Call to Order
Chair Winder called the meeting to order.

Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance
Vice Chair Makhija, and Commissioner DiBello were present. Note the absence of Chair Winder.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Montgomery County’s Treasurer, Jason Salus.

Opening Commissioners’ Comments

Vice Chair Makhija:

Commissioner-Chair Winder is not able to join us today due to the passing of her Mother; on behalf of the entire County—myself, Commissioner DiBello, Row Officers, Department Heads, and all of our County staff, we share our condolences for her and her family.

- Primary Election Voting begins this weekend
  - Satellite Offices will open this weekend for the Primary Election, which is scheduled for Tuesday, April 23rd
  - On Saturday, April 6th, our satellite offices in Lansdale, Narberth, and Norristown will be open, and on Sunday, April 7th, our offices in Pottstown, Narberth and Willow Grove will be open
  - All our satellite offices are open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. for the next two weekends
  - Drop boxes will be open 24 hours a day beginning Saturday, April 13th
  - Information about the 2024 Election can be found on the Montgomery County Voter Services website
**Voter Hall of Fame**
- We are looking forward to honoring our most recent Voter Hall of Famers this afternoon at 2 p.m.
- We'll have 16 dedicated voters joining us to be inducted into our Voter Hall of Fame - these are people who have voted in 50 consecutive General-November elections
- They are our champions of democracy, committed to the process, and set a great example for our community
- We'll also be acknowledging several voters who have voted in 50 elections before the age of 50; both general and primary elections, and local municipality races
- Applications are open all year round for the Hall of Fame and we will host more celebrations in the future

**National Public Health Week**
- This week is National Public Health Week, which runs from April 1st – 7th
- The theme for 2024 is Protecting, Connecting, and Thriving: We Are All Public Health
- Public Health encompasses so much of what we are responsible for in the County:
  - Preparedness and prevention
  - Vaccination programs
  - Tobacco and drug programs
  - Creating safe workplaces and housing
  - Public safety initiatives
  - Planning people-first neighborhoods
  - Community Education; and much more
- The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services and Office of Public Health does excellent work to support the health of all Montgomery County residents
- Thank you to Jae Kim, Deputy Administrator of Public Health, and David Genova, Director of Health Promotion at Montgomery County for you service
- Nobody’s health should be at a higher risk because of where they were born, the house they grow up in, or the color of their skin
- Centering public health in our policymaking and programs allows us to build healthy communities and combat existing inequities that can affect the public’s health
- Please take a moment to complete the Montgomery County’s Community Health Assessment survey that’s available in multiple languages at [www.montgomerycountypa.gov/CHA](http://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/CHA)
- The Commissioners of Montgomery County, do hereby proclaim April 1-7, 2024 as National Public Health Week and urge all Montgomery County residents to
observe this week by helping family, friends, communities, schools, and coworkers adopt healthy lifestyle choices

- **Self-Guided Walking Tour: Conshohocken Station Area**
  - The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) is inviting people to experience a new self-guided walking tour of the area around Conshohocken Station, which demonstrates the concept of transit-oriented development (TOD)
  - Transit-oriented development is residential and commercial development near existing transit links designed to increase the use of public transit and alternative modes of transportation
  - TOD expands opportunities to connect people and places throughout Montgomery County and the Greater Philadelphia area
  - Planning thoughtfully around our existing transit links helps our communities to become vibrant, dynamic places, while also preparing ahead for population growth, affordable housing, and climate change
  - The work being done here by the Planning Commission demonstrates our focus on further cultivating connectivity with accessible spaces for living and working in Montgomery County
  - We invite everyone to check out the tour to see this in action

**Commissioner DiBello:**

- **Week of the Young Child**
  - The [Week of the Young Child](#) starts Saturday, April 6-12, 2024
  - WOYC celebrates and ties together early learning, young children, teachers, families, and communities
  - It’s imperative that we highlight the importance of the growth and development of young children
  - The significance of early childhood education for long term thriving and reaching full potential is crucial to life cycle achievements
  - As Commissioners, we recognize the efforts of caregivers and educators who step up to the needs of our young children every day to make sure they are thriving and reaching full potential

- **National Child Abuse Prevention Month**
  - This year’s theme is - Doing Things Differently: Moving from the Challenge to the Change
  - [National Child Abuse Prevention Month](#) recognizes the importance of families and communities working together to prevent child abuse and neglect
  - Prevention services and supports help parents, other caregivers and communities protect our most vulnerable and strengthen families
- We must continue to innovate, collaborate, and prioritize the safety of our children.
- All residents are encouraged to educate themselves on the signs of child abuse or neglect, to speak up if you see something, and create safe supportive environments for our children.

**PA Homeowner Assistance Fund**
- The Pennsylvania Housing Assistance Fund application window is now open for 2024.
- This program assists homeowners with housing related expenses, mortgage, taxes, and other payments.
- In 2023, the Tax Claim Bureau was able to help 39 constituents get their delinquencies solved, with grants totaling $310,008 in sizes that ranged from $412 to $14,000.
- The program is prioritizing those who are in danger of losing their homes.
- Montgomery County will continue to promote this assistance to get our residents to a better place financially and until funding is depleted.
- Visit PAHAF or the Montgomery County Tax Claim Bureau for more information.

**Election Ruling**
- On March 27th, 2024, the U.S. 3rd Circuit Court made a ruling on mail in ballots that arrive on time, but in envelopes without dates, or incorrect dates by PA voters, should not be counted.
- Thanks to the concerned constituents that reached out and voiced their opinions with suggestions around election-ballot counting processes.
- This Board recognizes and acknowledges these concerns, but we can’t legally go back and un-certify an election without a court order.

**Board of Commissioner Meetings**
- Board meetings will be moved around the county at different townships in the evening to further engage with our community.
- Please stay tuned for additional details on times and locations.

**Montgomery County as a “sanctuary” Concerns**
- There have been several inquiries from residents around whether Montgomery County is considered a “sanctuary county”.
- The County should clarify this concern for our constituents.

*Solicitor McGarry mentioned that Montgomery County has never taken a position or declared itself as a “sanctuary county”.*
Vice Chair Makhija commented that local government is not meant to enforce immigration law.

Solicitor McGarry concluded that Montgomery County will not detain someone for immigration purposes, but will notify I.C.E. that they are in our custody to be picked up; and, that the prison determines the detention policy.

Announcements, Commendations, Presentations & Reports
1. Update from District Attorney's Office, Laurel House, and Mission Kids on Anti-Human Trafficking Activities - Brianna Ringwood, District Attorney's Office

Attending in Support
- Detective Kathleen Kelly, Human Trafficking Detective & Task Force Coordinator - Montgomery County Detective Bureau
- Leslie Slingsby, Chief Executive Officer of Services & Operations - Mission Kids Child Advocacy Center
- Beth Sturman, Executive Director - Laurel House
- Natacha (Rivera) Carroll, Advocacy Coordinator - Victim Services Center of Montgomery County
- Jalla Atkins, Coordinator - Forensic Nurse Examiner Program at Jefferson Abington Hospital

Vice Chair Makhija thanked the District Attorney’s office for their diligent work and efforts towards addressing human trafficking.

Commissioner DiBello expressed gratitude for everyone that’s here in support of this topic and the explanation into the depths of what human trafficking entails, how widespread it is in the county-PA, and nationally. Commissioner DiBello concluded that PA is considered one of the worse states, the county is a hot spot for this issue, and hopefully we reduce and eliminate this problem by bringing more public awareness to the total impact through sharing statistics on how often it occurs.

Vice Chair Makhija added that some of these cases can be monitored by data tracking technology to further enhance our efforts.

2. National Library Week - Karen DeAngelo, Executive Director and District Administrator for the Norristown Public Library
3. Airy Street Prison Update - Scott France, Montgomery County's Director of Planning

Vice Chair Makhija thanked Mr. France for this important update to help us understand the level of depth and engagement that’s happening with the municipality in creating an innovative way to utilize this space.
Commissioner DiBello thanked everyone who lifted their voices in support of this project, fellow Commissioners - along with the Planning Commission for thinking of ways to redevelop this space. Commissioner DiBello added that he is looking forward to the evolution of this project that will positively impact some of Norristown’s needs.

Public Comment on Today’s Pending Votes, Resolutions, Bids, RFP’s, and Contracts – Limited to 3 Minutes
(Speakers may comment on matters that appear on today’s agenda that the Commissioners will consider at this meeting, listed in items F through J. All public comments must be relevant, or “germane,” to County business. This means that the subject matter of all comments must be limited to items or issues which are currently before the Commissioners for consideration. Speakers may present once during the comment period on agenda items.)

1. David Morgan commented on the RFP for website streamlining, the planning commission budget for county projects, and transparency with spending for each county department.
2. Deb Spence commented on public comment guidelines, human trafficking and personal experience, supporting individuals with Developmental Disabilities-programs, acknowledging Autism Awareness month, and the targeted demographics for the alternative services contract award.

Approval of the Minutes
Vice Chair Makhija made a motion to approve the March 21, 2024, minutes of the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners’ meeting.

Commissioner DiBello seconded the motion.

There was no Board comment. There was no public comment. Vice Chair Makhija brought the motion to a vote, and it was adopted with all in favor, and none opposed.

Personnel
April 4, 2024, Personnel List – Chief Human Resources Officer, Catherine Halen

Vice Chair Makhija made a motion to approve the April 4, 2024, Personnel presentation as given by Chief Human Resources Officer, Catherine Halen and to authorize the proper County Officials to execute the same.

Commissioner DiBello seconded the motion.

There was no Board comment. There was no public comment. Vice Chair Makhija brought the motion to a vote, and it was adopted with all in favor, and none opposed.

Advertisement of Bids, RFP’s, and RFI’s – Exhibit A
Vice Chair Makhija made a motion to approve the Advertisement of Bids and RFP’s for Montgomery County on attached Exhibit A, and to authorize the proper County Officials to execute the same, subject to the approval of the County Solicitor.

Commissioner DiBello seconded the motion.

There was no further Board comment. There was no public comment. Vice Chair Makhija brought the motion to a vote, and it was adopted with all in favor, and none opposed. The full text of the resolution 24.C-40 can be found here.

**Advertisement of Bids, RFP’s, and RFI’s for Southeast PA Regional Task Force – Exhibit B**

Vice Chair Makhija made a motion to approve the Advertisement of Bids and RFP’s for the Southeast PA Regional Task Force on attached Exhibit B, and to authorize the proper County Officials to execute the same, subject to the approval of the County Solicitor.

Commissioner DiBello seconded the motion.

There was no Board comment. There was no public comment. Vice Chair Makhija brought the motion to a vote, and it was adopted with all in favor, and none opposed. The full text of the resolution 24.C-41 can be found here.

**Awards of Contract – Montgomery County – Exhibit C**

Vice Chair Makhija made a motion to approve the Contract Awards, Amendments, and Renewals for Montgomery County on attached Exhibit C, and to authorize the proper County Officials to execute the same, subject to the approval of the County Solicitor.

Commissioner DiBello seconded the motion.

There was no Board comment. There was no public comment. Vice Chair Makhija brought the motion to a vote, and it was adopted with all in favor, and none opposed. The full text of the resolutions 24.C-42 can be found here.

**Awards of Contract – Southeast PA Regional Task Force – Exhibit D**

Vice Chair Makhija made a motion to approve the Contract Awards, Amendments, and Renewals for Southeast PA Regional Task Force on attached Exhibit D, and to authorize the proper County Officials to execute the same, subject to the approval of the County Solicitor.

Commissioner DiBello seconded the motion.

There was no Board comment. There was no public comment. Vice Chair Makhija brought the motion to a vote, and it was adopted with all in favor, and none opposed. The full text of the resolutions 24.C-43 can be found here.
General Public Comment – Limited to 3 minutes

(Speakers may comment on matters that are or may be before the Board of Commissioners. All public comments must be relevant, or “germane,” to County business. This means that the subject matter of all comments must be limited to items or issues which are currently before the Commissioners for consideration, or which may come before the Commissioners for consideration at a future meeting. Speakers may present once during the general public comment period.)

1. Peggy Dellisanti gave condolences to Chair Winder-family and thanked the Commissioners for their service to the county. Ms. Dellisanti also commented in support of the Airy Street Prison restoration and repurposing of that space for community development, the warm inclusiveness of the public meetings, and an upcoming event that supports Laurel House.

2. Cassandra Morabito commented on the Airy Street Prison redevelopment and thanked Commissioner DiBello and the Planning Commissioner for their work on this project, would like to see additional parking spaces in Norristown, and suggested open space concepts for the repurposing of the building site.

3. Sydelle Zove spoke in support of the prison, the site expansion use, extracting government funding to fund this project, having a transparent process with the structural assessment, and that the Planning Commission is spearheading this effort as an emblematic collaboration of public-private interest and partnership.

4. Olivia Brady commented in support of the Airy Street Prison, the withdrawal of the demolition permit, and creating an attractive landmark destination on this repurposed space.

5. Jim Mollich commented on the public health assessment, management of the pandemic, social isolation, election integrity, 2020 election polling data on ballot counting, and the effects on small businesses with a minimum wage increase.

   Vice Chair Makhija commented on a letter to the Governor of PA about raising the minimum wage to $15, and that it’s important to support the increase, so people who work 40 hours a week have earning potential and are not living in poverty.

   Commissioner DiBello commented on his experience as a small business owner, supporting the increase that’s already being done in Montgomery County, but shouldn’t go any higher. Commissioner DiBello added that the minimum wage increase hasn’t changed in several years; however, a lot of small businesses were already paying higher wages, looking at starting salaries for new hires to fall in line with the majority, analyzing economic inflation and how much a company has to spend plays a huge part in how much people get paid as well.

6. Rosemary Buettikofer commented on government at work, her experience with poll work, election integrity and security, the ballot counting process, her son being a voter hall of famer, and believes the safeguards in place for election-day are effective.

   Vice Chair Makhija thanked Ms. Buettikofer for being a poll worker.
7. Deb Spence commented on the Pottstown community receiving more community resources, thanked Chair Winder for supporting pride month, acknowledging adults living with Intellectual Developmental Disabilities or Autism, the sexual assault of her niece, how gun violence and Covid-19 affected her family, supporting her family’s successes, and would like to bring awareness to her nieces court case to protect persons with Developmental Disabilities.

8. Tai Spence commented on her experience at her rehabilitation facility and the human right to freedom.

9. David Morgan commented on the Justice Center budget and spending, creating user friendly website information, property tax increases, mental health training for staff to address the homeless, housing affordability, and holiday celebrations around the county.

   Commissioner DiBello mentioned that the county recognized Good Friday by closing early in acknowledgment of Easter.

10. Adrien Seltzer commented on the delays to Bridge #6 repairs in Lower Merion.

11. Jenny Reimenschneider spoke in support of addressing human trafficking, is happy to see Laurel House being represented, and her mother’s experience with senior services, orphans court and guardianship.

12. Cathy Pagano thanked Commissioners Winder and Makhija for their support of the LGBTQ+ community, and commented on hosting a pride flag raising event in Lower Gwynedd as the first LGBTQ+ elected official, addressing human trafficking concerns, and policing traffic violations and crime in Montgomery County.

**Closing Commissioners’ Comments**

Commissioner DiBello commented on doing an overview of the County Planning budget for transparency, and thanked all the volunteers who participated in the Pottstown clean-up effort at tent city for trash left out due to homelessness in the county. Commissioner DiBello added that we have great partnerships in our community trying to address homelessness, but we need to: create interconnecting groups to follow up on an individual needs basis, come up with long term solutions, identify necessary supports, build self-efficacy, and devise strategic framework to address homelessness in Montgomery County.

Vice Chair Makhija mentioned homelessness is a priority for this Board and that we will hold a summit to go over next steps and solutions for affordable housing needs in the county by addressing the entire continuum of services. Vice Chair Makhija added that there will be poll worker training tonight to uphold our system and create a process people can trust, and that Lower Merion will host events to speak out about hate as the community recently experienced hate crimes at local synagogues; and when one community experiences incidents like this, it’s important all communities step in to show support.

**Upcoming Meeting Dates**
Adjournment
On motion of Vice Chair Makhija, seconded by Commissioner DiBello, the April 4, 2024, meeting of the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners was adjourned.

There was no Board comment. There was no public comment. Vice Chair Makhija brought the motion to a vote, and the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned with all in favor, and none opposed.

Salary Board
Public Comment on Salary Board – Limited to 3 Minutes
There was no public comment.

Salary Board
Vice Chair Makhija motioned to approve the April 4, 2024, Salary Board presentation as given by Chief Human Resources Officer, Catherine Halen, and to authorize the proper County Officials to execute the same.

Controller Sanchez seconded the motion.

There was no Board comment. There was no public comment. Vice Chair Makhija brought the motion to a vote and the April 4, 2024, Salary Board was adopted with all in favor, and none opposed.

Adjournment
On motion of Vice Chair Makhija, seconded by Commissioner DiBello, the April 4, 2024, meeting of the Montgomery County Salary Board was adjourned.

There was no Board comment. There was no public comment. Vice Chair Makhija brought the motion to a vote, and the Montgomery County Salary Board meeting was adjourned with all in favor, and none opposed.

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