

Commissioners' Board Meeting
Thursday, April 7, 2005

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, April 7, 2005, at 10:30 A.M. 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 Miller and County Administrator William E. Dennis.

The Commissioners' Meeting Minutes for the March 29, 2005 Workshop Meeting and the March 31, 2005 Commissioners' meeting were approved as published with a motion made by Commissioner Scott, seconded by Commissioner Gajewski and all voting yes to approve.

Consent Agenda Items

1. Commissioner Scott made a motion to approve the following consent agenda. Commissioner Gajewski seconded the motion and all voted yes to approve.
 - 109.05 A. Resolution authorizing 2005 Budget Transfers in the total amount of \$103,000.00, and 2005 Budget Appropriations in the total amount of \$1,422.00 per list dated April 06, 2005.
 - 110.05 B. Resolution authorizing a Voluntary Severance Plan to all full-time employees consisting of two-weeks of pay for every full year of service with a minimum payout of 3 weeks and a maximum payout of 52 weeks. The package will be offered to employees on April 18th Countywide and employees will have 45 days to make a decision and a 7 day revocation period. Separation dates will be established by the Department Head but in no case will be later than December 31, 2005. ***see agenda items for discussion**
 - 111.05 C. Resolution authorizing execution of the HAVA Grant application.
 - 112.05 D. Resolution authorizing Judith L. Schwank, as Chairman of the Board, to execute continuation of Subgrant No. 03-DA-ST-14420 by and between the County of Berks (Adult Probation) and the Pennsylvania Commission of Crime and Delinquency, with respect to funding in the amount of \$271,378.00 (100% state funding) for "Phase II – RIP (Restrictive Intermediate Punishment) – Level 3 & 4 Offenders," covering the period 7/1/05 – 6/30/06.
 - 113.05 E. Resolution authorizing the Human Resource recommendation as per list dated April 7, 2005.

2. Motion authorizing execution of Contract Agreements/ Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator, per listing dated April 4, 2005.

Reports

1. County Treasurer, Nelson Long, CPA presented his weekly report.
2. County Controller, Sandy Graffius presented her weekly report.

Agenda Items for Discussion

*Commissioner Scott asked several questions regarding the Voluntary Severance program. Beth Schiepan, Human Services Director responded with information regarding the program's eligibility for reimbursement for State and Federally funded programs. She informed the board that only the sick leave and vacation time payouts are eligible for the reimbursement. The Commissioner stated his support for what he described as an interesting experiment but suggested that the savings may not be realized until future budget years. Both Beth Schiepan and Bob Patrizio, Budget Director indicated that the key to the savings would be with the decisions the board makes for the overall goal to slow the growth of staff. They both agreed that the cost of the severance may be seen up front, but the decision to not replace or replace at the low end of the salary range, is where the long term savings will be.

Commissioner Gajewski suggested that the County should review the \$833,800.00 spent by the County since 1992 on environmental litigation. Commissioner Scott reminded everyone that the funds used for the various environmental litigation expenses were the result of a 1998 legal settlement with Waste Management of PA Inc. operators of the Pottstown Landfill and not from taxpayers. Both Commissioners Scott and Schwank described some of the environmental issues and benefits that have been the result of some of those expenses.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:20 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry L. Styer, Chief Clerk