

Commissioners' Workshop Meeting
Tuesday, October 24, 2006

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, October 24, 2006, 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 W. Gajewski, Sr., and Commissioner Mark C. 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 the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

II. PRESENTATION

Lloyd w. Hopkins Jr., Chair of the Agriculture Coordinator Committee for the Berks County Community Foundation, presented a proposal to the Commissioners requesting support for the creation of a Berks County Agriculture Coordinator to be established within the 2007 County budget. He said that the American Farmland Trust's 2005 report to the Berks County Foundation (BCCF) was the first to present this recommendation and several committees of the BCCF were formed to provide further study of this recommendation. He explained that this position could to serve as a liaison between the agricultural industry and the county and municipal governments while performing as a spokesperson and an advocate for the agricultural community. He said that the Committee recommended that this position be created on a trial basis for three years and be housed with the Berks Economic Partnership (BEP). Keith Masemore, Committee member and President of the Berks County Chapter of the PA Farm Bureau said this position would help to achieve the County's Commitment to Agriculture as stated in the County Comprehensive Plan. William Hughes, Committee member and Vice President, Agriculture Division of Fulton Bank said that the County needs to do more to preserve the profitability of Agriculture. Lyn O'Hare, Committee member and Asst. Manager of the Berks County Conservation District also expressed support for this position.

Commissioner Gajewski questioned Mr. Hopkins on the Agriculture Coordinator Committee's origin and specifics on the position and how it would be funded. Lloyd Hopkins responded by saying that the proposal was to place this person in the Land Development area of the BEP and would spend time working with all current farmers in Berks County indicating that at some time in the future there would most likely be a need for additional staff. When asked about combining with other Counties to share this position, Mr. Hopkins indicated that the committee would like this position to serve only Berks County and it would be essential that a person with this specific experience be selected. He indicated that the county of Cumberland also has a similar position and Lancaster County has a position within the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce.

Agriculture Coordinator discussion continued:

Commissioner Scott said he would be supportive of this position reporting to the Board of Commissioners but expressed concern for it “falling into the bureaucracy of the BEP.” He said he understood the general mission and that the specific details of the job description are yet to be defined but would see this as a role of advocacy, marketing and education. He said that small farms are labor intensive and need to be close to markets and could envision this position helping with creative opportunities.

Commissioner Schwank thanked all the committee members for the time they have dedicated to this project. She expressed her concern that the county's preservation of agricultural land is not enough to drive the kind of agriculture we want to see in this county. She said we all have a stake in this agriculture industry whether we live in the suburbs and draw water from our own wells or live in the city and draw water from Lake Ontelaunee, all citizens are impacted and we need to continue the effort from the \$95 million investment of Agricultural Land preservation in this county. She then described several projects that a person in this position may help to facilitate such as the development of new farmers markets and the coordination with area farmers for supplying those local farmers markets. Commissioner Schwank described a proposed Spanish Market that is being planned for the City that will need farmers to provide produce to supply its need; she also mentioned a new project with the Sunrich Company and issues surrounding the disposal of agriculture related bio-solids which is a frequent topic of citizen concern. The Commissioner then reported that she had written to Secy. Wolfe of the PA Department of Agricultural to begin discussions for state funding of this position.

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

- A. Resolution authorizing 2006 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$126,635 and 2006 Appropriations in the amount \$882,300 per listing dated October 20, 2006. Bob Patrizio, Budget Director, presented the report.
- B. Motion authorizing execution of Contract Agreements/ Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator, per attached listing dated October 23, 2006. Candace Noll, Contract Coordinator presented the list of contracts.
- C. Resolution approving Payroll Policy Number 03-008 Pay processing- “Special Circumstances” – Tina Dry, Payroll Manager presented this proposed policy intended to establish clear direction for handling special payments of wages for events such as the recent flood and for regular events such as Election Day.

- D. Resolution authorizing, as a result of Invitation to Bid #06-08-MB, a contract to supply and install rubber flooring in the dayrooms of housing units "I" and "J" at the Berks County Prison. The award of **\$18,341.45** shall be made to the following vendor;
- Abacus Sports Installations
836 Flory Mill Road
Lancaster, PA 17601
- As per the Invitation to Bid, the County may renew the contract for up to two additional one-year terms at the quoted price. Maria Ballas, Senior Buyer, presented the request.

Berks Environmental Advisory Committee:

- A. Resolution authorizing an amendment to contract to Ambient Air Quality Services (AAQS), Lincoln University, PA to review the revised DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) Air Quality Permit application in relation to the construction of an electric generating facility using various waste products at United Corrstack in the amount not to exceed \$2,300.

Human Resource Director:

- A. Human Resource Recommendations per list dated October 23, 2006.

Human Services

- A. Resolution authorizing Judith L. Schwank, Chair of the Board, to execute TEFAP Inventory – Reimbursement Request Form for the period (July, August, and September) FFY 2005-2006, in the amount of \$9,013.57 for distributing 81,941.55 pounds of food at \$.11 per pound and to authorize Margaret Bianca, Executive Director, Greater Berks Food Bank for apply for the funds on behalf of Berks County.
- B. Resolution authorizing the execution of the Medical Assistance Transportation Program Grant Allocation Agreement/Expenditure Plan by and between the County of Berks and the Department of Public Welfare in the adjusted amount of \$1,049,540 for fiscal year 7/1/06 – 6/30/07.

Mental Health / Mental Retardation:

- A. Resolution authorizing the execution of an Agreement by and between the County of Berks and Community Care Behavioral Health Organization (the Medicaid Managed Care Program, Health Choices) dated 10/1/06 to 6/30/09. Dr. Ed Michalik presented this request

Office of Aging

- A. Resolution which authorizes Judith L. Schwank, as Chairman of the Board, to execute FY2006/07 Aging Block Grant Application in the amount of \$7,485,238, the Tobacco/Bridge Program in the amount of \$12,126, and the PDA Waiver program in the amount of \$1,083,808. Kathy Frey, Office of Aging Director of Administration, presented the application.

IV. REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS:

- A. Resolution authorizing the appointment of Wachovia Bank, N.A., 600 Penn Street, Reading, PA 19601 as the County's principal depository bank for the General Operating Account and Payroll Account for the period November 1, 2006 through December 31, 2007 in accordance with the terms of the Wachovia Bank proposal dated October 6, 2006.

Commissioner Gajewski

- A. Commissioner Gajewski reported that he was preparing for several informational meetings regarding the NACO prescription card at area Senior Centers.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 11:45 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry L Styer, Chief Clerk