

Budget/Operations Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2020

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, January 9, 2020, at 2:00 P.M. in the Commissioners' Boardroom, 13th floor of the Berks County Services Center, pursuant to due notice to Board members and the public.

Commissioner Chair Christian Y. Leinbach called the meeting to order with Commissioner Kevin S. Barnhardt and Commissioner Michael S. Rivera in attendance. Also present were County Solicitor Christine M. Sadler, Chief Administrative Officer Ronald R. Seaman, Chief Financial Officer Robert Patrizio, Chief Clerk Maryjo Gibson and .

The following items were discussed:

1. Comprehensive Plan discussion with David Hunter, Executive Director, Planning Commission, Cheryl Auchenbach, Planner III, and J. Chadwick Schnee, First Assistant County Solicitor and Matt McGough, Planner III.
This discussion centered on two issues regarding the Berks County Comprehensive Plan 2030 Update scheduled for adoption January 23, 2020. Mr. Schnee addressed the first issue concerning 3 parcels in Centre Township and provided a brief recap. Mr. Schnee reported in October the Planning Commission voted to accept a third version of land use map of the area, and that, in December, the Planning Commission voted to recommend changing the land use of one parcel entirely to Rural Conservation. Mr. Schnee recommended that, after discussions with Planning staff, to maintain the land use designations for these parcels that exist in the current Comprehensive Plan (Map 1). Because of the difficulties with this issue, Commissioner Leinbach encouraged in the future, the Planning Commission should not proceed with future land use changes until all parties are notified and have an opportunity to comment.
The Commissioners agreed to accept Map 1 in the Comprehensive Plan, contingent on Planning Staff notifying the owner of the Troutman parcel before the January 23, 2020 Meeting.
The second issue dealt with solid waste disposal and the overabundance of landfill capacity in Berks County, and a request brought forth by the prior Board for language addressing these concerns.
Mr. Schnee submitted language for the Boards' consideration he would recommend inserting in the Plan to address these concerns. After discussion, the Commissioners agreed to insert Mr. Schnee's language in the Plan..
2. A discussion was held on the letter of response from PEMA to Berks and Schuylkill December 12, 2019 letter concerning PEMA's refusal to acknowledge the continued existence of the East Central PA Task Force. The Board agreed to challenge PEMA's response and recommended an internal meeting with key Berks and Schuylkill County personnel to develop a solid plan.

3. Chief Administrative Officer Ronald R. Seaman notified the Board there are some issues with the current GPS tracking software. Mr. Seaman reported Enterprise has submitted a proposal for a better improved system that cost \$100 per vehicle per year and asked if the Board is okay with moving ahead. The Board agreed pending receipt of an agreement with a defined cost and legal review.
4. Commissioner Barnhardt reported PA Downtown Center is holding its Annual Conference in Reading in June and is soliciting sponsorship requests. Commissioner Barnhardt asked the Board's support for a County sponsorship of \$2,500 contingent on the City also agreeing to a \$2,500 sponsorship. The Commissioners agreed only if the City agrees to same sponsorship.
5. Commissioner Barnhardt reported he is aware of an RFP the Conservation District put out for construction of a new building and encouraged the County to be proactive with our tenants. Mr. Seaman advised the Board that he received communication in November from the Federal government requesting contact information. Mr. Seaman provided the contact information and in December inquired into an update on their proposal. On December 31, Mr. Seaman received a response from the Federal government advising a draft is complete and is currently going through review. Mr. Seaman anticipates another update within the next three weeks. Commissioner Leinbach asked Mr. Seaman to share that information with our tenants at the Agricultural Center.
6. Jail Discussion – Next Steps
Solicitor Sadler advised she received a proposal from CGL for the next steps, and is concerned with the price tag, and advised it warrants further discussion. Ms. Sadler noted there is a tentative meeting scheduled with CGL on January 23, 2020 to clarify the soft costs. Because there were numerous questions raised, Commissioner Barnhardt suggested a list of questions be compiled and send those questions to CGL in enough time for them to have answers by January 23. Ms. Sadler asked the questions to be emailed to her by the end of the day Monday, January 13. Also suggested was the formation of a Jail Construction Task Force Committee. All three commissioners agreed there is nothing we can do by way of improvements to our Ag facility to accommodate the additional space request of the Conservation District until he RFP is awarded by the Federal Government

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:15 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maryjo Gibson, Chief Clerk