

Commissioners' Board Meeting January 24, 2008

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, January 24, 2008, at 10:30 A.M. in the Board meeting room on the thirteenth floor of the Berks County Services Center, pursuant to due notice to Board members and the public.

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

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

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Leinbach made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt to approve the January 8, and January 15, 2007 Commissioner workshop minutes and the January 10, and January 17, 2007 Commissioners meeting minutes, all voted yes to approve.

Consent Agenda Items

1. A motion was made by Commissioner Leinbach, seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt, and all voted unanimously to approve the items listed below, noting the amendment to resolution 25.08**
 - 20.08 A. Resolution authorizing Mark C. Scott, Esq., Commissioner, Chair, and Sandy Graffius, County Controller, to execute certification of appropriation funding for 2008 in the amount of \$5,126,957.00 for the purchase of Agricultural Easements under Act 43 –the Agricultural Area Security Law, as amended. The total funding amount requested is comprised of \$5 million from the line of credit approved on December 20, 2005 by the Commissioners, as well as the interest collected from the Clean and Green Rollback Tax Penalties and donations to the ACE Program in 2007.
 - 21.08 B. Resolution authorizing Dr. Robert Ziegenfus to be reappointed Chairman of the Agricultural Land Preservation Board for the term of January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008.
 - 22.08 C. Resolution authorizing 2007 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$125,281 and 2007 Appropriations in the amount \$815,534 and 2008 Budget Transfers in the amount of \$6,480 and 2008 Appropriations in the amount \$273,940 per listing dated January 18, 2008.

- 23.08 D. Human Resource recommendations per list dated January 22, 2008.
- 24.08 E. Resolution authorizing execution of a Recycling Services Agreement between the County of Berks and the Berks County Solid Waste Authority (SWA) concerning the implementation and administration of County recycling programs.
- 25.08 F. Resolution authorizing the termination of certain interest rate management agreements previously executed with respect to its general obligation bonds, Series of 1998 and Series of 1999 and General Obligation Variable Rate Demand Bonds, Series of 2002. ****Commissioner Leinbach made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt and approved by all to change the wording of this resolution to provide a more generic reference towards a financial advisor that will be employed to conduct these transactions.** Commissioner Leinbach also asked that the minutes reflect that this resolution does not obligate the board to terminate the agreements; but serves as authorization for the board to act on these financial decisions when it is deemed in the best interest of the county to do so. Commissioner Scott also noted that in the interest of ensuring the opportunity for competition he will be seeking proposals from financial management service providers interesting in providing those services for the County.
- 26.08 G. Resolution authorizing the County of Berks to execute the Family Center/Fatherhood Renewal Application 2008/2009. Allocations requested are Family Center--\$110,397 and Fatherhood Initiative--\$30,600.
- 27.08 H. Resolution appointing Commissioner Kevin S. Barnhardt to serve as the Commissioner Director for the Berks County MH/MR Advisory Board for a one year term.
- 28.08 I. Resolution re-appointing Dr. Raymond J. Hubbard, Wyomissing, PA, to the Berks County MH/MR Advisory Board for a three year term ending 12/31/2010.
- 29.08 J. Resolution re-appointing Eileen Kastura, Wyomissing Hills, PA, to the Berks County Redevelopment Authority for a five year term ending 12/31/2012.
- 30.08 K. Resolution re-appointing Lawrence Greene, Reading, PA to the Berks Area Reading Transportation Authority Board for a five year term ending 12/31/2012.

Reports

1. County Treasurer Nelson Long, CPA presented the weekly Treasurer's report.
2. County Controller Sandy Graffius presented the weekly Controller's report.

Reports of Commissioners

- A. Commissioner Leinbach presented two draft letters proposed to be sent to Congressman Tim Holden and Senator Bob Casey Jr. regarding the United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service in Berks County. He noted that this is a vital department to Berks County and that it would behoove the government to fill this director position as soon as possible. Commissioner Barnhardt made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Leinbach and approved by all to send the letters.
- B. Solicitor Miller presented an Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement between the County of Berks, Exeter JV Associates, LP, the Berks County Industrial Development Authority, the Township of Exeter and the Exeter Township School District. Solicitor Miller explained that this agreement was part of the Exeter Township TIF (Tax Increment Financing) Project and its execution was authorized by the previous board of Commissioners via Ordinance #4 enacted on June 28, 2007. Commissioner Leinbach made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt and approved by all for authorization to sign this agreement.
- C. Commissioner Scott presented a draft letter of support to the Governor on behalf of Firetree, Ltd. regarding a lease dispute between Firetree, Ltd, and the Commonwealth of PA, which may result in Firetree's operations in Wernersville State Hospital having to close. Commissioner Leinbach made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt, and all voted yes to send the letter.
- D. Commissioner Scott then discussed the \$36 million bond issue approved by the previous board of Commissioners in 2005 for the intended purpose of funding the preservation farmland and open space in Berks County. Commissioner Scott said that the Commissioners Open Space Grant program was developed following that bond issue in which \$12 million was designated for municipal and private conservation organization's open space projects. His suggestion to the Commissioners was that the county take a look at this grant program together with the language in the original bond documents to determine if the County could consider amending the proposed use of the Open Space Funds by allocating approximately \$4 million of the original \$12 million for the County's existing and proposed Open Space and Recreation projects such as the acquisition of the Hay Creek Trail and the operational expenses associated with the Antietam Lake and other County Parks properties thus avoiding the use of additional county tax dollars.

Reports of Commissioners continued:

- E. Commissioner Scott then announced that there will be an Executive Session held before the next Commissioners' Workshop meeting to discuss the acquisition of real estate involving the Hay Creek Trail project.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry L. Styer, Chief Clerk