

Commissioners' Workshop Meeting
Tuesday, August 23, 2005

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, August 23, 2005 at 10:30 A.M. 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. The Commissioner opened the meeting with a moment of silence and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

II. PRESENTATIONS/ PROCLAMATIONS/CERTIFICATES:

- Commissioner Gajewski presented a certificate of Recognition to Sheriff Barry Jozwiak for being recently selected as the President of the Pennsylvania Sheriff's Association.
- Commissioner Gajewski presented a Proclamation for the 60th anniversary of VJ Day - Leigh Tallas, Director of Berks County Veterans Affairs Office and Joe Yaklowich WWII Veteran; were present to accept the proclamation.
- Commissioner Gajewski presented a Proclamation for the 91st anniversary of the Fleetwood Volunteer Fire Company to Fire Chief Steve Bleiler who was present to accept the proclamation.
- Percy Satoris III of the Freedom Trail Association, Kurt Zwinkl and Madeline Cantu of the Schuylkill River Greenways Association provided an overview of the planned Freedom Trail project. The trail, as proposed, will provide a greenway trail providing access to walkers, bikers, horses and horse carriages from the Blue Marsh Lake to Lake Ontelaunee. Mr. Satoris indicated that the proposed location contains many existing trail areas so little construction will be necessary. He also stated that to secure the entire length of the trail adjoins only three property owners and one business owner in addition to State Game Lands, County and Township properties. He stated that the first step was to gain the support of the municipalities starting with the County's approval of an easement through County owned property in Bern Township. He then discussed other significant obstacles that will involve construction of two bridges necessary to cross the Schuylkill River as well as some method of construction to either tunnel under or build a bridge over Rt. #183. He indicated that the project was in conformance with both the Bern Township Recreation Plan and the Berks County Comprehensive Plan. When asked if a projected amount has been considered for the bridge construction, he indicated that the first estimate was \$5.5 million however he believes that the construction for less costly bridges is feasible. If the funding for these bridges fails to materialize, he indicated that alternate plans are in place to loop the trails.

- The Commissioners instructed the County Solicitors office to investigate the possibility of a County Easement.

III. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS / REQUESTS:

Budget Director:

- A. Adopt a resolution approving 2005 Budget Transfers totaling \$18,900 and 2005 Appropriations totaling \$7,200. Bob Patrizio Budget Director presented the budget report.

Human Resources Director:

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing the Human Resource recommendation as per list dated 8/23/05. Beth Schiepan, H.R. Director, presented the list of HR recommendations.

Purchasing Department

Contract Coordinator:

- A. Motion authorizing execution of Contract Agreements/ Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator, per listing dated August 19, 2005. Candace Noll presented the list of contracts.

IV. REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS:

- A. Authorizing execution of a grant application by and between the County of Berks (District Attorney) and the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) for 100% State funding in the amount of \$177,713 for the Victim/Witness Assistance Unit covering the period 1/1/06 - 12/31/06.

Commissioner Schwank

- A. Adopt Resolution appointing Jean Hay to the Berks County Library Board of Directors to a three-year term ending 6/1/08.

Commissioner Gajewski

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing Commissioner Schwank, as Chair of the Board, to execute Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Labor and Industry, Grant Recipients Release pursuant to the SPOC (Single Point of Contact) grants that provide training and employment services to individuals receiving TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) Funds. Total amount of grant funding is \$1,508,722,00.

- B. Adopt Resolution awarding contracts to three program vendors recommended by the Berks County Workforce Investment Board. The contracts are in response to a July 2005 Request for Proposals to provide the following programs:
- In school youth program for TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) with the **Boyertown Area School District** for eligible youth at the Boyertown Area School District – Total amount \$82,009
 - In school youth program with **Goodwill Industries of Mid-Eastern PA** for Special Needs youth for \$198,512
 - Contract with **United Community Services for Working Families** to operate a Pre-Apprenticeship program for In School WIA (Workforce Investment Act) eligible youth for \$105,309.
- C. Adopt Resolution authorizing the creation of an employee wellness center to be located on the first floor of the Services Center. Carey Kaucher, Human Resources Department and Employee Wellness Committee member presented a request of the Committee to locate ongoing wellness center for County Employees to be located in the first floor of the former Child Care Center. Carey noted that early plans for this program include lunch and learn sessions with health and fitness related topics. Possible classes for smoking cessation; yoga and healthy cooking are among the other possibilities. Commissioner Gajewski indicated that this temporary use of the area would fit in with the Master Space Plan, which indicates that the space is slated for cafeteria use in the future.

Commissioner Scott

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing the execution of a contract with Wegman's Catering, on behalf of Berks County Juvenile Probation for \$15.00 per person for approximately 100-120 people (with respect to a Volunteer Recognition Dinner to be held Thursday October 27, 2005 at 6:00 PM at the Berks County Agricultural Center Auditorium, honoring participants in the Juvenile Probation Community Youth Aid Panel Program. Total County cost for the Recognition Dinner is estimated to be \$662.00 and includes certificates, awards and other supplies.

Solicitor

- A. Resolution authorizing execution by the Berks County Board of Commissioners of the Extension to Lease Agreement between the Township of South Heidelberg and the County of Berks for office space used by District Justice Ann L. Young (23-1-01) for an additional one (1) year term commencing September 1, 2005 through August 31, 2006.

V. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

VI. CITIZEN COMMENT/BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Pete Archey, citizen of the City of Reading presented current information regarding the subject of property tax reform and the various pieces of legislation currently in front of the Pennsylvania Legislature. He suggested to the Commissioners that they need to be completely informed on the various tax reform proposals to better inform their constituents and further suggested that prior to any vote at the state level, public hearings should be held at the School Districts to assure that all school district impacts have been thoroughly examined.

John Morgan citizen of Berks County commented on the Commonwealth Caucus plan to replace the School Property Tax with an expanded sales tax and an increase we in the Real Estate Transfer Tax percentage. He stated that while tax reform is needed, property tax is a progressive tax as is personal income tax but sales tax places the burdens on the consumer and the poorest of those consumers will have the largest – most negative impact.

Commissioner Gajewski read a letter from State Representative Dante Santoni, Jr. State Representative, 126th District regarding the children and youth funding issues.

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 PM