

Commissioners' Board Meeting February 5, 2009

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, February 5, 2009, 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 January 27, 2009, Commissioners Workshop minutes and the January 29, 2009, Commissioners Meeting minutes, all voted yes to approve.

Consent and Non-Consent Agenda Items

1. A motion was made by Commissioner Barnhardt, seconded by Commissioner Leinbach, and all voted unanimously to approve the items listed below:
 - 22.09 A. Resolution authorizing 2008 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$364,969 and 2009 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$16,015 per listing dated January 30, 2009.
 - 23.09 B. Human Resource Recommendations per list dated February 2, 2009.
 - 24.09 C. Resolution authorizing the execution of a grant agreement between the County of Berks and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission for a Keystone Historic Preservation Grant in the amount of \$90,000 for the restoration of the Gruber Wagon Works.
 - 25.09 D. Resolution to amend resolution 298.08 authorizing execution of a Memorandum of Understanding between the AOPC (Administrative Office of PA Courts) and the Court of Common Pleas, changing the grant fund amount to \$5,387.00.

2. Motion to ratify and confirm payments set forth on Controller's Office vouchers listing dated February 5, 2009, as previously authorized by instructions issued February 5, 2009.

3. Motion to approve payments set forth on disbursement voucher list CDBG #2337, Emergency Shelter #2338-S, Rehab Escrow #1354, and HOME #606 dated 1/30/09 for the Community Development Block Grant Program, the HOME Grant Program and the Property Rehabilitation Program as administered by the Berks County Community Development Office.

Reports

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

The Commissioners instructed the Chief Clerk and the Solicitor to draft a resolution to formalize the establishment of the **Berks County Association of Environmental Advisory Councils (EACs)** under the management of John Ravert, Berks County Conservation District Manager. Commissioner Scott then read a letter from Kimberly Murphy, President of the Berks County Conservancy, asking that the County put this decision on hold until she is able to attend the Commissioner's meeting to discuss the Conservancy's involvement with municipal EACs in the County. The Commissioners said they would invite her to attend Tuesday's meeting prior to any further action on this proposal.

Commissioner Leinbach then expressed his concern with the proposed **State budget** which he said is currently proposed with an estimated deficit of \$2.5 to \$4 billion yet it contains proposals for increased spending. He said that he finds this proposal unconscionable saying that "you can't spend yourself out of a budget crisis." He discussed what he understood regarding the Governor's proposed 1% sales tax for Counties to split with municipalities and estimated that Berks could potentially receive \$1.6 million with 50% or \$800,000 going to Berks County Government and the other \$800,000 being split among the 73 municipalities. Commissioner Barnhardt expressed concern for the proposed cuts to Community Development and the Community College funding. While he was supportive towards the proposal to reduce the number of school districts in Pennsylvania, he suggested that they should go further to reduce the number to 67 (or one per county). Commissioner Scott, in referring to the budget's proposed additional sales tax levy by counties, said that he "opposed any effort to take money out of the pockets of consumers and put it into the hands of government."

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:04 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry L. Styer, Chief Clerk