



DAUPHIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

WORKSHOP MEETING

MAY 6, 2009
10:00 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jeff Haste, Chairman
Dominic D. DiFrancesco, II, Vice Chairman
George P. Hartwick, III, Secretary

STAFF PRESENT

Chad Saylor, Chief Clerk; Marie E. Rebeck, Controller; Janis Creason, Treasurer; William Tully, Esq., Solicitor; Randy Baratucci, Director of Purchasing; Tom Guenther, Director of IT; Kay Lengle, Personnel; Leila Brown, Solicitor's Office; Dave Schreiber, Personnel; Mike Potteiger, Director of Adult Probation; Diane McNaughton, Commissioners' Office; Sandy Snyder, Register of Wills; Faye Fisher, Director of Personnel; Amy Richards, Commissioners' Office; Robert Christoff, Conservation District; Jena Wolgemuth, Commissioners' Office; Brenda Hoffer, Commissioners' Office and Richie-Ann Martz, Assistant Chief Clerk

GUESTS PRESENT

Dan Miller, Jean Zell, Jere Zell, Donza Cobb, Kathy Possinger, and Terry Kerwin

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Haste, Chairman of the Board, called the meeting to order at 10:09 a.m.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Everyone observed a moment of silence.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Haste: We have three sets of Meeting Minutes that we'll take up at next week's meeting.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Haste: We are at the point in time in the Meeting for public participation. Is there anyone in the audience that would like to address the Board at this time? (There was none.)

DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS/GUESTS

A. Dauphin County Commissioners

1. Agricultural Conservation Easement Check presentation for the Jean K. Zell Farm located in Conewago Township

Mr. Haste: We have the pleasure today to have another one of our conservation easement projects that we have done throughout the County. I thought before we did the presentation Bob could give an explanation of the program.

Mr. Christoff: The program is a State-wide program that is designed to preserve farmland through the Commonwealth. It is run in individual counties by a local county board. Dauphin County has been participating in the program since 1991 when we selected our first farm for easement purchase. Two years ago, in 2006, we went over 10,000 acres. What this means for the land is that it is permanently preserved as farmland. The landowner would still own the farm. They can pass it on to an heir. They can sell it, but that easement does preserve it as farmland. The easement would apply to anyone who obtains the farm subsequently.

Mr. Haste: This has been a program that oftentimes folks, when we would talk about this think of northern Dauphin County, but this farm today is actually in Lower Dauphin County. They are our two big agricultural hubs within the County. I think, especially with the growing pressure that is being placed on farmers, this is a great program. It is a way for us to preserve our heritage, as well as our future. With this farm we will be over 12,200 acres. Today we will be preserving 136.99 acres in Conewago Township. Jean, if you could come forward? Is this your son?

Ms. Zell: Yes, Jere.

Mr. Haste: Today we are going to be giving them half of their installment. They will be receiving \$102,742, half of which will be paid by the Commonwealth and half by the County of Dauphin. Next year around this time you will be getting the second installment. Thank you!

Ms. Zell: You're welcome!

Mr. DiFrancesco: I would like to commend you for your commitment to this program, because in my mind it is really those people that are committed to agriculture, to farming, that get into these types of programs. We all know that part of the driving pressure is, especially in your area, when someone comes in and says hey I would like to make you a millionaire, a lot of people tend to say okay I would like to be a millionaire and they give up that farmland. Of course we all know that once that is done it is not going to be recreated and it is not going to go back. I think from a public standpoint today I just simply want to say thank you, because that preservation of the agriculture use, the green space, really improves the quality of the community for all of us. So your dedication to this program is to be commended and very much appreciated. Thank you so much!

Ms. Zell: You're welcome!

Mr. Hartwick: God doesn't make any more green earth. The ability to make sure that we do have and Jeff Haste has said this many times that anything that somebody else has from any region in the country can all be found in Dauphin County. Without preserving those valuable acres of farmland and without preserving the heritage and the ability to have an agricultural industry we would all be developed out. The great thing about Dauphin County is the diversity in its landscape and usage from farmland to urban to suburban. We got it all. Your commitment today will ensure that exists for generations to come. Thank you!

Ms. Zell: You're welcome!

Mr. Haste: We'll go over to the flags for a check presentation. Is there anything that you would like to say before we do that?

Ms. Zell: I think what really urged me to go along with this was that we farmed a farm for 19 years. We rented that farm and after we moved away it was never supposed to be sold for anything but farming. It soon went up into buildings. That just hurt me. I was determined that would not happen to this farm. That was my inspiration.

Mr. Haste: I appreciate that.

(The Commissioners presented Ms. Zell with the checks and pictures were taken.)

Mr. Haste: Bob, thank you for what you do too with this program.

Mr. Christoff: Thank you. We appreciate your support of this program.

PERSONNEL

Ms. Lengle: Are there any questions on the Salary Board items? (There was none.) Are there any questions on the items in the Personnel Packet? (There was none.) I don't have any requests for a vote on anything today.

PURCHASE ORDERS

Mr. Baratucci: In addition to the Packet that I gave you yesterday there is one more requisition from CID, which we want to add between now and next week so it can be considered next week. It is for some body armor for some members of the CRT Team. That one came too late to get on the Packet, but it will be in there next week for your approval. In addition to that I handed you a Blackberry requisition that also just came this morning. It is for one of the employees or attorneys in the District Attorney's Office. It is a personal program where he will be paying the \$50 and just hooking up to our system. Again you can vote on that next week. Do you have any questions on the Packet? (There was none.) We will take care of the budget adjustments that are necessary.

TRAINING PACKET

Mr. Haste: I didn't see anything that we needed to act on with regard to the Training Packet. Is that correct?

Mr. Saylor: Yes.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

(There were no Items for Discussion.)

SOLICITOR'S REPORT – WILLIAM TULLY, ESQ.

Mr. Tully: All the matters on the Report should be evaluated and ready for action next week. I'd be happy to answer any questions you might have. (There was none.)

CHIEF CLERK'S REPORT – CHAD SAYLOR

Mr. Saylor: Likewise, I have nothing unless there are questions of me. (There was none.)

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Mr. DiFrancesco: Just one quick comment. I did talk with the Solicitor this morning. Out of a sense of concern, obviously every time we get around this Election season and

I know this issue is regulated by local ordinance, but every year we get concerned with all the signs that go up on the right-of-ways. I realize that it is always a sensitive matter, because there is this balancing act between the freedom of a candidate to present themselves with freedom of speech and the fact that there are right-of-way signs in particular that I'm talking about, not the ones that are in people's yards, but the right-of-ways tend to be not only an eyesore when they are not handled correctly, but also a public hazard. Oftentimes intersections are blocked and it is difficult to see and the distractions that take place. My concern this year is I'm starting to see larger signs like the 3x5 and so forth popping up along roads. I guess the reason for my comment today is simply to remind the community, as a whole, that while some view this land as right-of-ways when it is attached to somebody's personal property, candidates and campaigns do not have the right to come on your personal property and put signs up. So, even though it may be along a state road if they are putting signs on your personal property, especially businesses and churches and things of that nature, it is within your rights to take those signs down. Solicitor Tully correct me if I'm wrong, but I think sometimes people have signs put up on their property and they wonder if they can take that down or would that be a violation of an election law. I think it is very important to clarify that publicly that you can't just randomly walk up to somebody else's personal property and start putting up signs. You have to get their permission to do so. In cases where that permission is granted that is all well and fine. In situations where people are just going out randomly and putting these signs up I think it is important for property owners in Dauphin County to know that they have the right to clean up their own property when they get in the way of lawn mowing or just simply look that's not a candidate that I'm supporting or whatever it might be. I think it is important to note that for the record, because I think there is some misunderstanding out there that what are my rights under the law as a property owner.

Mr. Hartwick: Within the last several weeks we have had someone that was really important in the community that passed away. I just wanted to note the passing of Rev. John White from New Hope Church, from the Scott White family. He was a very good friend of mine. I know it happened suddenly. The viewing is tomorrow and then the celebration of life on Friday. He was truly a good man and a good friend. I just wanted to note for the record his passing and I wish his family the best in sending them our condolences.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Haste: We are again at the point in time for public participation. Is there anyone in the audience that would like to address the Board? (There was none.)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved by Mr. Hartwick and seconded by Mr. DiFrancesco that the Board adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Chad Saylor, Chief Clerk

Transcribed by: Richie-Ann Martz