

Commissioners' Workshop Meeting
Tuesday, April 17, 2007

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, April 17, 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:

Budget Department:

- A. Motion authorizing Judith L. Schwank, as Chairman of the Board, to execute Contract Agreements/ Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator, per attached listing dated April 17, 2007. Candy Noll, Contract Coordinator, presented the list of contracts.

Community Development:

- A. Amend Resolution 44-07 to comply with terms with DCED. Ken Pick, Director of Community Development, attended the meeting to discuss this amended resolution requesting grant funds for repair of the Trexler Mansion and the RACC (Reading Area Community College) Bridge. Following a long discussion Ken explained that any changes approved in this new resolution that would require contribution from the county for funds that are not approved by the DCED would be passed on to the grantees involved in the two projects, namely Our City Reading for the Trexler Mansion / future Hispanic Center property and to RACC for the Bridge improvement project. Commissioner Scott expressed concern with what he said appears to be "incrementalism" of funding these projects. He suggested that the county needs to see a comprehensive view of a project prior to getting involved in this style of piecemeal funding.
- B. Adopt Resolution authorizing changes to the County's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.

HR Director:

- A. Human Resource Recommendations per list dated April 17, 2007.

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

Commissioner Schwank referenced copy of a letter she received from the City of Reading to the Federal Government for funding for street lights, street improvements and security cameras.

She also reminded the audience of Pick It Up PA day on Saturday, April 21, and the Earth Day celebration at Centre Park on Sunday, April 22.

Commissioner Gajewski

Commissioner Gajewski reported that he held a meeting with a group of Richmond Township citizens requesting financial assistance from the county for their continuing participation in a Zoning Hearing application currently before Richmond Township for the expansion of a Limestone Quarry in Richmond Township. He urged the other Commissioners to support this request as the expansion of this quarry may adversely affect the water quality of the residents living in the vicinity of the quarry. He indicated that group will most likely attend next week's Commissioners' meeting to present this request. Commissioner Scott repeated his previous suggestion that the county seek opinion from independent legal counsel that specializes in environmental law to determine the appropriateness and legal justification for the County's to enter an appearance in this proceeding at this late date in the process. Commissioner Schwank asked the County Solicitor to consult with the attorney representing the citizens group for detailed information before the County's involvement can be decided. She also indicated that she would seek information and input regarding this quarry application from the County's Planning Director and Conservation District Director. Commissioner Scott cautioned that the County should enter into these discussions with caution to avoid the precedent for throwing support towards every group of citizens that approaches the board in similar matters.

Commissioner Scott**IV. CITIZEN COMMENT/BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**

Pete Archey, Senior Citizen Advocate, attended the meeting to comment on the Tax Deferral Program for Senior Citizens that was approved at the last Commissioners' meeting. He questioned some differences between a similar State program and the County Program, and wanted to know if the requirements could be the same for both. He noted that the income eligibility requirements for the state tax rebate program allow for 1/2 of social security income to be waived, but that the county program does not. Commissioner Scott noted that we are

waiting for a response from Tax Claim Solicitor Adam Krafczek to see if statutes allow provide language requiring the same limitations.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 11:10 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry L Styer, Chief Clerk