A regular meeting of the Northampton County Council was held on April 4, 2019 with the following present: Ronald R. Heckman, President; Lori Vargo Heffner, Vice President; John Cusick; Matthew H. Dietz; Margaret L. Ferraro; Kevin Lott; William B. McGee; Robert F. Werner; Tara M. Zrinkski; Linda M. Zembo, Clerk to Council and Mr. Christopher Spadoni, Solicitor to Council.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. Ferraro led County Council in the pledge of allegiance.

Approval of the Minutes – March 21, 2019

Ms. Vargo Heffner made the following motion:

Be It Moved By the Northampton County Council that the minutes of the March 21, 2019 meeting shall be approved.

Mr. Lott seconded the motion.

The minutes were approved by voice acclamation.

Courtesy of the Floor

Ms. Kristen Kutza – advised she was a Registered Nurse (RN) at Gracedale and worked the day shift for eight years. She further advised when she started there was an RN in charge of all 16 units, a fill-in for every unit and three float RNs.

Ms. Kutza stated currently there was a total of 11 RNs for charge floors and two full time floats, which left seven to eleven floors open every day. She further stated she was currently one of two floats who covered the seven to eleven floors looking after approximately 300 residents.

Ms. Kutza advised it took approximately four hours to do one admission and last week they had five new admissions come in within two to three hours of each other and only an RN was allowed to assess the residents upon admission. She further
advised the process flowed into the middle shift so four RNs were doing five admissions.

Ms. Kutza stated RNs were the only employees that could assess a fall that had to be done before the resident was moved so when covering seven to eleven floors it could take a while for her to get to that resident.

Ms. Kutza advised this was not the level of care anyone would want for their family. She further advised health care was a fast growing field and Gracedale had to be competitive rate wise not only with other nursing homes, but hospitals as well.

In answer to Mr. Dietz’s question as to whether anything else could be done to retain staff besides a higher salary, Ms. Kutza replied no.

Ms. Valerie Makula - stated she had worked at Gracedale since 2001 and this was her first time negotiating a contract. She further stated at the beginning of the negotiations they came out with three different proposals at three separate times to award current nurses and encourage new nurses to come to Gracedale, but it became obvious a change in the pay scale would not happen due to the pre-determined pattern put out for all union contract negotiations.

Ms. Makula advised according to Onesalary.com the average pay for a long term staff nurse in Pennsylvania was $33 an hour and the starting salary at Gracedale was $26.65 an hour. She further stated they received $1.50 an hour professional premium during the week and $5 per hour on the weekends, but that premium had not changed since she began and was only received if they actually worked.

Ms. Makula stated it was next to impossible to hire and retain any RNs at $28.15 an hour, noting they hired per diem nurses at $36 an hour granted without benefits.

Ms. Makula advised their original proposal was to increase the professional premium by $3.50, which was counter-proposed to increase it by $.50 and that was rejected by union members. She further advised they then asked for a two-year contract retro to January 1st and a $2 an hour professional premium increase for the week and agreed to the $.50 an hour increase for the weekend, but that was rejected by the County Executive as a two-year contract would go against the pattern.
Ms. Makula stated they asked for the two-year contract part taken out and for the retro and professional premium increases, but it was again rejected so they were back to square one.

Ms. Brooke Kerzner, Mayor of Bangor, PO Box 792, Bangor, PA - advised she had several business members of her community with her who were very concerned about services being cut potentially through funding. She further advised Recovery Revolutions was the only counseling service provider for students that turned to their counselors for help with addiction.

Mayor Kerzner stated she had spoken to Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority (LANTA) about the lack of transportation in the Slate Belt so she wondered if County Council had any suggestions on how to get better service to her community because there were people that could not get down to jobs in the Lehigh Valley.

Mayor Kerzner advised 90% of her community members walk to Recovery Revolutions to receive services so it was important that they receive the funding they need. She encouraged County Council to ask questions of Ms. Jana Morris and have her show the supporting documentation regarding her issues.

Ms. Jana Morris, 78 North 1st Street, Bangor, PA - provided a copy of a document pertaining to the issues and concerns she had with regard to the lack of funding for Recovery Revolutions (see Attachment #1). She stated she would like to have a meeting to share evidence regarding this issue because this was not a contract or funding issue, but local access to treatment issue because their clients did not have licenses, public transportation or resources to receive treatment elsewhere.

Ms. Morris advised she had more than eight e-mails that indicated no new clients could access their care with County funds even though at the Human Services Committee meeting it was mentioned they could. She further advised she had three clients receiving treatment without funding, but she was a non-profit and could not continue to do that.

Ms. Morris stated there was funding available when she requested it in December, but before she was told she could not receive more funding they contracted with a center in Bartonsville, Monroe County and gave them the money they could have used.
Ms. Morris advised the Drug and Alcohol Advisory Board discussed contracts being increased based on need so there was funding there, but they were not allowed access to it so their clients could not get services. She further advised if you put a barrier on someone’s treatment they would usually not go somewhere else.

Ms. Morris stated today was the first time she heard they might be able to get funding in July. She further stated she had requested meetings, but did not receive any responses.

Ms. Diane Huschke, 1118 Flory Street, Pen Argyl, PA - advised the insurance Ms. Morris spoke of benefited her twice as she had been through Recovery Revolution. She further advised she was on the board of Recovery Revolution and was a business woman in Pen Argyl.

Ms. Huschke stated she had a very close relationship with her clients and there was a sense of community. She further stated it seemed to her the north eastern part of Northampton County had been neglected.

Ms. Huschke advised Recovery Revolution had established a sense of community in the area and they did fundraisers, but that was not dependable. She further advised it was not good for people in recovery to travel long distances to get treatment especially when they could walk.

Ms. Heather Marzigliano, 8213 North Delaware Drive, Bangor, PA - stated she owned a business in Bangor and Easton and was a member of the Slate Belt Chamber of Commerce. She further stated she lost a 25-year old brother to opioid addiction so she understood time was of the essence once someone asked for help.

Ms. Marzigliano advised she helped the women at Bloom by putting them to work in her shops because they needed everyone to fight for them. She further advised she did not want a “pissing” contest when talking about getting treatment for someone.

Ms. Carol Anderson, 574 Centerville Road, Bangor, PA - stated she was the Executive Director of Bloom, which was a two-year residential recovery program for women who were survivors of sex trafficking, prostitution, trauma and addiction. She further stated all the women who came through their door since they opened in 2016 have received treatment at Recovery
Revolution because one of their requirements was that they had to maintain consistency in treatment.

Ms. Anderson advised some of the women who came to them did not have insurance and the only way for them to receive treatment was with County funding. She further advised there was no public transportation in the Slate Belt that would get them to Monroe County and it took hours to get to Easton so that created a barrier that would make many people give up.

Ms. Anderson stated 33 women had come through their doors without costing the taxpayers a cent, but it would cost $60,000 and $100,000 a year to keep a woman in prison where she would not receive addiction services, trauma informed care or have the ability to work so she was not repaying her fine or contributing to society in a positive way. She further stated many of the women were making minimum wage so they could not afford a car service to take them to Bartonville for treatment.

Ms. Anderson advised she would not be able to provide services to the women who came to her if they were not able to access treatment. She further advised they were trying to do their part and now they were asking County Council to do their part by removing the barriers.

Ms. Patricia Baranowski, 998 Renaldi Road, Wind Gap, PA – stated she had been in the Drug and Alcohol field for 30 years and lost ten family members, many under the age of 28, through addiction. She further stated one of those family members sought funding from the County, but they could not get it so she was passionate about this.

Ms. Baranowski advised if no one tried to eliminate the barriers, they were not doing their jobs. She further advised Ms. Morris was one of the most passionate and ethical individuals she had ever met who started this program from the ground up.

Ms. Penny Conway, PO Box 392, Portland, PA – stated she was on the Drug and Alcohol Advisory Board and her son went to Recovery Revolution. She further stated everyone needed to sit down and talk this issue out because the Slate Belt could not lose Recovery Revolution.
In response to Ms. Zrinski’s question as to whether the Drug and Alcohol Advisory Board was aware of this situation, Ms. Conway advised it was brought up at the end of the March meeting.

In answer to Ms. Zrinski’s question as to whether they knew about it in or prior to December of last year, Ms. Conway stated she became aware of it six weeks ago.

Ms. Zrinski commented Ms. Susan Wandalowski, Director of Human Services, indicated the funding was not cut, but unused as of December and reallocated to other places where it was more useful or necessary.

Ms. Conway advised she believed they found out in January that there was a center in Bartonsville and her first reaction was that it was in Monroe County.

Ms. Terry Wilson, 300 Fox Gap Road, Bangor, PA - stated she worked for Recovery Revolution at Colonial Academy and was a partner of Bloom. She further stated the addiction problems were huge in Bangor and the more barriers there were the harder it made for someone to get treatment.

In response to Mr. Dietz’s question as to how much funding was required for now until the end of the fiscal year, Ms. Morris advised they needed $15,000 - $25,000 for new clients.

Mr. Dietz stated County Council may be able to use money from their Contingency Fund to assist them.

In answer to Mr. Werner’s question as to whether the funding would end on June 30, 2019, Ms. Morris advised that was correct and she had no indication if they would receive funding in July. She further advised in December they knew they were going to be low on this funding and in February they were told they could not take any new clients.

In response to Ms. Vargo Heffner’s question as whether they only saw clients based on the funding they received, Ms. Morris stated they accepted private insurance and medical assistance. She further stated the County was funding as a last resort so if they were pulling that funding there was no other access. She added she did not know the Request for Proposal period was over as she never received an e-mail after receiving them for 15 years.
County Executive Report

There was no report as Mr. Lamont McClure, County Executive, was not present.

Public Hearing on the Ordinance Removing Two Members from the Gracedale Advisory Board

Mr. Heckman advised the following ordinance was introduced by Ms. Vargo Heffner and Mr. Dietz at the March 21, 2019 meeting:

AN ORDINANCE REMOVING MS. ROSEMARIE FEHR AND MR. KENNETH SUN AS MEMBERS OF THE GRACEDALE ADVISORY BOARD

WHEREAS, Northampton County Home Rule Charter Article X. Authorities, Boards and Commission, Section 1002 Membership (g) entitled Removal from Office provides that the County Council shall have the power by ordinance to remove a member of an authority, board or commission if incapacity or absence prevents him from discharging the duties of his office for a continuous period of more than six (6) months.

WHEREAS, on February 16, 2017, County Council appointed Ms. Rosemarie Fehr and Mr. Kenneth Sun to the Gracedale Advisory Board; and

WHEREAS, on February 22, 2019, the County Executive requested that Ms. Rosemarie Fehr and Mr. Kenneth Sun be removed from the Gracedale Advisory Board as they have been absent from three (3) consecutive Advisory meetings within the last six (6) months.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDAINED AND ENACTED by the Northampton County Council that Ms. Rosemarie Fehr and Mr. Kenneth Sun shall and are removed as members of the Gracedale Advisory Board.

Public Hearing

Mr. Heckman asked if there were any questions or comments from the public.

There were no respondents.
As there were no questions or comments, Mr. Heckman called for the vote.

The vote: Vargo Heffner, "yes"; Dietz, "yes"; Ferraro, "yes"; Heckman, "yes"; Lott, "yes"; McGee, "yes"; Werner, "yes"; Zrinski, "yes" and Cusick, "yes".

The ordinance was adopted by a vote of 9-0.

Public Hearing on the Ordinance Entitled, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF NORTHAMPTON COUNTY AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF 8.7 ACRES OF REAL PROPERTY BY THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON IN PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP, PENNSYLVANIA FROM ANTHONY P. CURCIO, THOMAS M. CURCIO AND RICHARD J. CURCIO"

Mr. Heckman stated the following ordinance was introduced by Ms. Zrinski and Mr. McGee at the March 21, 2019 meeting:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF NORTHAMPTON COUNTY AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF APPROXIMATELY 8.7 ACRES OF REAL PROPERTY BY THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON IN PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP, PENNSYLVANIA FROM ANTHONY P. CURCIO, THOMAS M. CURCIO AND RICHARD J. CURCIO

WHEREAS, Northampton County Home Rule Charter Section 602 (a)(6) provides that the Northampton County Council shall enact an ordinance for any act which conveys, leases, purchases or authorizes the conveyance, lease or purchase of any real property of the County; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2019, Northampton County Council was requested to authorize the County Executive to enter into an Agreement of Sale, with Mr. Anthony P. Curcio, Mr. Thomas M. Curcio and Mr. Richard J. Curcio to purchase approximately 8.7 acres of real property located in Plainfield Township, County of Northampton, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, as more fully described in a Deed recorded in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds of Northampton County, Pennsylvania (Deed Book Volume 1991-1 Page 099323) also known as Northampton County Parcel Number E7-1-5-626 in consideration of Forty-three Thousand Five Hundred and NO/100 dollars ($43,500.00).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ORDAINED AND ENACTED by the Northampton County Council that it does hereby authorize the County Executive to enter into an Agreement of Sale to purchase approximately 8.7 acres located in Plainfield Township for $43,500 from Mr. Anthony P. Curcio, Mr. Thomas Curcio and Mr.
Richard J. Curcio in accordance with the Agreement of Sale which is attached hereto and made a part hereof as Exhibit "A".

Public Hearing

Mr. Heckman asked if there were any questions or comments from the public.

There were no respondents.

As there were no questions or comments, Mr. Heckman called for the vote.

The vote: Zrinski, "yes"; McGee, "yes"; Heckman, "yes"; Lott, "yes"; Vargo Heffner, "yes"; Werner, "yes"; Cusick, "yes"; Dietz, "yes" and Ferraro, "yes".

The ordinance was adopted by a vote of 9-0.

Public Hearing on the Ordinance Entitled, "AN ORDINANCE REAFFIRMING AND RATIFYING THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON'S PARTICIPATION IN THE PENNSYLVANIA COUNTIES RISK POOL AND THE EXECUTION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT PURSUANT TO THE PENNSYLVANIA INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION LAW, AS AMENDED"

Mr. Heckman advised the following ordinance was introduced by Ms. Vargo Heffner and Mr. Cusick at the March 21, 2019 meeting:

AN ORDINANCE REAFFIRMING AND RATIFYING THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON'S PARTICIPATION IN THE PENNSYLVANIA COUNTIES RISK POOL AND THE EXECUTION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT PURSUANT TO THE PENNSYLVANIA INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION LAW, AS AMENDED

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Cooperation Law, Act No. 177 of December 19, 1996, P.L. 1158, as amended, 53 Pa.C.S. §2301 et. seq. (the Law), authorizes local governments, including Counties, to jointly cooperate and enter into joint agreements with other Counties in the performance of their governmental functions, powers or responsibilities; and
WHEREAS, certain Counties established the Pennsylvania Counties Risk Pool (PCoRP) pursuant to the Law for the purpose of, inter alia: (a) providing a joint risk management pool to assist members in preventing and reducing losses and injuries to County property and to persons or property which might result in claims being made against members of PCoRP or their employees and officers; (b) creating an entity in perpetuity which will administer a joint risk management pool and using funds contributed by members to defend and indemnify, in accordance with the Bylaws and Intergovernmental Agreement of PCoRP, any member of PCoRP against stated liability or loss to the limit of the financial resources of PCoRP and (c) providing continuing stability and availability of needed coverages at reasonable costs as is more fully set forth in the Bylaws and Intergovernmental Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the County of Northampton is a member of PCoRP as previously Northampton County Council determined that it was in the best interests of the County of Northampton to enter into an intergovernmental cooperation agreement and become a member of PCoRP; and

WHEREAS, through this Ordinance, Northampton County Council reaffirms that determination and to ratify all action previously taken by the County of Northampton with respect to its membership and participation in PCoRP.

NOW, THEREFORE, Northampton County Council does hereby enact and ordain as follows:

Section 1. Northampton County Council hereby reaffirms and ratifies its membership in PCoRP. The Bylaws and Intergovernmental Agreement of PCoRP, which is attached hereto as Exhibit "A," is ratified, affirmed and approved substantially in the form attached hereto, the terms of which are incorporated herein by reference. Northampton County Council hereby authorizes and directs its officers to execute the PCoRP Bylaws and Intergovernmental Agreement. Northampton County Council also ratifies the execution of any other agreement that was necessary for its participation in PCoRP and is authorized to execute any other agreement necessary for its continued participation in PCoRP.

Section 2. This Ordinance and the Bylaws and Intergovernmental Agreement approved and adopted constitute a binding agreement and shall be sufficient warrant and authority for the officials and agents as appointed by the County of
Northampton to participate and represent the County of Northampton's interests in PCoRP.

Section 3. As a condition of participating in PCoRP, the County of Northampton agreed to comply with all the terms and conditions in the Bylaws and Intergovernmental Agreement and that agreement is reaffirmed and ratified.

Section 4. The duration of the Bylaws and Intergovernmental Agreement is indefinite, but is subject to the right of any member County to terminate its participation as set forth therein and subject to its provisions.

Section 5. The purpose and object of the Bylaws and Intergovernmental Agreement is as set forth therein.

Section 6. The organizational structure of PCoRP consists of a Board of Directors, all as is set forth in the Bylaws and Intergovernmental Agreement.

Section 7. The County of Northampton reaffirms and ratifies its delegation to the Board of Directors of PCoRP, the powers enumerated in the Bylaws and Intergovernmental Agreement.

Section 8. Any contributions required to be paid pursuant to the Bylaws and Intergovernmental Agreement shall be made with funds appropriated by the County of Northampton for that purpose and the County of Northampton ratifies any such sums previously paid.

Section 9. On behalf of the County of Northampton, PCoRP is empowered to enter into any contract necessary to effectuate its purposes and any contract entered into by PCoRP to date is hereby ratified and affirmed.

Section 10. Any real or personal property to be owned, or owned, by PCoRP shall be acquired, managed, licensed or disposed of as determined by the Board of Directors of PCoRP.

Section 11. The Bylaws and Intergovernmental Agreement may be modified or amended, as set forth therein.

Section 12. This Ordinance is being enacted pursuant to the provisions of the Intergovernmental Cooperation Law, Act No. 177 of December 19, 1996, P.L. 1158, as amended, 53 Pa.C.S. § 2301, et seq.
Section 13. This Ordinance shall take effect thirty days after date of enactment.

Public Hearing

Mr. Heckman asked if there were any questions or comments from the public.

There were no respondents.

As there were no questions or comments, Mr. Heckman called for the vote.

The vote: Vargo Heffner, "yes"; Cusick, "yes"; Lott, "yes"; McGee, "yes"; Werner, "yes"; Zrinski, "yes"; Dietz, "yes"; Ferraro, "yes" and Heckman, "yes".

The ordinance was adopted by a vote of 9-0.

Introduction of an Ordinance Amending the 2019 Northampton County Budget

Mr. Heckman stated the following ordinance was introduced by Ms. Vargo Heffner and Mr. McGee:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2019 NORTHAMPTON COUNTY BUDGET: DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION - ELECTIONS DIVISION; DEPARTMENT OF FISCAL AFFAIRS - BALANCING OF BUDGET

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Effective Date:

In accordance with Northampton County Home Rule Charter 705 (e) this ordinance shall become effective upon the date of enactment.

Mr. Heckman advised the public hearing, debate and possible vote would be held at the April 18, 2019 meeting.

Consideration of the Pennsylvania DCNR Grant Application - Archibald Johnston Conservation Area - Monocacy Creek Restoration Program Resolution

Ms. Zrinski introduced the following resolution:

R. 33-2019 WHEREAS, the County of Northampton (applicant) desires to undertake the following project, Archibald Johnston Conservation Area - Monocacy Creek Restoration Program; and

WHEREAS, the applicant desires to receive from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) a grant for the purpose of carrying out this project; and

WHEREAS, the application package includes a document entitled "Terms and Conditions of Grant" and a document entitled "Signature Page for Grant Agreement"; and

WHEREAS, the applicant understands that the contents of the document entitled "Terms and Conditions of Grant," including appendices referred to therein, will become the terms and conditions of a Grant Agreement between the applicant and DCNR if the applicant is awarded a grant.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED THAT:
1. The "Signature Page for Grant Agreement" may be signed on behalf of the applicant by the official who, at the time of signing, has the title of Northampton County Executive.

2. If this official signed the "Signature Page for Grant Agreement" prior to the passage of this Resolution, this grant of authority applies retroactively to the date of signing.

3. If the applicant is awarded a grant, the "Signature Page for Grant Agreement," signed by the above official will become the applicant/grantee's executed signature page for the Grant Agreement and the applicant/grantee will be bound by the Grant Agreement.

4. Any amendment to the Grant Agreement may be signed on behalf of the grantee by the official who, at the time of signing of the amendment, has the title specified in paragraph 1 and the grantee will be bound by the amendment.

In response to Mr. Cusick's question as to how much was the County requesting, Mr. Charles Dertinger, Director of Administration, stated this and the other grant were found late in the game and they were trying to leverage what they could from them so at this point they did not have a solid amount of what they would be permitted to apply for, but they would notify County Council when that information was available.

As there were no further questions or comments, Mr. Heckman called for the vote.

The vote: Zrinski, "yes"; McGee, "yes"; Vargo Heffner, "yes"; Werner, "yes"; Cusick, "yes"; Dietz, "yes"; Ferraro, "yes"; Heckman, "yes" and Lott, "yes".

The resolution was adopted by a vote of 9-0.

Consideration of the Pennsylvania DCNR Grant Application - Wy-Hit-Tuk County Park Rehabilitation and Improvements Project Resolution

Ms. Zrinski introduced the following resolution:
WHEREAS, the County of Northampton (applicant) desires to undertake the following project, Wy-Hit-Tuk County Park Rehabilitation and Improvements Project; and

WHEREAS, the applicant desires to receive from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) a grant for the purpose of carrying out this project; and

WHEREAS, the application package includes a document entitled "Terms and Conditions of Grant" and a document entitled "Signature Page for Grant Agreement"; and

WHEREAS, the applicant understands that the contents of the document entitled "Terms and Conditions of Grant," including appendices referred to therein, will become the terms and conditions of a Grant Agreement between the applicant and the Department if the applicant is awarded a grant; and

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED THAT:

1. The "Signature Page for Grant Agreement" may be signed on behalf of the applicant by the official who, at the time of signing, has the title of Northampton County Executive.

2. If this official signed the "Signature Page for Grant Agreement" prior to the passage of this Resolution, this grant of authority applies retroactively to the date of signing.

3. If the applicant is awarded a grant, the "Signature Page for Grant Agreement," signed by the above official, will become the applicant/grantee's executed signature page for the Grant Agreement, and the applicant/grantee will be bound by the Grant Agreement.

4. Any amendment to the Grant Agreement may be signed on behalf of the grantee by the official who, at the time of signing of the amendment, has the title specified in paragraph 1 and the grantee will be bound by the amendment.

As there were no questions or comments, Mr. Heckman called for the vote.

The vote: Zrinski, "yes"; Vargo Heffner, "yes"; Werner, "yes"; Cusick, "yes"; Dietz, "yes"; Ferraro, "yes"; Heckman, "yes"; Lott, "yes" and McGee, "yes".
The resolution was adopted by a vote of 9-0.

**Human Services Committee Report**

Ms. Vargo Heffner advised the Human Services Committee met earlier in the evening and indicated the next meeting would be held at 3:30 p.m. on May 2, 2019.

**Economic Development Committee Report**

Mr. McGee stated the Economic Development Committee met earlier in the evening and a presentation was given by Heritage Strategies regarding a historical restoration plan being developed in conjunction with the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan.

**General Purpose Authority Liaison Report**

Ms. Vargo Heffner advised the General Purpose Authority met this week and three bridges were completed, four were substantially completed, Bridge No. 143 was 2/3 complete and work on Bridge 63 would begin in two weeks. She further advised the reason for the delay in closing on the bridges was due to a 89-day waiting period for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to sign off on them.

**County Commissioner Association of Pennsylvania Energy, Environment and Land Use Committee Report**

Ms. Zrinski stated she was one of five individuals that met with Secretary of Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Patrick McDonnell and they discussed energy, recycling and transportation. She further stated she was having a meeting with Mr. Owen O’Neil of LANTA to talk about electric transportation.

Ms. Zrinski advised they also discussed different uses of solar and some grants that may be available. She further advised they talked about Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy and about recycling programs across the State and what might have to be done to amend the single stream recycling and plastic use efforts.
Adjournment

Mr. Cusick made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Werner seconded the motion.

The motion to adjourn was passed unanimously by acclamation.

Linda M. Zembo
Clerk to Council
Adjournment

Mr. Cusick made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Werner seconded the motion.

The motion to adjourn was passed unanimously by acclamation.

__________________________________________
Linda M. Zembo
Clerk to Council
4/4/2019 Human Services Committee

Summary of Issues:

- First time in 15 years-Slate Belt residents can no longer access a local treatment option if they receive County funding (New clients)
- County funded population: Disabled, Medicare, Working poor, Veterans, Adolescents
- 90% of Recovery Revolution’s Inc. (RRI) 2018 County funded clients were able to walk to treatment or less than 5 mile radius and mostly have no other options for transportation for various reasons including Legal issues with vehicles, Gas, License, and lack of Public Transportation
- December 31st RRI requested increase to cover existing and additional clients before the end of the fiscal year. County took over 1 month to respond. During this time they contracted with a new out of County Provider.
- The County SCA claims that Bartonsville “is in Bangor Area” and that “Pyramid will provide transportation and requested funding due to need in their Bartonsville Office.”
- Accurate Information: Bartonsville is farther from Bangor than Easton, Pyramid will only provide transportation for one service in the mid-afternoon and Pyramid identified needing support from Northampton County for their Allentown office- not Bartonsville.
- 40% of RRI’s 2018 clients were students that were seen at the school.
- School students, priority populations as identified by State also denied DIRECT access to treatment
- No reason provided for loss of funding- other contracts increased- new contracts given
- Decision was made without council or even informing Appointed Advisory Board
- Why was this decision made, without advisory council input? And why is this in the best interest of Slate Belt residents in need?
- Extremely crucial time where community members are dying. What actions will be taken to prevent this complex and lengthy process to resolve a matter that has the potential to hurt and kill people in our County?
Several brief areas of concern which could contribute the loss of funding:

- The Single County Authority (SCA) position has immense power to shape the County treatment landscape. In 2005, the SCA identified the need and requested that we open RRI in Bangor to help the northern tier of the County. Fifteen years later, the same position, has made decisions that re-establish barriers for treatment in the Northern Tier.

- RRI filed a complaint in August 2018, some of our specific concerns are:
  - Complicating the process of entry to treatment
  - Assisting in establishing a monopoly of services for Lehigh Valley Intake Unit (LVIU), the only For-profit provider located in the County
  - A history of clients being intentionally misdirected from local treatment.

- November 2018: Email sent to Ms. Miller questioning the meeting prior to the RFP release for Kolbe Academy. Ms. Miller found it appropriate to only invite the primary shareholder of LVIU, while excluding the other County providers, to the meeting with Kolbe Academy several weeks prior to the public release of RFP.

- Three providers that are located within the County: North East Treatment Centers, Recovery Revolution (Both Not-for-profits) and LVIU (For Profit entity that does not provide treatment, but only ancillary services)- The majority of public money is filtered to LVIU. Treatment centers could do every service that the for-profit provider does, and be able to complete it in a manner which is both comprehensive and reduces costs for both County and treatment centers. Forcing treatment centers to reach outside their agency to access these services costs treatment centers more money.

- Rate of Reimbursements are high compared to industry standard.
  - Costs to outpatient facility for providing an hour of therapy is $90-$110. County reimburses $81 to treatment providers per hour for individual therapy (average reimbursement rate in State of PA). County funds do not cover our costs for this service.
  - County reimburses LVIU $96 per hour for peer specialists (CRS), based on for-profit LVIU’s requests and budgets. This is the highest known reimbursement rate in the State of PA. Considering the lack of overhead for this service, it is unfathomable to suggest $96 an hour.
  - Majority of Level of Care assessments are completed by Case Managers at Lehigh Valley Intake without use of Urine Drug Screen. Private insurance pays between $60-$106 and requires a Masters level Clinician. The max County reimbursement for this one service is $243 using public funds, again highest known reimbursement rate of the State of PA.