

Commissioners' Board Meeting Minutes August 19, 2021

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, August 19, 2021, at 10:00 A.M. via Microsoft Teams Live, pursuant to due notice to Board members and the public.

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

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

Berks County Covid-19 Data Report –

Brian Gottschall, Director of Berks Department of Emergency Services, and lead on the Berks County COVID-19 Leadership Team. There is a significant upward rise on both testing and cases with one in four tests coming back positive. Hospitals continue to show small increases week over week on the number of hospital patients. Confirmed all those individuals who are hospitalized with COVID are individuals not inoculated at time of admission. Deaths remain extremely flat. Please visit www.doyourpartberks.com for further information.

CO-COUNTY WELLNESS UPDATE – Commissioner Christian Y. Leinbach

Continue to have multifunctioning contact tracing teams in place. There were 98 new contacts last week. The call center was well received and remains set up. It can be opened again very easily if the need arises. There are some concerns due to school openings and issues arising, but we will continue to monitor.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of August 12, 2021 Commissioners' Board Meeting were approved as presented.

Commissioner Leinbach noted an Executive session was held August 17, 2021 and dealt with personnel, litigation, and contract negotiations.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

Celine Schrier, Reading – Commented on Agenda Item 299.2021& 300.2021, Amending ICE contract

Jules Minotto, Reading - Commented on Agenda Item 299.2021& 300.2021, Amending ICE contract

Alex Elizabeth, Reading - Commented on Agenda Item 299.2021& 300.2021, Amending ICE contract

Bridget Cambria, Reading - Commented on Agenda Item 299.2021& 300.2021, Amending ICE contract

Adriana Zambrano - Commented on Agenda Item 299.2021& 300.2021, Amending ICE contract

The Q&A comments regarding agenda items were read and are attached hereto

Christine Sadler, County Solicitor, dismissed three comments on agenda items due to the individuals not being Berks County residents.

Agenda Items

1. A motion was made by Commissioner Rivera to approve the agenda as presented. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Leinbach, and opened it up for further discussion:

Commissioner Leinbach indicated the ICE facility is not a new issue and has been discussed before. The claims that are being made were made before and there being no evidence to substantiate any of the claims. He is going to support the request from ICE to modify the existing ICE contract.

Commissioner Rivera indicated the state has been conducting monthly inspections to investigate any claims. We will listen and take into consideration any point of views. At the end, we must make the decision which we feel is in the best interest of the County.

Seeing no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

293.2021 Adopt a resolution authorizing 2021 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$32,017 and 2021 Appropriations in the amount of \$386,254 per listing dated August 13, 2021.

294.2021 Adopt a resolution authorizing Human Resources Recommendations per listing dated August 19, 2021 as follows:

1. Authorize the appointment of Douglas Bodden to PC011076 Facilities Manager – Facilities & Operations, effective 9/1/2021. Rate of \$70,000/annually. Salary range Minimum \$49,516; Midpoint \$66,021; Maximum \$82,526. Replacement for Gary Bair who separated. This request meets the criteria of the Hiring Policy. Budget 10000 – 11030.

2. Authorize the appointment of Patricia Hodges to PC011633 Part-time RN Supervisor – Berks Heim Nursing, effective 9/15/2021. Rate of \$37.00/hour. Replacement for Jena Deisher who transferred. This request meets the criteria of the Hiring Policy. Budget 53000 – 33090.
 3. Authorize the promotion of Kristen Schlottmam from PC011171 Judicial Coordinator – Court Administration to PC013371 Juvenile Court Operations Manager – Juvenile Probation, effective 9/15/2021. Rate of \$52,000/annually. Salary range Minimum \$37,597; Midpoint \$50,130; Maximum \$62,662. Replacement for Carmen Torres who was promoted. This request meets the criteria of the Hiring Policy. Budget 10000 – 12020.
 4. Authorize a salary adjustment for Marc Loiacono PC011075 Facilities Manager – Facilities & Operations, effective 09/1/2021. Rate of \$67,000/annually. Salary range Minimum \$49,516; Midpoint \$66,021; Maximum \$82,526. This request meets the criteria of the Hiring Policy. Budget 10000 – 11030.
 5. Authorize the Hourly Part-time Rate Adjustments for Telecommunicators as outlined on the attached listing, effective 08/18/2021.
- 295.2021 Adopt a resolution authorizing approval of revised Avoidance of Infectious Respiratory Disease Spread Policy & Procedure, Section 9.9 with revision date of August 19, 2021 as attached.
- 296.2021 Adopt a resolution authorizing execution of the Berks Heim Nursing and Rehabilitation Open Employment & Volunteer Policy, the Equal Opportunity for Staff Development, and the Open Admission Policy Statement in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act.
- 297.2021 Adopt a resolution ratifying, confirming, and approving Christine M. Sadler, Berks County Solicitor, to execute the Waiver of Conflict letter for Stevens & Lee to represent The Works at Wyomissing, LLC real estate tax assessment matters.
- 298.2021 Adopt a resolution authorizing execution of a letter of commitment to support and participate in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) planning activities with other Counties in South Central PA.

- 299.2021 Adopt a resolution authorizing Christian Y. Leinbach, Chair to execute amendment/modification # P00028 between Berks County and US Immigration and Customs Enforcement to convert Berks County Residential Center from a family facility to a low-level female only facility subject to final review and approval of the terms and conditions by the County Solicitor.
- 300.2021 Adopt a resolution authorizing Christian Y. Leinbach, Chair to execute amendment/modification # P00008 between Berks County and US Immigration and Customs Enforcement to provide funding for the residential program at Berks County Residential Center subject to final review and approval of the terms and conditions by the County Solicitor.
2. Motion to authorize execution of Contract Agreements/Amendments as set forth on attached listing dated August 17, 2021. There is a total of 23 contracts listed.
3. Motion to ratify and confirm payments set forth on Controller's Office vouchers listing dated August 17, 2021, and the payment of electronic transfers and employee payroll.

Reports

1. County Treasurer A. Dennis Adams, CPA submitted a prepared weekly Treasurer's report.
2. The Controller's weekly report was presented by County Controller, Sandy Graffius.

REPORT OF CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Mr. Seaman reported on Parks & Recreation programs taking place the remainder of the month of August.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Rivera

Thanked the First Farm Bureau for the tour of three different farms in the County. Reading Music Foundation holding a free concert on Sunday, August 29, 2021 from 3-5 PM at Reading Liederkrantz, Ringgold Band will be performing. Free back-to-School carnival taking place at Charis Community Church, 123 N. 6th Street and they will be giving away school supplies. Federal Homeowners Assistance Fund is available to help owners behind on their mortgage and other home related programs due to COVID. Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA) has been designated by the state legislature to administer this

program in the Commonwealth. PHFA is working to develop the program which will be operational once approved by the Treasury Department sometime in the Fall.

Commissioner Barnhardt – Not present

Commissioner Leinbach

Asked Bob Patrizio, Chief Operating Officer to briefly discuss the revenue on the current ICE contract versus the modification to the contract. Bob Patrizio indicated that there is not much of a difference between the current contract and the new modification. The entire facilities costs are covered by ICE and there are no out of pocket costs to taxpayers.

Commissioner Leinbach indicated in the Spring, Congress and the President authorized the American Rescue Plan which put an unprecedented amount of money out to states, and to cities, and counties in Pennsylvania. However, there is continued frustration due to the lack of guidance on how to spend ARP money.

ELECTED OFFICIALS' COMMENTS

Sandy Graffius indicated that a total of seventy-one (71) debit cards paid out for work during the Election have not been cashed. A charge fee of \$3.99/mo. will be assessed to each debit card if not cashed by end of August 2021.

COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR

The Q&A comments were read and are attached hereto.

Christine Sadler, Solicitor indicated a total of eight comments were dismissed for not following our approved guidelines.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:05 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carmen Torres, Chief Clerk