

Commissioners' Board Meeting
Thursday, August 12, 2004

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, August 12, 2004 at 10:30 AM in the Board meeting room on the thirteenth floor 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 Scott in attendance. Also present were the Chief Clerk Terry L. Styer, Solicitor Alan S. Miller and County Administrator, William E. Dennis.

The Commissioners' Meeting Minutes for July 27, 2004 and July 29, 2004 were approved as published with a motion made by Commissioner Gajewski, seconded by Commissioner Scott and all voting yes.

Commissioner Schwank announced that the August 19, 2004 Commissioners meeting will be cancelled due to lack of a quorum. She added that the August 17, 2004 meeting will be utilized as both a work session and Commissioners meeting to approve items on that agenda.

On motion by Commissioner Scott, seconded by Commissioner Gajewski, the following consent agenda with the exception of Item 372.04 J. was approved unanimously. Commissioner Scott explained that his appointment to this DEP review committee needed official sanctioning by the Board and felt that there needed to be an alternate representative appointed as these discussions were very important to the County. Both Commissioners Schwank and Gajewski thanked Commissioner Scott for his participation on this important committee but disagreed on the need to formalize it with this proposed Resolution 372.04 J.

Commissioner Scott wanted to note that he will vote favorably on Resolution 363.04 A. regarding the Federal Food Purchase program but wished to make comments on the food distribution program generally. He indicated that his attendance at the Reading School District Empowerment meetings has made him aware of the demands the low-income population has placed on the governmental entities such as school districts. He described these individuals as those that have high demands particularly on the School District and little to offer the community financially to cover the costs of those demands, such as ability to pay taxes. He stated that there are 126 free food distribution agencies that receive and distribute free food from a program that is managed by the Greater Berks Food Bank. He felt unsure as to whether there were adequate control mechanisms in place to assure that recipients of this government program are all U.S. citizens. He also emphasized the fact that Berks County distributes four times the rate of free food that Montgomery County does. Commissioner Schwank encouraged Commissioner Scott to go and take a look at how these agencies operate and assure compliance with the regulations. She then suggested inviting Peg Bianca, Administrator of the Greater Berks Food Bank, to a future Commissioners' meeting to discuss the compliance process in this food distribution program. Commissioner Gajewski agreed that adequate oversight should occur. Following this discussion the motion for the consent agenda with the exception of Item 372 J. was approved unanimously.

Consent Agenda

1. Resolutions:

- 363.04 A. Adopt Resolution authorizing the execution of a Grant Agreement and designating the Greater Berks Food Bank as the lead agency for the County of Berks to participate in the State Food Purchase Program for the 2004-2005-program year.
- 364.04 B. Adopt Resolution authorizing Judith Schwank, as Chair of the Board, to execute a Grant Application (J8 04-47-1) by and between the County of Berks (District Attorney) and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for renewal of the project entitled "Berks County Sobriety Checkpoint and Expanded DUI/Underage Drinking Enforcement Program" for the period 9/1/04 – 8/31/05.
- 365.04 C. Adopt Resolution re-appointing members of the Berks County Workforce Investment Board (terms expired June 30, 2004.)
- 366.04 D. Adopt Resolution authorizing the Berks County Board of Commissioners or their authorized designee, to enter into Contracts of Sale of Agricultural Conservation Easements for County easement purchases, and to execute the Certification of County funds when applicable to a state easement purchase with the property owners described in this resolution.
- 367.04 E. Adopt Resolution authorizing changes to the County's CDBG Program as advertised.
- 368.04 F. Adopt Resolution authorizing execution of Assurances of Compliance/Review with respect to the BCCYS 2004-2005 Implementation Plan and the FY 2005-2006 Needs Based Plan and Budget Estimate which assured that all mandated services covered by this Plan will be delivered dependent upon the availability of State, Federal and local funding.
- 369.04 G. Adopt Resolution authorizing 2004 budget appropriations in the amount of \$725,173 per listing dated, August 5, 2004.
- 370.04 H. Adopt Resolution authorizing controlled goose hunt at Kaercher Creek Park, Berks County, on September 1, 2, 6, 9, 13, 16, 20 and 23, 2004.
- 371.04 I. Adopt Resolution authorizing the tax forgiveness, including interest and penalty, for all outstanding county taxes concerning the properties owned by Reading Redevelopment Authority in the area now known as the Buttonwood Gateway Urban Redevelopment Area:
409 Huyett Street, Reading
416 Tulpehocken Street, Reading

- 372.04 J. Resolution appointing Commissioner Mark C. Scott to the Pottstown Landfill Closure Committee as established by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and appointing Michelle Kircher as alternate representative. NOT APPROVED AT THIS MEETING.
2. Motion to Award Invitation to Bid # 04-09-RC, a one-year contract for the furnishing of 17 treatment carts for use by Berks Heim and 4 medication carts for use by Berks County Prison to Artromick International with an office at 4800 Hilton Corporate Drive, Columbus, Ohio, 43232 at their bid price of \$1,259.65 per treatment cart and \$1,368.48 per medication cart plus \$100.00 shipping per cart.
 3. Motion authorizing execution of Contract Agreements/ Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator, per attached listing dated, 2004.
 4. Change Order Requests for the renovation of the INS facilities, in the total amount of \$ 1,687.15:
 1. Change Order Request No. GC-005 to remove and reinstall windows in two rooms.
 5. Motion to authorize payment of invoices under the following Community Development Disbursement Vouchers:
 - a. No. 2092-S - Emergency Shelter Program
 - b. No. 2093 - Community Development Block Grant Program
 - c. No. 2094 - Community Development Block Grant Program
 - d. No. 468 – Home Grant Program
 - e. No. 469 – Home Grant Program
 - f. No. 1224 – Property Rehabilitation Program
 - g. No. 1225 – Property Rehabilitation Program

Reports

The County Controller Sandy Graffius, and County Treasurer, Nelson Long, CPA presented their weekly reports

Non-consent Agenda Items

Commissioner Scott introduced Resolution 373.04 K. and indicated that the County hoped for a greater percentage contribution from Montgomery County as the greater portion of the Landfill this closure study involves is located in Montgomery County but they recently approved 50% funding commitment. Commissioner Schwank stated her support of the resolution and acknowledged that pollution knows no political boundaries.

Non-consent Agenda Items continued:

Commissioner Gajewski then presented Resolutions 374.04 L; 375.04 M; and 376.04 N. which intends to minimize or prevent an anticipated cash flow problem at the end of this year. He indicated that he was aware of two departments that were showing more than what was allocated in their capital budgets. Bob Patrizio, Budget Director was present at the meeting and said that the issue will certainly be addressed.

Commissioner Schwank stated her support of the Resolutions and that we need to get serious about spending. She explained that the Cost Containment Committee will play a critical role. Commissioner Scott expressed opinion that no one should be attending training and or conferences unless it was considered to be an important part of their work.

County Administrator Bill Dennis stated that we are in the process of "peeling back the onion" and we need to be sure that we are "lean and mean" in how we approach this avoidance of deficit spending.

Commissioner Scott indicated his support of a long-term solution to the current budget crisis but questioned the need for the recent addition of County staff positions such as Brownfield's Coordinator and Risk Manager.

There were several questions and concerns expressed by Elected Officials such as Sandy Graffius, Controller, Ellie Antoine, Recorder of Deeds and James Troutman, Clerk of Courts.

Commissioner Schwank stated that we have to be creative and make cuts, she assured all in attendance that this is just the beginning of a process to put procedures in place to assure that improved financial management is a matter of practice for the future and not just a short-term correction.

At this time a motion made by Commissioner Gajewski, seconded by Commissioners Scott and all voted yes, approved the Non-Consent Agenda Resolutions listed below:

- 373.04 K. Resolution authorizing the Berks County Board of Commissioners to enter into an Intermunicipal Environmental Funding Agreement by and between Berks County and Montgomery County. The Agreement provides for joint and equal payment for consulting services respecting the Closure of the Pottstown Landfill, a facility situated in both Counties.
- 374.04 L. Resolution restricting the expenditure of County dollars for the hiring of new employees for the remainder of 2004.
- 375.04 M. Resolution restricting the expenditure of County dollars for the non-mandated training / conference travel for the remainder of 2004.
- 376.04 N. Resolution restricting the expenditure of County dollars for new capital projects for the remainder of 2004.

Agenda Items for Discussion

Joan Jeffries, resident from Berks County requested addition information on the discussion for funding a consultant for the Pottstown Landfill Closure Committee. She suggested using the County Solid Waste Authority members. Commissioner Scott thanked Ms. Jeffries for her comments but expressed his reluctance to ask volunteer members of a committee to contribute their professional services to a project that will likely take a considerable amount of time.

Citizen Comment/Business From The Floor

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:23 A.M.