

LAWRENCE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
PUBLIC MEETING
MINUTES OF Tuesday, October 21, 2025

The Lawrence County Commissioners' Meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag followed by a Moment of Silence.

The Lawrence County Commissioners' Meeting of Tuesday, October 21, 2025, was called to order by **Commissioner Daniel Vogler**, at 10:00 AM at the Lawrence County Commissioners Meeting Room. **Deputy Chief Clerk, Vanessa Bayless**, called the roll. Those in attendance were **Commissioner Dan Kennedy, Commissioner Chris Sainato, County Administrator, Joseph Venasco, Amy McKinney, Chad Strobel, Donald Andrews, Kenny Rice, Lisa Haddad, Patrick Micco, no one from the New Castle News**. It was stated for the record that the meeting is being taped. Those wishing to speak shall be given five minutes. If they need more time, they are to see the Chief Clerk at another time, and he will arrange for them to meet with the Commissioners. Those speaking are to state for the record their names, addresses and the nature of their business.

ROW OFFICERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS

None

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

FISCAL/CONTRACTUAL

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------|
| A. Repository Properties: | None |
| B. Advertise for bids/proposals: | None |
| C. Receipt for bids/proposals: | None |
| D. Warrant Registers: | |
| 1. October 16, 2025 | |
| 2. October 17, 2025 | |

Moved by Mr. Sainato seconded by Mr. Kennedy to approve and file said warrant register(s). Motion carried 3-0.

MINUTES AND CORRESPONDENCE

- A. Approval of Minutes:
1. October 14, 2025

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to approve said minutes. Motion carried 3-0.

- B. Presentation of Written Communications: None

REPORTS

- A. Staff Reports:
- B. Commissioner Reports:

Mr. Vogler reviewed his events from last week and deferred to Commissioner Sainato. Austin Downs wrote an article for the Westminster College Newspaper about movie producer, Wes Craven. He was a professor at Westminster and lived in New Wilmington for a year before moving to Florida.

Mr. Kennedy stated last night the United Way Taste Of The Town event was very well attended.

Mr. Sainato followed up with the Taste of the Town. The event showcased all local restaurants. The Commissioners attended the Shell restoration event in Shenango Twp. On Saturday and it was very nice. He also stopped in Wampum over the weekend and saw the Dick Allen mural. The Commissioners attended the Lawrence County Career & Technical event that showcased the students, who are doing a great job.

NEW BUSINESS

Lawrence County 2025 Hazard Mitigation Updated Plan County Adoption Resolution R-2025-349

WHEREAS, the Municipalities of Lawrence County, Pennsylvania are most vulnerable to natural and human-made hazards which may result in loss of life and property, economic hardship, and threats to public health and safety, and

WHEREAS, Section 322 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) requires state and local governments to develop and submit for approval to the President a mitigation plan that outlines processes for identifying their respective natural hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities, and

WHEREAS, Lawrence County acknowledges the requirements of Section 322 of DMA 2000 to have an approved Hazard Mitigation Plan Update as a prerequisite to receiving post-disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds, and

WHEREAS, the Lawrence County 2025 Hazard Mitigation Updated Plan has been developed by the Lawrence County Commissioners and the Lawrence County Department of Planning and Community Development in cooperation with other county departments, local municipal officials, and the citizens of Lawrence County, and

WHEREAS, a public involvement process consistent with the requirements of DMA 2000 was conducted to develop the Lawrence County 2025 Hazard Mitigation Updated Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Lawrence County 2025 Hazard Mitigation Updated Plan recommends mitigation activities that will reduce losses to life and property affected by both natural and human-made hazards that face the County and its municipal governments,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the governing body for the County of Lawrence that:

- The Lawrence County 2025 Hazard Mitigation Updated Plan is hereby adopted as the official Hazard Mitigation Plan of the County, and

- The respective officials and agencies identified in the implementation strategy of the Lawrence County 2025 Hazard Mitigation Updated Plan are hereby directed to implement the recommended activities assigned to them.

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Sainato to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION R-2025-337

WHEREAS, the Lawrence County Commissioners approved Resolution R-2025-317 on October 7, 2025 to implement a Countywide Burn Ban; and

WHEREAS, upon the recommendation of the Public Safety Director, the Pennsylvania Department of State and the upcoming weather forecast, the Countywide Burn Ban shall be rescinded effective October 21, 2025; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, that the Countywide Burn Ban is rescinded and no longer in effect as of October 21, 2025, upon approval of this Resolution.

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Sainato to remove Resolution R-2025-317 off the table. Motion carried 3-0.

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to approve said Resolution (R-2025-337). Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION R-2025-350

WHEREAS, Lawrence County, through its Children and Youth Department, desires to contract certain social services; and

WHEREAS, the County has the authority and duty to provide social services to children and youth subject to the regulations established by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (DHS) and the Juvenile Code:

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Lawrence County Board of Commissioners, that:

1. The Purchase of Service Agreement under the provider Diakon Child Family & Community Ministries shall be in effect for the period of July 01, 2025, through June 30, 2026.
2. Costs are incurred only if the provider or service is being used by Lawrence County per the Agreement.
3. Authorization is hereby given to execute an Agreement with the following service provider:

**Diakon Child Family & Community Ministries
1022 North Union Street
Middletown, PA. 17057**

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Sainato to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

Resolution R-2025-351

WHEREAS, the County of Lawrence (County) is eligible to apply to the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency for the Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Fund (PHARE), which includes the Marcellus Shale Impact Fee, Realty Transfer Tax and the National Housing Trust Fund funding sources; and

WHEREAS, the Lawrence County Blight Removal Program is a high funding priority for the County and the County wishes that the Marcellus Shale Funds be used for the support of this application; and

WHEREAS, the County, in partnership with the Lawrence County Redevelopment Authority, local municipalities and other county agencies, will use these funds to assist municipalities with neighborhood stabilization efforts, site preparation of blighted or vacant property demolition and housing rehabilitation to ensure resources are used in an effective and efficient manner to meet the housing needs of the County; and

WHEREAS, if awarded the above mentioned funds, the Chairman of the Lawrence County Board of Commissioners will sign off on all related documents.

NOW, THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED, that the Lawrence County Board of Commissioners agree to apply to PHARE for targeted neighborhood stabilization efforts, site preparation and blighted or vacant property demolition, façade improvements and housing rehabilitation to ensure resources are used in an effective and efficient manner to meet the housing needs of the County.

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Sainato to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION R-2025-352

WHEREAS, the County of Lawrence has received notification from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Community and Economic Development of the availability of funding in the projected amount of **\$613,245.00** - \$257,849.00 for the County of Lawrence, \$126,462.00 On Behalf of the Township of Shenango, \$103,555.00 On Behalf of the Township of Union and \$125,379.00 On Behalf of Ellwood City Borough) for the provision of services eligible under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG); and

WHEREAS, the County of wishes to engage in the provision of services eligible under the Community Development Block Grant Program; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Shenango, the Township of Union and Ellwood City Borough have directed and agreed on the purpose of the CDBG funds set aside for their community; and

WHEREAS, the First Public Hearing was advertised and conducted on August 4, 2025 (at the County of Lawrence, at and On Behalf of Ellwood City Borough, at and On Behalf of Shenango Township and at and On Behalf of Union Township). The second public hearing was advertised and conducted on September 22, 2025 (County of Lawrence and On Behalf of Shenango Township, Union Township and Ellwood City Borough) as required by the CDBG regulations, to obtain citizens' views and comments concerning the proposed use of these funds.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, that;

1. The County shall prepare and submit a grant in the projected amount of \$613,245.00, to the Department of Community and Economic Development.
2. The County has chosen to allocate their allocation to the following eligible projects:
 - a. Housing Rehabilitation \$187,172.00 in non-entitlement communities
 - b. CYS Transportation Program \$32,000.00
 - c. Program Administration \$38,677.00
3. The County of Lawrence on Behalf of Shenango Township has chosen to engage in Housing Rehabilitation and Program Administration.
4. The County of Lawrence on Behalf of Union Township has chosen to engage in Housing Rehabilitation, ADA Ramps and Program Administration.
5. The County of Lawrence on Behalf of Ellwood City Borough has chosen to engage in Street Improvements, Housing Rehabilitation and Program Administration.
6. The said program activities will be administered in accordance with all State and Federal Regulations.
7. The Chairman Commissioner shall have the authority to execute all documents required by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania pertaining to the application and administration of the 2025 CDBG Program.

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION R-2025-353

WHEREAS, Resolution R-2025-348 was approved on October 14, 2025 to allocate funds to the following list of grant applicants:

1. Lawrence County DUI	\$100,000.00
2. Bridging Recovery	\$247,000.00
3. New Castle City Fire Department	\$27,510.00
4. Game Changer	\$78,500.00

WHEREAS, said Resolution R-2025-348 shall be amended to read as follows:

1. Lawrence County DUI	\$100,000.00
2. Bridging Recovery	\$247,000.00
3. New Castle City Fire Department	\$27,510.00
4. Vision Ministries	\$78,500.00

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS; that the amended above-listed allocations will be distributed.

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Sainato to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION R-2025-354

WHEREAS, Lawrence County wishes to approve a Permissive Absence Day for employees who make a minimum donation to the United Way for the year 2026; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners approve a Permissive Absence Day for the year 2026 with a minimum donation of \$5.00 per pay; and

WHEREAS, all employees (union/non-union) with the exception of jail personnel may participate and this is strictly voluntary for the employee; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS that;

The Lawrence County Commissioners authorize the approval of a Permissive Absence Day for employees (union/non-union) who make a minimum donation of \$5.00 per pay towards the United Way for the year 2026.

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION R-2025-355

WHEREAS, Section 1784 of the County Code, *Supplemental Appropriations Transfer of Funds; Appropriation Limits*, authorizes the Board of Commissioners, by resolution, to make supplemental appropriations for any lawful purpose from any funds on hand or estimated to be received within the fiscal year and not otherwise appropriated; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Board of Commissioners to adjust the existing FY2025 Budget; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS to amend the 2024 Lawrence County Budget as follows:

INCREASING Transfer from DEA/TFO General Revenue Fund Account: 01391000.391146 by \$15,000.00; and

INCREASING DA Overtime General Expense Fund Account: 01419400.110400 by \$15,000.00

Reason: DA OVERTIME

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Sainato to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION R-2025-356

WHEREAS, Section 1784 of the County Code, *Supplemental Appropriations Transfer of Funds; Appropriation Limits*, authorizes the Board of Commissioners, by resolution, to make supplemental appropriations for any lawful purpose from any funds on hand or estimated to be received within the fiscal year and not otherwise appropriated; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Board of Commissioners to adjust the existing FY2025 Budget; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS to amend the 2024 Lawrence County Budget as follows:

INCREASING Misc Refunds General Fund Account: 013900000.341300 by \$2,000.00; and

INCREASING Transfer to JPO Uniforms General Fund Account: 01423600.205000 by \$2,000.00

Reason: Deposit From DA to JPO

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Sainato to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

RESOLUTION

R-2025-357

WHEREAS, budgets cannot always anticipate every extraordinary, ordinary, or contingency situation which arises throughout the fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, Section 1784 of the County code permits the Commissioners by resolution to authorize budget transfers from any encumbered balance; and

WHEREAS, the need to provide additional appropriations to certain accounts now exists; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAWRENCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, that:

1. Authorization is hereby given to the appropriate administrative officials to transfer a total of \$4,100.00 as further detailed in the attachment(s) designated T-2025-16.

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to approve said Resolution. Motion carried 3-0.

Transfers (Administrative)

- a. DJ Cartwright from Contingency to Equipment Lease for \$564.00
- b. JPO from Office Equipment to Uniforms for \$589.00
- c. JPO from Contingency to Uniforms for \$2,985.00
- d. JPO from Travel & Training to Uniforms for \$900.00
- e. JPO from Vehicle to Uniforms for \$1,211.00
- f. Coroner from Equipment Lease to Vehicle Expense for \$2,000.00
- g. Human Resources from Materials & Supplies to Land/Building Rental for \$100.00
- h. Court Administration from Contingency to Land/Building Rental for \$900.00
- i. DJ Cartwright from Contingency to Equipment Lease for \$564.00
- j. Recycling from Contingency to Land/Building Rental for \$300.00
- k. Human Resources from Materials & Supplies to Staples for \$1,500.00
- l. Sheriff from Salary of Deputies to Land/Building Rental for \$200.00
- m. Solicitor from Special Counsel Contingency to Special Counsel for \$5,000.00
- n. Tax Claim from Contracted Consulting to Land/Building for \$1,550.00
- o. DJ Russo from Contingency to Telephone/Internet for \$1035.00
- p. DJ Russo from Contingency to Property Insurance for \$600.00

Moved by Mr. Sainato, seconded by Mr. Kennedy to approve said Administrative Transfers. Motion carried 3-0.

ORDINANCES

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| A. Discussion: | None |
| B. On the Table: | None |
| C. For Introduction: | None |
| D. For Final Action: | None |

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. The next Commissioners' Meeting will be on Tuesday, October 28, 2025 @ 10AM in the Commissioners' Meeting Room.
- B. There will be a Special Election Board Meeting on Monday, November 3, 2025 @ 9AM in the Commissioners' Meeting Room.
- C. The Commissioners will discuss having a Special Commissioners' Meeting in November at their next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Sainato to adjourn the Lawrence County Commissioners' meeting dated Tuesday, October 21, 2025 @ 10:55 AM.