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from  
*Adams County*

written by: Commissioner Randy Phiel

January 5, 2024

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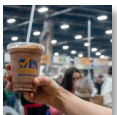
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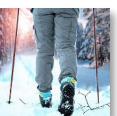
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Welcome  
To our  
TEAM

### *Welcome New Controller & Coroner*

At the December 29<sup>th</sup> *Swearing-In-Ceremony*, Adams County welcomed two new row officers. Welcome to the team Controller Tammy Myers and Coroner Francis Dutrow. The Swearing-in-Ceremony is always poignant, but the first time is very, very special. The Board of Commissioners thanks Tammy & Francis for their commitment to Adams County public service and wishes them great success and fulfillment in their county role! Retiring Controller John Phillips and Coroner Pat Felix, deserve special recognition for their dedicated and superior service to Adams County residents. Our sincere thanks and best wishes to both John and Pat!



## County Building Permit Threshold Adjusted

Per Adams County Ordinance #2 of 2023, the value threshold amount to require a County Property Improvement Permit is to be adjusted annually on January 1 by the most recently reported Consumer Price Index (CPI). For this year, the most recently reported adjustment was from October 2023 data, that shows a 3.5% increase. In that case, the Adams County New Permit threshold for 2024 is now **\$4,500**. Therefore, anyone who will be undertaking Substantial Improvements to their property where the “value of the proposed work or project is estimated to exceed” \$4,500 is required to obtain an Adams County Property Improvement Certification.

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## Keystone Pet Enhanced Therapy Services “KPETS” Approved

In certain situations, it is undeniable that approved therapy pets provide comfort and emotional support. At Tuesday’s public meeting, Commissioners approved the recommendation from District Court Administrator Don Fennimore, and after solicitor review, the Terms and Conditions Form with Keystone Pet Enhanced Therapy Services (“KPETS”). The agreement allows registered KPETS volunteers and their dogs to participate in therapeutic canine services in County and Court facilities. The Board also approved the Memorandum of Understanding between the County and KPETS registered handler Larry Miller. This MOU provides that Mr. Miller is permitted to engage in therapeutic canine services sponsored by KPETS at the Courthouse with his certified dog, Dudley, at such times as may be requested by the County or Courts. Both Agreements are effective January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, with no cost to the County. The Board of Commissioners fully supports the initiative of creating a supportive, caring, and compassionate environment where and when appropriate!

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## Adams County Broadband Update

This past month has seen a lot of data gathering for the initiative. County staff and the Broadband Task Force (BBTF) have been providing to and receiving updates from various community stakeholders. The BBTF has presented to the Adams County Council of Governments, County Planning Commission, @Home in Adams, the Adams Economic Alliance, Destination Gettysburg, and the Chamber of Commerce. Soon this effort will move onto specific municipal governments in Upper Adams to get their feedback and to inform them of potential grants. The BBTF is partnering with Community Media to create a video presentation, so that the public at large can access the study results and see what is to come for Adams County. The BBTF is also coordinating with Penn State Extension to learn more about best practices in Digital Literacy. Our intention is to apply for funds to help residents learn how to safely use the internet.

Over the coming months the State will release two significant grant opportunities. Both the BEAD Program and the Multi-purpose Facilities grant programs are the largest and will require community partners. The BBTF is reaching out to potential partners to determine best uses for these funds in our communities. The next two years will be pivotal in determining the digital future of Adams County.



## County Receives PCOMP Insurance Dividend Payment

Adams County is a member of the Pennsylvania County Commissioners Association PComp Insurance Plan, which is the abbreviation for *Pennsylvania Counties' Workers' Compensation*. How the plan performs each year, and how the county performs, can determine if any money is returned at the end of the year. We were recently advised that the Self Insurance Division of the Department of Labor and Industry has approved PComp's annual request regarding 2024 rates, grants, and a \$3 million dividend, as declared by the Board of Trustees! Two welcome take-aways for Adams County are that the new Wellness Improvement Grant Program (WIP) will begin in the 2024 coverage year. Members such as Adams County will receive a maximum of \$5,000 per member that can be dedicated to wellness activities. Also, based each counties experience over several years, Adams County will be receiving \$196,610 refund for exceptional performance! Commissioner Martin is a member of the PCOMP Board and is Chair of their Investment Committee!

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## Human Services Building Solar Moves Forward

The roof solar project at the Adams County Human Services Building has been an on-going project. The necessity of repairing and supporting the roof has been a necessary prelude to installation of the solar panels. At Tuesday's public meeting the Board of Commissioners signed a Letter of Intent with The Energy Network (TEN) whereby the parties agree to design and construct a rooftop solar PV energy project - with an aggregate capacity of +/- 480 kW DC ("the System") on the roof of the County's Human Services Building located at 525 Boyds School Road. The solar is expected to power the Human Service Building.

Landowner's rights, neighbor's rights, environmental concerns, and utilization of agricultural land all come in to play when discussing/debating solar panels. With solar energy in Adams County being a divisive subject, the Board believes that placing solar on an expansive commercial type building rooftop, sets an example of utilizing this type of energy, while preserving agricultural land and viewsheds. The project is anticipated to be completed this year pending supply chain fulfillment.

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## Pennsylvania Farm Show Starts Saturday

There is snow in the forecast for this weekend, so that can only mean one thing – *Its Farm Show Time!* The 108<sup>TH</sup> Pennsylvania Farm Show will be held Saturday, January 6<sup>TH</sup> through Saturday, January 13, in Harrisburg at the PA Farm Show Complex & Expo Center. The show offers visitors a tiny slice of the industry that employs nearly ½ million Pennsylvania residents and contributes \$132.5 billion to the Pennsylvania economy every year. Normally Adams County businesses are well represented. All 3 commissioners will be attending Public Officials Day on Wednesday. Admission is free but parking is \$15 whether on-site or utilizing shuttle



service from off-site lots. We can't mention the Farm Show without gloating that our own Adams Countian Russell Redding, Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture, has admirably and effectively served in that capacity for three different administrations. If you see him walking around the complex give him an Adams County atta boy!



## The End

- **Through The Darkness to Light: Photographs Along the Underground Railroad.** Exhibition GNMP Visitor Center. A visual perspective of the Underground Railroad. January 3-7. Fee included with admission to museum.
  - **NPS Winter Lecture Series.** Featuring some of the best National Park Service Rangers, historians, and authors from across the country. Various topics. Saturday's & Sunday's January 6 thru March 3. Program 1:30-2:30 at GNMP Visitor Center. A free event with seating, first - come first served.
  - **Healthy Adams County Winter Hiking.** Hike your way to better health with friends and other like-minded fitness and outdoor enthusiasts. Beginning February 4<sup>th</sup> – March 19<sup>th</sup>. Healthy Adams County is facilitating 8 interesting hikes around Adams County. I actually had the pleasure of leading one of these hikes from the Rec Park to West Confederate Avenue and across Pickett's Charge Field. [www.facebook.com/healthyadamscounty](http://www.facebook.com/healthyadamscounty).
  - **Dancing with the Local Stars.** This is a guaranteed fun night out. Go out to dinner with friends and then head to the Majestic Theater to support the Gettysburg/Adams County YWCA and Adams County Arts Council. This event normally sells out so get your tickets now. Show on Friday, January 12 at 7PM. Tickets are \$39-49.
  - **The Gettysburg Chamber Orchestra.** Sponsored by Music Gettysburg, this performance takes place at the Seminary on Sunday, January 14. The performance begins at 4PM. It will feature the Baroque Ensemble. This is a free event open to the public followed by **Robert Burns Night**. This performance is also sponsored by Music Gettysburg and takes place at the Seminary at 7:30 PM on Friday, January 19. This annual tribute to the famed Scottish bard is also free to the public.
  - Providing a plug for our neighbors in Franklin County, **Ice Fest 24** takes place in downtown Chambersburg from Thursday, January 24 – Sunday January 28. The event features ice sculptures, ice slides, vendors, and food. I can personally attest it is a great way to spend an afternoon! No entry fee for Ice Fest!
- Winter Cemetery Tour: Soldiers National Cemetery.** Saturday, February 3 at 3:30PM. The tour features African American soldiers buried in the National Cemetery. This is an outdoor event at no cost. Dress appropriately!

No matter what you do, get out there and experience all the historical, recreational, agricultural, natural, and cultural opportunities that beautiful Adams County has to offer!