

**Commissioners' Workshop Meeting**  
**Tuesday, December 6, 2005**

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

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, December 06, 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***

- Ron Roth, Reading Public Museum Executive Director and Pete Ponchieri, Director of Buildings and Grounds were present to request approval to hang a mural on the County Services Center as part of an upcoming exhibit on the work of Keith Haring beginning February 18, 2005. Mr. Ponchieri was instructed to contact Jim Stohecker from the County Facilities Department to determine if the proposed location on the County Services Center is structurally feasible.
- Richard Ehst, Regional President of Sovereign Bank was present to discuss the reorganization plan for the bank. He assured the Commissioners that Sovereign in its merger with Santander Bank, a commitment was made to keep Sovereign together as an organization for 12 years along with the continuance of being headquartered in Berks County.

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

***Budget Director:***

- A. Adopt a resolution authorizing 2005 Budget Transfers in the total amount of \$96,971.00 and appropriations in the total amount of \$539,000.00 per list dated December 2, 2005. Bob Patrizio presented the budget appropriations.

***Human Resources Director:***

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing the Human Resource recommendation as per list dated December 06, 2005. Marie Patestas, Human Resource Analyst was present to discuss.

**Human Resources Director continued:**

- B. Administrator Dennis discussed a request to officially authorize a memo to be sent to all Elected Officials and Department heads authorizing 2.5% ceiling for 2006 salary increases for Management Confidential employees. Commissioner approved the issuance of a memo to all elected officials and department heads regarding 2.5% increase for management confidential employee for 2006. The Commissioners agreed with sending the memo.

**Purchasing:****Contract Coordinator**

- A. Motion authorizing execution of Contract Agreements/ Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator, per listing dated December 2, 2005. Candace Noll, presented the list of contracts.
- B. Amendment #2 to Agreement #PC-3132-04, with Reinsel Kuntz Leshner as a result of Request for Proposal 04-11K1 for Auditing Services. This Amendment serves to extend the Agreement for an additional one-year term beginning January 1, 2006 and continuing through December 31, 2006.

**III. REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS:**

- A. Resolution expressing support for improvements to Route 222 North from Reading to Interstate 78 in Lehigh County as critical to the long-term development of the Greater Reading and Berks County area. Alan Piper, Transportation Planner, Berks County Planning Commission indicated that adoption of this Resolution is at a good time as the RATS (Reading Area Transportation Study Committee) is undergoing its long range transportation plan. Mr. Piper announced that there would be a public meeting held today in the Commissioner's Board Room as well as a second public meeting on December 7, 2005 at the Agriculture Center. Commissioner Mark Scott express his concerns about the congestion that we currently have in Exeter Township and was inquiring if any funds would be applied to solve that problem. Also he stated that this current plan, as proposed, would not be a complete connection to Lehigh County. Commissioner Schwank stated her concerns about the protection of Agricultural Preservation easements that will be affected by these plans. Commissioner Gajewski suggested that the county should avoid all future purchases of Ag. Easements along this proposed corridor. Alan Piper stated that is something that would have to be addressed at the public meetings.

**Commissioner Schwank**

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing the re-appointment of Joan Kohl to a two-year term with the Berks County Office of Aging Advisory Council.
- B. Adopt Resolution authorizing the re-appointment of Catherine R. Fox to a two-year term with the Berks County Office of Aging Advisory Council.

**Commissioner Gajewski:**

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing payment of invoices under the following Community Development Disbursement Vouchers:
  - 1. No. 518-Home Grant Program-\$29,043.00
  - 2. No. 2174- Community Development Block Grant Program-\$12,411.77
  - 3. No. 1269 – Property Rehabilitation Program-\$1,150.00
  - 4. No. 2173-Community Development Block Grant Program-\$18,970.92
- B. Adopt Resolution authorizing the re-appointment of Doris Epler to a two-year term with the Berks County Office of Aging Advisory Council.

Commissioner Gajewski reiterated his position that while he would still like to see an amicable solution towards the County's purchase of the Antietam Lake property from the City of Reading, the recent action taken by City council regarding the approval of two option agreements with M & B Investors and second option between the Mayor and five citizens, he suggested that the county should begin the process of filing eminent domain proceedings. Commissioner Scott stated his support but reminded the board that this filing would now have to entail all named parties involved in the current options. He suggested that the county authorize the preparation of the required paperwork to allow this action to be filed in court on short notice by the County. Commissioner Schwank agreed with that concept.

**Commissioner Scott:**

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing an application for the Grant-in-Aid funds from the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission for the 2005-2006 fiscal year. These funds help to subsidize the operating costs of the Juvenile Probation Office. Bruce Grim discussed that the amount of the grant will be 460,000.00 and that there would be no county match required he also introduced Robert Williams as his replacement as Chief Juvenile Probation Officer.

Solicitor

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing an application for a Highway Safety Project Grant in the amount of \$38,560.00 effective through September 30, 2006. (100% federal funding.) Steve Weber, Assistant Chief Adult Probation Officer indicated that this extension of an existing agreement would be used for the County's DUI program, which helps to prevent offenders from taking up room at the prison, and in turn saves the county money.

PROCLAMATIONS / CERTIFICATES

- Commissioner Gajewski will present a proclamation proclaiming December 15, 2005 as DUI Victims Remembrance Day.

MISCELLANOUS BUISNESS

- Commissioner Mark Scott brought up the Earl Land Trust Fund issue. He feels that the Berks County Conservancy should not ask the county for extra funding each year in the amount 135,000.00 if they are going to be in a position of receiving 500 acres of land and \$300,000.00 in cash of which \$200,000.00 will be use to pay off outstanding mortgages/rent, and the other \$100,000.00 would be used to maintain the vacant wooded land.

Commissioner Judy Schwank stated that the Berks County Conservancy plans are to sign over the mortgage to the County but there is far more information regarding this project. She suggested that the Board's questions be reserved until Thursday, December 8, 2005 Budget meeting, when the Conservancy will present further information on this topic.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:10 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Terry L. Styer, Chief Clerk