

Commissioners' Board Meeting Minutes November 13, 2014

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, November 13, 2014, 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 Solicitor Alan Miller, Chief Operating Officer Carl E. Geffken and Chief Clerk Maryjo Gibson.

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

PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was held to consider the Board's intention to organize a new joint municipal transit authority merging the Red Rose Transit Authority of Lancaster County and the Berks Area Regional Transit Authority (BARTA) of Berks County; and further to consider adoption of Resolution No. 349-14 approving the amendment of the Articles of Incorporation of Berks Area Regional Transportation Authority to be effective January 1, 2015 and adoption of Resolution No. 350.14 approving the new joint transit authority to be known as the "South Central Transit Authority".

David Kilmer, Acting Director of BARTA, presented a power point on the proposal to merge the two transit Authorities and reviewed the process involved to date. Mr. Kilmer commented that all drivers and mechanics will remain employees of their existing authorities and administration/management will become part of the new authority. Mr. Kilmer stated the name of the new Authority would be the South Central Transit Authority (SCTA) and expects the Authority to be operating in January 2015. Mr. Kilmer advised the main office will be located at Red Rose because that is where the health care consortium is located. Commissioner Scott voiced some of his concerns with the proposed merger namely, would this be an opportunity to experiment with the availability of savings and bind us to decades of structure we can't withdraw from? Commissioner Scott asked where the subsidy payments would go? Mr. Kilmer replied the subsidies would go to the new Authority, South Central Transit. Commissioner Scott stated he also was concerned about the lack of a management agreement stating he would like to see a strong termination clause and possibly a three (3) term to begin with. At this point in the meeting, Commissioner Barnhardt made a motion to approve Resolution No. 349-14 and Resolution No. 350.14 and thanked the Boards at Red Rose Transit and the BARTA Board as well as the Board of Commissioners of Lancaster and Berks County. Commissioner Barnhardt commented that this merger just doesn't benefit the taxpayers, but also the riders by offering more efficiency and possibly expanding some routes in the future. Commissioner Scott seconded the motion, and at this point Commissioner Leinbach asked if there were any comments from the public. Ralph Trainer, who sits on the Long Term Care Commission in Harrisburg and PennDOT's Shared Ride

Commission, asked Mr. Kilmer how do you see Red Rose's connection with BARTA and the support of people with disabilities, and will services be expanded? Mr. Kilmer responded that Red Rose already provides services into Berks County from Lancaster for some clients and Red Rose's shared ride program is about one and half times larger than Berks services. Mr. Kilmer commented the merger will allow more opportunity to provide transportation for people with disabilities and both agencies will be sharing a new State data base to provide better rider services to disabled individuals.

Commissioner Scott commented some of his concerns regarding performance and accountability have been partially answered this morning, but would like to see consideration to the possibility of a private management firm to manage the authority similar to how we manage Berks Heim. Commissioner Scott stated that with those reservations, he is supportive but will be looking to see if performance and accountability actually materializes. Commissioner Leinbach commented the Board meetings will not be an issue as the meetings will switch back and forth between Lancaster and Reading. Commissioner Leinbach commented we have a year plus experience with joint management between the authorities and to date he has not heard any negative news or comments. Commissioner Leinbach commented the savings cannot be ignored and are real. Commissioner Leinbach commented he believes we already have been able to demonstrate by having just one person running a joint operation that it can work, and strongly supports this merger, and it is good for both counties and the taxpayers, and better for riders and customers. No further comments were received. Commissioner Leinbach asked for the motion. Commissioner Barnhardt again motioned to approve Resolution No. 349.14 and No. 350.14, and all voted unanimously to approve said Resolutions.

PRESENTATION

1. Robert Patrizio, Chief Financial Officer, presented the Proposed 2015 County Budget and provided a detailed Power Point overview of the Budget. Mr. Patrizio commented he is pleased to present this Budget which retains the current tax rate of 7.372 mills for 2015. Mr. Patrizio reported the Budget adheres to the Commissioners' directive for no tax increase, maintains the County's Aa1 financial position, provides a wage increase for employees in 2014, reduces headcount and overtime, maintains the Board's commitment to farmland preservation, provides for continued maintenance and improvement to County facilities and parks and balances the budget without using reserves. Mr. Patrizio commented that one largest portion of the Budget is the new Radio System and employee health care and benefits continue to grow. Mr. Patrizio reported the Budget Message, and the Presentation will be posted on the County's webpage following the Meeting, and the 2015 Budget will be adopted at the December 18, 2014 Commissioners' Meeting. Commissioner Leinbach thanked Mr. Patrizio for a very detailed and transparent budget presentation. Commissioner Scott stated it is noteworthy to mention the percentage of the budget that is funded by Berks County tax receipts is 30%. Commissioner Scott thanked Bob and his staff for another stellar effort in preparing the Budget as well as department heads and especially Human Resources and Arnie Wetzel who was instrumental in negotiating labor rates and contracts. Commissioner Scott commented he agrees

with 99% of the budget, but is on the record that he doesn't agree with the extra allocation of \$200,000.00 to GREP (Greater Reading Economic Partnership) and disagrees with the elimination of the Agricultural Coordinator position, but will otherwise support and vote for this budget. Commissioner Barnhardt commented he is very pleased there is again no tax increase and on the positive bond rating. Commissioner Barnhardt commented he is also concerned about the 911 legislation to increase telephone rates. Commissioner Barnhardt complimented and praised Brian Gottschall and his staff for bringing the new radio system up and running, Diane Edwards and the staff at the Residential Center for new and innovative ways to raise funds; the Warden and her staff, and thanked the Reading Eagle for reporting on the issues at the Jail. Commissioner Barnhardt thanked Chris Stress and the staff at Parks & Recreation, and that after 6 years we are about to turn Hunsicker's Grove over to Longswamp Township, adding it is his opinion that parks located in outer areas of the County are better managed and maintained by the local municipality. Commissioner Barnhardt acknowledged CHR and the staff at the Berks Heim for excellent management, and Facilities and Ryan Hunter and his staff for a job well done in maintaining and upgrading County facilities. Commissioner Leinbach commented this budget celebrates the fiscal soundness of the County and the tremendous team of employees of County government, and appreciates everyone's participation in the budget process. Commissioner Leinbach stated the big news is no tax increase, and is realized by being as efficient as possible by with the resources given us. Commissioner Leinbach stated that 911 will be a major issue in 2015 as a result of the new legislation and commented that Berks County is the only county in Pennsylvania that charges local municipalities for participation in the 911 service, which will cut down on our deficit. Commissioner Leinbach commented he will continue to promote the concept of a county-wide LERTA. There were no comments from the public or Row Officers.

2. Ryan Hunter, Director of Facilities and Operations, reported to the Board of Commissioners that the grant submitted to the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority for assistance with the Courthouse lighting initiative was not awarded to Berks County for this project, and the majority of the Board of Commissioners decided not to proceed to go out for bid.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of November 6, 2014 Commissioners' Board Meeting were approved as presented.

Agenda Items

1. Commissioner Scott made a motion to approve the Agenda Items in its entirety, without reading each individual item due to lengthiness of the Commissioners' Meeting today. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt, and all voted unanimously to approve the items listed below:

- 351.14 Adopt a resolution authorizing 2014 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$27,000.00 per listing dated November 7, 2014.
- 352.14 Adopt a resolution authorizing Human Resources Recommendations per listing dated November 13, 2014 as follows:
1. Authorize the promotion of Jessica Bodor from PC012886 Probation Officer III to PC010127 Assistant Chief – Adult Probation, effective 11/5/2014. Rate of \$70,797/annually. Salary budgeted \$70,797/annually. Salary range Minimum \$47,870; Midpoint \$63,827; Maximum \$79,784. Replacement for Daniel Milloy who separated. This request meets the criteria of the Hiring Policy. Budget 10000 – 12010.
- 353.14 Adopt a resolution authorizing award and the Director of Contracts and Procurement to execute, two contracts as a result of ITB# 14-27-MB, Replacement of the Utility Trestle Bridge at North Campus as identified herein:

General Construction

Flyway Excavating Inc.
168 W Airport Rd
Lititz, PA 17543

Unit Price for possible additional work as follows:

Item No.	Description	Unit of Measure	Unit Price
1	Bulk Excavating	C.Y	\$50.00
2	Trench Excavating	C.Y	\$60.00
3	Compacted Type C select fill, in place	C.Y	\$75.00
4	Compacted common fill, in place	C.Y	\$60.00

General Construction Total: \$448,700.00

Mechanical Construction

Heisey Mechanical
615 Florence St
Columbia, PA 17512

Mechanical Construction Total: \$244,100.00

- 354.14 Adopt a resolution authorizing execution of the Amended and Restated Memorandum of Lease between the County of Berks and Douglas and Annette Donley for the Bethel Tower Site in regard to the Berks County Public Safety Radio Project.
- 355.14 Adopt a resolution authorizing Christian Y. Leinbach, Commissioner Chair, to execute the Temporary Easement for

Construction Purposes between KidsPeace Corporation and the County of Berks for the 24A Temple Bridge/Water Street Project.

- 356.14 Adopt a resolution authorizing the appointment of Michael J. Gombar, Jr., Wyomissing, Pennsylvania to the Berks County Solid Waste Authority to fill the unexpired term of the late John Bradley, Jr. The term will expire on December 31, 2016.
 - 357.14 Adopt a resolution authorizing the County Solicitor to execute a retainer letter between the County of Berks and Stevens & Lee for legal services representing the County in Children and Youth Services litigation.
 - 358.14 Adopt a resolution authorizing the purchase of a parcel of property consisting of approximately 35,000 square feet, Lower Alsace Township from John B. Evans, Reading, Pennsylvania in the amount of \$9,000.00; and further authorizes Kevin S. Barnhardt, Commissioner, to execute any and all documents required to complete the purchase of said parcel, including all settlement documents, the acquisition of which is in lieu of condemnation. This parcel will become part of the Antietam Lake Dam site.
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 November 10, 2014.
 3. Motion to authorize payments set forth on Controller's Office vouchers payable listing dated November 11, 2014 for week ending November 12, 2014 and the payment of electronic transfers and employee payroll.

Reports

1. County Treasurer A. Dennis Adams, CPA, was absent. Commissioner Leinbach presented the weekly Treasurer's report.
2. The Controller's weekly report was presented by County Controller Sandy Graffius.

REPORTS OF CHIEF OPERATING OFFICE/CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

1. Carl E. Geffken had no report this week.
2. Robert J. Patrizio commented the Commissioners will receive an update from Ken Pick regarding alternative ownership of Magisterial District Justice Offices.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Barnhardt referenced back to Item 358-14, that the purchase of this parcel of property in Lower Alsace Township will provide unfettered access to the base of Antietam Dam.

Commissioner Scott had no additional comments.

Commissioner Leinbach commented that over the weekend he and Commissioner Barnhardt attended the 5th Annual Veterans Dinner Dance at Wilson High School. Commissioner Leinbach commented it was a spectacular evening and 4 people were inducted into the Military Hall of Fame. Commissioner Leinbach commented on Tuesday, Veterans' Day, he was invited to the Keystone Wounded Warriors luncheon which raised \$100,000 for the Wounded Warriors Project, adding that all the money goes to the organization, there are no administrative costs.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:03 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maryjo Gibson, Chief Clerk