

**COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES**  
**JANUARY 9, 2013**

Commissioner Chairman Rodney D. Ruddock called the regular meeting of the Indiana County Commissioners to order at 10:30 a.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

**ROLL CALL**

Chairman Rodney D. Ruddock, present                      Commissioner David S. Frick, present  
Commissioner Patricia A. Evanko, present

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

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**APPROVE MINUTES...DECEMBER 24, 2012**

A motion was made by Ms. Evanko, seconded by Mr. Frick and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of December 24, 2012 as submitted.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**TAX REASSESSMENT OVERVIEW...FRANK SISCO / IRA WEISS & ASSOCIATES**

Commissioner Ruddock said the board wanted to have some discussion regarding the movement of the reassessment which will take place in 2016. He said the board wants to have pure transparency to the public in term of their intent.

Frank Sisko, Chief Assessor, said his office has been working on refining the RFP as well as developing a timeline of events for the successful completion of the reassessment project. He wants to present the RFP for approval at the next meeting on January 23, 2013. Martin Medvetz, former Chief Assessor, was also present and was hired to help consult with the project.

Janet Burkardt and Dominick Gambino were present from Ira Weiss & Associates. Janet Burkardt commented that the county has reached the conclusion that there is no choice and the reassessment needs to be done. In 2011, she said her firm did a study of the assessment that is place and that showed the regressivity that exists in Indiana County and it has put the assessment into a situation that is not fair. There are too many tax payers in Indiana County that are paying too little or too much and we need to readjust and reassess so that we can get everyone on an equal fair tax base. Ira Weiss will work as Indiana County's consultants with Dominick Gambino who was a former manager of the Office of Property Assessment in Allegheny County. Dominick successfully did reassessment twice of over 600,000 parcels in Allegheny County. They are working on an RFP and plan to present on the January 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting for approval so that it can be advertised. They will review the vendors and will be writing a contract. The problems that happens with contracts is they are not written with enough accountability in them and then assessments come in and they are not what you expected because the contract didn't have enough demands. We want to make sure that doesn't happen in Indiana County. The RFP will

set the tone of what is going to happen. It is more than just a reassessment in Indiana County; it is a whole CAMA (Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal) system. Down the road Indiana County won't be looking to do reassessment through an outside vendor but will be equipped to do it in-house. That is the goal. It is a complicated goal and will take time and that is why it won't be in effect until 2016 which is wise. This is a process that takes time and rushing it just creates problems.

Commissioner Ruddock said that the reassessment timeline that was developed presents an expectation in terms of dates. He asked Dominick Gambino asked if there is anything special in the RFP that they will be looking for to allow us to have a smooth sailing on this. Dominick said what he sees in Indiana County is that their initiative is going to be very unique as opposed to how Allegheny and Bedford did their reassessment. This RFP will be framed to have involvement from a local standpoint such as real estate professionals. Not only by helping to delineate neighborhoods and the knowing the markets but also doing independent sales ratio studies that make sure there is compliance to what they have determined to be contractual compliance. He said this will be a unique experience for them and the County because it will be like no other RFP written and no other contract done in Pennsylvania. Local involvement is going to be heavily part of the RFP contract. Commissioner Ruddock said Indiana County has had great success with local engagement from financing to developing concept plans for doing construction has worked favorable on our part.

Commissioner Ruddock asked about future reassessment and is there a concept to move forward internally without having to go out and engineer and bring in another team. Janet Burkardt said that is exactly the plan and that is why the RFP is as extensive as it is. The idea is a CAMA system is put in place and county employees are trained on using it. Dominick said it will be done on a computer system. The other key is the education component not only to educate the in-house staff so they can maintain CAMA system subsequent to certification. Most authorities look to certification and say we are done. He said that is just the beginning for staff, they have to maintain that CAMA system. There will be appeals and other function that will occur after certification once the contractor leaves the building. This education will not only be for the tax office but also elected officials and tax payers. He suggested coming back and having an Assessment 101 with staff as soon as possible. Commissioner Ruddock said they want to become more decision makers and obviously carrying that Assessment 101 to the townships, school boards and all of the constituent groups that want to part of the process. The more we get the information to the public the better we are served in doing the right thing for them. Dominick said there are many perceptions of assessments that are not correct and he said they want to make sure when the numbers are certified everyone understands how they were done and you that you can defend the product, numbers and process that was used to create the numbers. Commissioner Ruddock said that tax reassessment is for the sake of fairness and sometimes that is not articulated clearly enough particularly in some of the counties that have already gone through a reassessment. Allegheny County never talked about the importance of fairness and that is really key to us. Obviously it will take some work to make sure we get to that level. Heavy emphasis is to getting the information technology team engaged as well to carry the information out to the public in some fashion.

Dave Frick commented that the existing situation is probably a third paying less tax, a third paying more tax and maybe a third paying what they should be paying. We have known ever

since coming into office that the real concern of the prudent tax payer is the fairness. He hopes that is what we accomplish with reassessment.

Commissioner Evanko said we want to make sure we do this right from the very beginning. We want to have the right people in place and she thinks we are putting the right people in place to help us do this correctly. We want to be open, transparent and want the public to know what and how we are doing it and with the leadership of the Ira Weiss firm we will have that. We are going to take this on the road eventually and visit the key areas to let the public know what is happening and how we are going to go about it and if there is any questions we will be open to try to answer them and if we don't have the answer we will get it for them.

Commissioner Ruddock said he appreciates the assessment team along with Martin Medvetz with the timeline they developed. There may be some adjustments but it is a start point. The important thing is that we are starting the reassessment time table now and the ultimate goal is to have the values for real estate purposes in 2016.

#### **VEHICLE PURCHASE...TRI-STAR MOTORS / DISTRICT ATTORNEY**

At the request of Patrick Dougherty, District Attorney, a motion was made by Mr. Frick, seconded by Ms. Evanko and unanimously carried to approve the purchase of a 2013 Ford Explorer from Tri-Star Motors, Blairsville, PA in the amount of \$25,972.00. There has been some dialog with Tri-Star to honor the cost that was given in July, 2012 and the motion is contingent of them honoring that cost. It will replace 2004 Ford Expedition that will not pass inspection and has over \$116,000 miles and severe rust. It is noted that the vehicle will have a tow package with the cost of \$570.00. Because it will be used for the DUI Taskforce, they will reimburse the county from grant funds received for the DUI Taskforce.

#### **CONTRACT – ESG-H PROGRAM**

At the request of the Office of Planning & Development, a motion was made by Mr. Frick, seconded by Ms. Evanko and unanimously carried to enter into a contract agreement with the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development for the 2011 Emergency Solutions Grant Program Hearth Contract. This request also includes approval for all required forms to be signed by Commissioner Ruddock for contract execution. The contract amount is for \$223,000.00 to provide rapid re-housing services, reporting in the PA HMIS (Human Management Information Services) System and administrative funds. The Indiana County Community Action Program (ICCAP) will be the vendor for Indiana County and provide the direct services to eligible households.

Commissioner Evanko asked who does this program help? Luann Zak said those who need assistance with security and utility deposits. This is to keep them from becoming homeless. This also includes services to help them get out of the situation they are in.

#### **BUDGET REVISION – 2010 CDBG INDIANA COUNTY “OBO” INDIANA BOROUGH**

At the request of the Office of Planning & Development and the Borough of Indiana, a motion was made by Mr. Frick, seconded by Ms. Evanko and unanimously carried to approve a budget revision for the 2010 CDBG program contract. The original 2010 CDBG contract allocated \$120,000.00 to the B1 segment of the Greater Indiana Borough Revitalization Project. The B1 segment addressed improvements along Philadelphia Street from 5<sup>th</sup> Street to 6<sup>th</sup> Street. This segment of construction was completed under budget and \$23,856.55 remains unexpended. The

budget revision will re-allocate these remaining funds to the B2 segment of the Revitalization Project. This segment of the project will address street improvements on N. 7<sup>th</sup> Street from Philadelphia to Water Street. The total budget line item for Street Improvements remains unchanged at \$120,000.00 but the B2 Segment activity is being added to the contract.

### **CHANGE ORDER – EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT RADIO COMMUNICATIONS PROJECT / PLANNING**

In coordination with Emergency Management Agency and at the request of the Office of Planning & Development on behalf of the Indiana County Development Corporation, a motion was made by Mr. Frick seconded by Ms. Evanko and unanimously carried to approve a change order in the amount of \$35,785.00 to Salsgiver Telecom, Inc., for the Emergency Management Radio Communications Project. The change order is for additional work to connect 3582 Tunnelton Road, Saltsburg through a direct fiber optic line. All costs related to the change order will be paid by the Indiana County Development Corporation through a PA Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) grant. Approval is requested for Commissioner Ruddock to execute any required documents.

It is noted that the delivery of this fiber optic line is key to helping businesses stay and maintain their businesses in Indiana County.

### **BOARD APPOINTMENTS...CHILDREN'S ADVISORY COMMISSION**

A motion was made by Mr. Frick, seconded by Ms. Evanko and unanimously carried to approve the following appointments and reappointments to the Children's Advisory Commission:

#### New Members:

Jennifer McCroskey, Armstrong-Indiana-Clarion Drug and Alcohol Commission  
Marilyn Walther- Indiana Area School District  
Sandy Toy - The Care Center  
Terms to expire December 31, 2015

#### Members replacing others:

Deborah Casadei, Penn DOT (1-1-13 to 12-31-14)  
Wendy Sturiale, Child Care Information Services  
Terms to expire December 31, 2013

#### Reappointments:

Chris Arthurs, United School District  
Janis Baun, Indiana County Probation  
Lynanne Black, IUP  
Denice Conner, Salvation Army  
Jill DaBella, Penns Manor School District  
Janie Hess-Gray, Indiana County Head Start  
Marti Higgins, Indiana County Child Care, Inc.  
Pepita Jimenez-Jacobs, League of Women Voters  
Patty Kinter, ARIN IU 28  
Debbie Kotelnicki, Alice Paul House  
Cindy Risinger, Purchase Line School District  
Susan Sapko, United Way of Indiana County

Lauri Schiffbauer, Evergreen Boys and Girls Club  
Carol Schurman, Penn State Cooperative Extension  
Kristina Taylor-Porter, The Care Center  
Connie Violi, Community Guidance Center  
Terms to expire December 31, 2015

**REIMBURSEMENT AGREEMENT...FEDERAL BRIDGE INVENTORY AND INSPECTION PROGRAM FOR LOCAL BRIDGES**

At the request of PennDOT, a motion was made by Mr. Frick, seconded by Ms. Evanko and unanimously carried to approve the reimbursement agreement for the Federal Bridge Inventory and Inspection Program for local bridges in the amount of \$700,000.00. The county will receive a federal share in the amount of \$560,000.00 and the local share will be \$140,000.00 which will come from the County Liquid Fuels Fund.

**NOTICE TO PROCEED...T-562 DIXON RUN BRIDGE**

At the request of Jason Previte from Gibson-Thomas Engineering, a motion was made by Mr. Frick, seconded by Ms. Evanko and unanimously carried to approve a notice to proceed for work covered under Construction Consultation Part III and Construction Inspection Part IV for the T-562 Dixon Run Bridge project located in Rayne Township.

**APPROVAL OF REVISED INDIANA COUNTY EMPLOYEE MANUAL**

At the request of Melissa Miller, Director of Human Resources/Assistant Chief Clerk, a motion was made by Mr. Frick, seconded by Ms. Evanko and unanimously carried to approve the revised Indiana County Employee Manual. She noted that the changes are policy updates and also includes federal and state mandates required by law. The board thanked her for her review and update of the manual.

**COURTHOUSE CLOSED...JANUARY 21, 2013 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR HOLIDAY**

Commissioner Ruddock announced the courthouse will be closed on January 21, 2013 in observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday. Commissioner Ruddock said there will be a march at 10:00 a.m. on January 19, 2013 beginning at the Courthouse and then proceed to Grace Methodist Church ending with program and lunch.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Commissioner Evanko said that Indiana County Municipal Services celebrated their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary at their annual meeting held recently.

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING...JANUARY 23, 2013 10:30 A.M.**

The next regular scheduled Commissioners' Public meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 23, 2013 at 10:30 a.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business to come before the Board at this time, Commissioner Ruddock adjourned the meeting at 11:04 p.m.

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Patricia A. Evanko, Secretary

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Rodney D. Ruddock, Chairman