

**Commissioners' Workshop Meeting
Tuesday, February 13, 2007**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, February 13, 2007 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. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS / REQUESTS:

County Administrator

- A. Bill Dennis, County Administrator presented his weekly report (attached.)

Budget Department:

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing 2006 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$31,702.00, 2006 Appropriations in the amount of 26,118.00, and 2007 Appropriations in the amount of \$2,504,895.00, per listing dated Feb 9, 2007. 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 February 12, 2007. Candy Noll, Contract Coordinator presented the list of contracts.

Community Development:

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing the execution of a grant application with the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) in the amount of \$300,000.00 for prevention and elimination of blight under Section 4(C) of the Housing and Redevelopment Assistance Law, as amended for the rehabilitation of the RACC (Reading Area Community College) Bridge and Trexler Mansion to prevent further blight and/or eliminate the existing influence by providing a structural safe pedestrian bridge and rehabilitating a blighted building. Ken Pick Director of Community Development presented this pass through funding agreement on behalf of RACC for the bridge and for Our City Reading for the Mansion explaining that the funds would restore the bridge piers and stonework and extend the life of the pedestrian bridge for which the Commissioners were considering for future County acquisition.

He then explained that the grant for the vacant mansion at Fifth and Franklin, which was built in 1869 as the residence of businessman Horatio Trexler, will fund exterior renovations and the purchase of kitchen equipment. When the renovations are complete, the Mansion is proposed to become the Daniel Torres Hispanic Center. Following his presentation the board discussed many issues regarding what entity will ultimately assume the long term maintenance of the bridge and the overall operation and maintenance of the proposed RiverPlace Development project that will surround this bridge. Commissioner Scott questioned the method in which this project received funding suggesting it to be of a political nature. He also said that while this may very well be a worthy project but other communities like Boyertown and Hamburg Boroughs that are struggling to revitalize may be missing funding opportunities with these limited resources and finding it difficult to compete with the Cities that may have more political connections. He stated that following a review of the proposed master plan for the RiverPlace development project he is concerned that the "incrementalism" process that may occur within each aspect of this development may end up in the laps of a future board of Commissioners and ultimately the taxpayers. He said he wants to see what is envisioned be backed up with a financial plan and a comprehensive capital and operating budget addressing specifically who will be paying for it. He said we owe it to our citizens to provide public discussion and the elected officials of the involved communities should be part of it. He ended by saying that "just because a project is good doesn't mean it's affordable."

Commissioner Schwank responded by expressing her agreement agreeing with the idea of a comprehensive financial plan and involving the elected officials and reminded him of previous discussions that were held to propose establishing an operating authority for this project and the Reading Corridor that would consist of representatives of the involved communities. She said that she would arrange a meeting to discuss the necessary long term plans or the project.

Commissioner Gajewski asked why the city wasn't managing the funding request for the DCED. He then indicated that funding for the Penn Street bridge repairs from Penn Dot may include additional funds for the cost for the Plaza at RiverPlace.

Elections:

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing an amendment to a HAVA (Help America to Vote Act) Grant Agreement between the County of Berks and the Commonwealth of PA Department of State extending the period for the county's expenditure of funds to June 30, 2009

Human Resource Director:

- A. Human Resource Recommendations per list dated February 13, 2007.

III. REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS:**Commissioner Schwank**

Commissioner Schwank suggested that due to the storm warnings and the many schools closing, the county should decide early about invoking Liberal leave for County Staff before day's end. She also provided an update on the last meeting of the Law Enforcement Study Committee and that the RFP for a professional consulting firm is expected to be on the street in the near future. She then announced that area blood banks are in short blood supply and encouraged everyone to donate blood.

Commissioner Gajewski

Commissioner Gajewski reported on a recent Zoning Hearing Board meeting he attended in Maxatawny Township where the supervisors approved an application for a Walmart Store and suggested possible funding an appeal thereby assisting the residents opposed to the project and without the means to pursue any legal means to overturn the decision of the Township.

He then reported on the current locations where the County's Discount Prescription Card is available and when the list is complete will be posted in the County Web site.

Commissioner Scott

Commissioner Scott discussed other municipal zoning issues that the County had previously provided legal and/or expert resources for municipalities defending their zoning ordinance. He also expressed concern for industrially zoned areas being lost to commercial development that will ultimately be unable to provide high quality, highly skilled jobs.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 11:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry L Styer, Chief Clerk

To: County Commissioners
From: County Administrator
Subject: Weekly Report
Date: 2/13/07

The following summarizes some of my activities of the week and advises of future considerations:

Berks Heim/Office of Aging

On February 27th Berks Heim staff will be meeting with Office of Aging staff to discuss their missions and policies. This discussion is an attempt to increase the level of understanding between the two departments and foster collaborative efforts as we face the challenges of an aging population and their needs. The Berks Heim has successfully embarked on a sound plan of efficiency through the new facility and it is important for the Office of Aging to understand the policies and direction of the Heim. At the same time it is important that the Heim understand and assist as they can with the trends and challenges that face the Office of Aging.

The meeting, which I will facilitate, will have numerous discussion items. These include:

THE EVOLVING ROLE OF THE COUNTY HOME

REFERRAL SOURCES & PROCESS

- HOSPITALS
- COMMUNITY
- OTHER NURSING HOMES
- AREA OFFICE OF AGING OPTIONS

PAYOR TYPES & BUDGET CRITERIA RECOMMENDATIONS

- BUDGET PAYOR MIX PERCENTAGES FOR 2007
- RECOMMENDATIONS

ADMISSION DETERMINATIONS

- ACUITY LEVEL
- COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVES
- FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS
- MA APPROVAL PROCESS/OPTIONS PROCESS
- DEMENTIA, BEHAVIORS, WANDERING AND OTHER DIAGNOSIS

DISCHARGE PLANNING

- REQUIRED FOR ALL NEW ADMISSIONS
- AREA OFFICE OF AGING NURSING TRANSITION PROGRAM

CONFLICTING AGENDAS

- REIMBURSEMENT SYSTEM
- OPTION PROCESS

Jerry Fudeman, Barbara Coffin and I are confident that this effort will not only lead to better service to the community but it is also the first important step in strategically planning adequate and effective future services.

Election Services

As a reminder to the public the following are important dates and deadlines regarding the primary election:

MUNICIPAL PRIMARY

First day to circulate and file nomination petitions - February 13, 2007

Last day to circulate and file nomination petitions – March 6, 2007

Last day to file objections to petitions – March 13, 2007

Drawing for ballot positions – March 21, 2007 (subject to change)

Last day to candidates who have filed to withdraw – March 21, 2007

First day before Primary Absentee ballots applications shall be received - March 26, 2007

Last day to register before Primary Election – April 16, 2007

Last day to apply for Absentee Ballot - May 8, 2007

All absentee ballots must be receive by 5:00pm - May 11, 2007



**COUNTY OF BERKS
ELECTION SERVICES OFFICE
633 COURT STREET, 1ST FLOOR
READING, PA 19601**

2007 ELECTION DATES

Municipal Primary.....May 15, 2007
Municipal ElectionNovember 6, 2007

2007 CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORT FILING DATES

<u>TYPE OF REPORT</u>	<u>COMPLETE AS OF</u>	<u>FILING DEADLINE</u>
2006 Annual Report	Sunday, December 31, 2006	Wednesday, January 31, 2007

2007 MUNICIPAL CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORT DEADLINES

Sixth Tuesday Pre-Primary	Monday, March 26, 2007	Tuesday, April 3, 2007
Second Friday Pre-Primary	Monday, April 30, 2007	Friday, May 4, 2007
Thirty Day Post Primary	Monday, June 4, 2007	Thursday, June 14, 2007

2007 MUNICIPAL CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORT DEADLINES

Sixth Tuesday Pre-Primary	Monday, September 17, 2007	Tuesday, September 25, 2007
Second Friday Pre-Primary	Monday, October 22, 2007	Friday, October 26, 2007
Thirty Day Post Primary	Monday, November 26, 2007	Thursday, December 6, 2007

2007 ANNUAL REPORT DEADLINE

2007 Annual Report	Monday, December 31, 2007	Thursday, January 31, 2008
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POSTMARKS are acceptable as proof of timely filing when the report is postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service no later than the day prior to filing

SIXTH TUESDAY PRE-PRIMARY OR PRELECTION REPORTS are required to be filed only by candidates for state-wide office

PENALTIES In accordance with the Campaign Finance Reporting Law, those who file required reports after the filing deadline are assessed a late filing fee of \$20 per day for the first six days that a report is late, and \$10 per day thereafter, up to a maximum penalty of \$250.

QUESTIONS If you have any questions about Campaign Finance Reporting Law or requirements, please direct them to Pat Kennedy at 610-478-6895