

## **Commissioners' Board Meeting Minutes October 5, 2017**

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, October 5, 2017, at 10:00 A.M. in the Boardroom on the 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 County Solicitor Christine M. Sadler, 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.

Commissioner Leinbach announced there were 2 Executive Sessions, one held Friday, September 29, 2017 to discuss personnel and litigation at the Jail, and one yesterday, October 4, 2017 to discuss personnel.

### **PRESENTATION**

Sharon Kehres, President of the Reading-Berks Associations of REALTORS® (“RBA”), accompanied by Merlin Weaver, President-Elect, presented a report on the current housing market in Berks County. Ms. Kehres stated the mission statement of the RBA is to serve its membership, uphold high standards of the Realtor Code, advocate for private property rights and homeownership, and strive to improve quality of life within the community. Ms. Kehres reported the Association has over 900 members and is growing, and will be celebrating its 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year. Ms. Kehres distributed to the Board the RBA’s Commissioners’ Report/Market Data Report that represents a snapshot of the current housing market in Berks County. Ms. Kehres reported so far this year there are 529 new listings, but inventory is very limited, with the average listing price up 13.9% this year. Ms. Kehres acknowledged property taxes are still a big concern and the Association is supporting Senate Bill 76, The Property Tax Independence Act.

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of September 28, 2017 Commissioners’ Board Meeting were approved as presented.

At this point, Commissioner Leinbach recognized and congratulated Tyler Washington, our BCTV cameraman, who is starting a new job with a local advertising agency. Today is his last Commissioners’ meeting.

### **Agenda Items**

1. A motion was made by Commissioner Barnhardt, seconded by Commissioner Scott and all voted unanimously to approve the items listed below:

- 277.17 Adopt a resolution authorizing 2017 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$23,510 and 2017 Appropriations in the amount of \$750,643 per listing dated October 2, 2017.
- 278.17 Adopt a resolution authorizing Human Resources Recommendations per listing dated October 5, 2017 as follows:
1. Authorize the transfer of Kristine Cahill from PC011114 Guardian Ad Litem, Court Administration to PC010169 Assistant Public Defender I – Public Defender's Office, effective 10/18/2017. Rate of \$48,000/annually. Salary range Minimum \$44,690; Midpoint \$59,587; Maximum \$74,483. Replacement for Caroline Criste who separated. This request meets the criteria of the Hiring Policy. Budget 10000 – 11570.
  2. Authorize the promotion of Jesse Morey from PC010485 Correctional Officer to PC012260 Sergeant – Jail System, effective 10/18/2017. Rate of \$61,796/annually. Salary range Minimum \$46,146; Midpoint \$61,528; Maximum \$76,910. Replacement for Edward Bamberger who separated. This request meets the criteria of the Hiring Policy. Budget 10000 – 12090.
  3. Authorize the promotion of Leo Davis from PC010513 Correctional Officer to PC012264 Sergeant – Jail System, effective 10/18/2017. Rate of \$61,796/annually. Salary range Minimum \$46,146; Midpoint \$61,528; Maximum \$76,910. Replacement for Alan Coderre who separated. This request meets the criteria of the Hiring Policy. Budget 10000 – 12090.
  4. Authorize salary increase for James Gallagher, PC013142 – Solicitor's Office, effective 10/11/2017. Rate of \$54,249/annually. Salary range Minimum \$40,078; Midpoint \$53,437; Maximum \$66,796. This request meets the criteria of the Hiring Policy. Budget 10000 – 11020.
  5. Authorize \$250 uniform/clothing allowance for Lieutenants and Sergeants – Jail System, per attached listing, effective for the pay of 10/17/2017. Budget 10000 – 12090.

- 279.17 Adopt a resolution authorizing the award and the Director of Contracts & Procurement to execute as a result of Invitation to Bid #17-34-KO, a contract for the Antietam Dam Caretaker's House Demo (Rebid) Project as identified herein:

**Empire Services**

1420 Clarion Street

Reading, PA 19601

**Total (Not to Exceed): \$72,212.00**

Commissioner Leinbach reported this building was partially collapsed and has no real historical value, but the foundations will be saved for possible future viewing areas.

- 280.17 Adopt a resolution authorizing execution of the signature page for the second year of the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program (Federal 16.738 JAG) Grant for the 2016 Video Visitation Implementation in the Berks County Jail System. This Grant will facilitate faster interviews and hearings between inmates at the Jail and local criminal justice agencies, and is 100% funded by the federal government in the amount of \$104,973.00. Commissioner Barnhardt commented this will allow inmates to remain in their housing units instead of having to be moved.

- 281.17 Adopt a resolution ratifying, confirming and approving execution of the Hold Harmless and Indemnity Agreement between the City of Reading and County of Berks granting access to the City to drill holes and test pits to analyze soil at Stonecliffe Recreation Park. The work must be completed on or before December 1, 2017, regarding the upgrade to the City's sewer pump station as required by a U.S. Department of Justice Consent Decree.

- 282.17 Adopt a resolution authorizing Ryan Hunter, Director of Facilities & Operations, to execute the Written Certification to Bern Township certifying there is sufficient capacity and no logistical, operational or permit-related concerns to handle an increase of approximately 780 gallons per day of flow to the Berks County Waste Water Treatment Plant regarding the proposed WAWA Food Market Development in Bern Township, Berks County.

2. Motion authorizing Christian Y. Leinbach as Chairman of the Board, to execute Contract Agreements/Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator, per listing dated October 3, 2017. Commissioner Leinbach reported there are 3 contracts and referenced the departments.
3. Motion to authorize payments set forth on Controller's Office vouchers payable listing dated October 3, 2017 for week ending October 4, 2017 and the payment of electronic transfers and employee payroll; and due to the fact that the

Commissioners' Meeting is cancelled next week, the Board signed the vouchers payables and electronic transfers for the week ending October 11, 2017.

### **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**

Robert J. Patrizio reported there will be a discussion of a Magisterial District Justice lease proposal from the Berks County Redevelopment Authority, and follow up discussions on budget items from previous meetings.

### **REPORT OF CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

None.

### **COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

#### **Commissioner Barnhardt**

Commissioner Barnhardt commented on the recent editorials concerning discussions by the Board of possible privatization of the Jail and sale of the Berks Heim. Commissioner Barnhardt clarified since he usually speaks before his colleagues, his opinions are his alone, and he does not always share the opinions of his other two colleagues on these two issues. Commissioner Barnhardt commented he is still on the record as not supporting privatization, but it is a tremendously difficult decision and his decision will not be a political decision but what is best for the taxpayers and residents of Berks County. Commissioner Barnhardt also commented he still undecided on the Berks Heim and wants to see the numbers and financial analysis, and empathizes more with the people who work there; both are very emotional issues for him and they are challenging decisions.

#### **Commissioner Scott**

Commissioner Scott had no further comments but reserved his right to comment at the end.

#### **Commissioner Leinbach**

Commissioner Leinbach remembered all the people impacted by the horrific violence in Las Vegas; and it is especially difficult because we do not know yet why it happened.

**COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR**

Patrick Murray, a Correctional Officer at the Jail, a member of Teamsters and spokesperson for the group who attended the meeting, responded to comments made by Commissioner Scott as last week's meeting concerning correctional officers at the Jail. Mr. Murray defended himself and the correctional officers stating they are not bad actors as Commissioner Scott called them, and was upset by some of the comments made at the last meeting as some of the facts were misconstrued. Mr. Murray said this discussion should be about saving jobs and Berks County as a whole, and suggested holding a town hall meeting to get all the facts out to the public. Mr. Murray also recommended doing an audit to find out where the money is going.

Commissioner Leinbach responded the County is required to perform audits every year for all County operations and they are public and can be found on the County Controller's website.

Commissioner Leinbach clarified his comments from last week, stating there are a handful of bad actors at the jail as there are bad actors in every organization. His issue isn't just with the bad actors, but that the Teamsters find it necessary to defend every single action where some actions are indefensible; it costs the Teamsters money, the taxpayers money and puts a bad reputation on the organization. Commissioner Leinbach stated he is not saying the teamsters should not defend anyone, but there are number of cases that are just mind boggling.

Commissioner Scott thanked Mr. Murray for his genteel comments and appreciated his manner in which he delivered them. Commissioner Scott commented his main motivation in starting this conversation of privatization was he felt he had an obligation to the taxpayers to save money which could be in the millions, and only an RFP will reveal the potential savings.

Christine Kowalski, Wyomissing, expressed her wish the Commissioners reconsider their positions of privatization of the jail and the sale of the Berks Heim.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:46 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Maryjo Gibson, Chief Clerk