

## **Commissioners' Workshop Meeting Tuesday, June 24, 2008**

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

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, June 24, 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 Kevin Barnhardt and in attendance. Commissioner Christian Leinbach participated via conference phone. Also present were County Administrator, William E. Dennis, First Assistant Solicitor Christine S. Sadler, Esq., and Chief Clerk Terry Styer.

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

### **II. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS / REQUESTS:**

#### **Budget Department:**

- A. Adopt a resolution authorizing 2008 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$510,000 and 2008 Appropriations in the amount \$4,375,596 per listing dated June 20, 2008. Deputy Budget and Finance Director Kim Grinage presented the budget report.
- 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 June 23, 2008.

A motion was made by Commissioner Leinbach, seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt and all voted yes to approve the following Resolution.

- 171.08            Resolution authorizing Robert J. Patrizio, CPA, Budget and Finance Director of Berks County, to terminate all Swap transactions ordained, enacted and approved by the County of Berks, when notified by the County's Financial Advisor that said termination is in the best financial gain to the County of Berks, after first receiving verbal approval by a majority of the Berks County Board of Commissioners either in person, by telephone or by email communication.

**Career Link**

- A. Adopt a resolution to award a contract to operate **Vocational, Educational Remedial Services** in partnership with the Pennsylvania CareerLink ~ Berks County to the following service provider: Reading Area Community College, 10 S. Second Street, P.O. Box 1706, Reading, PA 19603, Theodore Bassano, Vice-President of Business Services.. The amount of the proposed contract budget for the period July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009 is \$292,985. Program operations are scheduled to begin on July 1, 2008. John W. Moser, Contract Administration & Monitoring Manager Berks County Workforce Investment Board explained that this contract provides literacy services and English as a 2<sup>nd</sup> language to clients.

**Community Development:**

- A. The Community Development item was pulled from the agenda

**Human Resource Director:**

- A. Human Resource Recommendations per list dated June 24, 2008.

**Human Services**

- A. Adopt Resolution to approve the execution of the Human Services Development Fund (HSDF) Assurance of Compliance, and further authorizes Mary Henry-Moss, Human Services Grants Coordinator, the ability to distribute remaining HSDF Funds as needed for the fiscal year 2008/2009. Total amount of allocation is \$835,042.
- B. Adopt Resolution authorizing the allocation of the Homeless Assistance Program funding; and further authorizes the execution of the Assurance of Compliance Certificate with respect to the Homeless Assistance Program (HAP), and further authorizes Mary Henry-Moss, Human Service Grants Coordinator, the ability to distribute the remaining HAP Funds to the prior approved agencies as needed for the fiscal year 2008/2009. Total amount of allocation is \$631,545.

**Planning Commission:**

- A. Adopt a resolution approving the amendments to the County's Natural Land, Farmland and Open Space Conservation Program. Shannon Rossman, Intergovernmental Affairs Planner with the Berks County Planning Commission, attended to discuss the proposed amendments. Berks County Agricultural Coordinator, Sheila Miller, provided some comments regarding the requirements for riparian buffers. She said that the federal Natural Resources Conservation Service doesn't specify minimum widths but responds to each site's needs but that a 35 to 50 foot buffer is the average recommendation with a 50 foot buffer for excessive runoff.

Mrs. Miller said her concern is for the 100 foot buffer that is being attached to streams designated as significant because it seems to go beyond the federal standard and will result in substantially more acres required to protect the stream and lost for farm production for the county's farmers. Shannon Rossman assured the board that the 100 ft. standards were only for Act 93 designated Exceptional Value or High Quality streams as recommended by the Pennsylvania "Special Protection Waters Implementation Handbook." And that several municipalities already require 300' buffers in their land use requirements. She also said that few of the county's farms have exceptional value streams running through them and would provide information to the board depicting those farms. Commissioner Leinbach suggested that the Berks Farm Bureau review these changes prior to the Commissioners decision to adopt.

- B. Adopt a resolution to certify completion of Community Conservation Partnerships Grant Project (BRC-TAG-9-21). Cheryl Auchenbach, Planner, attended the meeting to request approval of this document.

### **III. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:**

- A. Following an explanation from the County Administrator regarding the PAMAP Program, which he said has been under development for the past six years, with the intent to provide obtain and provide continuously updated map information for all private and public entities requiring this data; he noted that two thirds of the Commonwealth has been mapped, but the eastern third of the state, our most developed and heavily populated portion, may not be completed as planned due to the removal of necessary funding from the State budget. Following a brief discussion, the board voted unanimously to send a letter to the Berks County delegation asking that funding be restored to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR.)

### **IV. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS:**

- A. Discussion regarding Clean and Green Values – Ed Stock, Esq., Solicitor for Assessment Board of Appeals, attended the meeting to discuss the fact that statutes governing which board establishes the Clean and Green annual values along with other administrative tasks performed by the Assessment office are not crystal clear. He described the three main statutes that govern the activities of County Assessment Offices as being the County Assessment Law; the 3<sup>rd</sup> Class County Assessment Law and Clean and Green (Act 319.) He explained that he has advised the Berks County Assessment Board of Appeals and the Director Duane Rashlich that the Board of Appeals is responsible for setting the fees and rules as established in the Clean and Green Law, and the practice of the Berks Assessment Office was to use the land values established annually by the PA Department of Agriculture.

Commissioner Scott questioned the basic ability of the Board of Appeals to hear appeals on assessment values that they have set. Duane was asked to research the estimate of \$603,000 suggested as being the amount of lost revenue projected by the County Budget Director if the County would lock the values at the 2001 rates. The board agreed that additional information was needed before they would proceed with any decision.

- B. Adopt a resolution authorizing the execution of an agreement with EHD Insurance to provide the County's Comprehensive Insurance coverage for June 30, 2008 through July 1, 2009 per attached schedule.

**Commissioner Leinbach**

**Commissioner Barnhardt**

**Commissioner Scott**

- A. Commissioner Scott asked that an agreement be added to Thursday's consent agenda to authorize the Chair to sign a letter of agreement with Zelenkofske Axelrod LLC to perform accounting services for the County of Berks on an as needed basis.

**VI. CITIZEN COMMENT/BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**

Agricultural Coordinator Miller asked the board to check into other Counties to see how they are managing to have the Commissioners decide to freeze the Clean and Green land values in their counties. Duane Rashlich was asked to perform the research and report back to the Commissioners. She then reminded the Commissioners that the Act was designed to aid the farmer to preserve farms; she also reminded everyone of the cost to the taxpayers and the strain to school districts that would be the result of those farms converting to housing developments.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 11:45 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Terry L Styer, Chief Clerk