion was made that this be Adjourned. The motion carried by the following vote.

Aye: 3 - Patrick O'Malley, Jerry Notarianni and Laureen Cummings