

## **Commissioners' Workshop Meeting Tuesday, February 19, 2008**

### **I. CALL TO ORDER:**

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, February 19, 2008 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 Mark C. Scott called the meeting to order with Commissioner Christian Leinbach and Commissioner Kevin Barnhardt in attendance. Also present were County Administrator William E. Dennis, Solicitor Alan Miller Esq., and Chief Clerk Terry Styer.

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

### **Agricultural Coordinator**

- A. Sheila Miller presented her monthly report (attached to these minutes.) She then asked Tami Hildebrand, Ag. Land Preservation Director to update the Commissioners on the State Certification of Funds for the 2008 program.
- Ms. Hildebrand reported that the Commonwealth allocated \$33 million to a total of 57 counties statewide. She reported that with Berks County's certification of \$5.1 million the state will provide \$2.5 million bringing the total of Berks County's 2008 Agricultural Preservation funds to \$7.6 million.
  - Commissioner Barnhardt asked if the Agricultural Coordinator would be the appropriate person to field the numerous calls the Commissioners receive with regards to the land application of bio-solids (municipal sewage sludge.) Commissioner Scott spoke briefly about the concerns for the pathogens and heavy metals that may exist with the practice of land application of municipal sludge. He expressed concern that current standards for testing are not stringent enough to adequately ease those concerns. Commissioner Leinbach agreed that any concerns for the land application of sludge needs to be one of safety and not simply odor. Mrs. Miller said that the Ag. Extension Office and the Conservation District work with farmers on these issues and that she would be happy to serve as a mediator on behalf of the Commissioners.
  - Mrs. Miller then introduced Mallory Ketterer, the PA Lamb and Wool Princess, who offered remarks. Commissioner Scott presented Ms. Ketterer with a Certificate of Recognition for her accomplishments

**Budget Department:**

- A. Adopt a resolution authorizing 2007 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$112,469, 2008 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$11,920, and 2007 Appropriations in the amount \$15,261 per listing dated February 14, 2008. Budget Director Bob Patrizio presented the list.
- B. Motion authorizing Mark C. Scott as Chairman of the Board, to execute Contract Agreements/ Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator, per attached listing dated February 14, 2008. Candace Noll, Sr. Contract Coordinator presented the list.

**II. REPORT OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

County Administrator Bill Dennis presented his weekly report which is attached.

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

- A. Adopt a resolution to appoint David Phillips of Mohrsville, PA to a three year term ending 12/31/2010 on the Agricultural Land Preservation Board replacing Russell Swinehart, whose term expired on 12/31/07.
- B. Commissioner Leinbach requested that in addition to the printed legal notice published by the Reading Eagle for Public Meetings that the county consider using the web site and the media e-mails as is the custom for the regular Commissioners' meetings. He cited the Reading City / County meeting held recently as one where in addition to the legal notice in the paper, an e-mail and web page posting should be utilized. Commissioner Scott suggested a similar approach should be considered for all budget meetings and retirement board meetings.
- C. Commissioner Leinbach would like to form a Green Team Task Force to explore the possibility of the County enforcing a Green Initiative looking at all aspects of the organization including, purchasing practices, facilities and operations. Jane Meeks, Solid Waste Authority Executive Director, has agreed to head the Task Force.
- D. Commissioner Leinbach reported that the Township of Maiden creek Township has offered to provide maintenance services for Schaeffer Road Bridge until such time as funds become available for the County to replace it. The commissioners indicated that the county may want to consider this as a viable option for all county owned bridges. The Commissioners also discussed a change in the practice of awarding State Liquid Fuels funds to municipalities while being forced to utilize County taxes to cover the cost of maintaining and replacing the county's 62 bridges.

- E. Commissioner Leinbach reported on a meeting he attended suggested that the County be represented on the R6 Rail Study Group. Commissioner Scott made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt and all voting yes that Commissioner Leinbach along with Ken Pick and Alan Piper should represent the county at these committee meetings.

**Commissioner Barnhardt**

- A. Commissioner Barnhardt presented a draft letter proposed to send to municipalities in support of a grant application to the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) for a Shared Municipal Services grant that would provide a 50% match to fund the cost of a county wide police services study. He explained that the letter will ask the county's townships and boroughs for their cooperation in working with the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) who will be the consultant selected to perform this study. The Commissioners then agreed that when the results of the study are complete, a new task force possibly consisting of many of the previous members, will be formed to review the results of the study and help provide a list of potential action items for the Commissioners final review. Commissioners Leinbach and Scott agreed with sending the letter and commended Commissioner Barnhardt for the draft saying that it clearly states that the committee will not be studying the feasibility of a countywide police force but rather collecting information on existing law enforcement services and considering all options.
- B. Commissioner Barnhardt also reminded all citizens who may have registered to vote on the Department of State website that they still need to present a hardcopy signature to the Election Services department before their registration is complete.

**Commissioner Scott**

- A. Commissioner Scott presented a Proclamation to Michael Hartman, PE, Vice President of the Reading Chapter of the Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers, in designation of Engineer's Week, February 17-23, 2008.
- B. Commissioner Scott noted that a meeting will be held tonight at the Lower Heidelberg Township building for the citizens named in a lawsuit by Glen Gery and Quest Development. They will be meeting with Attorney Josele Cleary of Morgan, Hallgren, Crosswell & Kane, P.C. for the purpose of planning their response to the Courts hoping for a dismissal of the suit.

- C. Commissioner Scott asked Human Resource Director Beth Schiepan and Children and Youth Services Director George Kovarie to address a letter received by the Commissioners from the Department of Public Welfare about the County's withdraw from the Civil Service process. Both Beth Schiepan and George Kovarie indicated they were pleased with the letter and reiterated that the County already made the decision to withdraw based on the position that the County does not need their permission or approval.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 12:17 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Terry L Styer, Chief Clerk