

A meeting of the Fayette County Board of Commissioners was held at 10 a.m. on Monday, December 28, 2015 at the Public Safety Building, Uniontown PA.

#### **In attendance-**

Commission Chairman Alfred Ambrosini  
Commissioner Vincent Zapotosky  
Chief Clerk Amy Revak  
Solicitor John Cupp

**Commissioner Ambrosini** called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. A silent prayer was held. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

**Commissioner Ambrosini** asked Chief Clerk Revak to conduct a roll call. Present were Commissioners Ambrosini and Zapotosky. Commissioner Zimmerlink was absent. Commissioner Zapotosky said there is a quorum present.

#### **Public Comment on Agenda Items**

**Geraldine Mazza** said everything on the agenda is a farce, shame on you two. Commissioner Ambrosini told Mrs. Mazza she can make comments, but no personal attacks. Mrs. Mazza talked about how the people have a right to criticize the government and continued to be critical of the commissioners. Commissioner Ambrosini said there are rules and she should abide by them. Commissioner Zapotosky said she needs to talk about agenda items. Mrs. Mazza asked where they are getting the money to pay them. Commissioner Zapotosky said these HR items have been festering for years. He said some employees took a demotion to go from union to non-union and this is a matter of correcting that wrong. Mrs. Mazza asked why they didn't take care of it two years ago. Commissioner Zapotosky explained that it wasn't done and there are there to clean the slate. He said there were salary board meetings where it was discussed. A discussion ensued between Mrs. Mazza and Commissioner Ambrosini when she refused to sit down.

**Michael Cavanagh** said under building and grounds, the ratification of Eugene Gallo as parks manager for \$38,000, you say everything has been budgeted but I have heard Commissioner Ambrosini say you are applying for a grant, so it isn't really budgeted. Commissioner Ambrosini said it is fully budgeted, if we get the grant, it will offset 75 percent of the cost for the position. He said the position is needed and things need to be scheduled at the parks. Mr. Cavanagh said the position was created for Mr. Gallo and he is a pay to play guy. Emma Jane Davis said she wanted to speak on the entire agenda. She asked if the parks manager position was advertised in the newspaper. Commissioner Ambrosini said it was advertised internally by HR. Terry Kriss said everything on the agenda is a pay raise for everybody and it is disturbing it is happening at the 11 ½ hour. He spoke about his disappointment in not receiving his \$700. He said they played job chairs with Kathy Winkler and they are doing the same thing with Al's assistant. He said it is political cronyism. He was critical of the decisions being made.

He asked to see the prison plans. Mr. Kriss said it was wrong to hire Mr. Gallo and if they give him the job they will smell like fish forever.

**Commissioner Zapotosky** asked Denise Stepanik to approach the podium, adding that for the record Ms. Winkler is not here and can't defend herself, adding that she was given jobs she was qualified for and no longer works for the county and any mention of her name is inappropriate. He asked Ms. Stepanik about interviews for the parks position. She said only the department head and herself participated in interviews. She spoke about the process, and said the person selected far exceeded the other applicants. After Commissioner Ambrosini instructed a sheriff deputy to escort Mrs. Mazza out of the meeting after she was being disruptive, Commissioner Zapotosky asked that she be permitted to say, but asked her to refrain from interfering with the business being conducted. He said the meeting is being held to clean up issues.

### **Commissioners**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to approve the November 17, 2015 Commissioner meeting minutes.

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

### **Human Resources**

#### **Pay Study Longevity Correction**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to ratify the December 16, 2015, Salary Board decision to (a) set pay at the equivalent longevity step for the following county employees who moved to the non-union pay scales and (b) give back pay retroactive to January 1, 2015:

Debbie Apicella (Treasurer) \$21.47 to \$22.74  
William Arnold (Bridge) \$22.50 to \$23.36  
Larry Blosser (Election Bureau) \$23.46 to \$25.03  
Garry Brownfield, Jr. (Sheriff) \$22.71 to \$23.42 (at grade 15)  
Jessie Camilli (Coroner) \$15.39 to \$16.63  
Janice Cooper (Register of Wills) \$22.76 to \$26.26  
Sharon Crissman (Clerk of Courts) \$23.42 to \$24.77  
Albert Kara (DRS) \$25.77 to \$28.91  
Madonna Nicklow (Veterans Affairs) \$22.74 to \$24.77  
Tracey Vargo (Recorder of Deeds) \$21.47 to \$25.50  
Richard Zidek (DRS) \$29.18 to \$33.73

No Changes for the following as their:

Toni Petrus (Sheriff)  
Sue Martin (Planning and Zoning)

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

### Second Deputy

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to ratify Salary Board approval to upgrade all Second Deputy positions from SEIU Grade 10 to SEIU Grade 12, effective December 16, 2015.

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

**After the** vote, Commissioner Zapotosky said these positions are for people who fill in when the elected official and chief deputy are not available.

### Behavioral Health

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to ratify Salary Board approval of merit increase for Administrative Officer I, Theresa Levanduski, at Grade 37 to Step CC at \$21.32/hour (\$41,574.00 annually), effective January 1, 2016.

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to ratify Salary Board approval of merit increase for Administrative Officer I, Carole Rocek, at Grade 37 to Step Z at \$19.60./hour (\$38,220.00 annually), effective January 1, 2016.

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to ratify Salary Board approval of merit increase for Human Resource

Assistant I, Nicole Fijalkovic, at Grade 30 to Step EE at \$18.49/hour (\$36,055.50 annually), effective January 1, 2016.

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

**Building & Grounds**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to ratify Salary Board approval for adding a Custodial II position at SEIU Grade 4, SR \$10.40/hour (\$20,280.00 annually), effective January 1, 2016.

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to ratify Salary Board approval for adding a Park and Recreation Manager position at non-union supervisory Grade 14, \$19.58/hour (\$38,181.00 annually), effective December 16, 2015

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to ratify the selection of Eugene Gallo, Park and Recreation Manager at \$19.58/hour (\$38,181.00 annually), effective December 28, 2015.

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

**Court Administration**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to ratify Salary Board approval for the upgrading of two Court Administrative Assistants from non-union Grade 4 \$10.45/hr. - \$20,377.50 annually to non-union Grade 9 \$12.72/hr. or \$24,905.37 annual, and adjust for current steps as needed. Make retroactive to January 1, 2015.

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to approve the correction in Grade for the following employees as a result of this salary board action:

Tammy Cable from Grade 4 step A \$11.03/\$21,508.50 to Grade 9 Step A \$13.31/25,954.50, from 1-1-15 to 11-15-15. Correct Longevity effective 11/16/2015 to Grade 9 Step B at \$13.69/26,695.50.

Patty Porter from Grade 4 SR \$10.45/20,377.50 to Grade 9 SR \$12.61/24,589.50 effective 7/1/15.

Samantha Mandekic from Grade 4 Step B at \$11.36/22,152 to Grade 9 Step B \$13.69/26,695.50 effective 1/1/15 to 6/30/15.

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

**Human Resources**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to ratify Salary Board approval for establishing an Administrative Assistant, SEIU Grade 9 \$12.29/hr. or \$23,965.50 annually, effective January 1, 2016

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

**Prothonotary**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to ratify Salary Board approval for upgrading Two Department Clerk II positions to Department Clerk III Grade 5 \$14.26/hr. - \$27,811.85 annually to 7 \$15.23/hr. or \$29,693.69 annually (total inc. for both of \$3,659.90), effective January 1, 2016

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to ratify Salary Board approval for upgrading Department Clerk III to Administrative Assistant Grade 7 \$14.85/hr. or \$28,948.14 annually to grade 9 \$15.91/hr. or \$31,028.49 annually (inc. of \$2,245.32), effective January 1, 2016

Consider approving the reclassification of the following employees as a result of this salary board action:

Vicki Wheeler from Department Clerk III Grade 7 step H \$14.85/ \$28,948.14 to Administrative Assistant Grade 9 Step H \$15.91/31,028.49, effective January 1, 2016

Deanna Craft from Department Clerk II Grade 5 step I \$14.26/ \$27,811.85 to Department Clerk III Grade 7 Step I \$15.23/29,693.69, effective January 1, 2016

Samantha Campbell from Department Clerk II Grade 5 step B \$11.94/ \$23,283.00 to Department Clerk III Grade Step B \$12.71/24,792.15, effective January 1, 2016.

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

#### Register of Wills

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to ratify Salary Board approval for changing the title of one Computer Clerk to Department Clerk III at the same grade, effective January 1, 2016.

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to ratify Salary Board approval for upgrading one Computer Clerk Grade 7 \$12.71/hr. or \$24,792.15/annual to Legal Secretary III Grade 9 \$13.59/hr. or \$26,498.94 annual (inc of \$1,842.14), effective January 1, 2016

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to approve the reclassification of the following employee as a result of this salary board action:

Gloria Antoon from Computer Clerk Grade 7 step B \$12.71/ \$24,792.15 to Legal Secretary Grade 9 Step B \$13.59/\$26,498.94, effective January 1, 2016

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

**Tax Claim**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to ratify Salary Board approval for offering back pay from March 16, 2015 for the 2 encumbered positions approved last month which were upgraded from Accounts Clerk I SEIU Grade 4 \$10.76/ hr. to Accounts Clerk II SEIU Grade 6 \$11.52/hr., effective, December 16, 2015.

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to approve the reclassification/upgrade and specific back pay is for following employees as a result of this salary board action:

Jennifer Thomas, upgrade/reclassification from Accounts Clerk I at \$10.76/\$20,982 to Accounts Clerk II at 11.52/\$22,545.47 from 3/16/15 onward.

Raylene Ferlin upgrade/reclassification from Accounts Clerk I at \$10.76/\$20,982 to Accounts Clerk II at 11.52/\$22,545.47 from 3/16/15 onward.

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

**Treasurer**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to ratify Consider ratifying Salary Board approval for upgrading the 2 Accounting Clerks I to Accounting Clerk II from grade 4 \$11.22/hr. or \$21,881.87 annual to grade 6 \$12.01/hr. or \$23,413.60 annual (increase overall of \$3,306.39), effective January 1, 2016

Margaret Lipovsky from Accounts Clerk I Grade 4 step A \$11.22/21,881.87 to Accounts Clerk II Grade 6 Step A \$12.01/23,413.60, effective January 1, 2016

Ivy Wolfe from Accounts Clerk I Grade 4 step SR1 \$10.76/ \$20,989.80 to Accounts Clerk II Grade 6 Step SR1 \$11.52/22,463.12, effective TBD.

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

### Tax Claim

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Zapotosky and seconded by Commissioner Ambrosini to ratify Salary Board approval for establishing an Office Operations Assistant, SEIU Grade 12 \$13.60/hr. or \$26,520.00 annually, effective January 1, 2016.

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**

### Public Announcements

**Commissioner Zapotosky** said he wanted to thank everyone for a wonderful eight years, including his wife and son, who are present. He said it is all worth it in the end. He wished the new board the best of luck and hopes the county continues to grow and prosper. He thanked Ms. Stepanik and spoke about the employees who got raises, adding that they work hard. He said they don't have enough salary board meetings, and added that the parks director position was needed. He said this was his last meeting. He wished everyone happy new year. Commissioner Ambrosini said he wanted to thank the employees of the county, adding that they work very hard for modest pay. He spoke about how difficult it is to run a county, adding that CYS has really touched his heart. He said caseworkers have to deal with difficult situations.

**Commissioner Ambrosini** said as long as we make progress, we are headed in the right direction. He said there are a lot of issues facing Fayette County, and they won't be handled unless we have dedicated people who are willing to do the right thing. He said it has been an honor and a privilege for the people of this county. He said he decided to do public service just to help people, and will continue as a private citizen with the Circles program. He said he hopes people recognize what he has done to make the county a better place. Madonna Nicklow said she understands how the commissioners feel to be attacked, adding that she got badgered at a meeting after applying for the VA director position. She said that isn't the way things are supposed to occur. She thanked the commissioners for being good to her, and for hiring her as director. She said since she became director in 2012, they have brought in \$3 million annually. She said out of the 27 western district counties, Fayette County is number one in veteran's money. She thanked the commissioners from the bottom of her heart.

**Commissioner Zapotosky** said she took a lot of grief and thanked her. Ms. Nicklow said she works together with the other departments. Commissioner Zapotosky said he would be brief, adding that his wife just texted him to wrap it up. He spoke about making difficult decisions and serving as an elected official. Ms. Nicklow said she will miss them. Commissioner Ambrosini said when Madonna applied for the job and had trained the last nine directors in the office and they only stayed a short time, and then she was acting director, that was one of the easiest decisions they made. He said they needed consistency in that office. Commissioner Zapotosky recognized Sheriff Gary Brownfield and Register of Wills Donald Redman, who were leaving office at the end of the year,

both of whom thanked the commissioners for their support. Jared Billy thanked the commissioners on behalf of the union. Denise Stepanik said all the upgrades the commissioner's approved were evident and well justified. Ms. Nicklow also thanked Ms. Stepanik for her professionalism.

**Mrs. Mazza** said there hasn't been much accomplished in the last four years, and continued to criticize the actions taken during the administration. She then told them goodbye. Mr. Billy thanked the commissioners, adding that there is a low county mill rate. Mr. Cavanagh then said he was glad the four years are up, wished Commissioner Zapotosky and his family well, and then was critical about Commissioner Ambrosini. He spoke about the need for public comment. He was critical of Geno Gallo, calling him the "Minister of Misinformation" during Commissioner Ambrosini's campaign. He spoke about a website, claiming false lies were put out about two candidates. He was critical of how the hiring occurred. Commissioner Ambrosini asked Mr. Cavanagh to sit down after his three minutes were up. Mr. Cavanagh refused to sit down, after being repeatedly asked to sit down and said Commissioner Ambrosini didn't care about poor people. Commissioner Ambrosini repeatedly asked Mr. Cavanagh to be escorted out by the sheriff's deputy. A discussion then ensued between audience members. Commissioner Ambrosini then asked to speak before Mr. Kriss spoke.

**Commissioner Ambrosini** said Mr. Gallo did not set up the website, Mr. James Armstrong did, FayetteTruth.com. He said he only met Mr. Armstrong when he came to a meeting. Mr. Cavanagh said he has the screen shots and there is more to follow on that. Commissioner Ambrosini said Mr. Gallo has a design company, he does a lot of work for a lot of people, adding he can do work for whoever he chooses. He added that there wasn't anything on that website that was untrue. Commissioner Zapotosky said these matters aren't relevant to county business. Commissioner Ambrosini said if anybody thinks they can do a better job, do the petition process, run for the next time. He said obviously, we know there are some restrictions, you have to be a law abiding citizen, obviously and you cannot be a convicted felon. He said other than that, there aren't too many restrictions other than you have to be a certain age and a citizen of this great country. He said he would encourage people with business sense and experience to apply in the future to do public service work, because it is necessary. He said our founding fathers never intended for these positions to be careers for people, they were only intended to be a job to do part time to progress the country, municipality or county.

**Commissioner Ambrosini** said you do public service for a while and then go back to blacksmithing or farming or whatever you did before and that is what brought this country to be great. He said unfortunately that part of it has gone by the wayside somewhere along the way and now we have career politicians who only care about keeping their jobs. He said things get a little strange when that happens, he has seen it firsthand. He said he strongly suggests people consider running for public office to do public service and do the things that help other people, which is all he has tried to do in his four years, despite the detractors. He said it was pointed out that he doesn't care about the poor people, well, he has been involved with a new program, Circles Out of Poverty since it began and there will be efforts to make a county wide effort. He said there are efforts to help people a family at a time. He said he is an ally to a family and is

helping get them on their feet. He said until he gets accused on not caring about the less fortunate, he doesn't brag about it, but since he has been accused, he is saying he has been involved. He said he cares about the less fortunate, especially the children. He said he will be working diligently with the founder of Circles USA so it can be a countywide effort. He said there are 10,000 children in poverty and 22,000 children in this county whose families incur some public assistance and are involved in generational poverty. He said it won't get fixed unless there are motivated people who will do what it takes to solve the problem.

**Commissioner Ambrosini** said some of the misinformation and propaganda that has occurred over the past four years. He said he felt bad for the voting public because they don't see the truth, they see propaganda. He said the 10 second buzzwords and the prison project, he didn't waste a dime. He said it is still viable, and hopefully the next board will build it. He said it is the keystone of reducing the wasteful spending in our judicial system. He said we are wasting \$2 million in efficiencies, one facility 127 years old. He said every stakeholder in the county was included in the development and design of the new facility. He said the key is there have been a lot of hard work done by a lot of county employees and smart people to stop the wasteful spending and help people who need help. He said there is a reason it is the Fayette County Justice and Rehabilitation Center. He said one third of the inmates have behavioral health issues, not because they are bad people but because they don't know how to live in society. He said we can help them but we can't do that in an antiquated facility like we do now. He said terms like Taj Mahal is just propaganda, this is a complicated problem.

**Commissioner Ambrosini** said it doesn't just encompass the jail, it is the entire judicial system. He said if we aren't smart enough and dedicated enough to solve these problems, we will never progress. He said unfortunately we have people who are so dissenting, they don't pay attention to the facts and don't do their homework. He said the voters of this very good county can't possibly make the right decisions in a lot of cases. Mr. Kriss then criticized the commissioners about the public comment and spoke about how glad he was a prison wasn't built. He was critical of Commissioner Ambrosini and accused him of arrogance. He said the commissioners were a miserable failure.

## **Public Comments**

## **Adjournment**

**A motion** was made by Commissioner Ambrosini and seconded by Commissioner Zapotosky to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Ambrosini yes  
Commissioner Zapotosky yes

**Motion passed unanimously**