

**Commissioners' Workshop Meeting  
Tuesday, July 1, 2008**

**I. CALL TO ORDER:**

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, July 1, 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 Solicitor Alan Miller Esq., and Chief Clerk Terry Styer. County Administrator, William E. Dennis was not in attendance.

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

**Agricultural Coordinator:**

- A. Resolution ratifying and confirming the June 30, 2008 application for funding up to \$3,000 from the Commonwealth of PA Partners in the Arts grant program for 2008-2009 in order to fund a local artist's creation of a mural depicting Berks County's agricultural industry in the Agricultural Center's lobby area. Ag Coordinator Sheila Miller attended the meeting to present this request.

**Assessment:**

- A. Adopt a resolution authorizing the Commissioners to designate July 1 through and including August 15 as the applicable period in which to file assessment appeals with the Berks County Board of Assessments. This resolution shall apply for appeals for the 2009 tax year and each year thereafter.

**Budget Department:**

- A. Adopt a resolution authorizing 2008 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$263,923 per listing dated June 27, 2008. Kim Grinage, Assistant Budget Director, presented the report.

**Human Resource Director:**

- A. Human Resource Recommendations per list dated July 1, 2008. Beth Schiepan, Director of Human Resources, presented the recommendations.

At this time, Commissioner Scott called on Barbara Coffin, Director of Office of Aging, to offer comments on Peter Archey, former Executive Director of the Berks County Office of Aging, and ongoing advocate for senior citizens, regarding his passing last week.

**II. REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS:**

Commissioner Leinbach made a motion to approve a letter of intent for the County to participate in the 2009 Gypsy Moth Suppression program. Commissioner Barnhardt seconded the motion, the motion carried.

**Commissioner Leinbach**

- A. Commissioner Leinbach noted that Human Resources is working on a program for Car-pooling for County Employees, which should be presented at the next Commissioners' Workshop Meeting.
- B. Discussion on Upper Bern Township Fly issue. Rick Kauffman, Penn State Cooperative Extension attended the meeting to report on the Conservation District's involvement with other agencies attempting to resolve this issue. He began by noting that there were no illegal activities conducted on the farm that would have caused the overabundance of flies. He went on to itemize the various state and local agencies and the methods used to assist the farmer in alleviating the problem.

Dennis Essig, Upper Bern Township Supervisor, requested that the Commissioners assist all municipalities to create a Fly Abatement Program for those Farmers operating under the State's CAFO (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation) Permit.

Sean Lannoo, Upper Bern resident, noted that he has done extensive research on his own, and spoke with an expert in Florida who offered suggestions to help to eliminate future fly outbreaks. He provided his research to the Conservation District.

**Commissioner Barnhardt**

- A. Commissioner Barnhardt thanked everyone who came to the meeting in Lower Alsace Township regarding the development of a Master Plan for Antietam Park. He also noted that he will be meeting with Parks Director Bill Semmel to work on amending the Parks Ordinance relative to Antietam Park.
- B. Commissioner Barnhardt reported that the Open Space and Conservation meeting discussed at a previous Commissioners' meeting is now scheduled for July 22, 2008 from 2 PM to 5 PM at a location yet to be determined. He also encouraged his fellow Commissioners to agree to proclaim the week of July 21, 2008, Open Space Awareness Week.
- C. The Commissioner reported that the PERF (PA Executive Research Forum) has conducted interviews with the Commissioners and plan to meet with various Human Service agencies for input on how police services impact their agencies along with ways to improve.

- D. The Commissioner noted that he has scheduled a meeting with one of the bargaining unit business agents to discuss the four day work week encouraging them to permit the union employees to participate in the voluntary program. He also said that he is trying to reach out to other business agents as well. Commissioner Leinbach said that he has also scheduled a meeting with a business agent.

**Commissioner Scott**

- A. Commissioner Scott noted that there are numerous web sites available for anyone interested in Car pooling contacts.
- B. The Commissioner discussed the impact the ACRE law has had on many municipalities and their desire to find a balance between upholding zoning regulations and without disturbing normal farming operations. He said the question seems to revolve around what is considered normal farming operations.

**Public Comment:**

Agricultural Coordinator, Sheila Miller responded to Commissioner Scott's remarks that the ACRE law was much needed in PA and reminded everyone that we are still paying relatively low prices for our food in the United States. She also suggested that Pennsylvania municipalities need to develop improved land use regulations to limit development in Agriculture Security areas to prevent the conflict between residential and agriculture since agriculture continues to be a leading economic driver in Berks County.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 11:22 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Terry L Styer, Chief Clerk