Cameron County Commissioners
Commissioner's Conference Room
20 E 5th Street, Emporium, PA 15834
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 16, 2026 @ 11:00am

Commissioner Herzing called this meeting to order at 11:22 am, with a moment of silence and pledge to the flag. Late start due to the Retirement Board meeting going over our time scheduled because our new account manager had a lot of information to go over.

Visitors: Sophia Fragale, Cameron County Echo; David J Reed

Public Comment: David Reed asked to review the tax appeal final order. Commissioner Herzing offered it for his review.

Meeting minutes: The meeting minutes of April 2, 2026, were unanimously approved as presented.

Correspondence:

- Received Final Order of tax appeal for Marc J. Fruth and Cameron County Board of Assessment Appeals. We are waiting for the final letters from Assessment to proceed with refunding the tax to the owner.
- Received notification from PA DEP of Class A Stream Redesignations.

Chief Clerk Report: Business as usual.

Commissioners' Reports:
Commissioner Zucal:
Commissioner Zucal reported primarily on environmental planning, regional projects, and recreation updates:

- **Montrose Environmental work:** A major focus was a two-day site visit to a 370-acre property with engineers and a landscape architect to assess trails, terrain, and design possibilities. A follow-up meeting is expected in about a month with more data and planning recommendations.
- **Brownfield grant progress:** The county is part of a regional $1.5–$1.6 million brownfield grant involving multiple counties. Updates included ongoing site evaluations, including soil sampling at Pick Creek Flats. Some samples must be redone due to a lab error, but at no additional cost to the grant.
- **Meetings and coordination:** Attendance at a solicitor's meeting for legal updates and a North Central Regional Planning Commission meeting to review opportunities and regional initiatives.
- **Tourism and recreation efforts:** Work continues with Pennsylvania Great Outdoors on a redesigned gravel biking brochure. The Dark Sky Committee is planning events and promotional materials for upcoming stargazing programs.
- **Local projects:** Minor operational updates included moving furniture to the recreation center and noting ongoing improvements there, including removal of old concrete and installation of new sidewalks.

Overall, the report highlighted steady progress on environmental redevelopment, regional collaboration, and recreation/tourism initiatives.

Commissioner Herzing:
Commissioner Herzing's report centered on financial stability, operational improvements, and community development:

- **Pension and retirement system**: The county's pension plan is fully funded and in a surplus position, meaning it is financially strong without requiring increased taxpayer contributions. Investments are structured to manage market risk effectively. Discussions are underway about potentially providing a cost-of-living increase for retirees, pending further analysis.

- **Accounts payable automation**: The county has begun working with Tyler Technologies to implement an automated accounts payable system, which will streamline processes, reduce paper and postage costs, and improve staff efficiency.
- **Regional planning and public input**: At the North Central meeting, Herzing emphasized the need for greater public participation in economic development planning, encouraging residents to provide feedback on regional plans and upcoming transportation initiatives.
- **Human services update**: The local senior center ranks among the top in the region for meals served. A new food vendor has received very positive feedback, supporting efforts to help seniors age in place.
- **Grants and funding**: The county received a $50,000 grant for recreation center improvements and is expecting reimbursement funds from a broadband (BEAD) project. Act 13 funds were reported, with surplus added to capital funds and future funding opportunities noted.
- **Recreation center improvements**: Ongoing construction includes concrete work, siding, and a future elevator lift installation. Temporary closures have occurred due to safety concerns, but efforts are being made to keep portions accessible. Plans are also underway to outfit a new conferencing and co-working space.
- **General updates**: Coordination continues with vendors for technology and facility planning, and routine administrative responsibilities such as required reporting have been completed.

Overall, Herzing highlighted strong financial management, infrastructure upgrades, and a push for efficiency and community engagement.

Commissioner Moate

Commissioner Moate's report focused on community initiatives, infrastructure progress, and upcoming events:

- **Purple Heart signage initiative:** Ongoing coordination with PennDOT has identified a path forward to install signs honoring Purple Heart recipients, though placement and municipal permitting will be required.
- **County website update:** A draft of the new county website is under review, with launch anticipated within the next month or two, pending final revisions.
- **Events and representation:** The county will attend the Lumber Heritage Region's 25th anniversary event in May. Moate also highlighted the recent Sinnemahoning Canoe and Kayak Classic, which featured special America 250 PA-themed trophies.
- **Brownfield redevelopment:** Continued discussions through the Brownfield Advisory Committee included potential developer interest in local sites, signaling possible economic development opportunities.
- **Meetings and administration:** Participation in the solicitor's meeting included confirmation of a judicial sale scheduled for May 29. A recent retirement board meeting reported strong financial health due to conservative investment strategies.
- **Technology and infrastructure:** Work continues with the County Commissioners' Association Technology Committee, with a meeting scheduled in June. The Core Connect broadband project has received final federal approval and is moving toward implementation, with planning meetings underway. A separate meeting with Windstream will address communication infrastructure.
- **Community engagement:** Upcoming events include "Recovery in the Sticks" in May, focused on mental health resources, and a local news survey meet-and-greet hosted by Press Forward PA.

Overall, the report emphasized forward progress on infrastructure, economic development, and community-focused initiatives, along with active participation in regional events and planning efforts.

Treasurer's Report: Expenses for the month of March totaled $206,103.84

Old Business: nothing

New Business: nothing

Good of the Order: The "good of the order" focused on the upcoming **data center ordinance** and public engagement process:

- The ordinance is in its final draft stage, with a completed draft expected within about a week.
- Officials plan to hold a dedicated town hall meeting—separate from a commissioners meeting—to allow ample time for public input on what has been a highly discussed topic.
- The ordinance will be made available for public review at multiple community locations (such as the library, IDA office, senior center, and county offices), following a similar approach used for the wind turbine ordinance.
- Once locations and details are finalized, the county will formally announce and promote opportunities for residents to review the ordinance and provide feedback.

Overall, the goal is to ensure transparency and give the public sufficient time and access to review and comment before any decisions are made.

Adjournment: with no further business Commissioner Moate moved to adjourn this meeting at 11:50 am, with a 2nd from Commissioner Zucal, all in favor and so moved.

The next regular Commissioner Meeting will be Thursday, May 7, 2026, at 11:00am in the Commissioners Conference Room at the Cameron County Courthouse 20 E 5th St., Emporium, PA 15834.

Submitted by,

Annette Campbell
Chief Clerk, Secretary to the Commissioners