

Commissioners' Board Meeting December 20, 2007

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, December 20, 2007, at 10:30 A.M. in the Board meeting room on the thirteenth floor of the Berks County Services Center, pursuant to due notice to Board members and the public.

Commissioner Thomas Gajewski called the meeting to order with Commissioner Mark C. Scott in attendance. Also present were the Chief Clerk Terry L. Styer, County Solicitor Alan Miller, Esq., and County Administrator William E. Dennis. Commissioner Chair Judith Schwank was not present but participated by telephone.

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

Presentation

Commissioner Gajewski presented a Certificate of Recognition to Berks County Human Resource Department for being recognized by CCAP as one of the premier HR departments in the state. Beth Schiepan, Director of Human Resources, along with her department, accepted the Certificate.

Hilda Letman and Frank Gilyard, Sr., Board President of the Central Pennsylvania African American Museum and Cultural Center, presented a request for \$500,000 of County funds for the construction of a new museum facility proposed to be located on the oldest piece of property in Berks County that has been owned continuously by African Americans. The project was described as a seven million dollar project and funds from both the City and the Commonwealth have been committed with certain matching requirements, one of which is \$500,000 from the County. Both Commissioner Gajewski and Scott indicated that the ADD (Acquisition and Demolition) and CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) programs budgets have already been approved for 2008. It was suggested that rather than waiting for a future board of Commissioners to approve these funds, they should consider working with one of the existing agencies such as the Reading Museum and or the Berks Historical Society as an interim location to display the records and artifacts until such time as the funding and building construction comes to fruition.

Public Hearing

At this time Commissioner Scott made a motion to recess the Commissioners' meeting and convene a public hearing for comments on the proposed Berks County Greenway, Park and Open Space Plan, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Gajewski with all voting to approve and the public hearing was convened. It was noted that this plan which will be adopted as an element of the Berks Vision 2020: A Comprehensive Plan for the County of Berks. It sets forth a blue print for the protection of our most significant ecological resources, it promotes our heritage and enhances our parkland recreational

infrastructure. A greenway plan was developed to connect our parks and recreation areas, significant natural resources, wildlife conservation areas, and cultural destinations with each other and to the place where we live and work using natural corridors and recreation trails. Commissioner Gajewski asked if any part of the plan would impinge upon areas planned for future economic development. He was told that it did not. Hearing no public comments, Commissioner Scott made a motion to close the public meeting and reconvene the Commissioners meeting for the vote. Commissioner Schwank seconded the motion which was approved. Commissioner Scott then moved to approve the following resolution; Commissioner Gajewski seconded the motion and all voted yes to approve the following:

- 362.07 H. Resolution to adopt the Berks County Greenway, Park and Open Space Plan.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Scott made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Schwank to approve the December 11, 2007 Commissioner workshop minutes and the December 13, 2007 Commissioners meeting minutes, all voted yes to approve.

Consent Agenda Items

- I. A motion was made by Commissioner Scott, seconded by Commissioner Schwank and all voted unanimously to approve the items listed below:
- 355.07 A. Resolution authorizing 2007 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$131,899.00 and 2007 Appropriations in the amount \$374,704.00 per listing dated December 14, 2007.
- 356.07 B. Recommendation to award and execute, as a result of Invitation to Bid #07-09-AO, a contract for the supply and installation of street light poles on an as-needed basis. The contract shall be utilized for the emergency replacement of light poles on sections of the West Shore Bypass (Route 422) and Route 12 (Warren Street Bypass). The award shall be made to the following vendor; Telco, Inc. 1224 Cross Keys Road, Reading, PA 19605 \$50,260.00
- 357.07 C. Human Resource Recommendations per list dated December 18, 2007.
- 358.07 D. Resolution authorizing the execution of a grant agreement with the PA Department of Aging for the Senior Employment program which seeks to place low income individuals age 55 and older in private non-profit agencies in the community. Grant is for program year 2008 – 2009 for \$79,730. No County match is required.

- 359.07 E. Resolution authorizing, effective February 1, 2008, the Berks Heim private pay per diem rate increase from \$230 per day to \$235 per day plus an additional \$5 per day for ancillary services (Laundry, barber/beauty shop services [except color and permanents], medical supplies and therapies) Pharmaceutical drug costs that are not covered by private insurance will be billed separately.
- 360.07 F. Resolution authorizing tax forgiveness for 2007 County taxes for Parcel ID No. 22-5329-16-93-3218 owned by Alsace Township in the amount of \$86.69 including all penalties and interest.
- 361.07 G. Resolution to appoint Elaine Swavely to a three year term on the Children and Youth Advisory Board to full the expired position vacated by the resignation of Lois Schultz. Ms. Swavely's term will expire 12/31/2009.
- 362.07 H. Greenway plan above
- 363.07 I. Resolution supporting a request to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names to name previously unnamed tributaries to the Oysterville Creek and the Pine Creek in Pike Township.
2. Motion authorizing execution of Contract Agreements/ Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator, per listing dated December 14, 2007.

Reports

1. County Treasurer – Bill Dennis presented report for Nelson Long, CPA.
2. County Controller – Mark Hanson, Deputy Controller, presented report for Sandy Graffius, Controller.

Peter Archey, Reading citizen and advocate for Senior Citizens, read a statement thanking Commissioner Schwank for her service to the County and wishing her well in her new non-profit position, and also welcoming the new Board of Commissioners. "I want to first add my best wishes to Commissioner Schwank as she leaves County Government for the wide open spaces of non-profit state agency life. Your activity on behalf of the residents of Berks has been exemplary. Look backwards only to remember the progress the county made through your efforts. You are moving on to what appears to be a major positive step for you. You gave the county your best efforts at all times and we thank you for that. You don't owe us anything. I also want to express my good wishes to the incoming Commissioners. Running County government the next few years will not be for the faint of heart. It will take a climate of meaningful cooperation. If you agree to disagree over issues, and not let personalities get in the way, your election will have a positive message for the County. All the residents of Berks eagerly hope you will be equal to the task. To Judy Schwank, thanks again for the past, good wishes for your future. "

Commissioner Gajewski also read a statement thanking the citizens for the opportunity to serve them for the last four years.

Commissioner Scott then expressed good wishes to Commissioner Gajewski for his future endeavors.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:43 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry L. Styer, Chief Clerk