

Pre-Commissioners' Meeting
Tuesday, April 6, 2004

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, April 6, 2004, at 10:30 AM, in the thirteenth floor Board Room of the Berks County Services Center, pursuant to due notice to Board members and the public. Commissioner Chair Judith L. Schwank called the meeting to order with Commissioners Tom Gajewski and Mark C. Scott in attendance. Also present was Solicitor Alan Miller. Acting Chief Clerk William E. Dennis was not present.

Commissioner Schwank followed with a moment of silence and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Due to William Dennis, County Administrator/Acting Chief Clerk, being out of the country, Alan Miller, Solicitor, proposed a resolution that Lori Schneider, Executive Assistant to the County Administrator, be made Acting Chief Clerk in his absence. This would be effective April 6, 2004 through and including April 12, 2004. On motion by Commissioner Gajewski, seconded by Commissioner Scott, the appointment was approved.

The Board of Commissioners discussed and approved the following items for listing at the April 8, 2004 Meeting:

I. REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS:

- A. Adopt Proclamation regarding *National Public Safety Telecommunications Week*, to be presented at the April 8, 2004 Commissioners' Meeting.
- B. Presentation by Suthida Chairantanawat, Web Administrator of Information Systems on the *Berks County Website*. Ms. Chairantanawat gave an in depth look at how far the website has come and to increase the awareness of the information and services available via the county website (www.co.berks.pa.us). Ms. Chairantanawat took the audience on a virtual tour, showing many of the County department websites and the content these sites had to offer. Ms. Chairantanawat also mentioned that the townships and boroughs, as well as the fire and police departments, have been invited to add web pages to the County site. To date, Bern Township, Wyomissing Borough, Kutztown Borough Police Department and the Strausstown Volunteer Fire Company have listed their web pages.
- C. Adopt Resolution authorizing the execution of certain documents and the reinvestment of certain funds with respect to project funds established by

General Obligation Bonds, Series of 2002. This investment of funds netted the County approximately \$2.1 million dollars.

Commissioner Schwank

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing the execution of the Annual Statement of Work – 2004 Application by the County of Berks (Emergency Management) for the Emergency Management Performance Grant Program.

Commissioner Gajewski

- B. Adopt Resolution authorizing the Chair of the Board of Commissioners to submit a letter to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) indicating the County's intent to apply for funding from the Brownfields for Housing Initiative, for the approximate amount of \$176,044.00.

Commissioner Scott

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing Judith L. Schwank, Commissioner, Chair, to execute Continuation Subgrant Award Notice #2003-JB-04-14174 by and between the County of Berks (Public Defender) and the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), with respect to funding in the amount of \$45,403.00 for the project titled "JAIBG 2003," covering the project period 04/01/2004 – 03/31/2005.
- B. Adopt Resolution authorizing Judith L. Schwank, Commissioner, Chair, to execute Continuation Subgrant Award Notice #2003-JB-03-14175 by and between the County of Berks (Public Defender) and the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), with respect to funding in the amount of \$45,403.00 for the project titled "JAIBG 2003," covering the project period 04/01/2004 – 03/31/2005.
- C. Adopt Resolution authorizing the execution of a Subgrant Application between the County of Berks (District Attorney) and the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), for funding in the amount of \$75,000.00 for the "Weed & Seed" program, for the project period of 07/01/2004 – 06/30/2005.
- D. Adopt Resolution authorizing Continuation of Maintenance for a male child born 04/11/86, on request of BCCYS and in accordance with applicable federal regulations, effective 04/11/04 through 06/30/04 in the form of Purchased Care from Children's Home of Reading-Foster Home at the per diem rate of \$66.35 to allow for completion of high school.

III. OTHER REQUESTS:***Contract Coordinator:***

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing execution of Contract Agreements/ Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator, per attached listing dated April 2, 2004.

Engineer:

- A. Change Order Requests for the renovation of the INS facilities:
1. Change Order Request No. 1, General Construction; Amount \$11,084.32. Gym Room F21 & Exercise Room F22. Removal of vinyl wall covering, patch plaster and painting. Required to correct water damage to existing wall coverings.
 2. Change Order Request No. 2, General Construction; Amount \$268.80 (credit). Activities Room F41. Result of a plumbing change that eliminated asbestos floor tile removal.
 3. Change Order Request No. 3, General Construction; Amount \$232.23. Life Skills Room F10. Install a laminated pipe enclosure to conceal a sanitary vent line because the existing vent line is too far away from the sink location to meet the building code.
 4. Change Order Request No. E-1, Electrical Construction; Amount \$927.66. Interview Room F25 and Court Room F26. Splitting the existing room into two rooms requires independent light switching, moving light fixtures, rewiring of a relocated AC unit and adding of two duplex wall outlets.

These change orders (except for Change Order No. 1) fall under the 10% Contingency that was budgeted for this project.

Solicitor:

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing the County of Berks to apply for and to be host municipality for a Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program grant on behalf of and for the benefit of the Foundation for the Reading Public Museum.

This is a grant the museum is applying for to acquire a storage facility, which is important to the museum's accreditation as a museum on a national level. In order to apply for the grant, the museum needs to work through a municipality and have asked the County to accept this role. There is no cost to the County.

- B. Adopt Resolution authoring placing Ordinance No. 2-04 regarding Berks County Park Rangers and their respective responsibilities and duties on the table for enactment April 22, 2004, and further authorize the County Solicitor to take the necessary steps to advertise the same.

This ordinance would define the duties of Park Rangers. Donald Hillbish, Chief Park Ranger, spoke about the duties Park Rangers currently perform. He added that even though there is a County Code authorizing the County to appoint and equip Park Rangers, the ordinance would officially recognize that Park Rangers to patrol the parks and enforce the laws (protect and preserve). This would be the foundation for the creation of a Ranger Division.

IV. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

Commissioner Gajewski also introduced information from the Housing Development Corporation regarding the Henner Apartments Project in Womelsdorf, which would create affordable housing for senior citizens. The Housing Development Corporation is hoping to obtain financing for this project through the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA), in the amount of \$1.6 million; this would leave an additional \$120,000 that Housing Development Corporation is asking the County to commit. The deadline for the County to commit to these funds and submit a letter statement their commitment is April 9, 2004.

Commissioner Gajewski asked the Board of Commissioners to adopt a resolution to submit a letter of intent to commit \$120,000 of Community Development Funds from the 2005 Community Development program, with this resolution being contingent on concurrence by the to Berks County Community Development Director. Community Development Director, Ken Pick, was out of the office when the Commissioners received the request; therefore, Commissioner Gajewski asked that this item be voted on during this meeting so that the time requirements can be met. When Mr. Pick returns to the office, he would be consulted on this matter. Commissioner Gajewski moved for the adoption of the resolution and Commissioner Scott seconded the motion for purposes of discussion.

Commissioner Scott expressed concern that this program was introduced to the Commissioners so close to the filing deadline. Due to the fact that funding to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is limited, the programs are compared and the best choices for the funds are made. With this request being made so closely to the deadline, there is no time to evaluate this program with other program requests to determine where the best allocation would be.

Commissioner Gajewski agreed that these types of projects should be reviewed at the same time so that each project can be evaluated against other projects to better determine the best use of the CDBG funds. However, since the request for monies for this project would be from the PHFA, PHFA's deadlines have to be met.

Jim Heinz, Housing Development Corporation, said that this would be a tax-paying property, with an estimated increase in the value of the property from what it is currently assessed at. He stated that one of the reasons this project is coming for review so close to the deadline is that they were working on another project in Muhlenberg Township that fell through (the owner of the land decline to sell). This project would have required that the County commit approximately \$700,000 of funding.

Commissioner Scott again raised his concerns regarding the short notice received to review this information and mention that he reserves the right to vote no to these things in the future. Commissioners Schwank and Gajewski agreed. The board voted and the motioned passed.

Citizen Comment/Business From The Floor

Kurt Bellman, Director of Election Services, introduced Election Services new Bi-lingual Coordinator, Laiza Otero. Ms. Otera has already implemented new procedures for the coming primary election and has filled half of the necessary interpreter positions. Commissioner Schwank asked Ms. Otera if she would return to an Elections Meeting or a Board of Commissioners' Meeting after the primary election and report on the process.

Controller Sandy Graffius mentioned that the agendas and minutes for both the Pension Board and the Retirement Board would be placed on the County's Website.

Commissioner Scott reported about information sent to him from Phil and Beth Litbin of Reading. They sent information regarding mushrooms being a good source of Selenium, which reduces the risk of prostate cancer. The Litbins also mentioned that Berks County is the leading producer of mushrooms in the nation, possibly worldwide.

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 11:45 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lori A. Schneider, Acting Chief Clerk