Huntingdon, PA

Tuesday, October 20, 2026

9:30 a.m.

The regular meeting of the Huntingdon County Commissioners was held on the above date and time in the Commissioner's Meeting Room with the following present: Commissioners Walls and Reeder; Chief Clerk, Alayna Clark; Solicitor, Larry Newton; Daily News Reporter, Joe Thompson and Skylar Kephart; CYS Director, Kelvin Abrashoff; Register & Recorder, Kelsey Dunn; Kafferlin Strategies Partner, Ben Kafferlin; PA DCED, Jake DeCarli; Visitors: Brittni Williams, Danny Davis, Bryan Rummel, Melanie Norris, Barry Wright, Gene Rowles, Matthew Preston, Elizabeth Preston, Stewart Neff, Brad Pitt, Kenny Kachel, Peggy Stullen, Kevin Fluke, Jay Ziegler, Kim Kachel, Donna Hyslop, Casandra VanNest.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Commissioner Walls. Prayer was led by Commissioner Reeder and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by Commissioner Walla.

It was moved by Commissioner Reeder, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Walls, yes; Reeder, yes) to approve the previous meeting minutes.

It was moved by Commissioner Reeder, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Reeder, yes; Walls, yes) to approve payment of bills.

There was 1 Addition to the Agenda: Consideration of Approval of appointment of Martha Barroqueiro as a volunteer for the CYS Advisory Committee. It was moved by Commissioner Reeder, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Walls, yes; Reeder, yes) to add to the agenda.

There were no announcements by the Board.

Under Public Comments:

Stewart Neff, Warriors Mark Township resident, raised concern about Act 44, which established state oversight for Solar Farms, perceived as favoring energy companies over local interests. Mr. Neff criticized municipalities in Huntingdon County that have not adopted zoning, arguing this lack of control allows unregulated development, including data centers and solar farms, to occur anywhere in the county.

Casandra VanNest, Henderson Township resident, announced that a community meeting is being held on Saturday at the Stone Church from 6-8.

Gene Rowles, Todd Township resident, expressed frustration over the sudden closure of the Baker Bridge, which is vital to local access, noting that no advance notice was given despite regular use. Commissioner Walls explained that the bridge was condemned by a state inspector and deemed unsafe, necessitating immediate closure. While the county conducts its own inspections, state findings are binding. Letters were sent out.

Jay Ziegler, Union Township resident, thanked Commissioner Reeder for attending a developer meeting on a proposed data center but criticized the absence of the others. He urged the board to adopt strong county-level regulations, referencing models from Somerset and Franklin Counties. Although the Planning Commission was directed to develop optional guidelines, a proposed countywide ordinance was voted down, reportedly due to opposition from several townships.

Kevin Fluke, Penn Township Supervisor, stressed that while municipalities can regulate data centers, they cannot ban them outright. Those without zoning or specific ordinances lack tools to control development. It was noted that 30 townships lack zoning, creating vulnerabilities. Resources are available through the county Planning Commission, which offers guidance and ordinance examples, but adoption remains voluntary.

Brad Pitt, Union Township resident, explained that having a county-wide SALDO in place would cover those townships that don't have one and maybe would motivate those townships to do their own. Mr. Pitt questioned why this wouldn't be done at the County level, still giving you the freedom to do what you need to do in your individual townships and cover those towns.

Larry Newton, Solicitor, stated that you can regulate, but you can't stop data centers. The important thing is that we regulate it. Solicitor Newton stated that he is hopeful that Union Township can adopt an ordinance, maybe before the end of the year.

There were no matters to be addressed by the Solicitor.

Under new business, CYS Director, Kelvin Abrashoff, requested Consideration of Approval of Purchase of Service Agreement with Children's Aid Society of Franklin County. This is renewal for July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, for emergency and residential shelter services, particularly the 43-day diagnostic assessment program for youth. The daily rate increased from $106 to $121, a $15/day rise, within state-approved reimbursement levels (80% covered by the state). It was moved by Commissioner Reeder, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Reeder, yes; Walls, yes).

Director Abrashoff requested Consideration of Approval of Purchase of Service Agreement with Children's Aid Society of Clearfield County. This is a renewal for July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, for alternative foster care services used when internal placements are unavailable. The daily rate increased by $4, remaining within state guidelines. It was moved by Commissioner Reeder, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Walls, yes; Reeder, yes).

The 504 Plan Discussion by Jen Bellis, Community Development Administrator, was tabled. It was moved by Commissioner Reeder, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Reeder, yes; Walls, yes) to table this agenda item.

Register & Recorder, Kelsey Dunn, requested Consideration of Approval to hire Renne Covert as Deputy Register effective 10/19/2026. It was moved by Commissioner Reeder, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Walls, yes; Reeder, yes).

Consideration of Approval of appointment of Martha Barroqueiro as a volunteer for the CYS Advisory Committee. It was moved by Commissioner Reeder, seconded by Commissioner Walls and carried (Reeder, yes; Walls, yes).

Kafferlin Strategies Partner, Ben Kafferlin, discussed Step 3 of the STMP Program. Mr. Kafferlin presented a comprehensive operational and financial assessment of the county, identifying key challenges and opportunities across departments and systems. It outlines findings and recommendations based on multi-year data analysis, stakeholder interviews, and benchmark against peer counties, with the goal of guiding future implementation through state-funded support. The county has made progress in reducing debt and increasing fund balance, but long-term financial sustainability remains a concern. Major systematic issues include inequitable property reassessment, jail operations inefficiencies, lack of standardized policies, and outdated record-keeping. Employee satisfaction is strong in mission alignment and job security but pay dissatisfaction and lack of transparency in compensation are significant concerns. Critical recommendations include developing a capital improvement plan, exploring Home Rule charter, digitizing records, and launching centralized grant administration. Findings will be compiled into a roughly 300 page document to support future funding applications through DCD's STAMP program.

There were 2 Veteran Burial Allowances

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Reeder to adjourn the meeting at 10:49 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Alayna L. Clark, Chief Clerk.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeffrey Thomas, Secretary

Huntingdon, PA

Tuesday, October 27, 2026

9:30 a.m.

The regular meeting of the Huntingdon County Commissioners was held on the above date and time in the Commissioner's Meeting Room with the following present: Commissioner Reeder and Thomas; Chief Clerk, Alayna Clark; Solicitor, Larry Newton; Daily News Reporter, Joe Thompson and Skylar Kephart; CYS Director, Kelvin Abrashoff; Register & Recorder, Kelsey Dunn; Prothonotary, Sarah Snare; Treasurer, Susan Harry; Public Guests- Melanie Norris, Danny Davis, Dean Slummers, Roy Roland, Gene Rowles, Jay Ziegler, Tracy Ziegler, Anthony Zumpetta, Abbey Hobble, Elise Gerhart, Ellen Gerhart; Online Guests- Constance Wilson Andresen, Joani Harlan, and Michael Miller

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Commissioner Reeder. Prayer was led by Commissioner Thomas and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by Commissioner Reeder.

It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Reeder and failed (Reeder, yes; Thomas, abstained) to approve the previous meeting minutes.

It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Reeder and carried (Thomas, yes; Reeder, yes) to approve payment of bills.

There was 1 Addition to the Agenda: Consideration of Approval to appoint Mary Lou Peduzzi as Board Member of Huntingdon County Housing Authority. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Reeder and carried (Reeder, yes; Thomas, yes).

Commissioner Thomas announced not to forget to exercise your right to vote next week on November 3rd.

Commissioner Thomas also announced his retirement. He had decided not to run for reelection. Commissioner Thomas stated that it has been a real honor and pleasure, he loves his job, and the people he works with. It is time for a new chapter in his life.

Under Public Comments:

Anthony Zumpetta, Calvin Resident, commented that the opposition of placing a data center in Trough Creek Valley has been overwhelming. It will have a negative impact on those that live in the Valley. Mr. Zumpetta reflected the The Daily News Article "Expert talks data center potential impacts" in the October 24th paper. Mr. Zumpetta mentions that this article is based on research by a distinguished professor of Environmental Engineering, Dr. Shirley Clark. Dr. Clark has no vested interest in Trough Creek Valley and has come to her conclusions based on facts and extensive research. Mr. Zumpetta stated that the Commissioners would be heroes if they support the vast majority who oppose the data center. He also stated that the Commissioners would be despised if they chose the data center. This one issue alone will decide their reputation and fate of voters of Huntingdon County.

Gene Rowles, Todd Township Resident, commented about Baker Bridge closing down. Mr. Rowles wants to know why the bridge is closing. Commissioner Thomas explained that the bridge was condemned for being unsafe at the moment.

Dean Shannon, Union Township, commented that there are Bald Eagles, the national bird, located in the area. He believes that he could get great support to not build this data center. Mr. Shannon stated that he was maliciously prosecuted in Montgomery County because he bought and ambulance and decked it out with Donald Trump décor. He moved to Huntingdon County and tried to go before Judge Zanic. Mr. Shannon allegedly stated that Josh Sapiro covered up criminal investigation. Mr. Shannon also alleged that the President Judge has a cocaine problem that was covered up and has been to rehab multiple times. He questioned why this was allowed to happen. Huntingdon County's Solicitor, Larry Newton, responded to these allegations. Solicitor Newton stated that in his view Judge Zanic doesn't even drink and he does not have a cocaine problem. The allegation is false and spurious in his perspective.

Commissioner Thomas commented that he does not have the facts and engineering designs to form his opinion about data centers. What he does know is that data centers have been a thing, they have just been smaller. Now, data centers are being built on acres and acres of land.

Elise Gerhart, Union Township resident, commented that she uses Facebook to inform her neighbors and community about what is going on with the data center issue. Ms. Gerhart commented that the Save Trough Creek Valley Facebook page has 721 followers. They use the page to engage and inform about public meetings and township meetings. Ms.

Gerhart believes that she should be able to just show up as resident instead of having the responsibly of informing the public. Within only 3 municipalities (Huntingdon, Mapleton, Calvin) which includes 476 people. There are hundreds of people who care about this issue and want to be involved. Ms. Gerhart commented that the public are hearing 2 different stories. Commissioners such as Scott Walls is telling residents that this is a township/municipality issue and ask your supervisors to draft an ordinance. The residents are also hearing from their township supervisors that they need to go to the Commissioners. She believes that the County isn't doing enough or taking on any responsibility. Ms. Gerhart was also brought up and questioned a powerline that could be possibly running through Huntingdon County.

Commissioner Reeder commented on the powerline. In January the Board and community should know more about it. It is coming from West Virginia, Indiana and going to Perry County. The only thing the Board has been told is that the line may go through our County.

Jay Ziegler, Union Township resident, wanted to make it known that he submitted a Right-To-Know form to the Chief Clerk. Mr. Ziegler mentioned the August 11th meeting that took place about this data center. Mr. Ziegler commented that he was told Commissioner Thomas attended this meeting. Commissioner Thomas corrected him that he did not. Mr. Ziegler said that this development is supposed to use 342 acres of 1,142 acres. Mr. Ziegler discussed the gas-fire generators. This generator is 1.3 gigawatts and is not taxable and placed on the West-side.

Ellen Gerhart, Union Township Resident, commented that in August, Governor Shapiro issued an executive order for Data Centers and asked if the Commissioners had a copy and read it. Ms. Gerhart explained that Shapiro expressed that if a community rejects data centers, no permits should be issued. Ms. Gerhart stated that she would like to see no permits issued in the community. She commented that they have a petition and meetings to show that the community is against this data center.

Abbey Hobble, Cass Township Resident, commented that Commissioner Reeder's Facebook post had a lot of excellent points. Ms. Hobble stated that while she was reading it the numbers stated in the posted stopped her in her tracks. She believes that one thing that needs to be focused on is the agriculture in this county. The numbers she wants to see analyzed: how many family farms have disappeared? How many generational farms have been broken up and sold by realtors? How many people are moving to this area because they can't sustain the jobs? Ms. Hobble commented that she is watching agriculture disappear from this county and it scares her. Ms. Hobble discussed food sustainability. School programs that are no longer encouraging agriculture. Ms. Hobble stated that this whole meeting is about planning for a county and sustaining our people. Ms. Hobble questioned, what if every constituent doesn't have a sustainable supply of food? What if they don't have a garden? What if they don't know how to plant?

Constance Wilson Andresen, online guest, thanked the Chief Clerk, Alayna Clark, for providing her with the Right-To-Know Form and thanked Register & Recorder, Kelsey Dunn, for providing her with an unknown mortgage. Ms. Andresen commented that she is concerned about all the Commissioners for not reprimanding Solicitor Larry Newton for tampering with records. Ms. Andresen also explained that she is concerned about the invoice that she sent to the Treasurer, Susan Harry, for her private security hire.

There were no matters to be addressed by the Solicitor.

Under new business,

Susan Harry, Treasurer, requested Consideration of Approval to hire Phyllis Andreas as Clerk in the Treasurer's office effective October 19, 2026. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Reeder and carried (Reeder, yes; Thomas, yes).

Commissioner Patrick Reeder requested Consideration of Approval to Request Quotes and Demonstrations from three Time Clock and Attendance Vendors that Integrate with the County's Munis Payroll System. Commissioner Thomas commented that he is not a fan of the phone system. Register and Recorder, Kelsey Dunn, commented that this topic was brought up in an department head meeting almost a year ago, if not longer. Every department that had spoken at the meeting was against the use of a time clock system for a number of different issues that it would bring to every department within the county. R&R Dunn continued that the current system in place is not an honor system as it was made to see. The employees document their time, and the department head verifies and sends that time over. It is the department head's responsibility to verify that their employees are at work when they said they are. Unless there is a trust issue with a specific department head, I don't see the reason to fix something that's not broken. R&R Dunn stated that she brought up a year ago that if this issue is a timing issue, like getting the timesheets to fiscal, she was willing to directly put that time into the MUNIS system. On September 25th of 2026, the departments received an email that the new MUNIS system was being established, and names were requested for those that would need access to this system to do just that. R&R Dunn explained that she has never worked for a company that had a time clock. Dunn explained that she will not ask her staff to put an app on their personal cellphones that they pay for to log into every day. If this will be required of them, she believes the county needs to look at a way to pay a portion of their cell phone bill. Commissioner Reeder read the county's personal policy, number 2-3 says "employees who are eligible for overtime

report their daily hours on time sheets. The employee signs, the supervisor signs, the department head sends them to the Commissioner's office. Those signed sheets are due by 10:00 in the morning on the last Friday of the pay period." This means that the last hours of each pay period go on a sheet before they are worked. Those hours must be entered into our county software. Commissioner Reeder commented that an electronic system records those hours when they happen. These systems connect to our county software. Going digital would save about several hours of work. Prothonotary, Sarah Snare, commented that she wants to echo what Kelsey Dunn said about cell phones. Snare commented that her employees are not paid enough to be required to put something on their cell phone. The only way should would do that if there was some kind of compensation for the employees, or they get their own cell phones for work. The money that would be needed to purchase wall-clocks can be spent in other areas that are more of a priority. Kelvin Abrashoff, CYS Director, commented that no one in their office is against the online system, but some of his employees came to him before the meeting and raised concerns about GPS monitoring on the phone, or if they are not going to use the app, they must come into the office to clock in. Director Abrashoff has on-call staff. He has staff that works throughout the night and at the weekends. Having this system would not accurately reflect the staff's hours worked on those days. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Reeder and failed (Thomas, no; Reeder, yes).

Consideration of Approval to appoint Mary Lou Peduzzi as Board Member in Lieu of George Kyle's Resignation for Huntingdon County Housing Authority. It was moved by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Reeder and carried (Reeder, yes; Thomas, yes).

There were 0 Veteran Burial Allowances

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Thomas to adjourn the meeting at 10:31 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Alayna L. Clark, Chief Clerk.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Jeffrey Thomas, Secretary