

Commissioners' Workshop Meeting

Tuesday, July 27, 2004

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, July 27, 2004, at 10:30 AM, in the thirteenth floor Board Room of the Berks County Services Center, pursuant to due notice to Board members and the public.

Commissioner Chair Judith L. Schwank called the meeting to order with Commissioner Thomas Gajewski and Commissioner Mark L. Scott in attendance. Also present were County Administrator, William E. Dennis and Solicitor Alan Miller and Chief Clerk Terry Styer.

Commissioner Schwank followed with a moment of silence and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

II. PROCLAMATIONS/CERTIFICATES/PRESENTATIONS:

KIZ (Keystone Innovation Zone) presentation and request for a County Resolution of support of this Kutztown University project: Tom McKeon, Director of Community & Economic Development introduced William J. Sutton, Vice President for Advancement, Kutztown University who presented this project by explaining that the University contracted with Delta Development Corporation who helped them devise a plan and develop an advisory board for this Keystone Innovation Zone project that originally was proposed for the corridor from Center City Reading, north along Rt. 222 all the way to Allentown. The Advisory Committee's recommendation was to shorten and concentrate the proposed area to begin in Center City Reading and extend through Kutztown Borough to Brenigsville, Lehigh County incorporating several industrial zones along the corridor. He indicated that the next goal of this project is to develop a list of choices for a non-profit organization to run this program. Commissioner Schwank suggested utilizing the Berks Economic Partnership.

The Board of Commissioners commended Mr. Sutton and those involved for taking the initiative for this project. Commissioner Schwank stated that this project would tie in nicely existing urban centers using new and improved technology and existing institutions of higher learning such as Kutztown University. Commissioner Scott asked for more information on the tax incentives for business to locate in a KIZ and asked how it compares to the KOZ (Keystone Opportunity Zone) where property owners are granted tax exemption status for a period of time. Mr. Sutton indicated that this is not intended to be a real estate tax exemption incentive but rather a low cost "incubator" tax credit. He said that the State intends the help young people who received advanced degrees from our universities stay in Pennsylvania instead of increasing what has become known as the "brain drain." He also indicated that all of the funding mechanisms and application requirements are still under development by the state.

KIZ discussion continued:

Following the above discussion, a motion to approve the proposed resolution was made by Commissioner Gajewski, seconded by Commissioner Scott who noted that the Resolution being adopted was not defined by metes and bounds, but rather approving the concept of the project to proceed with whatever official approvals, by the State and or individual municipalities as applicable. With that correction all voted yes to approve Resolution 353.04. (copy attached to these minutes)

At this time Commissioner Gajewski, on behalf of the Board of Commissioners presented a Certificate of Recognition to Tom McKeon for earning national recognition as a Certified Economic Developer, following an exam by the International Economic Development Council. This designation is awarded to those individuals who have achieved the highest level of professional attainment and demonstrated their commitment to professional and personal growth. With this certification, Tom McKeon becomes the only person in the Tri-State Area (PA-NJ-DE) to hold certifications in both planning through the American Institute of Certified Planners and economic development through the International Economic Development Council. As Director of Community and Economic Development for the County of Berks for the past thirteen years, Tom has made significant contributions to numerous development initiatives in the County.

A Proclamation for **FAMILY DAY**, on behalf of CASA (The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University) was presented Commissioner Schwank and noted that it will be mailed to the respective agency.

Proclamation for the **150th Anniversary for the Reading Fair** celebrating Farm and Family- Commissioner Schwank presented the Proclamation to A. Wayne Readinger, Agricultural Director for the Reading Fair who thanked the Commissioners as he presented a colorful description of the history of the Reading Fair and the many activities that continue to make it a success each year.

Commissioner Gajewski, on behalf of the Board of Commissioners presented a Certificate of Recognition to the Haag family for being selected as the Berks County Outstanding Farm Family for 2004. The Commissioner emphasized that farming is a very important part of Berks County's economy. David Haag and his wife, Mary, together with their children, Michael, Jessica, Brittany and Samantha, actively participate in the management and operation of a Centre Township dairy farm that has been in their family for more than 200 years.

III. REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS:

- A. Adopt a Resolution authorizing an increase in the private pay rate at Berks Heim from \$185.00 to \$198.00, effective 09/01/04. Jerry Fudeman, Director of the Berks Heim described this rate increase stating that the last increase was in 2002 and it will effect approximate 33 families representing approximately 5 – 7 % of the residents at the Heim. Jerry then updated the board on the building project which is expected to be ready for occupancy in April 2005. He indicated that the transition plan has already begun.

Berks Heim continued:

Commissioner Gajewski commended Jerry and Scott Adams, Berks County Facilities Director for the success of this project which appears will be under budget upon completion.

Commissioner Schwank then noted that she had received numerous requests on behalf of the residents of the Heim to consider changing the name of County Welfare road. She asked the Chief Clerk to look into the logistics of getting it changed.

- B. Adopt Resolution authorizing the execution of the Medical Assistance Transportation Program Grant Allocation Agreement/Expenditure Plan by and between the County of Berks and the Department of Public Welfare for fiscal year 04/05 in \$1,048,879. Mary Henry Moss, Human Service, Human Services Coordinator presented this year's allocation plan.
- C. Motion to Authorize payment of bills for week ending August 6, 2004 as presented by the County Controller and reviewed and approved by the County Budget Director.

Commissioner Schwank

- A. Adopt Resolution appointing Yvonne Strohman, Community Prevention Partnership, 227 North Fifth Street, Reading, PA to the Berks County Children and Youth Advisory Board to fill the unexpired term of Richard Miller (to 12/31/04.)

Commissioner Gajewski

- A. Adopt Resolution appointing Gloria Seifrit, 1130 North Sixth Street, Reading PA 19601 to the Council on Chemical Abuse Board for a three year term (to 2/1/06) replacing James Gallen (term expired on 2/1/03.)
- B. Adopt Resolution appointing Brian S. Craze, Sr., 16 St. Paulia Lane, Oley PA 19547 for a four year term (to 3/10/08) to the Parks Recreation Board to replace Eileen Schoener (term expired on 3/10/04.)
- C. Authorize payment of invoices under the following Community Development Disbursement Vouchers:
 - 1. No. 2090-S - Emergency Shelter Program
 - 2. No. 2091 - Community Development Block Grant Program
 - 3. No. 467 - Home Grant Program
 - 4. No. 1223 - Property Rehabilitation Program

Commissioner Scott

- A. Adopt Resolution approving the application to the PCCD (Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency) in support of **The Pretrial Caseload Management Project** (a case management software system.)
- B. Adopt Resolution approving the application to the PCCD (Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency) in support of **The Berks County Re-Entry Project** (a coordinated ex-offender reintegration project.)

Scott Rehr, Berks County Prison Society presented both of the above grant applications and discussed the history as well as the goals for each project. Commissioner Scott expressed his support of the concept but following a discussion on funding these programs, asked to have more details of the County match required to be spelled out in the resolutions presented for approval Thursday.

- C. Adopt Resolution appointing Jane-marie McEachern to the Berks County Library Board for a 3 year term (to 6/1/07) replacing Jack Romig (term expired 6/1/04.)

IV. OTHER REQUESTS:*Budget Director:*

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing 2004 budget transfers in the amount of \$44,000 per listing dated July 23, 2004.

Contract Coordinator:

- A. Motion authorizing execution of Contract Agreements/ Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator, per attached listing dated July 23, 2004.

V. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**VI. CITIZEN COMMENT/BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**

James Troutman, Clerk of Courts spoke at length about the AOPC's requirement for Pennsylvania Courts to implement a statewide case management system for criminal records. Mr. Troutman expressed words of warning that the system is currently flawed and until those flaws are corrected, will have a dramatic impact on all court related agencies if Counties are forced to install it in its current condition. Following a discussion of options, the board of Commissioners asked Mr. Troutman to draft a letter to the appropriate authorities for the Commissioners to submit.

Commissioner Scott mentioned his attendance at the annual Banquet for Pennsylvania Sheriffs, hosted this year by Sheriff Barry Jozwiak. He commended the Sheriff for a very successful event.