

**Commissioners' Workshop Meeting
Tuesday, August 21, 2007**

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, August 21, 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 Mark C. Scott in attendance. Also present were County Administrator, William E. Dennis, Solicitor Alan Miller Esq., and Chief Clerk Terry Styer. Commissioner Thomas W. Gajewski, Sr. did not attend the meeting.

Commissioner Schwank opened the meeting with a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Commissioner Schwank announced an Executive Session was held on Thursday, August 16, 2007, immediately following the Commissioners' meeting to discuss matters involving environmental litigation.

II. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS / REQUESTS:

Administrator:

- A. Bill Dennis' weekly report is attached.

Budget Department:

- B. 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 August 20, 2007. Candy Noll, Contract Coordinator presented the list of contracts.

Career Link

- A. Adopt a resolution authorizing Judith L. Schwank, Chair of the Berks County Board of Commissioners to sign the "Grant Recipient's Release, Grant Recipient's Assignment of Refunds, Rebates, and Credits, and WIA Grant Closeout Tax Certification" for the WIA Grant for Berks County Employment and Training Office on behalf of the applicant. This funding was for the EARN (Employment and Retention Network) program (previously known as the SPOC (Single Point of Contact) program) designed to provide training and placement services to individuals receiving TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) assistance.

Court Administration

- A. Adopt a resolution authorizing execution of a Lease Agreement between Thomas A Stewart, 7173 Bernville Road, Bernville, PA and the County of Berks for offices space located on Route 183, Jefferson Township, PA, for Magisterial District Court 23-3-07 for a five (5) year term beginning November 1, 2007 and ending October 31, 2011. Faith Phillips, Special Courts Administrator attended to discuss this agreement proposed for Judge Book's Office.

Human Resources

- A. Adopt a resolution authorizing the execution of the Berks County Intern Policy. HR Director Beth Schiepan presented the policy noting that previous concerns that the County would not be able to have unpaid interns upon adoption of this policy should be an issue reporting that HR has already been following this draft policy, and as of today the county is successfully using 38 unpaid interns and 11 paid (or work study) interns. She requested the board to formalize this current practice as a County-wide policy to assure compliance with the Department of Labor. Commissioner Scott stated that if the intent of the clause on determining the benefit derived to the County is the net benefit then he would support this policy. It was also discussed that what hasn't changed is that only unpaid interns would be eligible for parking cost reimbursement

Solicitor

- A. Adopt a resolution authorizing commencement of eminent domain proceedings for the benefit of the Berks County Industrial Development Authority (IDA) concerning a twelve foot (12') wide strip of land bisecting property owned by the IDA in Bethel Township. Solicitor Alan Miller reported that with all costs and fees of such condemnation to be paid by the IDA. Mike Setley, Solicitor for IDA was present to discuss the proceedings, noting that this is mostly a "ceremonial" process as no one has come forward to claim title to this piece of land and it needs to be done to ensure clear title to the property.

Commissioner Scott asked if the proposed project of industrial warehouses is the highest and best use of this land, or should the IDA hold on to it until a better usage (or better opportunity to create higher paying jobs) comes along? Mr. Setley replied that all indicators show that this is the highest and best usage for this property. He added that for a more high tech industrial use such as the previously proposed food park, upgrades to all utilities and especially the water sources are needed. He said that officials at Bethel Township feel those changes might have an adverse effect on the municipalities land use plans. He said that Bethel Township is attempting to protect its rural farming community has agreed to use this land along Interstate 78 to create jobs and improve income but not at the expense of this rural community.

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

- A. Adopt a resolution appointing M. Katherine Atkinson to the Mental Health/Mental Retardation Advisory Board to fill the unexpired three year term vacated by Kathy Weckerle, who resigned. Ms. Atkinson's term will expire on December 31, 2008.
- B. Commissioner Schwank noted that they are continuing to move forward on the Agricultural Coordinator position. There is a second round of interviews scheduled for next week.

Commissioner Scott

- A. Commissioner Scott reported that the Executive Session held last week regarding Environmental Litigation was the Richmond Township / Lehigh Quarry issue.
- B. Commissioner Scott noted that he and his assistant visited the DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) office in Harrisburg yesterday. The purpose of the visit was to review files pertaining to the Exide cleanup. He speculated that they saved the attorney for this program a full day's research work. He also reported that there has been inadequate analysis of other contaminants found in the area including arsenic, selenium, and cadmium. He said of the properties in the "lead contaminated area" also tested high for arsenic, but nothing has been mentioned about it.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 11:20 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry L Styer, Chief Clerk