

Operations Meeting Minutes June 23, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.

Pursuant to due notice to Board members and the public the Operations meeting was held via Microsoft Teams Live at 9:30 a.m..

Participating were Commissioner Chair Christian Y. Leinbach, Commissioner Kevin S. Barnhardt, Commissioner Michael S. Rivera, Executive Assistants Mary Buerer, Jessica Blausner and Barbara Lopez, County Solicitor Christine M. Sadler, First Assistant J. Chadwick Schnee, Assistant County Solicitor Paul Bradshaw, Human Resources Director Jessica Weaknecht, and Maryjo Gibson, Chief Clerk.

1. Impacts on Berks County if the Governor's Emergency Declaration is lifted –
Chad Schnee reported there is currently ongoing litigation in the Supreme Court to decide whether the Governor's Declaration of Emergency is valid, and a decision on its viability is expected in due course. Mr. Schnee said Berks County's Declaration issued March 12, 2020 gives Berks County the flexibility for contracting and procurement purposes, and suggested the County do another Declaration recognizing a continuation of the March 12th Declaration.
Commissioner Barnhardt suggested extending the Declaration to December 31, 2020 to coincide with the expiration of CARES Act funding.
Commissioner Leinbach asked if there was a motion to extend the Declaration of Emergency.
A motion was made by Commissioner Barnhardt to extend the Declaration of Disaster Emergency through December 31, 2020. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Rivera. The motion carried.
2. Berks County Convention Center Authority – Christian Leinbach
Based on a report from the Berks County Conservation Center Authority, the Authority's financial shortfall will be in the range of \$400,000 to \$600,000. Commissioner Leinbach commented the Authority will be meeting with the City of Reading, and would also like to know what Customer Bank will do and how do they see the County's part in assisting.
Assistant County Solicitor Paul Bradshaw reported the \$40,000 that is disbursed to the County Treasurer is protected by the Agreement and Statute, and any changes to the Agreement will have to be done by Ordinance.
Commissioner Leinbach asked that this item be listed on next week's Agenda for follow-up.
3. Discuss Face-to-Face Training/Conferences for county employees at least thru Green Phase
There currently is a moratorium on travel for face-to-face training and conferences.
After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Rivera directing Human Resources and the Solicitor's Office to put together a resolution or policy setting forth guidelines for face-to-face training and conferences for county employees, and to be listed at an upcoming Commissioners' Meeting.

4. Constable Audit – County Solicitor Christine Sadler
Ms. Sadler provided updated the Commissioners on the status of the original proposal submitted by Zelenkofske Axelrod LLC to provide an audit of a sampling of constable cost sheets. The Commissioners decided that proposal would not answer the question of how much money we were collecting, what percentage costs were recovered and what costs the county recovered, and directing the Solicitor to obtain a new proposal for a top to bottom review for calendar year 2019. The new proposal to perform an audit of all costs sheets for 2019 would be \$600,000.
Ms. Graffius will reach out to other County Controllers in Pennsylvania on their practices relating to Constables and costs related to their services, and whether they use constables and how many use sheriff deputies.
After further discussion, and the need for more information, this matter will be listed for follow-up at the July 7, 2020 Operations Meeting. The County Controller, the District Attorney and the Sheriff will be asked to attend and provide reports. If any one of three cannot make the meeting it will be rescheduled until the next available date.
5. Discuss PRO Role and Procedures –
The Commissioners agreed there should be a controlling mechanism in place for the new PRO to issue press releases and release information on social media.
The Board suggested Ms. Weaver put together a simple social media policy for review and approval by the Commissioners.
6. 2025 CCAP Annual Conference
Commissioner Leinbach reported the Visitor’s Bureau submitted an application to host the 2025 CCAP Annual Conference in Berks County.
Because Seven Springs cancelled the CCAP Conference this year without penalty, The Commissioners agreed to withdraw our application for 2025 thereby allowing Seven Springs to host in 2025.
7. Commissioner Rivera reported the name of the Small Business Loan Program has been changed to Small Business Grant Program.

Adjourned at 1:19 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maryjo Gibson, Chief Clerk