

Commissioners' Workshop Meeting Minutes Tuesday, May 22, 2012

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, May 22, 2012 at 10:30 A.M. in the 13th floor Boardroom of the Berks County Services Center, pursuant to due notice to Board members and the public.

Commissioner Chair Christian Y. Leinbach called the meeting to order with Commissioner Kevin S. Barnhardt and Commissioner Mark C. Scott in attendance. Also present were County Solicitor Alan S. Miller, Carl E. Geffken, Chief Operating Officer and Maryjo Gibson, Chief Clerk.

Commissioner Leinbach opened the meeting with a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, and announced that the Board met in Executive Session on May 21, 2012 to discuss personnel issues.

II. PRESENTATIONS

Clare Adams, Director of Berks County Parks and Recreation, presented a PowerPoint on the Low-Mow Meadows/Streamside Buffers Project being implemented at the Berks County Parks System. Ms. Adams commented that the goal of this program is to increase stewardship, habitats, ecosystems and stormwater management using common sense balanced conservation solutions that help build healthy, attractive and sustainable landscapes. Ms. Adams further commented that less than 1% of all County parklands, or approximately 8 to 9 acres are included in this year's program. Ms. Adams mentioned there will be future solid savings using the Low-Mow program. Ms. Adams stated that with the savings realized from this program park building maintenance and other improvements can be made. Commissioner Scott clarified with Ms. Adams that when she refers to low-mow she means less frequent mowing, not no mowing at all. Ms. Adams confirmed Commissioner Scott's understanding. Commissioner Barnhardt asked what the projection for the program is for next year. Ms. Adams commented that there are some new grants she would like to explore, and to also spend more time on the Union Canal Trail area. Commissioner Leinbach commented that Trout Unlimited has participated in the past with stream bank maintenance.

III. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS / REQUESTS:

Budget Department

- A. Adopt a resolution authorizing 2012 Budget Transfers for \$526,098.00 and 2012 Appropriations in the amount \$3,688,213.00 per listing dated May 18, 2012. Beth Evans, Manager of Budget, commented there is nothing out of the ordinary this week.

Purchasing

- A. Motion authorizing Christian Y. Leinbach as Chairman of the Board, to execute Contract Agreements/Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator, per listing dated May 18, 2012. Commissioner Leinbach reviewed the four contracts listed this week.
- B. Adopt a resolution authorizing the award and the Director of Contracts & Procurement to execute as result of Invitation to Bid #12-7-MB, a contract for the Design and Installation of Pedestrian Canopies for the County Services Center for a period of 16 months as follows:

Safeway Services LLC
1201-1215 S. Cameron Street
Harrisburg, PA 17104

Total Amount: **\$117,420.00**

If required, the contract may be extended on a month-to-month basis at the following rates:

\$2,145.00/mo. for Court Street Canopy (south side)

\$1,670.00/mo. for Washington Street Canopy (north side)

Kelly Laubach, Director of Contracts and Procurement, commented that the total amount of the contract should be \$117,423.00, and is part of the canopy to be used for the façade remediation project. Ms. Laubach commented this is the third time the canopies went out for bid and has finally received a responsive bid. Commissioner Barnhardt commented the canopies will also provide safety prior to the actual improvement of the façade.

Emergency Services

- A. Adopt a resolution authorizing Christian Y. Leinbach, Chair of the County Commissioners, to execute the Berks County Public Safety Radio Network Final Land Development and Construction Plans for the Bally/Hereford Site, with a last revision date of May 14, 2012 (the "Plans"), as such Plans were presented to this Board on or before the date of this Resolution, and further authorizes Christian Y. Leinbach, Chair of the County Commissioners, to execute all other such ancillary documents as may be required in connection with the submission and recording of such Plans, as such ancillary documents shall be approved by the County's Solicitor, all on behalf of the County of Berks.

IV. REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS

- A. Adopt a resolution extending the term of exemptions, deductions, abatements and credits for real property, earned income tax, net profits mercantile, and business privilege taxes within a specific geographic area in the City of Reading, Berks County designated as a Keystone Opportunity Expansion Zone ("KOEZ") or Keystone Opportunity Improvement Zone

("KOIZ") in order to foster economic opportunities, stimulate industrial, commercial, and residential improvements and prevent physical and infrastructure deterioration within areas of Berks County, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, upon certain terms and conditions.

- B. Adopt a resolution extending the term of exemptions, deductions, abatements and credits for real property, earned income tax, net profits mercantile, and business privilege taxes within a specific geographic area in the Borough of Birdsboro, Berks County designated as a Keystone Opportunity Expansion Zone ("KOEZ") or Keystone Opportunity Improvement Zone ("KOIZ") in order to foster economic opportunities, stimulate industrial, commercial, and residential improvements and prevent physical and infrastructure deterioration within areas of Berks County, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, upon certain terms and conditions.
- C. Adopt a resolution authorizing the exemptions, deductions, abatements and credits for real property, earned income tax, net profits mercantile, and business privilege taxes within a specific geographic area in the City of Reading, Berks County ("Expansion Parcel(s)") designated as a proposed expansion of a contiguous existing Keystone Opportunity Expansion Zone ("KOEZ") or Keystone Opportunity Improvement Zone ("KOIZ"), as appropriate, in order to foster economic opportunities, stimulate industrial, commercial, and residential improvements and prevent physical and infrastructure deterioration within the designated areas of Berks County, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, upon certain terms and conditions.
- D. Adopt a resolution authorizing exemptions, deductions, abatements and credits for real property, earned income tax, net profits, mercantile and business privilege taxes within a specific geographic area in the Borough of New Morgan, County of Berks designated as a proposed Keystone Opportunity Expansion Zone ("KOEZ"), in order to foster economic opportunities, stimulate industrial, commercial, and residential improvements and prevent physical and infrastructure deterioration within areas of the County of Berks, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, upon certain terms and conditions.

Ed Swoyer, President of the Greater Berks Development Fund, commented that earlier this year the State of Pennsylvania amended the KOZ legislation and provided the opportunity for municipalities, counties and school districts to extend the time period and expand opportunity zones, and also added a new KOZ. Mr. Swoyer commented that today's resolutions include two for the City of Reading, one for the former Armour Cast building site in the Borough of Birdsboro, and a new KOEZ for the Borough New Morgan. Commissioner Leinbach commented on the success of properties involved in the KOZ program and cited numerous businesses who participate in the program. Commissioner Leinbach also commented these programs are a significant boost in revenue for the municipalities, school districts and County where these businesses exist. Commissioner Scott questioned the two zones in Reading and asked if the original KOZ included tax relief for residential improvements or for strictly commercial improvements. Mr. Swoyer commented that the law provides that if the

residential property falls within a particular zone, the property could be exempt from Pennsylvania personal income tax. Steve Najarian addressed the Commissioners regarding the New Morgan KOZ and commented this request is for 350 acres of property located in the southern portion of the site near the interchange of the Turnpike and Route 176, and the purpose of the KOZ is to encourage opportunities to attract firms to locate in the area.

Commissioner Barnhardt

Commissioner Scott

Commissioner Scott commented on an article he recently read in the Wall Street Journal regarding the beleaguered Midwest and how with all the economic development it is becoming more competitive than it used to be and is giving a stiff challenge to the southern states who traditionally lead in terms of providing incentives, and that is good news for the people who live in the rust belt. Commissioner Scott further commented that Pennsylvania, with all its' economic disadvantages, is realizing cheap natural gas prices associated with Marcellus Shale, which is offsetting some of the other disadvantages to locating a business in Pennsylvania.

Commissioner Leinbach

Commissioner Leinbach commented that yesterday he participated in a meeting hosted by Scott Sechler, President and CEO of Bell & Evans, along with Congressman Dent and numerous representatives from surrounding municipalities, regarding the lack of access between Hamburg and Harrisburg of natural gas lines to the Route 78 corridor. Commissioner Leinbach further commented that Marcellus Shale was also discussed along with the impact of the lines they are planning to bring in. The outcome was a discussion that will occur between Berks County, County Planning, the County Commissioners, Lebanon County and the municipal organizations that will be impacted to see what is needed to address the Marcellus gas issue. Commissioner Leinbach also announced that later this year there will be a nationwide conference of states that will be held in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

Commissioner Leinbach also announced that this Thursday evening he will be hosting a Town Hall Meeting at the Leesport Market regarding County issues.

CITIZEN COMMENTS/BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Recorder of Deeds Frederick Sheeler reported that real estate sales seem to be picking up for the first time in five years and there has been no increase in tax claim or sheriff sale deeds being recorded.

Ed Terrell, a citizen of the City of Reading, addressed the Board on the violence currently taking place in the City of Reading. Mr. Terrell asked the County for support in helping end the violence and also suggested bringing in the National Guard.

Janine Galiano read a prepared statement regarding her issues she is dealing with involving Berks County Children & Youth Services.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 11:33 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maryjo Gibson, Chief Clerk