

Commissioners' Workshop Meeting
Tuesday, April 12, 2005

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, April 12, 2005 at 7:00 P.M. in the Boscov's Court of the Fairgrounds Square Mall in Muhlenberg Township, 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. PRESENTATIONS/ PROCLAMATIONS/CERTIFICATES

In recognition of NACo's (National Association of Counties) designation of April 10 through 16, 2005 as National County Government Week and the theme of Honoring County Heroes, we would like to present the following:

- Commissioner Scott presented a Certificate of Recognition on behalf of the Board of Commissioners to the Hathaway family. Pam and Mark Hathaway of Exeter Township are the recipients of the **Outstanding Foster Family of the year** award from the Pennsylvania State Foster Parent Association. Along with raising four children of their own they have provided a stable and loving foster home environment for twenty of Berks County's abused and neglected children. They are also the proud adoptive parents of five special needs children as well. As leaders in the foster care community, they have helped to guide other foster parents around adoption issues and caring for children with medical needs. The Commissioner spoke about the heartache that is often felt by the foster parent when the time comes to reunite the foster child with their parent, which he described as the mission of the foster program. He commended the Hathaways for their dedication to this program. Commissioner Scott then introduced Barbara Hartranft MSW, Director of Placement for Berks Children and Youth Services who described the County's Foster Care Program that currently provides for 800 of Berks County's children in foster care.
- Commissioner Schwank presented a Certificate of Recognition on behalf of the Board of Commissioners to John T. Hetrick, **Earl Township's Emergency Management Coordinator**, for being the first local coordinator in Berks County to receive Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) certification as a Professional Municipal Emergency Management Coordinator. Bob Osika, Berks County's Emergency Management Coordinator explained that professional certification is achieved only after successful completion of the training, education, and experience criteria defined in PEMA Directive D2003. Since January 1, 2004, Mr. Hetrick is only one of eight local emergency management coordinators (EMCs) to earn this distinction, which is quite remarkable considering that there are approximately

2,854 municipalities in the Commonwealth. Mr. Hetrick has served as the Earl Township EMC since 1996, and his overall commitment to local emergency management spans more than 18 years. His staff currently includes ten (10) other dedicated volunteers who are well trained to assist their community during a local disaster emergency. By achieving this professional certification, Mr. Hetrick has clearly demonstrated a superior level of commitment, dedication, leadership, and professionalism to the emergency management field.

- Commissioner Schwank presented on behalf of the Board of Commissioners, a **Proclamation for National Public-Safety Telecommunications Week** for April 10 – April 16, 2005 to Craig Brenheiser, Director of Berks County Communications Center who thanked the board and reported that during 2004, public-safety telecommunicators in Berks County answered more than 441,000 telephone calls for assistance resulting in over 210,000 dispatches to police, fire, emergency medical and other responders.
- Commissioner Schwank presented on behalf of the Board of Commissioners, a Certificate of Recognition to Duane Briscoe, Senior Telecommunicator, Berks County Communications Center for receiving the Associated Public Safety Officials (APCO) **Telecommunicator of the Year Award**.
- Commissioner Gajewski presented, on behalf of the Board of Commissioners, a Proclamation for **Sexual Assault Awareness Month** to Mary Kay Bernosky Esq., Executive Director of Berks Women in Crisis which is an organization successfully providing basic services to victims and survivors of sexual violence through crisis counseling and intervention, prevention education programs and referrals since 1994. He indicated that the Berks Women in Crisis organization is mounting a campaign of community education and prevention strategies aimed at Berks County secondary school students to educate them about sexual violence and what to do if it happens to them or someone they know.
- Commissioner Gajewski presented, on behalf of the Board of Commissioners a Certificate of Appreciation to Al Boscov, Founder of **Our City Reading** noting his exceptional leadership in the creation of Our City Reading, Inc. which renovates homes making them available for purchase by first-time homebuyers as well as his work to undertake economic development projects to create jobs and improve the quality of life. The Our City Reading program revitalizes neighborhoods through the elimination of vacant houses helping to create safe, clean, desirable neighborhoods. Since its inception, the corporation has renovated and sold 144 properties in the City. Through his commitment, hard work, energy and vision, Albert Boscov has made substantial improvement in the transformation of neighborhoods throughout Reading and Berks County improving the quality of life for all Berks Countians.

III. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS / REQUESTS:**Budget Director:**

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing 2005 Appropriations in the total amount of \$105,000.00 per list dated April 8, 2005.

Purchasing Department

- A. Adopt Resolution to award a contract, as a result of Invitation to Bid #05-01-RC, for the supply, delivery and installation of roller shades at the new Heim facility. The award shall be made to C.R. Blinds with an office at 317 Pershing Blvd, Shillington, Pennsylvania, 19607 at their bid price of \$103.44/shade. (435 shades = \$44,996.40) Budget Code: 22-802-04-101-00.
- B. Adopt Resolution to award contract as a result of Invitation to Bid #05-01-RC, for the supply, delivery, and installation of furniture for the new Heim facility, as per the attached spreadsheet, to Office Service Company with an office at 1009 Tuckerton Road, Reading, Pennsylvania, 19605. Award Total: \$58,831.15. Budget Code: 22-802-04-101-00.
- C. Adopt Resolution to award contract as a result of Invitation to Bid #05-01-RC, for the supply, delivery and installation of furniture for the new Heim facility, as per the attached spreadsheet, to Environmental Interiors with an office at 400 North Blue Ribbon Avenue, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 17112. Award Total: \$195,554.65. Budget Code: 22-802-04-101-00.
- D. Adopt Resolution to award contract as a as a result of Invitation to Bid #05-01-RC, for the supply, delivery and installation of furniture for the new Heim facility, as per the attached spreadsheet, to Corporate Environments, Inc. with an office at 601 Penn Street, Suite 605, Reading, Pennsylvania, 19601. Award Total: \$227,201.24. Budget Code: 22-802-04-101-00.

County Administrator

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing the Commissioner Chair to approve an agreement on behalf of the County of Berks, with Mark Morgan of Municipal Finance Partners for the conduct an audit of the County's pre-fund healthcare contract with Capital Blue Cross. The cost of this audit will be 7.5% of any enhanced settlement of the escrow account, and will include a detailed financial audit, traditional claims audit and a random sampling audit. County Administrator Bill Dennis explained that in 2002 Berks County entered into a pre-fund agreement with Blue Cross for three years in order to level out costs for the County's Health Insurance needs. As a result of this agreement the County's plan is in a surplus status and stands to receive a payout at the end of the contract of approximately 2.5 million. It is anticipated that results of this audit could increase the expected payout or surplus to \$3 million and if successful the consultant will be paid 7.5% of the increase only.

- B. Adopt Resolution authorizing Riverside Consulting Group, Inc., 531 East Lancaster Avenue, Wayne, PA 19087, to prepare a healthcare self-insurance RFP to be completed and evaluated by no later than May 20, 2005 for a January 1, 2006 implementation. The fee not to exceed \$32,000 will include preparation of the RFP, RFP process management, negotiations, review and report preparation and implementation of self-insurance. Bill Dennis explained that the County is proposing to provide a self-funded plan for health care as costs for the current program rose 17% for 2005. He indicated that the major benefit is that the County will be the "holder of the money" while paying a third party administrator for record keeping, claims management and other related administrative duties. He also indicated that employees would not notice the change. Commissioner Scott asked how the County plans to spread the risk in a one-year plan. Mr. Dennis indicated that the County would need to consider options such as reinsurance or establishing a fund reserve.

IV. REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Schwank

- A. Adopt Resolution accepting the proposal from Synergetics Architects to amend contract number PSA - 2118 - 04 dated 8/5/04 for a continuation of professional services for the Adaptive Recreation Area Improvements at a cost of \$30,668.00 and a reimbursable allowance of \$4,325. Bill Semmel, Parks Director will be attending the meeting for questions.
- B. Adopt Resolution accepting Agricultural Conservation Easement Agreement of Sale (\$1.00) between the County of Berks and the Thun Children Family Trust for 126 acres of land located in Lower Heidelberg Township along State Hill Road near the Brownsville Road. In total, the family has preserved over 474 acres in Lower Heidelberg Township through the joint State and County Agricultural Conservation Easement Program and the Berks County Conservancy.

Commissioner Gajewski

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing payment of invoices under the following Community Development Disbursement Vouchers:
1. No. 2131-Community Development Block Grant funds - \$192,160.54
 2. No. 2130-S-Emergency Shelter Program – \$2,397.94
 3. No. 2129-PS-State Emergency Shelter Program – \$1,360.00
 4. No. 491-Home Grant Program - \$1,450.00
 5. No. 1241-Property Rehabilitation Program - \$10,821.00

Commissioner Gajewski continued:

- B. Adopt Resolution authorizing a three-year contract extension to June 30, 2008 (contract PSA-894-02 will expire on June 30, 2005) for the operations and maintenance of the county sewage treatment plant with Miller Environmental, Inc., 6008 Farming Ridge Blvd., Reading, PA 19606. The proposed extension would continue the contract under the same terms, conditions, scope and compensation requirements as are stated in the current agreement. Payment to Miller beginning July 1, 2005 will be \$17,859.16 per month for the plant operations and \$1,200 per month for maintenance expenditures (total \$19,059.16 per month). An annual increase of 2.5% to the operations fee is proposed for July 1, 2006, and an increase of 2.5% to the operations fee is proposed for July 1, 2007.

Commissioner Scott

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing a contract amendment between the County of Berks and the US Department of Homeland Security, Immigration & Customs Enforcement to increase the monthly rent for the detention area of Immigration Services from \$224.07 to \$ 298.47 per day for each detainee beginning March 1, 2005. All other terms of the contract shall remain the same.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**VII. CITIZEN COMMENT:**

David Goheem, citizen of Reading asked the board if the County had a plan to deal with illegal aliens entering Berks County and suggested that cutting benefits would resolve the issue. The Commissioners responded to Mr. Goheem by explaining that Berks County does not knowingly provide benefits to illegal aliens and that public welfare benefits are administered by the State not the county. In addition it was noted that the immigration and customs agents employed by the Federal Government are overwhelmed by the number of reported cases of illegal aliens entering the county.

Gerald Pennebacker of Alsace Township suggested the County consider use of the Agere Bldg. Site as a possible community corrections facility. The Commissioners asked Tom McKeon to respond to the issue of redevelopment of a Brownsfields site such as this one and explain why in some cases the re-use of older structures may not be cost effective. However, Mr. Pennebacker was then informed by the Controller Sandy Graffius, that the County is currently evaluating the possible use of the Heim Annex for the Community Corrections center.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:35 P.M.