

## **Commissioners' Board Meeting February 14, 2008**

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, February 14, 2008, 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 Chair Mark C. Scott called the meeting to order with Commissioner Christian Leinbach and Commissioner Kevin Barnhardt in attendance. Also present were the Chief Clerk Terry L. Styer, County Solicitor Alan Miller, Esq., and County Administrator William E. Dennis.

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

### **Approval of Minutes**

Commissioner Barnhardt made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Leinbach to approve the February 5, 2008 Commissioner workshop minutes and the February 7, 2008 Commissioners meeting minutes, all voted yes to approve.

### **Consent Agenda Items**

1. A motion was made by Commissioner Leinbach, seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt, and all voted unanimously to approve the items listed below:
  - 49.08 A. Resolution authorizing 2007 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$19,146.00 and 2007 Appropriations in the amount \$35,795.00 per listing dated February 8, 2008.
  - 50.08 B. Human Resource Recommendations per list dated February 12, 2008.
  - 51.08 C. Resolution authorizing the exoneration of local Tax Collectors for unpaid 2007 Berks County Property Taxes in the total amount of \$3,466,615.05 representing 7242 unpaid accounts per listing dated February 7, 2008 and forward to Tax Claim Bureau for collection of same.
  - 52.08 D. Resolution expressing support for improvements to Rt. #222 from Reading to Interstate 78.
  - 53.08 E. Resolution to appoint President Judge Jeffrey L. Schmehl to the Mental Health/Mental Retardation (MH/MR) Advisory Board to fill the unexpired term of retired Judge Arthur E. Grim, who resigned. Judge Schmehl's term will end December 31, 2009.
  
2. Motion authorizing execution of Contract Agreements/ Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator, per listing dated February 11, 2008.

**Reports**

1. County Treasurer Nelson Long, CPA, presented the weekly Treasurer's report.
2. County Controller Sandy Graffius presented the weekly Controller's report.

Commissioner Scott announced that an executive session was held on February 12<sup>th</sup> for the purpose of contract negotiations.

Commissioner Leinbach and Commissioner Barnhardt announced that they had attended a public presentation for a proposed economic development project called "Riverview at Reading" intended to be located in the southern part of the city. They reported that this project has the potential of producing about 12,000 jobs at the peak of the 8 year construction period with a planned use of local labor and ultimately providing 800 permanent jobs. Special mention was made that this is a private sector endeavor by a family owned development corporation based in Baltimore known as Giannasca Development Group. It was also noted that there is a potential for \$25 million in property tax revenue at the completion of the project.

Commissioner Barnhardt reported that a scheduled meeting regarding the RACC bridge has been postponed until next week.

He also noted that he held a meeting with representatives from West Reading regarding the Parkview Road bridge. West Reading acknowledged that they are the owners of the bridge and are asking for help from the County for repairs to the bridge.

Commissioner Scott added to his report of an ongoing lawsuit between Lower Heidelberg and Quest Land Development Group LLC and Glen-Gery Corporation. He noted that the list of nominal defendants (who were actually citizens attending the Zoning Hearing Board meetings that are named in the suit) has risen from 62 to 80, and that representatives of these defendants had a meeting with him earlier today seeking help. He spoke with an attorney who specializes in zoning issues and has agreed to take on the 80 defendants as a group at a municipal rate of \$165 per hour which he said is a significant reduction over her private rate. Commissioner Leinbach made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt, and all voted yes to authorize an engagement letter with Joselle Cleary from Morgan, Hallgren, Crosswell and Kane to enter preliminary objections and file a motion to dismiss the action against the township citizens.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:19 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Terry L. Styer, Chief Clerk