

# Wyoming County Commissioners Meeting

## ZOOM AVAILABLE

### September 7, 2023

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**In Attendance:** Rick Wilbur, Tom Henry, Ernie King, Commissioners, Amber Franko, Chief Clerk

**Press:** Warren Howeler, Rocket Courier (via Zoom)

**Visitors:** None

Rick Wilbur, Chairman opened the Meeting at 10:03 a.m.

**Public Comment (Agenda Items Only):**

None

**Old Business:**

None

**New Business:**

Commissioner Henry made a motion to approve bills for payment. Commissioner King second the Motion. Motion carried.

Rick Wilbur announced a declaration of disaster emergency caused by flash flooding in Forkston Township, Washington Township and Lemon Township in the early morning of Friday, August 18, 2023. Ernie King made a motion to approve this declaration. Tom Henry second the Motion. Motion carried.

**Public Comment:**

Warren Howeler questioned how the process works to declare a disaster. The Commissioners informed him the Townships need to contact EMA to request a declaration through the County.

Mr. Howeler also asked for clarification of the \$1,000,000 that was pledged from the county through ARP for the Tyler hospital sale. Rick Wilbur explained the money will be given to the healthcare provider for overhead expenses to help get up and running.

Mr. Howeler also asked for additional information regarding the meeting the Commissioners had with surrounding counties regarding a juvenile detention center. Commissioner Wilbur explained that this meeting was just preliminary discussions and nothing had been decided.

There being no further business to come before the Commissioners at this time. Ernie King made the Motion to adjourn. Tom Henry second the Motion. Motion carried.

Rick Wilbur, Chairman adjourned the meeting at 10:12 a.m.

Handwritten signatures of Ernie King and Tom Henry. The signature of Ernie King is written in a cursive style, and the signature of Tom Henry is written below it, also in cursive. There is a horizontal line drawn across the bottom of the signatures.

# Wyoming County Commissioners Meeting

ZOOM AVAILABLE

September 12, 2023

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**In Attendance:** Rick Wilbur, Tom Henry, Ernie King, Commissioners, Atty. Paul Litwin, Solicitor, Amber Franko, Chief Clerk

**Press:** Warren Howeler, Rocket Courier (via Zoom), Kevin McConlogue, New Age Examiner

**Visitors:** John Alunni, Human Services Director, Robert Roberts, Sheriff, Lynnelle Farber, Planning Director, Ryan Hogan, Luzerne County, Mike Marabell, Lori Bennett, Howard Friswold, George Yuhas, Dr. Mark Murphy, Lackawanna Trail School, Tracey Wescott, Lackawanna Trail School, Dale Kitchnefski (via Zoom), Jeri Jordan (via Zoom), Stacy Althenhain (via Zoom), Holly Arnold (via Zoom)

Rick Wilbur, Chairman opened the Meeting at 10:00 a.m.

**Public Comment (Agenda Items Only):**

Mr. Yuhas requested to view the Children & Youth contracts before being voted on. The contracts were provided to Mr. Yuhas and Chairman Wilbur informed Mr. Yuhas that contracts are available for public review 24 hours in advance of a meeting.

No further comment regarding the agenda, Tom Henry made a motion to approve. Ernie King second the Motion. Motion carried.

**Old Business:**

Ernie King made the motion to approve the August 29, 2023 and September 7, 2023 meeting minutes. Tom Henry second the Motion. Motion carried.

**New Business:**

Commissioner Wilbur announced the receipt of Leadership Award for Public Impact by Nicholson Tourism Center. Tom Henry commented that this was a long time in the making and is a huge addition to the county.

Commissioner Wilbur also announced the receipt of \$29,970 of food distribution from PA Dept of Agriculture from 7/1/2022-6/30/2023. Commissioner King commented that this has helped hundreds of people in the community.

Rick Wilbur made a motion to approve the hiring of Cierra Knott as Telecommunicator Trainee with the 911 Center. Tom Henry second the Motion. Motion carried.

Commissioner King made the motion to approve accepting bids for miscellaneous items from EMA, no longer in use, that were up for auction on Municibid. The auction ended September 11, 2023. Tom Henry second the Motion. Motion carried.

Listing#: 58987277-1986 International 1854 4x4-\$8,100

Listing#: 59130061-Yellow Arrow Stick-\$76.00

Listing#: 59135575-Yellow Arrow Stick-\$76.00

Listing#: 59127938-Full Size Edge Light Bar-\$160.00

Listing#: 59128650-Full Size Edge Light Bar-\$160.00

Rick Wilbur made the motion to formally approve a declaration of disaster emergency caused by flash flooding in Forkston Twp, Washington Twp and Lemon Twp on August 18, 2023. Commissioners signed the declaration September 5, 2023. Ernie King second the Motion. Motion carried.

Rick Wilbur discussed the need to declare a disaster emergency for flash flooding affecting numerous county townships and boroughs on September 9, 2023. Commissioner Wilbur made the motion to approve the declaration. Ernie King second the Motion. Motion carried.

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Commissioner Henry made the motion to approve Children & Youth service contracts. Ernie King second the Motion. Motion carried.

**Public Comment:**

The Commissioners wanted to publicly thank the 911 and EMA staff for all of the hard work and long hours they have been putting in during the recent flash flooding.

Commissioner Henry announced that September is Suicide Prevention Month. The Courthouse lighting will be changed and pamphlets have been handed out to businesses within the community to spread awareness. The Suicide and Crisis Prevention Lifeline is 988 which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

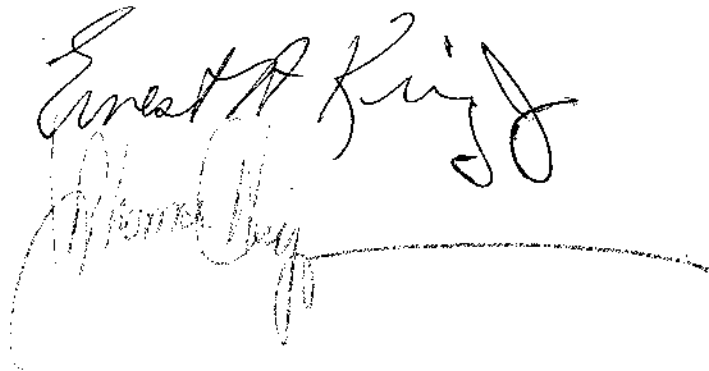
Lynnelle Farber noted there will be no Planning Board meeting on September 20<sup>th</sup>. The meeting has been rescheduled to September 27, 2023.

Representatives from Lackawanna Trail School District, Dr. Mark Murphy and Tracey Wescott, spoke to the Commissioners regarding multiple accidents and hazards with the intersection of Tunnel Hill and Route 11 near the school. Mr. Murphy wanted to make the Commissioners aware and stated they are speaking to everyone they could in order to get this issue resolved.

George Yuhas let the Commissioners know he was conducting his own investigation regarding the camera in the courthouse gazebo. He asked the please be kept up to date on any internal investigations as well.

There being no further business to come before the Commissioners at this time. Ernie King made the Motion to adjourn. Rick Wilbur second the Motion. Motion carried.

Rick Wilbur, Chairman adjourned the meeting at 10:25 a.m.



Ernest A. King  
Rick Wilbur

# Wyoming County Commissioners Meeting

ZOOM AVAILABLE

September 26, 2023

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**In Attendance:** Rick Wilbur (via Zoom), Tom Henry, Ernie King, Commissioners,  
Atty. Paul Litwin, Solicitor, Amber Franko, Chief Clerk

**Press:** Warren Howeler, Rocket Courier (via Zoom), Kevin McConlogue, New Age Examiner

**Visitors:** Robert Roberts, Sheriff, Atty. Tim Carroll, Public Defender, Lori Bennett,  
Howard Friswold, George Yuhas, Judy Murach (via Zoom)

Tom Henry opened the Meeting at 10:13 a.m.

**Public Comment (Agenda Items Only):**

None

Ernie King made a motion to approve the agenda. Rick Wilbur second the Motion. Motion carried.

**Old Business:**

Ernie King made the motion to approve the September 12, 2023 meeting minutes. Rick Wilbur second the Motion. Motion carried.

**New Business:**

*Chief Clerk Report*-Ms. Franko announced the new website for the county-[www.wyomingcountypa.gov](http://www.wyomingcountypa.gov). If using the old site, you will be automatically redirected to the new site. Tom Henry added the county upgraded the website for security reasons.

*Solicitor Report*-None

Tom Henry made a motion to add to the agenda, approval for additional information needed for a Children & Youth contract. Ernie King second the Motion. Motion carried.

Commissioner King made a motion to approve October 1-7, 2023 as Juvenile Justice Week and Commissioner Henry read the proclamation aloud. Commissioner Wilbur second the Motion. Motion carried.

Ernie King made a motion to approve the hiring of Kevin Douglas Chichura as Juvenile Probation officer with a start date of October 2, 2023. Rick Wilbur second the Motion. Motion carried.

Commissioner Henry discussed an addendum to the current PrimeCare contract for the Jail. An increase in MAT services, which is reimbursed to the county, is about \$400 additional per year. Commissioner Henry made a motion to approve the addendum. Commissioner King second the Motion. Commissioner Wilbur abstained until he could review further. Motion carried on majority vote.

Tom Henry made the motion to approve the additional information needed for a C&Y contract. Ernie King second the Motion. Motion carried.

Two resolutions were presented to the Commissioners from Trehab before the meeting. These were tabled until the next meeting in order to be reviewed.

Handwritten signatures of Rick Wilbur, Ernest A. King, and Amber Franko.

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Commissioner King commenced opening the closed bids for the following projects:

*Removal of Landscaping at the AG Building*

- The Certified Arborists-\$800
- Cherry Hill Group-\$5,750
- York's Landscape Services-\$22,000
- Tim Morris-\$4,500

*Removal of Trees at the AG Building*

- Preston Roberts-\$13,200
- Beaver Logging-\$13,000
- Brown's Tree Service-\$15,869
- The Certified Arborists-\$11,200

*Gas Hookup at the Courthouse*

- Rybnick Mechanical-\$25,823

**Public Comment:**

Lori Bennett voiced concerns regarding the timeliness of the cancellation of Commissioner's meetings. Ms. Bennett stated there have been two meetings she has attended which were cancelled after she had already arrived to the Courthouse and was not advertised to the public as being cancelled. Tom Henry will follow up with our IT department.

Ms. Bennett asked what the status of the union negotiations were and if there has been a contract settled. Amber Franko responded that there will be union arbitration on September 28, 2023 for one of the union groups. The other group have put negotiations on hold until arbitration is awarded.

Ms. Bennett voiced concerns over the ceiling failures within the Courthouse in the last few months. Tom Henry assured everyone that all of the ceilings have been inspected and both ceilings have been repaired.

As a follow-up to the approved hiring of the Juvenile Probation officer, Ms. Bennett asked what the current number of employees were in the Juvenile department as well as how many open positions the county currently has. Tom Henry will follow up with Judge Shurtleff.

Ms. Bennett also asked who the public should contact if they are aware of a homeless veteran. The county Veterans Affairs employee is Jack Hubert but if he is not available, please call the Commissioner's office.

George Yuhas requested the county's policy or procedure when writing and approving a resolution. Chief Clerk Franko will follow up with Mr. Yuhas.

There being no further business to come before the Commissioners at this time. Ernie King made the Motion to adjourn. Tom Henry second the Motion. Motion carried.

Tom Henry adjourned the meeting at 11:05 a.m.