

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

The second regular meeting of April, 2023 of the Pike County Commissioners was called to order by Commissioner Osterberg at 11:00 a.m. at the Pike County Administration Building, followed by the "Pledge of Allegiance" to the flag.

PRESENT: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron; Chief Clerk Gromalski; and Solicitor Farley.

Public Comments/Questions concerning today's agenda – none.

Commissioner Osterberg announced that further down in the Agenda there is a Presentation by Habitat for Humanity, and we are moving this ahead for Mr. Donlon so that he can get on his way because he has important work to do. Twice a year we make a donation from Act 137 toward Habitat for Humanity which does incredible work and I believe they are up to house #35. That funding comes out of Act 137 which is the recording fees that is paid by people when they record any documents in the County. Mr. Donlon was presented with the check for \$75K.

Mr. Donlon said besides building houses, we also build ramps. We started a ramp yesterday and just so you know, I see building contractors here, we do not take jobs where people can afford to hire a contractor. This is an elderly couple, one is in a wheelchair, and one uses a walker, and we started the ramp yesterday out in Pocono Woodlands. They will pay us back for the materials by \$15 or \$20 a month, whatever they can afford, and all the labor is free. We do that in addition to building houses. We're on house #35 now and accepting applications for house #36. Thank you very much. The prices have gone up considerably if you want to check Walmart, Home Depot, or Luhrs', you'll find the pricing is unbelievable these days. The founder of Habitat in Pike County Margaret Mary Jonas and my next-door neighbor, Donald Brinks, started this fund many years ago when Habitat was founded in Pike County and it has increased considerably since then.

Motion to recess the Commissioners' Meeting to hold a Retirement Board Meeting.

A RETIREMENT BOARD MEETING was held.

Motion to adjourn the RETIREMENT BOARD MEETING and reconvene the Commissioners' Meeting.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve the April 19, 2023, Agenda.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

Commissioner Osterberg announced they would need to add another item to today's Agenda under 'Debt Service', a payment of **\$3,410.44**.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to amend today's Agenda to include an additional item under '**DEBT SERVICE**'.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve the April 5, 2023, Meeting Minutes.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve the April 12, Conference Minutes.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve payment from the **GENERAL FUNDS** in the amount of **\$1,613,391.02**.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to pay the **DEBT SERVICE** in the amount of **\$3,410.44**.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

PERSONNEL

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to change the title of **MIGDALIA CORTES** to Office Administrator in the District Attorney's Office, effective May 1, 2023.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

Motion to recess the Commissioners' Meeting to hold a SALARY BOARD MEETING.

A SALARY BOARD MEETING WAS HELD.

Motion to adjourn the SALARY BOARD MEETING and reconvene the Commissioners' Meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to open bids for the Pike County Jail Ice Building Roof Replacement Project.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

Solicitor Tom Farley announced two bids were received. One from Dunmore Roofing in the amount of \$80,000, with contingencies \$85,000 total; Pro Solutions Home Renovations in the amount of \$69,500, with contingencies \$79,500 total. Solicitor Farley asked that we table the awarding of the bid until the engineer and myself can review.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle to table the awarding of bid for the Pike County Jail Ice Building Roof Replacement Project until May 3, 2023.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to advertise bids for the Bennett Avenue Building 1 Interior Renovations Project.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

Commissioner Osterberg said this is the first phase of the construction at Bennett Avenue for moving Transportation and the Department of Human Services to that location. This is the main building in the front of the property which was the Penn DOT headquarters opposed to the buildings in the rear, which will be in separate bids. The thing I want to bring up about this is the plan is to make this into a vocational center for those with disabilities. This is an important move for the County to do this. All of our vehicles are now being maintained by contracts with outside vendors. This is going to bring all that in-house and allow it to be housed at that facility which is a very big building built in 1931 during the Pinchot years. It's important that we preserve the building so we're looking forward to getting this bid in the next couple of weeks and begin that project. Along with that, in the future it being the Recycling Center and an Archive Center for all the documents we have to store here in the County.

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to adopt Resolution No. 23-19, Sexual Assault Awareness Month, April 2023.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

Commissioner Schmalzle read Resolution No. 23-19 aloud.

Commissioner Osterberg introduced Chelsea Falotico from VIP to talk about this.

Ms. Falotico said Pike County has a smaller staff and it's nice to see some of our Wayne County staff come here today. When we talk about Sexual Awareness Month we like to come up with a theme and this year we chose Healing Together. We as an agency help clients and survivors of sexual assault heal on their own journey. They put in a lot of work. We want to ask the community to heal from sexual violence with our survivors, alongside our survivors. What healing looks like to us, we sat down and tried to figure out a way to bring healing to life and figure out a way to ask people to heal we have to give you a guideline. Healing looked a lot like change. If you're healing from something physically, your body has to go through changes in order to grow. If you're healing from some kind of trauma, mentally your mind, in order to grow, has to go through some sort of change. Our community has to go through some sort of change in order to heal from sexual violence. That might look like changing the way we talk about sexual violence, the way we write about it, the way we read about it and I come prepared with examples. Some of you might be aware of a case that happened a while ago, Brock Turner was charged with raping a woman on his school's campus. Most of the headlines read along the lines of 'Star Collegiate Athlete's Career in Jeopardy Due to Sexual Assault Allegations'. What they should have looked like is 'Man Rapes Unconscious Woman Behind a Dumpster on College Campus'. We like to sugarcoat what we're writing and reading so it doesn't seem as violent and awful. Sexual assault and rape is an awful thing. Why do we try to make it seem like it's not that big of a deal? By the way, Brock Turner only ended up serving about 6 months' probation. That is less time than Martha Stewart served, and it is less time than somebody would have served if they were caught after curfew during a peaceful Black Lives Matter protest. We need to change how we talk about victims. The way we approach talking about victims of sexual assault. Just a few weeks ago at the courthouse I listened to a defense attorney repeatedly refer to the Plaintiff in a child sexual assault case as a 'young woman'. She was 12 at the time the incident occurred. Twelve years old! She's a child, she's not a young woman. Ms. Falotico continued we need to change the way we educate about sexual violence. Myself and many of the other women in this room can come up with a really long list of things we are taught as young girls in order to avoid victimhood. I have come up with such a list and it includes: not going out alone; if you're going on a date make sure you tell your friends where you are going, what time you're going and who you are going with and where do you plan on going and what kind of car does the person drive; don't think about going anywhere without pepper spray or some type of weapon; don't go to the bar alone; if you go to the bar, don't leave your drink on the bar unattended; actually, when you carry your drink, carry it from the top so nobody can slip a drug into it; if you go to the bathroom, make sure you take a friend with you because it's not safe to go to the bathroom by yourself; if the creepy guy at the bar asks you for your number, don't refuse to give it to him because he might get mad, but also don't give it to him because then it might be leading him on; don't smile at the creepy guys at the bar because that is also leading them on and you don't want to cause yourself any trouble down the road; don't give them a fake number when they ask for it because it's just going to piss them off and we don't want to do that; when you're renting an apartment don't rent one on the first floor; don't open your windows when your home along; you should probably get a big dog for safety if you're living on your own as a woman; don't wear anything too short, you don't want to give the wrong impression; don't wear anything that covers up too much then you will look like a prude. We can go on and on and on about the messages we send young girls about how to protect themselves.

Ms. Falotico asked the Commissioners if they can think of anything that they were taught as young boys to avoid victimhood from sexual violence? Commissioners Schmalzle answered don't talk to strangers. Ms. Falotico said the point is that we don't really talk to boys about it because we don't expect young boys to have to save themselves, but we put all of the burden on young women. Changing the roles that we consistently set for young girls and the messages that we're sending to young people about sexual violence is the only way we can start to heal as a community. The way we educate about consent too. Just this month VIP (Victims' Intervention Program) has coffee sleeves that go over a hot cup of coffee and year after year multiple local coffee shops will use those sleeves that have 'We Believe Survivors' and 'We Ask For Consent'. One of the owners that I had a conversation with this month said he doesn't want to use them, his prerogative that's okay, because he didn't want to assume that his customers did that. That his customers ask for consent which means he's more concerned with making rapists feel more comfortable in his establishment than victims and that just didn't feel right. I think it comes down to the fact that we don't educate about consent and sometimes consent is seen as a dirty word. The bottom line is we have a lot of work to do as a community. We have a lot of changes that we have to make if we ever want to heal and prevent sexual

violence from reoccurring. There's been a lot of talk about epidemics recently, but I don't think that people understand that sexual violence in itself is an epidemic in this country. We are one of the best countries in the world – why is this still happening? How can we change? How can we, as a community and individuals, change what is happening on a daily basis to our friends, neighbors, daughters, brothers, sisters and everybody that's important to us? We all have a job to do and making those really small changes are going to make a colossal impact on our community and our families. Thank you for your support.

Commissioner Osterberg announced that everything that can be done in this office will be done to make sure that message is put out there.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to adopt Resolution No. 23-20, National Volunteer Week, April 16-22, 2023.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.
Commissioner Waldron read Resolution No. 23-20 aloud.

Commissioner Waldron said he is on the Area Agency on Aging Advisory Board and got to know much more in the last year or so about what the RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) group does. In fact, they are being honored at a luncheon next Friday up at Camp Ladore in Waymart, PA. In a county like ours where we are spread out and with only so much transportation opportunities, although we have some for seniors, it is really great that these people volunteer to help those seniors be able to remain their homes, have dignity in their lives even when life is not going as well for them many times. Nonetheless, we really appreciate that volunteer effort – it is essential to keep people's lives meaningful.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to adopt Resolution No. 23-21, Conservation District Week, April 23-29, 2023.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.
Commissioner Schmalzle read Resolution No. 23-21 aloud.

Commissioner Schmalzle said he is fortunate to sit on the Conservation Board and works with a fantastic Board and staff led by Michele Long. We have someone who is the voice of Conservation in Pike County and the State of Pennsylvania, Kelly Stagen. Pike County Conservation District Director Michele Long was introduced and thanked everyone for the Proclamation. Director Long continued that they will be celebrating Conservation District Week next week. The Pike/Wayne Envirothon will be held next Wednesday at the Brookfield Education Center. We have such an incredible Board of Directors to volunteer a significant amount of their time to help our professional staff team look after the resources of Pike County that are so important to our community. We have a number of services that we provide, most of which focus on education and technical assistance. We do regulatory permitting and provide assistance with that and work with a number of partners on different projects. There are a lot of different types of resources in Pike County and we can't handle that alone, we do that through the many partnerships that we have. I want to thank the Commissioners for their support. Our organization is very lucky to have a sitting Board of Commissioners that are dedicated to protecting the resources here. In showing that dedication, they have worked with our Board and staff to hire a District Engineer that brings a local resource back to our community to review permitting and healthy development within the community. Thank you, Commissioners, for that and your long-standing goal supporting our organization. Kelly Stagen is here today, she is one of our Board members. Kelly sits on the National Association of Conservation Districts and is currently the President of the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts. Her voice is not only heard here in Pike County, but it is also heard State-wide and we're very lucky to have such a great volunteer Board.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, adopt Resolution No. 23-22, National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 23-29, 2023.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.
Commissioner Waldron read Resolution No. 23-22 aloud.

Commissioner Osterberg introduced Director of Victims' Services, Sara Loeb of the CAC (Children's Advocacy Center). Director Loeb said everyone likes to be heard. Everyone loves to know that somebody is listening to them, and I think as crime victims are survivors they like to know that somebody is listening to them. As Chelsea (Falotico) said, and as VIP does, they help make those victims and survivors have that voice. During Crime Victims' Rights Week we want to remember that some people don't get to have that voice. Some people never want to use that voice and we want to empower people to make sure that they feel confident and empowered to use their voice as much as they can. Thank you to VIP for helping the victims of our office as well as their office and thank you Commissioners for your support.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to execute the Purchase of Service Agreement between Passavant Memorial Homes and the County of Pike, on behalf of Children and Youth Services.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to authorize the Chairman to execute the Letter of Amendment to the Shohola Falls Road Bridge Project.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to execute the Intermediate Punishment Treatment Program Grant Application, on behalf of the Probation Department.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve the following Human Services Payment Vouchers, on behalf of the Office of Human Services: State Food Purchase Program in the amount of \$5,933.91;

Human Services Development Fund in the amount of \$1,695.87; and Emergency Rental Assistance Program 2.0 in the amount of \$110,506.87.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve the CDBG Payment Voucher in the amount of \$58.75, payable to the Recorder of Deeds, for Vargas Lien, on behalf of the Office of Human Services.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve the CDBG Payment Voucher in the amount of \$7,916.00, payable to Pro Solutions Home Renovations LLC., for Vargas Upfront Payment, on behalf of the Office of Human Services.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve the CDBG Payment Voucher in the amount of \$6,355.22, payable to Family Promise, on behalf of the Office of Human Services.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve the CDBG Payment Voucher in the amount of \$710.00, payable to Amazing Place LLC., on behalf of the Office of Human Services.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve the Contract for Professional Services Agreement for Fiscal Year 2023-2024, effective July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, on behalf of Children and Youth Services.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve the Purchase of Service Agreement for Fiscal Year 2023-2024, effective July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, on behalf of Children and Youth Services.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to approve the Business Associate Agreement for Fiscal Year 2023-2024, effective July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, on behalf of Children and Youth Services.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to recommend the reappointment of **CYNTHIA DEFEBO** to the Board of Directors of the NEPA Alliance for the new Fiscal Year commencing July 1, 2023.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to recommend the appointment of **ANTONIO PERITO** to the Board of Directors of the NEPA Alliance for the new Fiscal Year commencing July 1, 2023.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

MOTION: by Commissioner Waldron and seconded by Commissioner Schmalzle, to authorize the fiscal year 2023 first quarter payment from Pike County Emergency Medical Services Matching Grant funds to Palmyra Township in the amount of \$44,500.00.

VOTE: Commissioners Osterberg, Schmalzle and Waldron voted 'aye'. Motion carried.

Commissioner Osterberg announced that before we go to 'Miscellaneous', in the packet here you'll see that we're continuing with the funding for the Medical Services. At last week's meeting we awarded money to Delaware Township, Lackawaxen Township, Milford Township, Porter Township and Shohola Township. All of this money is being equally distributed among the County, the way the millage is laid out. It's a continuing effort here, I know at the last meeting we took a couple of shots about this. We shouldn't be taking shots about this. This is a really positive program that's going on in this County. We have some members of Lehman Township here and if you saw today's Dispatch, it came out late last night, their ambulance service now is dealing with an urgent care service now. I think this is all being driven by the partnership between the County Commissioners and, in this case, the Lehman Township Supervisors. I think it's being made out to be something that's not real – it is real. I don't know if Lehman wants to speak a little bit to this, but I think it's important. A meeting attendee responded that our EMS Administrator, Sue Duffy, would like to make a statement. Commissioner Osterberg said the article that's in the paper is very uplifting.

Sue Duffy said the byline scares me because the one thing that I said to him is please understand that by my talking to the liaison at Lehigh Valley Health Network, there are no talks about any sort of building whatsoever. All they are seeing us; I didn't read the article yet. Like the wonderful people that spoke here today, I have to stick to this because I'm not a public speaker and I have to speak from what my head told me instead of what my heart may want to say in response to those things. I am the EMS Administrator for Lehman Township, our Lehman/Pike EMS. Between the time that we started last year, March 9th and yesterday we have responded to a total of 1,507 dispatches which is amazing. More than 50% of those calls were advanced in nature and each of those percentages are increasing where we need paramedics. For those who don't understand the difference between Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced (Life Support): Basic Life Support is the cornerstone there, the glue that holds EMS together. That is your Emergency Medical Technicians or EMT's, your emergency responders. They provide all of the basics that we need for breathing, circulation and bandaging. They go out there and start everything and nothing that we do, even as advanced providers, is worth anything without those EMT's. Advanced Life Support (ALS) now is like an emergency room on wheels. There are advances where we can transmit EKG's

directly to the hospital if we feel someone is having a heart attack or if we see someone is having a heart attack. The cardiac catheterization team will be ready at the door waiting to take that patient up to the Cath Lab, they will be waiting for the CAT Scan to put that patient in. We are able to get that information to them and also treat them before they ever would be able to if they had to wait and drive themselves to the hospital. Our people, in moving vehicles, do it 24 hours a day as well.

Ms. Duffy continued there was a statement that the ALS units are nothing more than hearses. That is not only disrespectful, it's ignorant, and it's blatantly false. We are no longer in the era of throwing patients in the back of a Cadillac driving really fast to the hospital and hoping they arrive alive. Up until recently, I was actively working in Advanced Life Support. The advancement that EMS has seen over the years is quite astounding. While there will always be room for updates regarding technology protocols, it is something to be quite proud of. We see the balance of our patients who would never have survived in those previous eras, not only arriving at the hospital alive and frequently, greatly improved, but they're also walking out of the hospitals and continuing with their lives. The Emergency Medical Services in Pike County, of which there are roughly 13 services, cover approximately 550 square miles with a population of just under 60,000 people. Many of those services do not have Advanced Life Support, they are not available 24 hours a day. That puts a lot greater wear on those surfaces that are running 24 hours a day than they had planned for. Lehman Township is extremely lucky, we're one of the only services in the area that is an actual department of our Municipality. Most services began as private volunteer organizations, many still are. I say we're lucky because we're set up primarily to cover Lehman Township and a small portion of Middle Smithfield (Monroe County) and Porter. We will always handle mutual aid calls for any neighboring area that needs us. There are services in Pike County that actually cover a huge section of Pike as well as portions of Wayne (County), a whole sector of Route 84 and they actually go into New York State, and they do it with one ALS unit. That's a lot of wear and tear, which brings me to my next false statement.

Ms. Duffy said she heard that response times do not matter. The American Heart Association states "we report decreasing survival as ambulance response time increases, this is in association with cardiac arrest, traumas, strokes and specifically observed in pediatrics". By rapid response time or not referring to driving ambulances at breakneck speed to get to the destination, that only jeopardizes your crews and general public. Need to provide a service with the appropriate funds and/or equipment so they're not required to travel great distances to these 911 emergencies. As you read in the Dispatch, I recently spoke with EMS liaison at Lehigh Valley Pocono, and it was mentioned that Lehigh Valley is impressed at the number of responses that Lehman/Pike has had since we have begun taking the 911 calls. They are likewise impressed with the number of responses in Delaware and Lackawaxen Townships. They are finally seeing Pike County. We always knew it was a busy 911 area, I'm glad that others are seeing it now as well. Services can only hope to provide adequate personnel, equipment, vehicles, and stations based solely on reimbursements from insurance. I can't speak for other areas, but in Lehman Township the vast majority of the insurance coverage for our residents is Medicaid or Medicare which covers roughly about 23% of our bills, that's if they pay them at all. A large number of our patients still have no insurance, or they have private insurance who send them the check and they just don't happen to pass it along and then we have to figure out a way to get it. Trucks and equipment are very expensive, and they require constant upkeep. Payroll is a huge burden. Workers' Compensation for EMS is exorbitant. One time someone said to me that it is akin to working with dynamite. The workers with dynamite have roughly the same Workers' Comp as an EMS worker. Many supplies are not provided by hospitals and often times, due to vast shortages, are difficult to obtain from outside vendors. EMS personnel generally work 2, 3 or more different services just to be able to make ends meet. They work long shifts, days, nights, and holidays. They aren't able to spend any significant time with their families because they are providing a necessary service to the general public. Most services do not provide paid time off or benefits of any kind. These providers work in EMS because it is something that they love and it's something that the community cannot do without. I will reiterate for anyone who sits there and states that EMS providers are no better than hearse drivers or that rapid response is unnecessary. They do a great disservice not only to those who work in Emergency Medical Services, but to the communities they serve and I guarantee that if anyone in this room had a loved one who was in midst of a medical or traumatic emergency, time would be of the utmost importance and I hope that every EMS provider who walked through their doors would be held in the highest regard because they absolutely deserve to be. Thank you for your time.

Commissioner Schmalzle said this is a passion of mine. You are passionate, it comes right through. Lehman and the entire County is lucky to have a person like you in such a leadership role. When we jumped into this game, meeting after meeting after meeting as you heard from me last meeting I went on about this, there wasn't an answer because the system was there and it wasn't broken, it was broke. That's why we, some people said it was an overreach on our part, reached out to the Municipalities to offer financial support, we didn't want to run it, we didn't want to be involved with it, but we wanted to provide a way to help to fund it. My businesses are in Lackawaxen Township and what I knew then was Lackawaxen had figured it out a little bit by passing a Referendum by having a full-time paid staff, by putting money into it. It's a community and Woodloch Springs essentially is the pulse of that area. People moving from New York expect high level of services, but successful people that could afford both in time and financial, to get involved. I do know that your supervisors looked at Lackawaxen as a model to build the current system that you have. The leadership in Lehman should be commended, it wasn't in this shape not that long ago. You couldn't be up here today saying you had 1,500+ calls, but now you can. It's exceptional work. Congratulations – we love to be partners with Lehman and all of the 13 Municipalities. As long as we're here, that will continue as vibrantly as it is now and into the future. Thank you.

Commissioner Osterberg added you talk about mutual aid, that's why we went into this. We know that there were difficulties, particularly with the smaller Municipalities, I've used this at other discussions, it's like the haves and have nots, they didn't create the boundaries of the Municipalities, they didn't create how many parcels they have in it, but they still have to provide the same service. The money that we put into this would also somewhat level the playing field. Obviously, the bigger Townships get more. We're all sitting here in Milford Borough right now and if one of us has a medical emergency, regardless of where we live in the County or where we live, we're anticipating that there is going to be ample ambulance services that are going to come here whether it's ALS or BLS. As Ron said at the last meeting, we know we can do better, and we will. This is the beginning of this. We need more ALS units in this County and we need to figure that out as a team. All of the Municipalities need to work together. The County is here to help foster this along, but then it's also the Municipal leaders that have to come together. Dingman Township talked about what they were going to do when we started funding

this, they felt it was more important that they bolster their BLS unit. Everybody in Milford Borough and this region of Pike County is benefitting from that. Lackawaxen did the same thing by moving another rig into the Greeley location which didn't have an ambulance down there and that benefits Shohola. Shohola is putting one into Walker Lake, this is all together. To come here and criticize this is really being ignorant. We wouldn't have Lehigh Valley coming here and talking to you whether the article is accurate or whatever. More importantly, they're here talking to you because they see the numbers. We met with Lehigh last year and we brought them back then and it was only 6 months of calls and showed them the County calls and you could see their eyes open up. Now they're impressed. That's why Northwell is interested in here. Last night at the Delaware Township Planning Commission meeting they got their Conditional Use Approval from Planning and it now goes to the Supervisors. That's moving. What happens in Lehman or across the border, I don't know, I only read the article. It's ignorant to think that this isn't working. Thank you.

Supervisor of Lehman Township???, Terry Laino???, thanked the Commissioners for helping us with this. Like she (Sue Duffy) was saying, time does matter. We had people laying in their driveways waiting for an ambulance for 45 minutes. That is what was going on before you guys and Sue and all of us got together and put this together. It's been a big difference. People call on the phone and thank us and they are so happy and that's what's important. Commissioner Osterberg said we haven't had anyone complain about it and the money that we put into it. The average payment is something like \$70 a year for a household (County tax). If I'm laying on the floor waiting for an ambulance, I'll be waving \$70 in the air pretty quick. Commissioner Waldron added that I'd like to follow up on something Ron said. I was a Solicitor for various Municipalities in Pike and Wayne Counties for over 40 years. Their system wasn't broken; it just needed the financing. The reality is there were some haves, Lackawaxen being one and I represented Palmyra Township for over 3 decades, and they were able to form a unit, but they could barely fund it because they had 40% of their calls were outside of the Township. That have and have nots became an issue. The reality is there was a suggestion made by people running for office that said maybe we just need a different system and authority. We don't need more bureaucracy; we just need to fund the existing situations. Fortunately, my colleagues sitting here and my predecessor, Steve Guccini, had the courage to say we're going to make sure that that happens and not just use Federal dollars, but use committed funds so that they can be there hopefully forever. As long as the right people are sitting in the stable hopefully that will happen forever because it works and we've been given concrete examples of how it works. Maybe they speak in ignorance otherwise it's deliberate misstatements, that's a fancy word for lies and we can't have that okay? We have to make sure people understand that when something is working, you shouldn't mess with it. Fortunately, this has been working in the last year or two. I'm really glad that it is working.

MISCELLANEOUS

- PennState Extension Calendar of Events – Mental Health and First Aid for Adults Dealing with Children and 4-H Future Responders Camp
- Habitat for Humanity Check Presentation-\$75,000.00

PRESS & PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS/ADJOURNMENT

THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF THE PIKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2023, AT 11:00 A.M. IN THE PIKE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING.