

**SPECIAL COMMISSIONERS' BOARD MEETING**  
**December 16, 2010 – 6:00 P.M.**

The Berks County Board of Commissioners met in special session on Thursday, December 16, 2010 at 6:00 PM 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.

Chairman Mark C. Scott, Esq. called the meeting to order with Commissioner Christian Leinbach, Commissioner Kevin Barnhardt, and First Assistant Solicitor Christine M. Sadler, Esq. in attendance.

In addition to the board members, Row Officers Coroner Dennis J. Hess, Prothonotary Marianne Sutton, and Controller Sandy M. Graffius were also in attendance.

The purpose of the meeting was to consider action on Resolution 380.10 fixing the salaries of certain elected officials to be elected in 2011 for terms to begin in 2012, including the Berks County Commissioners, Register of Wills, Controller, Sheriff, Clerk of Courts and Recorder of Deeds. First Assistant Solicitor Christine M. Sadler, Esq. was then asked to read in its entirety, the text of the proposed Resolution as currently drafted.

In summary, pursuant to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Class County's Code requiring that any salary increase shall be applied equally to all County officials and by Resolution No. 325-08 adopted by the Board of Commissioners December 10, 2008, providing for no salary increase for calendar years 2012 and 2013 for the Treasurer, Prothonotary and Coroner, the County Commissioners recommend no salary increase for the Commissioners, Register of Wills, Controller, Sheriff, Clerk of Courts and Recorder of Deeds for calendar years 2012 and 2013. The County Commissioners announced it is their intention that for calendar years 2014 and 2015 to approve no salary increases for the Commissioners, Register of Wills, Controller, Sheriff, Clerk of Courts and Recorder of Deeds.

Coroner Dennis Hess raised concerns about the length of time certain Row Officers will be without a raise. He also expressed concerns about Elected Officials' salaries falling behind Management/Confidential employees they supervise due to raises afforded to those employees. First Assistant Solicitor Christine Sadler explained that if this resolution is voted on today, it will extend into the first two years of the next term of the Treasurer, Prothonotary, and Coroner. Commissioner Leinbach stated that he would be willing to support putting a fair system in place for cost-of-living adjustments for Elected Officials at the next salary increase vote in December 2012. He also stated he would look into a base adjustment if it is justified depending on the economic climate at that time. Commissioner Leinbach expressed to everyone that the Row Officers and Board of Commissioners in Berks County are currently some of the highest paid in the state of Pennsylvania.

Commissioner Scott expressed his thoughts that a balance needs to be struck between raises for Elected Officials, Management/Confidential employees, and union employees. He stated that all salary increases need to be looked at going forward and the Board of Commissioners will endure years without a pay increase as a symbolic gesture. Commissioner Scott also noted that if the proposed resolution passes today for no salary

increase, it influences the next Board of Commissioners and Row Officers, which may not be the people currently holding these offices.

Ms. Sadler clarified that if a cost-of-living adjustment would be voted on in December 2012, it would not take effect until county year 2016. If today's resolution passes for no increase, the 0% increase must remain in effect for 2014 and 2015 for the Coroner, Prothonotary, and Treasurer.

Ms. Sutton asked how this issue is not discriminatory as she feels Elected Officials are singled out. Commissioner Leinbach stated that the statute governing this issue singles out the Elected Officials. Also, Commissioner Scott stated the decision on this issue is at the discretion of the Board of Commissioners.

A motion was made by Commissioner Barnhardt seconded by Commissioner Leinbach and all voted yes to approve the following Resolution:

- 380.10 A. Adopt Resolution fixing the salaries of certain elected officials to be elected in 2011 for terms to begin in 2012 including the Berks County Commissioners, Register of Wills, Controller, Sheriff, Clerk of Courts and Recorder of Deeds.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:38 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Kaitlin P. Daley, Interim Chief Clerk