



MINUTES

HUNTERDON COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Meeting Room
71 Main Street, Building 1, Second Floor
Flemington, New Jersey 08822

March 4, 2025

I. **5:00 p.m. CONVENE:**

II. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

1. Resolution Entering into Executive Session.

Motion: By: Jeff Kuhl **Seconded:** Susan Soloway

Yes: John Lanza, Shaun Van Doren, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

III. **5:30 p.m. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

IV. **MOMENT OF SILENCE**

V. **REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNSEL ON EXECUTIVE SESSION**

VI. **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

Commissioner Kuhl shared that the Department of Planning and Land Use will be hosting a public informational meeting on Thursday, March 6th, starting at 6 pm to review the Preliminary State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The meeting will be held at the Route 12 County Complex and staff from the State Office of Planning Advocacy will provide a presentation on the Preliminary State Development and Redevelopment Plan and will answer questions from the public. Commissioner Kuhl provided background information regarding the Preliminary State Development and Redevelopment Plan and State Plan Policy Map. As co-liaison to the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, Commissioner Kuhl shared that Hunterdon County will be hosting the Fall Choose NJ Economic Development Meet-up at Ironbound Farms.

Commissioner Soloway shared that the 2025 Hunterdon County Beer Trail Tap Takeover is taking place on Sunday, June 1st at Descendant Brewery in Milford. Every brewery in Hunterdon County will have its beer available, and all brewers will be on hand to meet with the public, except for Esker Hart from High Bridge. The event will be the official launch for the 2025 Beer Passport season with new prizes. Commissioner Soloway reminded the public about the 11th Annual Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick Parade on Sunday, March 16th in downtown Clinton. In closing, Commissioner Soloway announced that four locations have been selected for the 2025 Veteran Headstone Cleaning Program. The first event will be at the Readington Reformed Church on Saturday, May 3rd. Additional details will be shared.

Deputy Director Van Doren reported that the New Jersey Department of Health has confirmed two feline cases of H5 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza "bird flu" in Hunterdon County. County Health Officer, Karen DeMarco, has advised everyone that the risk of H5 infection to the general population remains low, but Hunterdon County Health Department is taking proactive action to educate the general public about bird flu and encouraging those at higher risk for exposure including agricultural workers. The Health Department is providing information to the public and monitoring the health of

the individuals who had contact with the affected cats. Residents are urged to contact their veterinarian immediately if they are concerned that their cat may have H5 bird flu. Deputy Director Van Doren advised NJDOH continues to work in collaboration with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and the NJ Department of Agriculture (NJDA) to monitor the occurrences of H5N1 Avian Influenza and its impact in the State. In closing, Deputy Director Van Doren shared updated from the Department of Human Services.

Director Lanza thanked Commissioners Rich, Kuhl, and Soloway, for attending the 50th Annual New Jersey Recreation and Park Association's awards dinner last week and accepting the prestigious *Award for Excellence in Playground Design* on behalf of the Board. Commissioner Kuhl and County staff will be meeting with the 4H Fair Committee to review prospective spots for the location of the second inclusive playground that the county is planning. Director Lanza shared that last Friday, he joined County Clerk Mary Melfi to address members of this year's Leadership Hunterdon Class. Leadership Hunterdon, a program initiated in 2012 by the Hunterdon Chamber of Commerce, was created to transform people to become trustees of our communities, to become leadership resources, and to work for the betterment of Hunterdon County. Director Lanza shared that work is progressing well on the preparation of the FY25 county budget and the budget committee is working hard at continuing to make investments in our county parks and open spaces. Later on the agenda will be a resolution authorizing the County Administrator to begin developing criteria for a Municipal Law Enforcement Equipment Grant. A grant Director Lanza called for during his reorganization speech as part of the Board's *New Era of Partnership*. Director Lanza thanked the Budget Committee for their hard work.

VII. PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITION

1. Recognizing Joseph Colalillo for his outstanding achievements and contributions to the supermarket industry and upon receiving the Food Industry Association (FMI) Sidney R. Rabb Award for Statesmanship.

Mr. Colalillo thanked the Board for recognizing him this evening. He shared his father came to Flemington in 1958 and opened a store about a block away from the Courthouse and wanted to make the community a better place to live, a better place to be, a better place to shop, and a better place to work. Mr. Colalillo continues to follow in his father's footsteps.

Motion: By: Jeff Kuhl **Seconded:** Susan Soloway

Yes: John Lanza, Shaun Van Doren, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

2. Recognizing the North Hunterdon Regional High School Wrestling Team (NHRHS) upon winning the 2025 New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) Group 4 State Wrestling Championship.

Coach Dave Bell stated he and his team are honored and grateful to be recognized this evening.

Motion: By: Susan Soloway **Seconded:** Shaun Van Doren

Yes: John Lanza, Shaun Van Doren, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

3. Recognizing the Delaware Valley Regional High School Wrestling Team (DVRHS) upon winning the 2025 New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) Group 1 State Wrestling Championship.

Coach Andy Fitz thanked the Board for inviting him and the team in for recognition. He added there are only 5 High Schools in the County, 2 of which have won state titles, and he is proud to be part of it.

Motion: By: Jeff Kuhl **Seconded:** Susan Soloway

Yes: John Lanza, Shaun Van Doren, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT, Limited to 2 minutes per person. (Comments exceeding 2 minutes will be entertained later in the agenda)

Mr. Nick Vitovitch introduced himself and his wife Jerri. He stated he the board president of a local nonprofit, the Hunterdon Conservation, Education and Recreation Council, Inc. which was founded in 1962. They oversee 82 acres of land, leased from the NJ DEP, within the Round Valley Recreation Area. The site was originally called the Round Valley Youth Center and was renamed several years ago to the Sauerland Outdoor Center (SOC) in honor of our founder, former Hunterdon County Freeholder, Paul Sauerland. Mr. Vitovitch advised he will need longer than 2 minutes for his remarks so he will continue later in the agenda.

Mr. Adam Bianca, a resident of Raritan Township thanked the Board for allowing him to make a public comment. He stated he is in attendance this evening to make comments regarding Ukraine. Here to encourage Board to pass a statement of support for Ukraine. He encouraged the Commissioner Board to release a new statement of support Board for Ukraine. He added the Board previously issued a statement of support back in 2022 and said the time has come for the Board to release another statement of support. Mr. Bianca shared that a student of his is a refugee that fled from Ukraine.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENT - PUBLIC HEARING DATE FOR ORDINANCE 2025-02, HERON GLEN GOLF RATES FOR 2025, MOVED TO MARCH 18, 2025

X. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATE, Brayden Fahey, Director & OEM Coordinator

1. Authorizing the Director or Deputy Director of the Board of County Commissioners to sign and accept, on behalf of the County, a sub-grant award from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), in an amount not to exceed \$65,211.85 for the construction of flooded roadways or bridge crossings warning systems.

Public Safety Director and OEM Coordinator, Mr. Brayden Fahey, provided background regarding Phase 2 of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

Motion: By: Jeff Kuhl **Seconded:** Shaun Van Doren

Yes: John Lanza, Shaun Van Doren, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

XI. PURCHASING, Ray Rule, QPA

1. Approving a contract for County RFP 0005-2025, with Percepture Incorporated, for 2025 Explore Hunterdon Comprehensive Tourism Marketing Campaign.

Motion: By: Susan Soloway **Seconded:** Jeff Kuhl

Yes: John Lanza, Shaun Van Doren, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

2. Approving Requisition #R25-1583, with Krueger International, for furniture for the Main Branch County Library in an amount not to exceed \$59,594.45.

Motion: By: Shaun Van Doren **Seconded:** Jeff Kuhl

Yes: John Lanza, Shaun Van Doren, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

3. Approving Requisition #R25-1679, with Queues Enforth Development, for 911 dispatch software maintenance in an amount not to exceed \$84,479.00.

Motion: By: Susan Soloway **Seconded:** Shaun Van Doren

Yes: John Lanza, Shaun Van Doren, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

4. Approving requisition #R25-1506, with Foley Inc., for a generator for the Route 12 Communications Tower in an amount not to exceed \$50,615.09.

Motion: By: Jeff Kuhl **Seconded:** Susan Soloway

Yes: John Lanza, Shaun Van Doren, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway

No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

XII. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR, Brad Myhre

1. Authorizing the County Administrator or his designee to develop criteria for a Municipal Law Enforcement Equipment Grant and to work with the Budget Committee to designate \$500,000.00 for this program in the FY25 county budget.

Motion: **By:** Susan Soloway **Seconded:** Jeff Kuhl
Yes: John Lanza, Shaun Van Doren, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway
No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

XIII. APPOINTMENTS

1. Approving the appointment of Charles Sanchez as a member to the Hunterdon County Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), term to be effective immediately through March 31, 2029.

Motion: **By:** Shaun Van Doren **Seconded:** Jeff Kuhl
Yes: John Lanza, Shaun Van Doren, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway
No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

XIV. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion: Approving Consent Agenda excluding Resolutions #1 and #3
By: Shaun Van Doren **Seconded:** Susan Soloway
Yes: John Lanza, Shaun Van Doren, Jeff Kuhl, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway
No: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:**

2. Approving the Claims Register dated March 04, 2025.
4. Approving the hire and provisional appointment of Nia Guadalupe as a Keyboarding Clerk 2 in the Hunterdon County Department of Health, Division of Environmental Health. (Filling a vacancy)
5. Approving the provisional promotion of Victor Perez to the title of Human Services Specialist 1 in the Department of Human Services, Division of Social Services.
6. Acknowledging the action of Hunterdon County Prosecutor Renee Robeson to promote Kayla N. Morales to the title Victim Witness Advocate in the Hunterdon County Office of the Prosecutor.
7. Acknowledging the action of Hunterdon County Prosecutor Renee Robeson to adjust the salary of Reagan Hronich, Supervising Victim Advocate, in the Hunterdon County Office of the Prosecutor.
8. Acknowledging the action of Hunterdon County Prosecutor Renee Robeson to promote Torry J. Boggs to the title of Victim Witness Coordinator in the Hunterdon County Office of the Prosecutor.
9. Approving the action to grant Marianne Sievers a regular appointment as a full-time Librarian 2 as of March 4, 2025, in the Hunterdon County Library, no salary adjustment.
10. Approves the action to grant Jenny Holmes a regular appointment as a full time Social Worker- Bilingual as of March 4, 2025, in the Hunterdon County Department of Human Services, Division of Social Services, no salary adjustment.
11. Approving the action to grant Samantha M. Weidele a regular appointment as a full-time Principal Account Clerk as of March 4, 2025, in the Hunterdon County Finance Department, no salary adjustment.
12. Approving the action to grant Hemi Chakrabarty a regular appointment as a full-time Senior Public Health Investigator as of March 4, 2025, in the Hunterdon County Health Department, no salary adjustment.
13. Approving the action to grant Kathleen A. Horsch a regular appointment as a full-time Keyboarding Clerk 2 as of March 4, 2025, in the Hunterdon County Department of Public Works, no salary adjustment.

14. Approving the action to grant Geordan L. Marrero a regular appointment as a full-time Senior Mechanic as of March 4, 2025, in the Hunterdon County Department of Administrative Services, Division of Vehicle Services, no salary adjustment.
15. Approving the action to grant Brenden J. Ryan a regular appointment as a full-time Senior Bridge Repairer as of March 4, 2025, in the Hunterdon County Department of Public Works, Bridge Division, no salary adjustment.
16. Authorizing the Qualified County Purchasing Agent to initiate competitive contracting for the Hunterdon County Opioid Settlement Fund Projects, for the Department of Human Services.
17. Authorizing the Director or Deputy Director of the Board of County Commissioners to sign a Contract for Performance of Area Plan Contract Services and Business Associate Agreement with Legal Services of Northwest Jersey, for the Legal Assistance program, for the period of January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2027, in the amount of \$67,320.00 (\$22,440.00 per year).
18. Approving a request from Team Somerset Cycling Club to host a Cycling Event on various County Roads in the Township of Readington on Saturday, June 7, 2025 from 8:00 a.m. until 9:30 a.m.
19. Approving a request from Lonely Hearts Racing, Rutgers Cycling, to host a bicycling event on various County Roads around Round Valley Reservoir on April 26, 2025, from 7:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.
20. Urging state leaders to pass legislation that will authorize counties, municipalities, school districts, and all local governments to publish legal notices in a clear, transparent, and timely manner on a local government's official website.
21. Authorizing the Director of the Board of County Commissioners to sign the First Amendment to the Right of Way and Attachment Agreement with Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless dated June 22, 2016.

Motion: Approving Resolutions #1 and #3

By: Susan Soloway **Seconded:** John Lanza

Yes: John Lanza, Zachary Rich, Susan Soloway

No: None **Abstain:** Shaun Van Doren, Jeff Kuhl **Absent:**

1. Approving the executive session and regular meeting minutes from the February 04, 2025 meeting.
3. Approving the executive session and regular meeting minutes from the February 18, 2025 meeting.

XV. **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Mr. Nick Vitovitch of Lambertville shared the following comments. "We oversee 82 acres of land, leased from the NJ DEP, within the Round Valley Recreation Area. The purpose for starting this nonprofit and acquiring a lease for this site was primarily to provide the residents of Hunterdon County a small offset for the impact the Round Valley and Spruce Run reservoirs would have on our community. Our original lease ended in 2018 and at that point we went into "hold-over status" and has been in that status now going on 6+ years. We requested a new lease from the NJ DEP in 2015 and were told that at that time we would receive a new one, with the same basic terms and conditions. We have inquired about the lease several times every year and have always been told the same thing but have never received an updated lease.

In 2019 COVID hit and the NJ Water Authority, another division of the NJ DEP, started work on the Round Valley South Dam update project that resulted in us losing access

to our main camping areas, several major trails, and our amphitheater. COVID and the dam work have had a huge financial impact on us because of loss of usage, but we have been able to hang on because of several generous donations from members of our community. We regained access to our upper field and our amphitheater in August, 2024, however both venues are in need of restoration as we did not get them back anywhere near their condition in 2019, prior to the dam work.

The most challenging issue we are having and the one we need your help with regards to the lease for this site. All the people we had been working with to renew our lease, starting in 2015, have retired or left the NJ DEP. In March of 2024 we met a new team of people regarding the lease on our site. At that time, we were told that we might not even be offered a new lease and, if we were, we would need to bid on the lease, which would be a public process. In addition, they made it clear that in no way would we be able to have a full-time caretaker live on premises. The site has a 3-bedroom farmhouse that has housed our caretaker since our founding. For the past 60 years now, we have had someone living on site without issue. The house is not leased to the caretaker but provided in exchange for maintaining, providing security, and managing users while on the site year-round. This arrangement has worked well for us and frankly is the only way we could successfully manage this site and offer it for use at the low rates we do, \$3/per user/per day.

We received a letter from the NJ DEP in relation to the March 2024 site meeting on July 1st, 2024. This letter was shocking to us as they stated we were not in compliance with our lease in regards to several items. At this point we reached out to Assemblyman Erik Peterson for help with this matter. He setup a Zoom meeting with the NJ DEP on August 31st, 2024, where we discussed the issues, especially those around the lease. To say the least, the meeting was frustrating to both Assemblyman Peterson and us. The NJ DEP was unwilling to make any commitments of any kind regarding any of the issues at that time and reiterated that if they offered a lease on the site, it would be a public offering, and again no full-time caretaker in the residence. After the meeting, SOC sent a written response to the March letter to the NJ DEP.

We did not receive any response from the NJ DEP until February 11th, 2025. This letter included two new items of non-compliance which we do not agree with and also included a list of resolved items, one of which is that we cannot have a caretaker living in the house on site. From our perspective, this is not at all resolved. I have enclosed a letter we received from the state in 2008 from the NJ DEP that allows us to have our caretaker live in the house. I have since reached out to Assemblyman Peterson again and we are working on our next steps. In the meantime, I did request permission from the NJ DEP via email to make a minor fix to the water line via email on February 12th, 2025, as this is having a material impact on our overall usability and our ability to make repairs and reseed the upper field. We have not yet received a response from the NJ DEP on that simple request."

In short, Mr. Vitovitch is asking for assistance in securing a lease renewal from NJDEP.

Director Lanza advised the County will see where Assemblyman Peterson's office has left off with this process. He added, if it cannot be accomplished through Assemblyman Peterson's office, to then reach out to Senator Zwicker or Senator Steinhardt.

Mr. Adam Bianca asked if the Board were to consider a new statement of support, would that need to be placed on an upcoming agenda.

Director Lanza advised any resolution that is considered by the Board must be placed on the agenda. He added, a lot can happen between now and the next Commissioner Board meeting. He advised a more effective way to advocate would be to reach out to Congressman Kean.

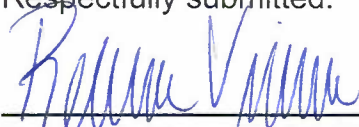
XVI. ADDITIONAL COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

XVII. EXECUTIVE SESSION (Reconvene if necessary)

XVIII. ADJOURNMENT

The Board convened at 6:36 p.m. on a motion by Deputy Director Van Doren, seconded by Commissioner Kuhl, followed by a voice carry.

Respectfully submitted:



Rebecca Viersma, CLERK