

Commissioners
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MARC C. SORTMAN
Vice Chairman
MARK MUSSINA
Secretary



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**LYCOMING COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2026
10:00 A.M.**

Present: Commissioner Metzger, Commissioner Sortman, Commissioner Mussina, Shannon Barnes, Senior Director of Operations, Solicitor Christopher H. Kenyon.

1.0 OPERATIONS

- 1.1 Opening Prayer
- 1.2 Pledge of Allegiance
- 1.3 Convene Commissioners' Public Meeting
- 1.4 Approve the Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- 1.5 Public Comment on Agenda Items Only

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

- 1.6 Proclamation – Suicide Prevention Month – Erin Timmins, Comments Attached

Commissioner Metzger spoke about the impacts of suicide and how it has affected him personally. He pointed out the need for everyone to be kind, reach out if you sense something is wrong, take time to listen without judgement and help them find the assistance they need. Everyone needs to feel valued. Everyone has talents and gifts to share. Commissioner Metzger emphasized the need to stop the stigmatism that is associated with mental health and often prevents people from seeking help. Suicide is final and leaves a devastating impact on the ones left behind. It's a widespread issue that has impacted most people.

Commissioner Mussina pointed out that there are certain groups of society that are more susceptible to suicide and tend to have higher rates than the rest of society. He emphasized that society should not condone ridicule and bullying. We need to stand and tell people when they are being cruel and condemning. He commented that the statistics are truly tragic, especially for young people.

Commissioner Sortman expanded on the comments from Commissioner Metzger about the finality of the decision to commit suicide saying that those that choose this have not thought this through. He spoke about the message that, especially males, have been given to not talk about their problems and feelings. This is the barrier that needs to be changed so people can talk about their struggles before they get to the point of suicide.

2.0 REPORTS

- 2.1 Emily Snyder for Nicki Gottschall – Vote to ratify accounts payable cash requirement report for invoices due through 9/30/26 to be paid on 9/23/26 in the amount of \$2,200,727.45.

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

3.0 INFORMATION ITEMS

3.1 Emily Mrochko – WATS MPO Public Participation Plan and Title VI Program - **The Lycoming County Planning and Community Development, Transportation Division, in cooperation with PennDOT and River Valley is seeking public review and comment on the draft Williamsport Area Transportation Study (WATS) Public Participation Plan (PPP) and Title VI Program.**

The Public Participation Plan document lists the WATS MPO public participation and outreach procedures, and how interested parties can participate in the transportation decision-making process. The Title VI Plan lists how the WATS MPO fully complies with Title VI and prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in any program receiving federal financial assistance.

The draft Public Participation Plan and Title VI Plan is available on the WATS MPO website at:

https://lycomingcountypa.gov/government/departments/planning_community_development/transportation/index.php and is available to view at the WATS MPO office: 33 West Third Street, Third Street Plaza Building, 3rd Floor, Williamsport, PA 17701.

The 45-day federally required public comment period commenced on September 23, 2026 and conclude on November 7, 2026. In addition, a virtual public meeting will be held on Thursday, October 15, 2026 from 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

The public is encouraged to review the draft Public Participation Plan and Title VI Program documents and provide comments to Emily Mrochko, Transportation Planner 48 W. Third Street, Williamsport, PA 17701 via email at emrochko@lyco.org or phone 570 320-2141.

- 3.2 Michael Hagen – Elected Officials Personnel Actions

New Hire:

Courts – Wendy Keefer-DeHart, Tipstave, Part-Time, PG7, \$12.7908 per Hour, Not to Exceed 1000 Hours Annually, Anticipated Start Date: October 19. 2026.

4.0 PERSONNEL ACTIONS

- 4.1 Michael Hagen – Approve the following Personnel Actions as conditional offers of employment, subject to the successful completion of a background check and all other employment conditions as outlined in Attachment (A).

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

5.0 ACTION ITEMS

- 5.1 Emily Mrochko – Vote to approve Larson Design Group Change Order #1 Small Local Bridge Inspection Program in the amount of \$4,108.44. (2026 approved budgeted item – Liquid Fuels Grant funds)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

- 5.2 Larissa Hassinger– Vote to approve Amendment #1 to the Professional & Administrative Services Agreement. (CDBG FFY 25 approved budgeted funds)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

- 5.3 Larissa Hassinger – Vote to approve Amendment #2 to the Professional & Administrative Services Agreement. (CDBG FFY 24 approved budgeted funds)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

- 5.4 Larissa Hassinger - Vote to approve the CDBG FFY25 Subrecipient Agreement with West Branch Regional Authority in the amount of \$30,000.00. (Approved CDBG FFY 25 funds)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

- 5.5 Kristen McLaughlin – Vote to approve the Interagency Agreement Amendment #2 with Lycoming County Department of Public Safety in the amount of \$103,928.26. (2026 approved budgeted item – ARPA funds)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

Commissioner Metzger thanked Kristen for all the work that she did with the ARPA funds. He noted that without her assistance and that of her agency they wouldn't have been able to achieve all that they did. He informed all that the County received 22 million dollars that has to be used by the end of 2026. Once all the work is completed there will be a power point presentation on the completed projects. Twelve million dollars of that money was allocated to outside agencies and municipalities for generational projects. He relayed that when then Senator Casey was monitoring how counties were utilizing the monies Senator Casey told the Commissioners that they could be a model for the rest of the countines on how to allocate the money.

- 5.6 Carissa Seals for Gary Staggert – Vote to approve the Amendment to the Agreement with Cogan House Pest Solutions in the amount of \$485.00 per month. (2026 approved budgeted item – Operating Expenses)

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

- 5.7 Shanean Edmonds – Vote to approve the Amendment to the Agreement dated 10/1/2021 with the PA Department of Agriculture extending the term until September 30, 2027.

Mr. Mussina moved to approve. Mr. Sortman 2nd the motion. Approved 3-0

6.0 COMMISSIONER COMMENT

Commissioner Sortman thanked the previous Board of Commissioners for the way they handled the disbursement of the ARPA funds, choosing generational projects throughout the county that benefited the residents now and in the future.

Commissioner Sortman addressed the upcoming elections assuring all that Voters Services does everything they can to ensure secure voting throughout the county. If any issues arise, they will be looked at and dealt with.

Commissioner Sortman announced that although the County is in better place fiscally than prior years a Tran loan will need to be taken. This is due to income that has not yet been received but was budgeted. The prior Tran loan has been paid off. Commissioner Sortman thanked the entire County staff for reducing expenditures. He expressed his concern about the departments that are at 90% of their budget for the year.

Commissioner Metzger spoke about the difficulties they have encountered getting responses from federal agencies regarding the payment owed to the County for grants that have been awarded and work completed. He thanked Congressman Meuser, Senator McCormick and Fetterman, as well as their staff for their assistance. Commissioner Metzger added that they will continue to look at ways to save money and eliminate waste. He encouraged staff to present any cost saving ideas they have.

Commissioner Sortman added that they are looking ways to offset the grant funding money until it is received in order to keep the general fund in a positive cash flow.

Commissioner Mussina announced that October 19th is the last day to register to vote. He spoke about a Social Studies teacher who gave students the forms to register to vote when they turned 18. Commissioner Mussina thanked the Financial Management Team for their hard working on the budget as well as all the county employees for their cooperation.

7.0 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Speakers who wish to address the Board of Commissioners will be limited for no more than three (3) minutes on any particular item. The speaker must state his/her name and address for the record. Any deviation from this rule must be approved by the Board Chairman.

Forest Rothchild – Comments and information attached

Commissioner Metzger thanked Jeff Stroehmann and the other township supervisors for the use of the township building as the host site for people to get assistance regardless of the township they live in. He encouraged everyone who had damage, even if it was minor to report it as it helps get the aid needed.

Jeff Stroehmann, Woodward Township Supervisor thanked the Commissioners for coming out and touring the area. He relayed that this meant a lot to the residents. The biggest challenge is to get the word out to anyone who sustained any damage from the storm to come and report it.

Commissioner Sortman spoke about the buildup of stone and debris in the streams. He thanked the Conservation Department for touring the area. They have the abilities to assist with stream cleanup. If you have a stream on your property with debris do not clean it up yourself but let the Conservation department know about it. There may be assistance to repair the stream.

Commissioner Metzger added that cleanup of streams is not allowed by the state which is frustrating. The state representatives are aware of this and have been working on this issue.

Commissioner Mussina talked about some unique situations that occurred during this storm that haven't happened prior such as mud slides that no flood insurance would have covered. He encouraged all to report any damage that they incurred.

Director Barnes reported that the county is focused on finding grants to fulfill project needs. She stated that we are no longer chasing grants and then finding projects to apply the grant to. The County is also being diligent in looking at the specific requirements of the grant to make sure we can fulfill the requirements prior to applying for it.

YOU TUBE PUBLIC COMMENT

None

8.0 NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next Commissioners Public Meeting will be held on Thursday, October 1, 2026, at 10:00 A.M. in the Commissioner's Board Room, 3rd Floor, 33 West Third Street, Williamsport, PA 17701

To View This Meeting and For More Detailed Information Click on The Link Below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0A0kAxQk32c>

ATTACHMENT (A)

PERSONNEL ACTIONS:

Internal changes:

Facilities Management – Chris Paulhamus, Maintenance III, Full-Time, PG8, \$26.00 per Hour, 75 Hours per Pay Period, Effective Date: September 27, 2026.

New Hires:

Prison – Alex Wagner-Pizza, Correctional Officer, Full-Time, Union, \$21.50 per Hour, 80 Hours per Pay Period, Anticipated Start Date: September 28, 2026.

Public Safety – Lucas Hower, GIS Program Specialist, Full-Time, PG8, \$21.3304 per Hour, 80 Hours per Pay Period, Anticipated Start Date: September 28, 2026.



PROCLAMATION



Whereas, September has been designated National Suicide Prevention Month, a month to remember the lives lost to suicide, the millions of people who have struggled with suicidal ideation and acknowledge the individuals, families and communities that have been impacted; and

Whereas, Suicide is among the top 10 leading causes of death in the United States, resulting in about one death every 11 minutes. In addition, suicide attempts result in an even larger number of non-fatal, intentional self-harm injuries; and



Whereas, According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, suicide is the second leading cause of death for people 10 to 34 years of age, the fourth leading cause of death among people 35 to 54 years of age and the eighth-leading cause among people 55 to 64 years of age, with suicide related deaths being four times higher among males compared to females; and

Whereas, Despite the positive efforts suicide remains a public health issue that touches the lives of our communities causing serious emotional, physical, and economic impacts; and

Whereas, Suicide Prevention Month is a time in which mental health advocates, individuals, prevention organizations, survivors, allies, and communities around the country unite to promote suicide prevention awareness and education; and

Whereas, The National Alliance of Northcentral PA (NCPA) hosts the Suicide Prevention Committee which aims to improve wellness within Lycoming and Clinton County through collaborative efforts surrounding suicide education - learning warning signs, promoting prevention and resilience, offering outreach, providing education, encouraging community change and is supported by individuals who have struggled or lost loved ones to mental illness, local service agencies, providers, educators, county officials, and community partners; and

Whereas, Lycoming County strives to continue to support expansion of mental health resources, training and service, offer expanding crisis intervention services, and provide Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) to firsthand responders; and

Whereas, All citizens are urged to play a role in suicide prevention and promote mental health and wellness as we strive towards reducing suicides and destigmatizing it through education, advocacy, outreach, intervention, and promoting wellness within our community.

Now, Therefore, be it resolved that we, the Lycoming County Commissioners, do hereby proclaim the month of September 2026, as

National Suicide Prevention and Action Month

Lycoming County, Pennsylvania.

Lycoming County Commissioners

Scott L. Metzger, Chairman

Marc C. Sortman, Vice Chairman

Mark Mussina, Secretary



Erin Timmins Comments:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of NAMI North Central PA, our dedicated volunteers, community partners, and individuals and families we serve, I would like to thank Lycoming County Commissioners for proclaiming September as Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. This proclamation represents more than a symbolic gesture. It is a powerful reminder that suicide prevention is everyone's responsibility and that increasing awareness, education, and access to support can save lives. Every day, individuals in our community's face challenges related to mental health, substance use, trauma, grief, isolation, and hopelessness. By openly acknowledging these struggles and encouraging conversations about mental health, we help to reduce stigma and remind people they are not alone.

Suicide remains a significant public health concern both nationally and here in our local communities. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 48,824 Americans died by suicide in 2024, and millions more experienced suicidal thoughts, made plans, or attempted death by suicide. Suicide continues to be one of the leading causes of death in the United States, particularly among young people and young adults.

Locally the impact is also significant. Data shows that 24 individuals died by suicide in 2024 and 21 individuals died by suicide in 2025. Behind every statistic is a person, a family, friends, coworkers, and a community forever changed by that loss. These numbers remind us why suicide prevention cannot be limited to a single month. It requires year-round awareness, education, compassionate support, and a community willing to have difficult conversations about mental health.

At NAMI North Central Pennsylvania, we are committed to creating a community where individuals and families affected by mental health conditions feel supported, informed, and empowered. Through our free peer support groups, individuals living with mental health challenges can connect with others who understand their experiences and offer hope, encouragement, and understanding. We also provide a Survivors of Suicide Loss Support group, offering a safe and compassionate space for those navigating the profound grief that follows the loss of a loved one to suicide.

Our Suicide Prevention Committee meets quarterly and works to promote education, awareness, and community engagement. We recently started collaborating with local organizations to provide monthly wellness events. We attend and provide educational presentations, share resources throughout the community, and partner with the CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) and organizations to strengthen support systems and improve responses to individuals experiencing mental health crises.

As we continue our mission, we are developing a community mental health panel to bring together professionals, advocates, and individuals with lived experiences to discuss mental health challenges, available resources, and ways we can work together to build a stronger and healthier community.

This proclamation helps send an important message: It is okay to ask for help. You are not alone. Recovery is possible. By working together, we can create a community where no one struggles alone and where every individual knows they matter.

On behalf of NAMI North Central Pennsylvania, thank you for this proclamation and for your commitment to promoting suicide prevention, mental health awareness, and hope throughout our community. We look forward to continuing this important work alongside our community partners and members of our community.

Together we can save lives and foster hope and healing throughout Lycoming County.

Thank you

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS UPDATE

September 2–3 Storm Recovery Update

September 24, 2026 | Forest W.S. Rothchild, Director of Public Safety | Board Action: None — Informational

BOTTOM LINE: Recovery has shifted from damage assessment to assistance — beginning tomorrow, September 25, the SBA opens a Disaster Loan Outreach Center in Woodward Township, and every affected resident should come in and ask what help is available.

THE EVENT

- The National Weather Service reported 3 to 7 inches of rain in portions of the warned area, with flooding across central and western Lycoming County.
- We saw damage to homes, basements, roadways, and other property. Some residents were displaced; many are still working through cleanup, repairs, insurance, and the financial impact.

DISASTER DECLARATIONS

- The County issued its disaster declaration on September 4 to document the event and preserve access to state and federal recovery assistance.
- South Williamsport, Woodward, Anthony, Watson, and Duboistown submitted local disaster declarations.
- Why it matters: some state recovery programs evaluate eligibility at the municipal level. Federal SBA assistance follows its own eligibility requirements.

SBA DISASTER LOAN OUTREACH CENTER (DLOC)

- **Location:** Woodward Township Municipal Building, 89 Moore Road Extension, Linden
- **Opens:** Friday, September 25
- **Hours:** Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. | Saturday, 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
- **Who should come:** Homeowners, renters, businesses, and eligible private nonprofit. SBA is not only for businesses. Do not assume you are ineligible — ask.

THE COUNTY’S ROLE

- We help residents navigate recovery: where to go, who to speak with, and what resources are available.
- We cannot promise which program a resident will qualify for or what assistance they will receive.

RECOGNITION

- Thank you, Commissioners, for visiting impacted areas firsthand. Leadership on the ground tells residents their concerns are heard and they have not been forgotten once the emergency passed.

MESSAGE TO RESIDENTS

We are still here, and we will keep working with you through recovery. If your home or property was damaged, or you do not know where to start, reach out. Beginning tomorrow, come to Woodward Township and talk with us and the SBA. Our goal: help every affected resident find the legitimate assistance available to repair, replace, and move forward.