

Commissioners' Workshop Meeting
Tuesday, November 29, 2005

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, November 29, 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, County 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. PRESENTATION

Bill Westcott, Engineer for the County presented a Plaque to the Commissioners that he received on their behalf from the Eastern Pennsylvania Water Pollution Control Operator Association for the excellent maintenance and operations of the Berks County Sewage Treatment Plant. The Commissioners commended Bill and Miller Environmental Consultants who operate and maintain the facility for the County.

III. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS / REQUESTS:

Budget Director:

- A. Adopt a resolution authorizing 2005 Budget Transfers in the total amount of \$130,444.00 and appropriations in the total amount of \$4,352,114.00 per list dated November 23, 2005. Bob Patrizio presented the budget appropriations.
- B. Adopt Resolution authorizing the Human Resource recommendation as per list dated November 29, 2005. Beth Schiepan Director of Human Resources discussed the position recommendation on today's agenda.

Purchasing:

Contract Coordinator

- A. Motion authorizing execution of Contract Agreements/ Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator, per listing dated November 23, 2005. Candace Noll presented the list of contracts.

III. REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS:

- A. Commissioner Schwank proposed that time extension be granted towards the County's Offer for purchase of the Antietam Lake property from the City of Reading. Commissioner Scott made a motion to approve a time extension; Commissioner Gajewski seconded the motion all voted yes to extend the current offer to January 31, 2005.
- B. Adopt resolution authorizing Commissioner Schwank as Chair to sign a letter of time extension for the Berne Station Bridge Replacement Agreement No. 050349. Bill Westcott, Engineer stated that it should take one year to complete project.
- C. Adopt resolution authorizing an amendment of a continuation of 2005-DA-ST-15619 by and between the County of Berks (Adult Probation) and the Pennsylvania Commission of Crime and Delinquency, requesting \$90,000 in additional funds to add to the \$271,378.00 (100% state funding) awarded April 7, 2005 for "Phase II – RIP (Restrictive Intermediate Punishment) – Level 3 & 4 Offenders," covering the period 7/1/05 – 6/30/06. Nancy Xavios from Adult Probation discussed how the funds will be available to the County with no required match.
- D. Resolution authorizing execution of Amendment # 1 to a grant agreement, between the Berks SCA (Single County Authority) and the Department of Health, Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Programs (BDAP) requesting federal funds in the amount of \$383,998.00 for the "Ecstasy and other Club Drugs Social Norming and Environmental Project" for the period July 1, 2005 through September 29, 2006. George Vogel Director of Council on Chemical Abuse indicated that he would only act as administrative over site for these funds and there would be no County match required.

Commissioner Schwank

- A. Adopt resolution approving a Pre-Disaster Mitigation - Competitive Project Grant Agreement Berks County: Jeff Weidner, Emergency Management Agency Planner, described the proposed use of this competitive grant from FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) in the amount of \$90,000 will be to acquire the professional services of Skelly and Loy Consultants in cooperation with EMA, County Planning Commission members and other public agencies to prepare a county wide Hazard Mitigation plan. He explained that in order for municipalities to apply for disaster relief and/or flood prevention funds, they must have a disaster mitigation plan in place. He stated that these federal funds could be used in place of Liquid Fuels funds to cover the cost of flood preventative projects such as culvert replacements. The plan is expected to be completed in December of 2007 and will be made available to the municipalities for adoption.

Commissioner Gajewski:

- A. Adopt Resolution for \$185,000.00 from the Liquid Fuels Fund for Mill Road Culvert Replacement in Caenarvon Township.
- B. Adopt Resolution authorizing On-The-Job Training contracts and subsidized employment agreements as per list dated 11/18/2005.
- C. Adopt Resolution authorizing payment of invoices under the following Community Development Disbursement Vouchers:
 - 1. No. 517-Home Grant Program-\$46,907.92
 - 2. No. 2173- Community Development Block Grant Program- \$5,220.61
 - 3. No. 1268 – Property Rehabilitation Program-\$5,505.00

Commissioner Scott:

- A. Commissioner Scott proposed that the County approve the hiring of Special Counsel for the purpose of considering eminent domain proceedings with the Antietam Lake property. Commissioner Gajewski indicated that he agrees that it is time to prepare but would have preferred avoiding litigation with another municipality. He said he would support hiring of counsel but would like to see this sale resolved amicably before that becomes necessary. He expressed concern for sailing into uncharted waters with an eminent domain action between municipal entities.

Solicitor

- A. Resolution authorizing the execution of the Memorandum of Understanding by and between the County of Berks and St. Joseph Medical Center. The Solicitor explained the purpose of this memorandum was to allow the hospital to provide medicines and supplies at a lower cost to patients of a lower income that will quality. He assured that this memorandum was merely perfunctory and would provide no financial impact to the County. Commissioners Scott made a motion to approve that was seconded by Commissioner Gajewski with Commissioner Schwank abstaining as she is a member of the Board of St. Joseph's Hospital. The motion passed.

PROCLAMATIONS / CERTIFICATES

- Commissioner Schwank presented a Proclamation to the Dollar Energy Fund. Greg Whitman, Energy Educator for \$1 Energy and Mary Beth Simialek, Area Manager, Gary Gormler, and Jennifer Rivera from Met Ed were present to accept. They indicated that the way to donate money to this cause is by making a one time contribution or that included in your energy bill, there will be a brochure that explains how to donate money to this cause by adding your donation to your billing cycle. All funds collected will stay in our area to help those financially eligible with their winter heating costs.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

John Morgan resident of Ruscombmanor Township stated his belief that the vast majority of county and city citizens would favor the preservation of the Antietam Lake property in perpetuity as a County Park. He then spoke at length on the subject of tax reform and in particular his objections to the Commonwealth Caucus Plan as he believes this concept shifts the tax burden to our poorest of citizens by levying, among other options, a sales tax to replace property taxes for school districts. He also reminded everyone one of the loss of a tax deduction that will result from the replacement of real estate tax with sales tax so in effect the result would be higher federal taxes

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:40 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry L. Styer, Chief Clerk