

Pre-Commissioners' Meeting
Tuesday, March 30, 2004

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, March 30, 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 were Acting Chief Clerk William E. Dennis and Solicitor Alan Miller.

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

The Board of Commissioners discussed and approved the following items for listing at the April 1, 2004 Meeting:

II. REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS:

- A. Adopt Proclamation regarding *Athletic Training Month*. Attending to accept the Proclamation are Chris Karasek, MS ATC Comprehensive Athletic Treatment Center, and Rennie Sacco, Kutztown University Athletic Trainer.
- B. Present Certificate of Recognition for Paula M. Flippin for her lifelong dedication to volunteer community service and for her tireless work on various community and volunteer activities in Reading, Berks County and beyond. She has made a lasting difference for the good of society.
- C. Present Certificate of Recognition Al Eckstrom for his fight against drug and alcohol abuse. Commissioner Gajewski introduced Mr. Eckstrom as a good man with a good heart. Mr. Eckstrom, stating that he was an alcoholic who still has a problem, pledged himself to continue to help others through Easy Does It, Inc.
- D. Presentation by *Crime Alert Berks* to update the Commissioners' on the work of the organization and to thank the Commissioners' for the County's support. *Crime Alert Berks* will also be requesting the signature of the Commissioners' on a letter to the community to match the contribution made by the County. Commissioner Gajewski introduced Barry Rohrbach, State Police Corporal Reichert, Cumru Township Chief Brian Hiester and Trooper Ray Albert who advised those present that the program is working well. Help is still needed to raise funds and

Mr. Rohrbach asked the Commissioners to solicit businesses. The last time the business community was asked for help, \$12,000 was raised. The Commissioners were also advised of a new program, Keep Our School Safe, Cash for Tips. The program is in some schools already but it is planned to have the program in all schools. Commissioner Scott advised that one simple call can change a case and save enormous dollars. He called Crime Alert an A plus investment for the business community, especially banks and convenience stores who are especially vulnerable. Commissioner Gajewski suggested that some business do the same as the French Fry sale, which was very successful in raising funds.

- E. Presentation by Cheryl Auchenbach, Planner III and Scott Wails, GIS Analyst of the Berks County Planning Commission on *Berks County Greenway, Parks & Recreation Plan*. After the presentation, Bill Semmel, Director of Parks and Recreation advised that the County is required to have a greenway plan. He called this process the opportunity to do something unique by using technology available. Commissioner Schwank called this and similar efforts a chance to offer a legacy to our children, and she knew of no better way to do that other than parks and recreation. Commissioner Gajewski added that it made sense to have a comprehensive overall plan for parks, something that we need to do in a lot of areas.
- F. Authorize refund of 2002, 2003, and 2004 County Property Taxes at the request of the Board of Assessment Appeals (attached list).
- G. Adopt Resolution authorizing the execution of the Report of Berks County to the Pennsylvania Department of State regarding alternative language accessibility programs, policies and procedures required by the voting rights Act of 1965.

Commissioner Schwank

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing the creation and establishment of a Citizen Corps Council and activities within Berks County due to the award of a federal grant provided through Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency.

Commissioner Gajewski

- A. Authorize payment of invoices under the following Community Development Disbursement Vouchers:
 - 1. No. 2068 – Community Development Block Grant Program
 - 2. No. 2069 – Community Development Block Grant Program
 - 3. No. 2071 – Community Development Block Grant Program

4. No. 459 – HOME Grant Program
 5. No. 460 – HOME Grant Program
 6. No. 1209 – Property Rehabilitation Program
 7. No. 1210 – Property Rehabilitation Program
 8. No. 1211 – Property Rehabilitation Program
 9. No. 2070S – Emergency Shelter Program
- B. Adopt Resolution authorizing amendments to the County's CDBG, HOME and ESG Programs (Community Development Office).

Commissioner Scott

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing subsidized adoption of a male child born 04/28/98 on request of BCCYS and in accordance with applicable federal regulations, at the rate of \$11.00 per day Maintenance, including physical and mental health care, and \$500.00 legal cost plus filing fees (Case Number 14841).
- B. Adopt Resolution authorizing subsidized adoption of a male child born 11/06/00 on request of BCCYS and in accordance with applicable federal regulations, at the rate of \$10.00 per day Maintenance, including physical and mental health care, and \$500.00 legal cost plus filing fees (Case Number 14841).
- C. Adopt Resolution authorizing subsidized adoption of a male child born 09/01/97 on request of BCCYS and in accordance with applicable federal regulations, at the rate of \$11.00 per day Maintenance, including physical and mental health care, and \$500.00 legal cost plus filing fees (Case Number 18895).
- D. Adopt Resolution authorizing subsidized adoption of a male child born 08/17/01 on request of BCCYS and in accordance with applicable federal regulations, at the rate of \$10.00 per day Maintenance, including physical and mental health care, and \$500.00 legal cost plus filing fees (Case Number 18895).
- E. Adopt Resolution authorizing execution of a Block Grant Agreement by and between the County of Berks (Juvenile Probation) and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Juvenile Court Judges Commission, with respect to seventh year funding (7/1/03 - 6/30/04) in the amount of \$58,968.00 for the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program.

OTHER REQUESTS:

Budget Director:

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing 2004 Budget Transfers in the total aggregate amount of \$334,325.00 per listing dated March 26,2004.

Contract Coordinator:

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing execution of Contract Agreements/ Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator, per attached listing dated March 26, 2004.

Purchasing Coordinator:

- A. Award Invitation to Bid #03-23 regarding services for Berks Heim, for a one-year contract as follows:
 - 1. Bath Towels: Turner Textiles, 100 S. Fourth Street, P.O. Box 976, Reading, PA 19603 at \$13.75/dozen.
 - 2. Washcloths: Charm-Tex, 1618 Coney Island Avenue, Brooklyn, NY, 11320 at \$1.90/dozen.
 - 3. Patient Gowns: Tabb Textile Co., Inc., 511 Pleasant Drive, Opelika, AL, 36801 at \$14.75/dozen.
 - 4. Pillows: Harbor Linen Co., P.O. Box 3510, Cherry Hill, NJ, 08034 at \$3.46 each.

Commissioner Gajewski advised that staff was also preparing a RFP for elevator maintenance.

Solicitor

- A. Adopt Resolution ratifying, confirming and approving the execution of a Sub-grant application to the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency in an amount of \$42,780.00 for the Drug Control and System Improvement Program.

IV. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

Mr. Dennis requested formal adoption of a Resolution authorizing acceptance of the proposal of Financial Solutions, LLC, 607 Washington Street, Reading to become the Financial Advisor to the County effective April 1, 2004.

Commissioner Scott questioned the process followed to select the financial advisor. He objected to the responsiveness of Financial Solutions, LLC to the RFP, citing examples of exclusions to requested information to which the bidder did not comply. The Commissioner also objected to the amount of proposed retainer as a basis for awarding the bid, acknowledging however that the current method of approving transactions without benefit of a pre-stated commission was problematic. Commissioner Scott requested that both proposals be re-evaluated by those more qualified than the Commissioners and the County Administrator. Commissioner Scott also read from the Code of Conduct adopted by the Board at its organizational meeting, alleging that the Commissioners did not adhere to the tenants outlined in the course of this procurement.

Mr. Dennis responded that all three Commissioners received information and a recommendation at the same time and no prior meetings or discussions took place.

Commissioner Schwank agreed that the retainer fee was not that important. She stated her interest in a new look, a different perspective in advising the Commissioners on the fiscal affairs of the County. Commissioner Gajewski agreed and added that he had reviewed the proposals and did not find exception to the proposal. Commissioner Gajewski moved to award the proposal to Financial Solutions, LLC and Commissioner Schwank seconded. Motion carried 2 to 1 with Commissioners Schwank and Gajewski in favor and Commissioner Scott opposed.

Citizen Comment/Business From The Floor

Several citizens were present to express opposition to the Patriot Act and to ask the Commissioners for their formal support of repealing the act. Dorothy Reilly, Rosie Schmitz, Anneleis Visser, Ben Shoemaker, Darlington Hoopes, Jr., and Reading City Council member Angel Figueroa were present to address the Commissioners.

Commissioner Schwank advised that she had sent a letter to legislators but never has received a response. She advised that the Commissioners would consider a resolution if their content was acceptable. Commissioner Gajewski agreed but wanted to see the specifics of the resolution. Commissioner Scott reiterated his idea of putting the issue up for referendum vote if it were permitted by County Code. He would prefer to put the

matter up for public debate. He added that the issue should be addressed at town meetings with Federal representatives.

With no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 12:28 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

William E. Dennis, Acting Chief Clerk