

**Commissioners' Workshop Meeting**  
**Tuesday, September 28, 2004**

***I. CALL TO ORDER:***

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, September 28, 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, Solicitor, Alan Miller, Esq. and Chief Clerk Terry Styer.

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

***II. PROCLAMATIONS/CERTIFICATES/PRESENTATIONS:***

Terri Lampe, Brownfields Development Manager, and Tom McKeon, Director of Community & Economic Development presented the Brownfields Inventory Campaign currently underway for Berks County. She indicated that there will be a two-week campaign that will encourage citizens to assist with identification of potential Brown Fields sites in the County. The information will then be submitted to the State and Federal Government to request grant funds to assist with the cleanup and development of those sites. Commissioner Scott indicated that he is aware that the EPA is reluctant to identify new sites as their funding is severely limited, so he asked Terri to explain the positive outcome we could expect by identifying more sites. Terri Lampe concurred with his comment by saying that of the 750 applications received by the EPA Nationwide, only 250 received grants. In the case of Berks County, she said we are shooting very high and believes that there are more sites than what has already been identified. Commissioner Scott asked if the sites identified in Berks how many were actually rehabilitated and returned to the tax rolls. Terri said there is only one in Boyertown, which is an approximate 30-acre Brownfield parcel that now hosts several different businesses and the property, in its entirety, has been returned to the tax rolls. Commissioner Schwank said that this was the first effort the county has made to officially identify additional Brownfield sites. Commissioner Scott stated that this information all sounds good but feels that with the interest in rapid recovery of our area's economy, the greatest growth has not been on remediated Brownfields but the higher paying jobs and high quality employers are looking for and locating on Greenfield's properties. Tom McKeon agreed by saying that each has its place in the economic development plans of the County, which will hopefully end up with a variety of sites for developers to choose from. He further explained that the identification of these sites helps to open a new channel of funding for Berks County despite what appears to be dwindling federal funds. Commissioner Scott said he would like to see us earmark the number of sites on file currently and report to the commissioners the number of additional sites that this campaign is able to identify.

The Commissioner continued to challenge the view that the net economic advantage of identifying these sites is positive. Commissioner Gajewski suggested that many banks require this type of environmental study prior to financing.

A Proclamation was presented by Commissioner Schwank for the Pine Forge Historical Society for its preservation and listing of the Pine Forge Mansion and Industrial Site in the National Register of Historic Places.

Dorothy Reilly, Berks County citizen, expressed concerns regarding the Voter Registration and the Elections process generally and that her concerns were intensified following a meeting she had with Kurt Bellman, Elections Director. She asked the board to explain several things such as purging of voter records.

Chris Winter, Deputy Elections Director explained the process by which a registered voter can be made inactive in the voter registration records which he explained is only after they fail to vote in two Federal Elections in a row and when the County Elections bureau determines via mail returns and several other required processes that the individual has moved, will that record be listed as inactive. He stated that the record is not actually purged, and the individual can re-register and the file will be made active again.

Chris went on to state that since the news article in the Reading Eagle regarding the number of voter registration applications received, his department has been "blessed" with overwhelming numbers of volunteers. He then explained his process for organizing all the volunteers to the best use. He assured the board of Commissioners and the citizens of Berks County that as long as registrants get their applications postmarked by the deadline of October 4, 2004, that no registered voter in Berks County will be denied their right to vote. In reference to the specific comments regarding Kurt Bellman, Chris stated that he has full confidence in Kurt's ability. Commissioner Gajewski asked Chris to explain the comment regarding veterans receiving 2-3 absentee ballots. Chris assured him that every ballot is bar coded and will ultimately be scanned, so no vote could be counted twice. Commissioner Scott asked Chris to elaborate on the comments regarding multiple registrations. Chris suggested that some folks just hate to say no and when a registration drive takes place, they end up sending in their name twice but this situation was among approximately 80% of the registrations they received that also included address changes, party changes and or incorrect information. He indicated that only 20% of the recent applications are actually new registered voters, which amounts to approximately 18,000.

Commissioner Schwank emphasized that there isn't a more important job than that of inspiring voters that all votes will be counted.

Commissioner Gajewski suggested that he would contact someone from the League of Women Voters to observe the activities in Voter Registration in order to help assure the public.

Pat Pieja thanked the board for the open discussion and information regarding the elections process.

Jim Troutman, Clerk of Courts, asked to have the "provisional ballot" described. Chris stated that whenever there is a discrepancy at a polling place, such as a problem with the voter's registration not being on file, he or she will not be refused a vote, but instead will cast on a provisional ballot, which will be placed in a special green envelop, sealed and ultimately reviewed by the Board of Elections as to what precinct the vote should be recorded.

Commissioner Scott thanked Dorothy Reilly for initiating a valuable and informative discussion for the TV viewers of this meeting.

### III. REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS:

Adopt Resolution authorizing Pass-through funding contracts between the County, The Berks County Prison Society and the Council on Chemical Abuse

#### Commissioner Schwank

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing a Contract Administration, G701 Change Order No 4, by and between the County of Berks, the Engineer (Elliot Leboeuf & Associates), and the General Contractor (R. S. Mowery and Sons, Inc.), for the new Live Fire Training Prop, in the amount of \$281,025.62; and for a Contract Administration, G701 Change Order No 2, by and between the County of Berks, the Engineer (Elliot Leboeuf & Associates), and the Electrical Contractor (The Warko Group) for the new Live Fire Training Prop, in the amount of \$3,340.00. Bob Osika, Emergency Management Coordinator described the changes to the Fire Training Center as improvements and that more of the building will not be utilized for "burn" training purposes. Scott Adams, Facilities Director described the project's budget and indicated that the contingencies built into the budget will allow for these improvements while remaining under budget.
- B. Resolution authorizing Commissioner Schwank, as Chair of the Board, to execute Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Labor and Industry, Grant Recipients Release, Assignment and Closeout forms pursuant to the terms of WIA Grant numbered 015029101.

#### Commissioner Gajewski

- A. Motion authorizing payment of invoices under the following Community Development Disbursement Vouchers:
  - 1. No. 2101 – Community Development Block Grant Program
  - 2. No. 475 – HOME Grant Program
  - 3. No. 1230 – Property Rehabilitation Program

**Commissioner Gajewski continued:**

- B. Resolution Authorizing execution of Application for County Aid MS-339 (Liquid Fuels) in the allocated amount of \$165,000 for the Township of North Heidelberg to replace the damaged and deteriorating Heidel Road Bridge.

**Commissioner Scott**

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing the Fiscal year 2004/2005 HealthChoices Capitation Rates.

**IV. OTHER REQUESTS:**

**Budget Director:**

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing 2004 budget transfers in the amount of \$749,589 per listing dated September 23, 2004 and budget appropriations in the amount of \$185,510. Bob Patrizio, Budget Director presented these requests.

**Contract Coordinator:**

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

**V. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**

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

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:45 AM.