

Commissioners' Workshop Meeting Tuesday, April 28, 2009

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, April 28, 2009, at 10:30 A.M. in the thirteenth floor Board Room of the Berks County Services Center, pursuant to due notice to Board members and the public.

Commissioner Chair Mark C. Scott, Esq. called the meeting to order with Commissioner Christian Leinbach, and Commissioner Kevin Barnhardt in attendance. Also present were Solicitor Alan Miller Esq., and Chief Clerk Terry Styer.

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

II. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Deb Dietrich from **Berks County Cooperative Extension** promoted the Annual Berks County 4-H Chicken Bar-be-que featuring Kauffman's Bar-be-que chicken at Lowe's, Route 724, Sinking Spring on Sunday, May 3rd. Time is 10 AM -1 PM. Tickets are \$5.50 each.

The **Berks County Transition Team** consisting of Jennifer Biehn, Human Resources Director; Terry Styer, Chief Clerk; Bob Patrizio, Budget and Finance Director; Alan Miller/Christine Sadler, Solicitors; Todd Simpson, Information Systems Director; Dean Smith, Business Analyst; and Ken Borkey, Executive Director for the Berks County Youth Center, who were charged with the responsibility of reviewing the status of the County Administrator's projects/job duties prior to his resignation, and provide the Commissioners with a plan for reassignment during the transition phase. In addition and relative to this presentation, the Team was asked to present their recommendations to the Commissioners regarding position/role of County Administrator and what if any alternatives to this system should be considered. These recommendations included the collaborative input of County department heads and County elected officials. Jennifer Biehn and Dean Smith presented the following summary:

The Transition Team (the team) interviewed the Board of Commissioners individually and collected information from County department heads and elected officials. This provided the team with important information about what has worked well (and not so well) in the past, and important expectations for this job. Also reviewed was what other government and non-government organizations do so 'best practices' for the County could be developed. The last process involved a ranking and weighting system that was used to determine the best model out of the following six options that were considered:

1. **Do Not Fill the Job:**
2. **County Administrator:** Fill the job as it's currently defined.
3. **Chief of Staff:** Similar to the "County Administrator" job, but with less authority and autonomy.
4. **Division Heads:** A committee structure in which functions are grouped together and represented on a governance committee which would answer directly to the Board.
5. **Liaison System:** The Board has hands-on responsibility for day-to-day operations of the County.
6. **Chief Operations Officer:** Similar to the current definition of the "County Administrator" job, with more clearly-defined internal responsibilities to run the organization with guidance from the Board of Commissioners.

CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER (COO) –received highest ranking

The person in this job will run the operations of the County organization, with guidance as needed from the Board of Commissioners. This will allow the Commissioners to focus on leading the County on **strategic issues** that impact the citizens of the County. This will also help to make decision-making more effective, because there will be a single point of contact between the Commissioners and 28 departments. This will also make sure that the Commissioners' direction is carried out uniformly throughout all departments. It was strongly recommended that with an organization of this size, this position will also need a strong Deputy COO as well as administrative support.

Commissioner Barnhardt commended the Transition Team for doing a tremendous job and was impressed with the involvement and "buy-in" from department heads and elected officials. He also reflected on the positive feedback he has received regarding that process from several department heads. He pointed out that this new structure is proposed to have more direct responsibility to the Board of Commissioners for policy driving which he hoped would provide more interaction with the COO on a day to day basis and that would help to keep the board more in touch with our departments. He then added that for the position of the COO, the Deputy COO and the Administrative Assistant, he felt that we have qualified employees who could step up to fill some of these roles.

Commissioner Leinbach said he also received similar positive feedback from department heads and elected officials for the transition team process. He said that this process represents a "new day of management in Berks County Government." He credited the success of this process with the fact that it was not driven by the Commissioners. He commended the team for allowing theirs and other diverse opinions to emerge from within the organization and for looking outside the organization at other counties and even the private sector for examples and ideas. He indicated that he fully supports the outcome for the structure of the former office of County Administrator and that this will enable the Commissioners to continue to work with departments, provide clear direction for the COO to serve as a voice to and from the Board rather than a roadblock.

Commissioner Scott said that this is an improvement over the previous two County Management positions he has experienced and suggested that this structure will reflect the personality of this board and will allow the board to operate in a more "hands-on" atmosphere, hopefully without being micromanagers. He said this structure establishes a stronger direction from the Commissioners to the COO while maintaining some reasonable balance for department heads. He said he agreed that this Transition Team process was objective since it was not driven by the Commissioners but delegated to the participants to weigh in objectively.

III. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS/REQUESTS:

Budget Department

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing 2009 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$72,069 per listing dated April 24, 2009. Bob Patrizio, Budget Director, presented the report.
- B. Motion authorizing Mark C. Scott, Esq. as Chairman of the Board, to execute Contract Agreements/ Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator Candace Noll, per attached listing dated April 27, 2009.

Community Development

- A. Adopt a Resolution to appoint a Commissioner to serve as a county representative to the Borough of Sinking Spring (BOSS) TIF Committee. Ken Pick Community Development Director will provide an overview of the Phase I (intersection realignment for Rte. #422 and 724) of the Borough's revitalization plan "BOSS 20/20."

District Attorney

- A. Adopt a Resolution to ratify and confirm application for a grant between the Berks County District Attorney's office and the Bureau of Justice Assistance for a Forensic Services Expansion Project. Amount requested is \$184,370.

Facilities

- A. Authorize execution of an AIA Agreement between the County of Berks and David M. Kleckner, Architects, P.C., 18 Catherine Street, Shillington, Pennsylvania, 19607 to provide architectural services for the Berks County Prison - Compost Facility.

Human Resources

- A. Human Resource recommendations per list dated April 28, 2009.

Parks and Recreation

- A. Adopt a Resolution to authorize approval and execution of the Application for Relocation Payment from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Transportation, for removal and relocation of the entrance sign for the Berks County Heritage Center due to expansion of the Route 183 and Route 222 interchange.
- B. Commissioner Barnhardt presented a Proclamation celebrating the 41 year career of retiring Parks and Recreation Director Bill Semmel. His wife, Amy, and entire staff had warm words of thanks and appreciation for Mr. Semmel's long and respected career.

Planning

- A. Adopt a Resolution authorizing the execution of a grant application and agreement between the County of Berks and the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for the Pole Barn at Gruber Wagon Works.
- B. Adopt a Resolution authorizing the execution of a grant application and agreement between the County of Berks and the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for the Gruber Wagon Works Restoration.
- C. Adopt a Resolution authorizing the execution of a grant application and agreement between the County of Berks and the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for the Antietam Lake Valve House.

Solicitor

- A. Adopt a Resolution to authorize execution of Business Card change forms to remove the name of William Dennis as a signatory for the credit card account for Berks County Emergency Management Agency.
- B. Adopt a Resolution to authorize execution of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Berks County Board of Commissioners and the Court of Common Pleas for Information Systems to provide all services previously handled by Court Technology Position.

IV. REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS**Commissioner Leinbach****Commissioner Barnhardt**

Commissioner Scott

- A. Proposal for Liberty Environmental to review application from Boyertown Foundry Company for Title V Air Quality Permit. Amount not to exceed \$3200.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 11:36 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry L Styer, Chief Clerk