

Commissioners' Board Meeting Minutes August 22, 2019

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, August 22, 2019, at 10:00 A.M. in the Commissioners' Boardroom, 13th floor 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 Assistant County Solicitor Paul Bradshaw, Chief Administrative Officer Ronald R. Seaman and Chief Clerk Maryjo Gibson.

Commissioner Leinbach opened the meeting with a moment of silence and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

PRESENTATION

Dr. Betsy Adams, Coordinator of the Berks Institute for School Attendance, along with the Honorable Scott E. Lash, Berks County Court of Common Pleas, Jeffrey Gregro, Deputy Chief, Juvenile Probation, and Stephanie Esser, Director of Advancing School Attendance Program ("ASAP"), presented an update on truancy initiatives and progress in Berks County schools.

Mr. Gregro reported the program has been very successful over the last 8 years at little expense to the County. Mr. Gregro stated the program began in 2011 when Berks County had one of the highest rates of truancy in the State, and the program is funded through special grants and is needs based. Mr. Gregro noted the program receives a wide array of community support from businesses, schools, the Courts and local municipalities to name a few.

Dr. Adams reported the program was instituted to address chronic absenteeism in Berks County Schools and to educate parents and students on the importance of school attendance, not only to avoid fines and possible jail time, but to realize a better quality of life and employment. Dr. Adams reported they have partnered with RACC where students 15 years or older, and as an alternative to fines, can attend informational sessions dealing with careers, a family seminar and a parenting seminar for parents with students in elementary school.

Ms. Esser talked about the ASAP program offered by SAM noting she has already received over 500 referrals this year, and they come from all 18 school districts and cyber and charter schools.

Commissioner Leinbach suggested receiving this update on a yearly basis.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of August 15, 2019 Commissioners' Board Meeting and August 15, 2019 Budget/Operations Meeting were approved as presented.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

None.

Agenda Items

1. A motion was made by Commissioner Barnhardt to approve the Agenda, requesting a correction be made to Item 273.19. Commissioner Barnhardt noted the grant was applied for by Our City-Reading, not the Authority. Commissioner Scott seconded said motion with a request to comment. Request was granted by the Chair. Commissioner Scott commented he will be a No vote to Item 273.19. Commissioner Scott commented after reviewing a summary of the Project he received from Ken Pick, Berks County Redevelopment Authority, he does not feel it the best utilization of \$8 million. Commissioner Scott suggested the money could be better used to support scholarships to Reading students to continue their education to improve their quality of life, or to hire more police officers to patrol City streets.

Commissioner Barnhardt responded this is not County money to control, it is State money, and it seems the County gets mired in the details of RCAP grants which are controlled by the State but require County approval of the project. Commissioner Barnhardt noted investing in buildings in the City has been good for the City and City residents, who are currently employed at the IMAX Theatre, the Googleworks, the DoubleTree Hotel and now at Saucony, who provided the first jobs to city residents.

Commissioner Leinbach clarified all the Board is voting on today is approving the Berks County Redevelopment Authority to manage this RCAP grant. Commissioner Leinbach met with Ken Pick and asked about any risk to date with all the previous RCAP projects. Mr. Pick advised that the BCRA has never had to come to the County for funds.

Commissioner Leinbach will be voting in favor of the resolution.

Seeing no further comments, a motion was made to approve the Agenda with the exception of Commissioner Scott's No vote to Item 273.19. Said motion carried.

268.19 Adopt a resolution authorizing 2019 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$136,171 and 2019 Appropriations in the amount of \$28,530 per listing dated August 19, 2019.

269.19 Adopt a resolution authorizing the award and the Director of Contracts and Procurement to execute a contract for a three (3) year term as a result of the Request for Proposal #19-11-GR for Psychological Consulting Services for the Berks County Area Agency on Aging as follows:

Wyomissing Behavior Analysts, Ltd.

2032 Lincoln Court
Wyomissing, PA 19610

Term	9/1/2019 – 8/31/2022
Service	Hourly Rate
Consultation	\$240.00
	Flat Fee
Expert Testimony	\$480.00

Estimated Annual Expenditure: \$73,000.00

The County reserves the right to extend the contract for two (2) additional one (1) year terms upon mutual agreement of both parties in accordance with the terms of the contract governing the cost per unit of service.

- 270.19 Adopt a resolution authorizing the award and the Director of Contracts and Procurement to execute two (2) contracts for a three (3) year term as a result of the Request for Proposal #19-14-GR for Interpreter Services for Berks County Area Agency on Aging as follows:

Centro Hispano Daniel Torres, Inc.

501 Washington Street
Reading, PA 19603

Term	9/1/2019 – 8/31/2022
Service	Rate per Hour
Onsite Interpreter Services – Rate per Hour	\$24.00

Estimated Annual Expenditure: \$39,840.00**Language Services Associates, Inc.**

455 Business Center Drive, Suite 100
Horsham, PA 19044

Term	9/1/2019 – 8/31/2022
Service	Rate per Minute
Telephonic Interpreter Services – Spanish Rate per Minute	\$0.83
Telephonic Interpreter Services – Common Languages Rate per Minute	\$0.83
Telephonic Interpreter Services – Less Common Languages Rate per Minute	\$0.83

Estimated Annual Expenditure: \$8,160.00

The County reserves the right to extend the contracts for two (2) additional one (1) year terms upon mutual agreement of both parties in accordance with the terms of the contract governing the cost per unit of service.

- 271.19 Adopt a resolution authorizing Christian Y. Leinbach, Chair, to execute the Mutual Non-Disclosure Agreement between Pennsylvania Association of Area Agencies on Aging (“p4a”) and the County of Berks, on behalf of the Berks County Area Agency on Aging (“BCAAA”), to allow BCAA and its other aging services providers to participate in p4a’s common administrative services.
- 272.19 Adopt a resolution authorizing execution of Amendment #1 to HealthChoices Behavioral Health Agreement No. 4100083356 between the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, acting through the Department of Human Services and the County of Berks, and amends various appendices of the Program Standards and Requirements.
- 273.19 Adopt a resolution authorizing Christian Y. Leinbach, Chair, to execute the Agreement between the County of Berks (“County”) and the Redevelopment Authority of the County of Berks (“Authority”) whereby the County authorizes the Authority to assist Our City-Reading, Inc. (“OCR”) with funding and other assistance for the Goggleworks II-Incubator/Restaurants Project (“Project”) as a result of a grant the Authority applied for and was awarded in the amount of \$2,000,000 for the Project.
- 274.19 Adopt a resolution authorizing A. Dennis Adams, Berks County Treasurer, to open a new bank account for the Act 13 funds with BB&T, Reading, Pennsylvania.
2. Motion authorizing execution of Contract Agreements/Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator per listing dated August 20, 2019. Commissioner Leinbach reported there are 9 contracts and referenced the departments.
3. Motion authorizing payments set forth on Controller’s Office vouchers payable listing dated August 20, 2019 for week ending August 21, 2019 and the payment of electronic transfers and employee payroll.

Reports

1. County Treasurer A. Dennis Adams, CPA submitted a prepared weekly Treasurer’s report.
2. The Controller’s weekly report was presented by County Controller Sandy Graffius.

REPORT OF CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

The Budget/Operations Meeting is cancelled for lack of agenda items.

REPORT OF CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

No report today.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**Commissioner Barnhardt**

Commissioner Barnhardt reported that Federal Census employees will be walking through neighborhoods in Berks County this weekend to verify addresses and that the homes are still there. Commissioner Barnhardt stated they all should have federal identification tags.

Commissioner Barnhardt announced the new voting systems will be on display all day this Saturday, August 24, 2019, at the Muhlenberg River Fest.

Commissioner Barnhardt reported tomorrow he will be attending the U.S. Chamber and PA Chamber's Opioid in the Workforce program, where employers will discuss opioid use and solutions in the workforce.

Commissioner Barnhardt provided an update to the discussion last week at the Budget Meeting regarding Epler's School House. Commissioner Barnhardt reported he has not yet received an estimate to move the School House but did speak with a representative from the Airport Authority. Commissioner Barnhardt stated the Authority does not oppose the move, noting it could become part of the French Village, but they do not have the financial capability to move the building. Commissioner Barnhardt is also working to start a Friends of Epler's School, consisting of retired teachers and individuals interested in historic preservation.

Commissioner Scott

Commissioner Scott thanked Commissioner Barnhardt for following up on that suggestion.

Commissioner Leinbach

Commissioner Leinbach complimented the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance for leading the effort by distributing a letter to state and federal delegation outlining transportation priorities resulting from significant cuts in funding that has been diverted to the State Police from Act 89. Commissioner Leinbach remarked these funds were already committed and mentioned \$60 to \$70 million was cut from the previously authorized funds. The Chamber asked for that funding to be restored.

Commissioner Leinbach commented on an article regarding the recent settlement by Harris County, Texas, of a lawsuit concerning the unconstitutionality of its bail system relating to misdemeanor offenses, noting it seems the Courts are quickly pushing the constitutionality of that issue. Commissioner Leinbach read a portion of the decision, then commented he believes setting or posting bail should not be about whether or not a person can afford it, but whether the person is a flight risk or a risk to society.

ELECTED OFFICIALS' COMMENTS

Berks County Recorder of Deeds Fred Sheeler suggested that instead of moving Epler's School why can't it be incorporated where it is into the project, and then possibly deed or lease it to an historical society. Commissioner Barnhardt responded all possibilities are being looked at.

COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR

Hubert Beck, Robesonia, complimented and thanked Commissioner Leinbach for his article and leadership regarding his August 12, 2019 article on the health risks of 5G towers.

Sara Alicia Huerton Long, Reading, commended Commissioner Leinbach for his comments on the bail issue and the low flight risk of people who are charged with misdemeanors, and asked the Commissioners to extend that same faith and flight risk status to asylum seekers who are also low risk of flight.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:00 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maryjo Gibson, Chief Clerk