

Commissioners' Board Meeting Minutes December 6, 2018

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, December 6, 2018, 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 Vice Chair Kevin S. Barnhardt called the meeting to order with Commissioner Mark C. Scott in attendance. Commissioner Leinbach participated via telephone. Also present were County Solicitor Christine M. Sadler, Chief Administrative Officer Ronald R. Seaman and Chief Clerk Maryjo Gibson.

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

Presentations

1. Pamela J. Shupp, Executive Vice President of the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance ("GRCA") and President of Greater Reading Economic Partnership ("GREP"), a division of GRCA, provided a quarterly report on recent activities concerning GREP.

Ms. Shupp reported in 2018 GREP will have visited a total of 110 Berks County companies, and over 50% of those businesses are in expansion mode. Ms. Shupp reported that the businesses they visited, over 1300 new jobs have been created and over 2400 jobs have been retained, and GREP will continue efforts to attract new businesses to Berks County. Ms. Shupp reported in 2018 and 2019 GREP anticipates an additional 7.5 million square feet of new space, hoping to generate about \$2.7 million in additional county taxes. Ms. Shupp considers 2018 a good year and the prospects look bright for economic growth and prosperity in Berks County.

2. George Havlick, Esq., Norris McLaughlin & Marcus, Berks County Special Labor Counsel, provided an update on the Berks Heim collective bargaining contracts negotiations. Mr. Havlick stated the process of selling the Berks Heim was put on hold in August 2018 after a request was made by Commissioner Scott to negotiate with SEIU and UFCW in order to obtain economic concessions to possibly avoid selling the Berks Heim.

Mr. Havlick reported in August he was tasked with meeting with both unions at the Berks Heim in an effort to inquire whether they would be interested in making some economic concessions in their next collective bargaining agreements that would help change some of the economic projections for the Berks Heim.

Mr. Havlick reported he held initial meetings in late September and early October with SEIU and UFCW to share with them the concept to take to their members in making certain economic concessions in their collective bargaining agreements beginning in 2020. Mr. Havlick felt both those meetings went well. A subsequent meeting was held with SEIU where Chief Financial Officer Bob Patrizio attended to answer any and all questions from the union. SEIU thought it would be a good idea for a joint meeting with UFCW, and Mr. Havlick contacted UFCW to see if they would be interested. On October 25 UFCW said they would get back to him.

Since that date, all communication with both unions has stopped. Mr. Havlick was surprised, thinking talks were going well, and in his opinion, the lack of communication leads him to believe the unions are not interested in further negotiations.

Commissioner Scott stated his intent was to continue to support a moratorium on the sale of the Heim as long as good faith efforts were being made with the unions to renegotiate the collective bargaining agreements effective in 2020. Unfortunately, based on Mr. Havlick's report and what conversations he has had with some local union representatives, it appears that good faith efforts are not being made, therefore, Commissioner Scott reinstated his support of going forward with the sale process, and at this time, resume the process of picking up where we left off.

Commissioner Scott expressed his disappointment, but has no regrets, as he feels he has been fair to the parties involved.

Commissioner Scott motioned, with a request for a second to resume the process forthwith.

Commissioner Leinbach commented he is both shocked and disappointed that the union leadership of SEIU and UFCW, not the local folks who actually serve, did not take this effort seriously and are not willing to negotiate. Commissioner Leinbach stated his goal was to do everything possible from keeping the sale of the Berks Heim from going forward while protecting the taxpayers, and will support the reopening of the sale process for the Berks Heim, seconding Commissioner Scott's motion.

Commissioner Barnhardt noted there was a motion made and seconded to resume the sale process.

Commissioner Barnhardt expressed his disappointment with the process, and still is hopeful the local members will pressure state leadership to come to the table.

Commissioner Barnhardt will remain consistent, he does not want to sell the Berks Heim, and is not in favor of the motion, but very dismayed at the whole process.

Commissioner Barnhardt stated the motion was moved and seconded, and all those in favor consent by saying aye. Commissioner Scott and Commissioner Leinbach voted Yes, Commissioner Barnhardt voted No.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of November 29, 2018 Commissioners' Board Meeting were approved as presented.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

None.

Agenda Items

1. A motion was made by Commissioner Scott to approve the Agenda as presented. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Leinbach, and all voted unanimously to approve the items listed below:
 - 362.18 Adopt a resolution authorizing 2018 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$371,410 and 2018 Appropriations in the amount of \$281,283 per listing dated December 3, 2018.
 - 363.18 Adopt a resolution authorizing Human Resources Recommendations per listing dated December 6, 2018 as follows:
 1. Authorize the transfer of Kevin Neiswender from PC011019 Training/Education Manager – Department of Emergency Services to PC010004 Assistant Chief Deputy – Coroner, effective 12/12/2018. Rate of \$54,208/annually. Salary range Minimum \$44,460; Midpoint \$59,280; Maximum \$74,099. Replacement for Michael Fizz who separated. This request meets the criteria of the Hiring Policy. Budget 10000 – 11520.
 2. Authorize the promotion of Owen Scott from PC012042 Probation Officer II to Assistant Chief – Adult Probation, effective 12/19/2018. Rate of \$77,386/annually. Salary range Minimum \$52,810; Midpoint \$70,413; Maximum \$88,016. Position created by Salary Board on 11/1/2018. This request meets the criteria of the Hiring Policy. Budget 10000 – 12010.
 3. Authorize appointment of Danial Roe to PC013347 Historic Resource Supervisor, effective 1/9/2019. Rate of \$49,500/annually. Salary range Minimum \$38,992; Midpoint \$51,989; Maximum \$64,986. Position created by Salary Board on 9/6/2018. This request meets the criteria of the Hiring Policy. Budget 10000 - 16070.
 - 364.18 Adopt a resolution authorizing execution of Amendment No. 2 to the Agreement between the County of Berks and Palmetto Posting, Inc., Spartanburg, South Carolina, to provide services related to the posting of delinquent tax notices on certain properties for an additional one (1) year term effective January 1, 2019 and ending December 31, 2019.

- 365.18 Adopt a resolution authorizing the appointment of Joseph E. Rosenbaum, Douglassville, Pennsylvania, as Farmer Director, to the Berks County Conservation District Board for a four (4) year term commencing January 1, 2019 and expiring December 31, 2022.
- 366.18 Adopt a resolution authorizing the reappointment of Christian Y. Leinbach, Hamburg, Pennsylvania, as Commissioner Director, to the Berks County Conservation District Board for a one (1) year term commencing January 1, 2019 and expiring December 31, 2019.
- 367.18 Adopt a resolution approving sending a letter of support to Berks Connections/Pretrial Services for an application for PA Smart Growing Registered Pre-Apprenticeship Programs Funding for their vocational training program entitled Rebuilding Reentrants and Reading (R3).
- 368.18 Adopt a resolution amending Resolution No. 161-18, which accepted a proposal and authorized execution of a Consulting Agreement between the County of Berks and WSK & Associates Wyomissing, Pennsylvania in connection with the CCTV and Access Control System, by increasing the amount not-to-exceed by \$1,500.00 to expand the scope of work to include evaluation and specification recommendations for the Coroner and Archive Offices.
- 369.18 Adopt a resolution authorizing the amendment of Resolution No. 336-16, which reconstituted the Security Committee, to add a representative appointed by the President Judge.
2. Motion authorizing execution of Contract Agreements/Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator per listing dated December 4, 2018. Commissioner Barnhardt reported there are 9 contracts and referenced the departments.
3. Motion to authorize payments set forth on Controller's Office vouchers payable listing dated December 4, 2018 for week ending December 5, 2018 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

There was not a Budget/Operations Meeting this afternoon.

REPORT OF CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Ronald R. Seaman reported on the activities occurring at Holiday Lights at Gring's Mill and the Beidler's House this weekend.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**Commissioner Barnhardt**

Commissioner Barnhardt thanked the 435 poll workers and 115 members from the public who attended last weekend's public display of the two proposed voting systems, and thanked Debbie Olivieri and Karen Barsoum from Election Services and his Executive Assistant Jessica Blausner for all their time and effort in putting the event together. Commissioner Barnhardt reported there were 50 counties and over 300 people that attended the Mental Health in the Criminal Justice System program this past Monday, mentioning Berks County Judge Theresa Johnson was the motivational speaker. Commissioner Barnhardt reported next Thursday morning he, First Assistant Solicitor Schnee and Shannon Rossman, Executive Director of the Berks County Planning Commission, will attend a meeting in Harrisburg to make a third request to have the State allow the County to make modifications in the rural conservation areas regarding agricultural land preservation pertaining to the County's Comprehensive Plan Update. Commissioner Barnhardt mentioned tomorrow is Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, and read some prepared comments.

Commissioner Scott

No additional comments.

Commissioner Leinbach

Commissioner Leinbach reported he is in California attending the NACo Board meeting, and yesterday had a unique opportunity along with 24 other NACo members, to take a tour of the southern border between California and Mexico hosted by the U.S. Border and Custom agents, and saw a prototype of the proposed new walls. Commissioner Leinbach commented on the passing of President George H.W. Bush, stating he was a person of great character, strength and courageous and kind. Commissioner Leinbach mentioned almost two weeks ago he, Assistant County Solicitor Chad Schnee, Mary Buerer and Kelly Andrisano, PACHA, met with officials from the State Office of Long Term Living to discuss IGT funding, and yesterday was informed the Office of Long-Term Living is not able at this time to provide any projections and no indication on the ability to potentially do a better deal with us at this time. Commissioner Leinbach commented we will continue to work on this issue and will provide update if they become available.

ELECTED OFFICIALS' COMMENTS

County Controller Sandy Graffius reported the Friendly Understandable Financial Statement (FUFS) is now available in her office, senior citizen centers, elected officials' offices, local libraries and local municipal offices.

COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR

Crystal Kowalski, Wyomissing, commented that she doesn't understand how the final decision to sell the Berks Heim now seems to fall on the backs of the unions.

Mike Morrill, West Reading, commented on the proposed voting systems the County is looking at, and is concerned the two systems being considered do not have a voter verifiable paper trail. Mr. Morrill encouraged the Board to reconsider and look at the paper ballot system.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:01 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maryjo Gibson, Chief Clerk