

Commissioners' Board Meeting
Thursday, September 23, 2004

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, September 30, 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 the September 14, 2004 Commissioners' Workshop Meeting and the September 16, 2004 Commissioners' Meeting were approved as published with a motion made by Commissioner Scott seconded by Commissioner Gajewski, the motion carried. Commissioner Schwank did not vote as she was not in attendance at the 9/16/04 meeting.

Commissioner Scott made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Gajewski and all voted yes to approve the following Consent Agenda. As part of the discussion and prior to the vote Commissioner Gajewski read a prepared statement (attached) regarding his opinion of the Saint Mary Hospital Authority's request to this board. Commissioner Scott described the TEFRA hearing as an example of what he meant previously by referring to this being a perfunctory process and acknowledges that the Board of Commissioners is required to conduct the hearing prior to the Hospital Authority's filing for tax exempt bond financing approval with the Internal Revenue Service. He stated that the St. Joseph Medical Center expansion project, which will be financed by the Authority, is an important one to the people of Berks County and that he fully supports the financing. Commissioner Schwank also emphasized her support and further stated that in the interest of full disclosure she wanted the public to be aware of her position on the St. Joseph Medical Center Board. She indicated that she received a written confirmation from the County Solicitor that her position on the St. Joseph's board could not be perceived as a conflict of interest by voting on this tax exempt bond project as a Commissioner in that she will receive no pecuniary benefit from this decision. She also stated that this hospital project has been in the planning stages for a number of years and that hospital officials had been in discussions with the previous Board of Commissioners regarding their proposed changes. She stated that she was pleased that the County hosts two "top notch" Medical Facilities in this County and introduced Michael B. Jupina, Director of Communications and Marketing for the Medical Center who discussed the project by stating that he expects it to bring 35 million dollars for the area's construction workers during the next 2 years. He also attempted to explain the confusion regarding the financing or refinancing of this project by stating that the funds were originally advanced by Catholic Health Initiatives who then looked to the St. Mary's Hospital Authority for tax exempt financing. He said that depending on which organization you spoke to, one was in the process of refinancing an existing bond and the other was undertaking a new financing, but it was all related to St. Joseph's Medical Center project. Commissioner Gajewski restated his support of the project but continued to object to the scheduling procedure that he believes was mishandled.

Consent Agenda

1. Authorizing from September 16, 2004 meeting:
 - 401.04 F. Resolution approving financing of a project by Saint Mary Hospital Authority for Catholic Health Initiatives for improvements to certain facilities operated by St. Joseph Medical Center and to conduct a public hearing concerning such project.

2. Authorizing current consent agenda items:
 - 403.04 A. Resolution approving PA Department of Transportation plans for housing replacement as last resort for two Berks County property owners.

 - 404.04 B. Resolution authorizing Amendment #2 to the Healthchoices Behavioral Health Agreement No VC1486-01.

 - 405.04 C. Resolution authorizing execution of a Lease Agreement between Marvin C. Miller and the County of Berks for office space located at the Matthew Brooke Professional Center, Suite 180, 321 N. Furnace Street, Birdsboro, for District Court 23-3-01.

 - 406.04 D. Resolution authorizing 2004 budget transfers in the amount of \$135,171 per listing dated September 23, 2004 and budget appropriations in the amount of \$296,832.

3. Motion authorizing payment of invoices under the following Community Development Disbursement Vouchers:
 1. No. 2099-S Emergency Shelter Program
 2. No. 2100 – Community Development Block Grant Program
 3. No. 474 – HOME Grant Program
 4. No. 1229 – Property Rehabilitation Program.

4. Motion authorizing execution of Contract Agreements/ Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator, per attached listing dated, September 17, 2004.

Reports

The County's Deputy Controller, Mark Hanson and County Treasurer, Nelson Long, CPA provided their weekly reports to the board.

Agenda Items for Discussion

Clerk of Courts Jim Troutman asked for clarification on the Penn Dot resolution for Housing of Last Resort.

Citizen Comment/Business From The Floor

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned to salary board at 11:15 A.M.