

## **Commissioners' Board Meeting April 3, 2008**

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, April 3, 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 March 25, 2008 Commissioner workshop minutes and the March 27, 2008 Commissioners meeting minutes, all voted yes to approve. Commissioner Scott announced that an executive session was held April 2, 2008 for personnel issues.

### **Consent Agenda Items**

- I. A motion was made by Commissioner Barnhardt seconded by Commissioner Leinbach, and all voted unanimously to approve the items listed below:
  - 98.08 A. Resolution authorizing 2008 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$75,000 per listing dated March 28, 2008.
  - 99.08 B. Resolution authorizing the execution of a Grant Agreement by and between the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) and the County of Berks, in the amount of \$3,160.00, as part of the Hazardous Material Emergency Preparedness Program (HMEP) to be used toward hazardous materials planning.
  - 100.08 C. Resolution authorizing the execution of a Grant Agreement by and between the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) and the County of Berks, in the amount of \$8,764.00 as part of the Hazardous Material Emergency Preparedness Program (HMEP) to conduct training activities.
  - 101.08 D. Human Resource Recommendations per list dated April 1, 2008.

- 102.08 E. Resolution authorizing execution of the Supplemental Resolution and Agreement for the period of July 1, 2007 through December 31, 2007.
- 103.08 F. Resolution authorizing execution of a lease agreement between the County of Berks and Directlink Realty L.P. effective July 1, 2008 for premises located at 2561 Bernville Road, Reading, PA, for the purpose of relocating the Berks County Emergency Management Agency and Berks County 911 operations.
- 104.08 G. Resolution to appoint Mitchell R. Darcourt to the Berks County Board of Assessment Appeals to replace Anthony Carabello for a four year term ending 12/31/2011.
2. 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 March 28, 2008.
3. Motion authorizing execution of a letter to the Office of Economic Adjustment withdrawing the County from the LRA (Local Redevelopment Authority) for the Naval Marine Reserve Center on Kenhorst Boulevard thereby transferring responsibility to the City of Reading

### **Reports**

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

### **Citizen Comment/Business From The Floor**

1. Commissioner Barnhardt announced that the Department of Community and Economic Development approved a grant application for a 50% match for the Countywide Police Study with Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) and asked that the Board consider approving the contract to proceed next week. He reported that 47 municipalities responded favorably that they would participate in the study. He then thanked the District Attorney for his cooperation and Mike Natole from the DA's office for the tremendous job in preparing the grant application and Ryan Hunter, Executive Assistant, for writing and coordinating the letter with the municipalities.
2. Commissioner Leinbach requested input from the board regarding the Environmental Advisory Committee's recommendation to review the Exide

**BEAC Request continued:**

Reading Smelter Afterburner Plan application to DEP. Commissioner Scott indicated his concerns for the brevity of comments offered previously by Ambient Air Quality Services Inc. (AAQS), the consultant recommended by the BEAC for this project. He then offered to discuss this issue further with the consultant before proceeding with approval for reviewing this plan application.

3. Commissioner Leinbach reported on the information he gathered at the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) Spring Legislative Conference including new technologies regarding emergency communications and broadband service; updates to the Title IV-E child welfare funding and a CCAP program offering to bring Tax Fairness Forums to interested Counties for the purpose of public discussions on Tax Reform. He also said that the NACo Prescription Drug card program is proposed to include some form of Dental Coverage in the future.
4. Ed McCann, Workforce Development Director, attended the meeting at the request of Commissioner Leinbach to answer questions recently circulating about privatization of his department. He said that informal discussions between himself, the prior board of Commissioners, the Administrator, and the Budget Director have centered on the decreasing revenue from the Workforce Investment Act funds and the possibility of his board to consider privatization as a means of delivering the same services in a more cost effective manner. He said the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) considered looking into the concept and that is as far as it has been taken. Michelle Mulherin, business manager of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Council 88, and other AFSME representatives attending the meeting, argued that information gathered at a recent Workforce Investment Board meeting led them to believe that the decision to privatize has already been made. She also read from a "white paper" written by Ed McCann as further evidence of this decision. Mr. McCann answered by saying that the "white paper" was a concept plan in case he was directed by the WIB to move forward to analyze the options. County Administrator Bill Dennis said that this discussion began several years ago when one of the WIB Grant programs required the county to competitively bid the project and explained that it simply became part of a budget meeting discussion to consider other options for his department. The Commissioners agreed that looking at factual data that could present new ways to provide the same and or improved services at a reduced cost is part of the board's responsibility and agreed with Mr. McCann to continue looking into possibilities.
5. Commissioner Scott reported that he will be sending a response letter to the Upper Bern Supervisors regarding the moratorium on the Open Space Grants program informing them of the Commissioners decision.

6. There was a lengthy discussion on the proposed Goggle Works Apartment project and its related request for tax relief. Each Commissioner said that Mr. Albert Boscov has met with them and proposed a rather complex leasing concept involving the Reading Housing Authority, which he proposes would provide some form of tax relief, with a 40 year agreement for a payment in lieu of tax from the project's developer. The Commissioners and the County Solicitor have requested information from the developer that would provide the legal means for the Commissioners to make this type of decision. The Commissioners agreed that special counsel may be needed to advise the board.
7. Commissioner Leinbach announced the activities planned for next week's NACo County Government week which will highlight agencies involved in child protection responsibilities.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12 Noon.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Terry L. Styer, Chief Clerk