

Commissioners' Workshop Meeting
Tuesday, April 20, 2004

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, April 20, 2004, at 7:00 PM, at the Fairgrounds Square Mall, 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. Row Offices represented were the Coroner Bybel, Controller Graffius, Sheriff Jozwiak and Acting Treasurer Kaucher.

Commissioner Schwank explained that the meeting was being held at the Fairgrounds Square Mall as part of observing County Government Week and as a continuation of the Board's commitment to holding evening meetings. 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 22, 2004 Meeting:

II. REPORTS OF COMMISSIONERS:

- A. Adopt Proclamation regarding *National County Government Week*, April 18, 2004 through April 24, 2004.
- B. Present a Certificate of Recognition to *The Peanut Bar Restaurant* regarding their 80th Anniversary in the City of Reading. Commissioner Gajewski presented the certificate to Harold Leifer, calling the Peanut Bar an outstanding, one of a kind business in downtown Reading that has been in existence since 1924. Mr. Leifer stated his pride and pleasure in accepting the certificate, and expressed his thanks to the people of the County who have been so supportive over the years.
- C. Present a Certificate of Recognition to *The Greater Berks Food Bank* for their outstanding efforts in Berks County. The Commissioners recognized the Food Bank for their unselfish and tireless dedication to the hungry, serving 6,000 families a month. Mr. Tim Becker accepted the certificate, explaining that the Food Bank could not do what they did without the support of a great network.
- D. Presentation by Dennis Louwarse, Executive Director of BARTA, *Update on Schuylkill Valley Metro Rail Service*. Mr. Louwarse outlined the changes at BARTA, including restructuring of routes, new ridership efforts,

new buses, and the phases of the Transportation Complex project. Mr. Louwense also outlined the Schuylkill Valley Rail Project, a project he characterized as the highest level of technology, the highest level of service and the highest level of cost and economic impact. Mr. Louwense stated the task is to come up with a financially feasible project with the appropriate level of service, built in one stretch with everyone served from the very beginning. He added that this project could be the largest economic development effort in the history of Pennsylvania.

Commissioner Gajewski commented that the County was fortunate to have Mr. Louwense on the Task Force and that the return of investment for this endeavor could be as high as 10 to 1. Commissioner Scott questioned the identity of the operating entity and the financial subsidy of each participating jurisdiction. Mr. Louwense advised that the operating entity has yet to be answered. He also advised that the task force is looking at tax and other incentives, understanding that everyone has fiscal constraints.

- E. Presentation by Alan Piper, Transportation Planner, County of Berks, *Update on Berks County Road Projects*. Mr. Piper first outlined the different modes of transportation found within the County, which includes bicycles and pedestrians, airport, rail and bridges and highways. He then gave an update on the various highway projects within the County, including 222 South, West Shore Bypass, 222/183 Interchange, 222 North/422 East and he concluded with a discussion of the Reading Area Transportation Study.

Commissioner Schwank

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing Judith L. Schwank, Commissioner, Chair, and Sandy Graffius, County Controller, to execute Certification of County funds for Agricultural Land Conservation Easement Purchase in the amount of \$95,644.06 or \$1,615.61 per acre for James P. Adam, Jan M. Adam, and David J. & Christine A.A. Williams, 535 Virginville Road, Hamburg, Pennsylvania, consisting of 59.2 acres of which 59.2 acres would be subject to the easement.
- B. Adopt Resolution authorizing Judith L. Schwank, Commissioner, Chair, and Sandy Graffius, County Controller, to execute Certification of County funds for Agricultural Land Conservation Easement Purchase in the amount of \$21,003.00 or \$1,615.62 per acre for James P. Adam, Jan M. Adam, and David J. & Christine A.A. Williams, 535 Virginville Road, Hamburg, Pennsylvania, consisting of 13.0 acres of which 13.0 acres would be subject to the easement.
- C. Adopt Resolution authorizing Judith L. Schwank, Commissioner, Chair, and Sandy Graffius, County Controller, to execute Certification of County funds for Agricultural Land Conservation Easement Purchase in the

amount of \$220,800.00 or \$1,600.00 per acre for Donald L. and Mary A. Bender, 40 Montello Road, Sinking Spring, Pennsylvania, consisting of 138.0 acres of which 138.0 acres would be subject to the easement.

- D. Adopt Resolution authorizing Judith L. Schwank, Commissioner, Chair, and Sandy Graffius, County Controller, to execute Certification of County funds for Agricultural Land Conservation Easement Purchase in the amount of \$88,519.41 or \$1,642.29 per acre for Glenn A. Davis and Steven G. Davis, 184 Spring Road, Bernville, Pennsylvania, consisting of 53.9 acres of which 53.9 acres would be subject to the easement.
- E. Adopt Resolution authorizing Judith L. Schwank, Commissioner, Chair, and Sandy Graffius, County Controller, to execute Certification of County funds for Agricultural Land Conservation Easement Purchase in the amount of \$193,015.01 or \$1,665.36 per acre for Roy W. and Betty Jane Hetrick, 69 Hetrick Road, Bernville, Pennsylvania, consisting of 115.9 acres of which 115.9 acres would be subject to the easement.
- F. Adopt Resolution authorizing Judith L. Schwank, Commissioner, Chair, and Sandy Graffius, County Controller, to execute Certification of County funds for Agricultural Land Conservation Easement Purchase in the amount of \$161,280.00 or \$1,600.00 per acre for Elwood A. Moyer, 161 Seigfried Road, Bernville, Pennsylvania, consisting of 100.8 acres of which 100.8 acres would be subject to the easement.
- G. Adopt Resolution authorizing Judith L. Schwank, Commissioner, Chair, and Sandy Graffius, County Controller, to execute Certification of County funds for Agricultural Land Conservation Easement Purchase in the amount of \$75,200.00 or \$1,600.00 per acre for Rodney L. and Lena O. Schaeffer, 103 Seigfried Road, Bernville, Pennsylvania, consisting of 47.0 acres of which 47.0 acres would be subject to the easement.
- H. Adopt Resolution authorizing Judith L. Schwank, Commissioner, Chair, and Sandy Graffius, County Controller, to execute Certification of County funds for Agricultural Land Conservation Easement Purchase in the amount of \$158,560.00 or \$1,600.00 per acre for Clarence M. and A. Arlene Weaver, 1230 Tulpehocken Road, Richland, Pennsylvania, consisting of 99.1 acres of which 99.1 acres would be subject to the easement.

Commissioner Gajewski

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing the appointment of Ruth M. Perkins, 22 Plymouth Place, Wyomissing, Pennsylvania, 19610, to the Berks County Public Libraries Board, for a term to expire 06/02/06.

Commissioner Scott

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing an increase in Maintenance subsidy from \$12.50 per day to \$15.00 per day for a female child born 12/10/90 on request of BCCYS and in accordance with applicable federal regulations (Case Number 15690).

III. OTHER REQUESTS:*Budget Director:*

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing 2004 Budget Transfers in the total aggregate amount of \$26,667.00; and 2004 Budget Appropriations in the total aggregate amount of \$150,501.00 per listing dated April 16, 2004.

Contract Coordinator:

- A. Adopt Resolution authorizing execution of Contract Agreements/ Amendments as furnished by the Contract Coordinator, per attached listing dated April 15, 2004.

Solicitor:

- A. Adopt Resolution amending Resolution No. 193-04 to the extent of providing further authorization by the Board of Commissioners to apply for and be host municipality for a Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program on behalf of and for the benefit of the Foundation for the Reading Public Museum.
- B. Adopt Resolution authorizing the Board of Commissioners to agree to guarantee a bond issue by the Reading Regional Airport Authority in the amount of \$8,000,000.00. Mr. John Rinehart explained that the funds are part of a \$35,000,000 project, 90% reimbursed by the federal government that expands the existing runway 600 feet and makes other improvements, develops the industrial park and makes improvements to the sewer system. Commissioner Scott called the project a great economic development opportunity and stated that the loan guarantee was of little risk to the County. Commissioner Schwank asked that the County be able to see the payment schedule. Mr. Rinehart advised that that work had not yet been completed but would be provided. Commissioner Gajewski requested an assurance that this preliminary vote would not obligate the guarantor and that the County would see another resolution when all information was provided. Mr. Rinehart affirmed that assurance.

- C. Enactment of Ordinance No. 02-04 authorizing County Park Rangers and their respective responsibilities and duties.

IV. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

- A. Authorize execution of Certification to the State Tax Equalization Board, of a list of conveyances or transfers of real estate during the month of March 2004.

Commissioner Schwank advised those present that a handout was available, "Blueprint for Tax Fairness". She also listed all offices open for visits during County Government Week. Finally she read a letter received regarding Disabled American Veterans, thanking the County for transportation services.

Commissioner Gajewski thanked all who came out for the meeting. He noted the passing of Donald Bagenstose, former County Commissioner and William Hartranft, former City Controller, expressing his sympathies to their families.

Commissioner Scott noted the lack of agricultural land preservation in the eastern part of the county and called for the raising of the amount paid per acre. He cited Montgomery County, which pays \$10,000 an acre, and is in competition with the eastern part of Berks County.

V. CITIZEN COMMENT/BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

No comments were received.

Respectfully Submitted,

William E. Dennis, Acting Chief Clerk