

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' WORK SESSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 2020

The Board of County Commissioners met today in their weekly Work Session.

Present at today's meeting were:

Joshua G. Parsons, Chairman
Craig E. Lehman
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Larry George
CHIEF CLERK

Lisa Johnson
ASSISTANT CHIEF CLERK

Christina Hausner, Esquire
COUNTY SOLICITOR

Also present were:

Rebecca Gallaher, Chair
DISCOVER LANCASTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jessica Hamilton, Director
EDC FINANCE CORPORATION

Sarah Long, Director of Marketing
DISCOVER LANCASTER

Trish Nabors
NABORS COACHING GROUP

Cathy Rychalsky, Executive Director
LANCASTER COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Joe Shiffer, Deputy Warden of Inmate Services
PRISON

John Stigler, Director of Administration
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH/DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

Matthew Wagner, Reentry Services Manager
PRISON

Carter Walker, Reporter
LANCASTER NEWS

Ryan Washington Jr., Student
FRANKLIN & MARSHALL COLLEGE

Commissioner Parsons called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Commissioner Parsons announced that Commissioner D'Agostino is on vacation and will not be present for today's meeting.

Commissioner Parsons announced the Board of Commissioners met in Executive Session on Monday, June 15, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. to discuss labor and personnel matters.

Commissioner Parsons announced the postponement approval of the June 9, 2020 Work Session Minutes.

Commissioner Parsons made the following re-announcements:

- The evening County Commissioners' Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, June 17, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. at Sadsbury Township Municipal Building has been cancelled and will be rescheduled at a later date.

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**Lancaster County Commissioners' Work Session
Tuesday, June 16, 2020**

- There will be a County Commissioner's Meeting held on Wednesday, June 17, 2020 at 9:15 a.m. in Conference Room 102/104, first floor, Lancaster County Government Center annex.

1. Ms. Hamilton, Director of Project Management presented Next Generation Farm Loan Applications.

NOTE: For more information, please refer to Res. No. 44, 45, and 46 of the County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes dated June 17, 2020.

2. Ms. Rychalsky, Executive Director, presented Lancaster County Workforce Development Board's Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021.

NOTE: For more information, please refer to the County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes dated June 17, 2020.

3. Mr. Wagner, Reentry Services Manager, Mr. Shiffer, Deputy Warden of Inmate Services and Ms. Nabors, Nabor Coaching Group presented an Agreement for Onsite Pre-release Reentry Services at the Prison on behalf of the Prison.

NOTE: For more information, please refer to the County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes dated June 17, 2020.

4. Mr. Stygler, Deputy Director of Administration, presented Amended Agreements for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 and Agreements for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 on behalf of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services.

NOTE: For more information, please refer to the County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes dated June 17, 2020.

5. Ms. Hausner, County Solicitor, presented Budget Adjustments for Solicitor's Office.

NOTE: For more information, please refer to the County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes dated June 17, 2020.

6. Rebecca Gallagher, Chair and Sarah Long, Director of Marketing, presented an overview Discover Lancaster's COVID-19 Recovery Plan.

On May 14, 2020, a letter was sent to the Commissioners with a request for COVID recovery funding for the tourism industry. The letter was signed by 177 companies in Lancaster County and over 200 individuals in four days. There was an overwhelming support for the business and tourism community in Lancaster County. Since that time, they had an opportunity to make a presentation to the County support groups to determine their eligibility for CARES Act funding. When that determination was made, they created a formal presentation proposal specifically how the money will be spent (the presentation was a handout).

They are proposing the second half of this program which will be the marketing and advertising needed to get those businesses back operationally. The funding provided to EDC and the Chamber took care of the first step, helping the businesses operate in safe ways for visitors.

Commissioner Lehman understands the importance of tourism in Lancaster County; however, given where we are currently with COVID 19, it is hard to know how the tourism industry will react, particularly if there is resurgence of COVID-19 in the fall. Also, some have speculated that with international travel probably being the least attractive tourism option for the foreseeable future that regional tourism, once COVID-19 is reasonably addressed, could see higher than normal demand. Commissioner Lehman questioned how we know that investing money now is going to have the desired impact if there is a resurgence of COVID-19 in the fall. We are limited as to when we can spend this money by December 30, 2020. If we approve funding now and that money would be spent over the summer months to try to boost tourism between now and the end of the year, and if there's a resurgence of COVID-19 there isn't any amount of money that's going to solve that problem.

Ms. Gallagher stated there is still a need now, having owning a Bed & Breakfast and Winery in Ephrata, she took \$2,000 in reservations on opening day. Those eager to come back are different than what they used to be at one point. Guests were further away, and now they are more local. She suggested on advertising and marketing to different people than in the past. Everything that they are doing requires good timing and requires us to be able to pivot and adapt to the situation before us. They are taking into account the possible resurgence in the fall, but you will still have a Christmas season which still calls for advertising and associated costs. The alternative is a bit scary of just giving up on the tourism business.

Commissioner Lehman stated nobody is talking about giving up tourism, but asked how can they assure him that the money will be spent well and it's going to give you the impact you want if you're getting reservations now, then in his mind, it would at least make sense to wait and see what happens in the short term, and receive actual data on what the recovery of the tourism industry looks like and then we see what happens with COVID in the fall and maybe there is an investment that could be made at the end of the year. Spending \$2.2 million right now without a sense of what the future might hold may not be money well spent. Ms. Gallagher stated they currently have 400 partners and if they were to receive the funding, they would make every single tourism business in the County a partner of Discover Lancaster through the end of the year. They would like every single business to benefit from the program and the marketing.

Commissioner Lehman stated he will give it some thought and added that marketing for folks to come here in the fall, without knowing what will happen with COVID-19, is at least a reasonable question. He is concerned about spending marketing dollars when we do not know if COVID-19 will resurge or not and this may not be the wisest use of funds.

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Commissioner Parsons stated these are legitimate questions and he appreciated the plan and information that went into it. There are a lot of unknowns right now noting the Commissioners need to consider potential allocations of CARE Act funds for municipalities, EMS, Fire, Police and the Convention Center. Money was allocated quickly to move the County forward. He is open to possible funding to Discover Lancaster; it, however, is not ranked at the top. The money must be utilized this year or will go back to the federal government. As we get further into it, he anticipates more conversation, and he is unable to give a definitive answer right now.

Commissioner Lehman stated that if you have a marketing plan to try and boost tourism this summer before the fall hits and is targeted to that period of time, and targeted to regional tourist he would be open to that, but anything beyond that, however, he will have difficulty with anything beyond that because there are unknown variables. If money is spent unwisely, that means other unmet needs do may get the resources that they require as well. Maybe there is a window of opportunity over the summer to try and do some more marketing in a very strategic approach, but going into the fall, it will be a tough sell for him.

The Commissioners will stay in touch as they move forward and thanked them for their understanding.

7. Ms. Johnson, Assistant Chief Clerk, presented the June 17, 2020 Commissioners' Meeting Agenda noting no changes.

Commissioner Lehman mentioned that back in 2017 the Board of Commissioners was approached to remove the Columbus statue in Lennox Lane over by the Old Historic Courthouse. At that time, he expressed reservation about taking down the statue that was connected to a National holiday. Since that time, he has been lobbying federal officials to create and establish an Indigenous Peoples Week thinking that it would be important to start a conversation on our history and as a result of that conversation it would prompt a re-evaluation of things like the Columbus statue. In the wake of the George Floyd tragedy, Commissioner Lehman is no longer willing to wait on the Federal Government to do the right thing. There are some folks who might view this as being anti-Italian American, which could not be further than the truth, because he thinks there are a variety of contributions that Italian Americans have made to this nation since its founding which could be celebrated.

Commissioner Lehman stated it is time to remove the statue, and added to the vandal who defaced the statue, vandalism is not the answer for the removal of the statue in Lennox Lane. Only with public dialog, public discussion and public support can we ever get to the point that that statue will be ultimately removed. Today, Commissioner Lehman is calling for the removal of the statue of Columbus in Lennox Lane.

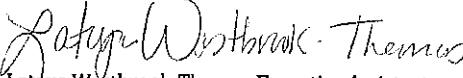
Carter Walker asked the Board for an explanation as to what was the reason behind the eight sheriffs' accompanying Facilities Management staff, while picking up debris. Commissioner Parsons was uncertain of the number of Sheriffs however, it is not unusual for them to be accompanied by the Sheriff's Deputies.

Commissioner Lehman introduced Ryan Washington Jr., who is a student at F&M College working on a BA in Government. He will be shadowing Commissioner Lehman throughout the summer and he is happy to have him on board.

8. On motion of Commissioner Lehman, seconded by Commissioner Parsons the meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Motion passed. Commissioner D'Agostino was absent for the vote.

Respectfully submitted,


Latoya Westbrook-Thomas, Executive Assistant
Commissioners' Office