



DAUPHIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

COMMISSIONERS' WORKSHOP MEETING

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2005

10:00 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jeff Haste, Chairman
Dominic D. DiFrancesco, II, Vice Chairman

MEMBER ABSENT

George P. Hartwick, III, Secretary

STAFF PRESENT

Chad Saylor, Chief Clerk/Chief of Staff; Bill Tully, Esq., Solicitor; Marie Rebuck, Controller; Bob Dick, Treasurer; President Judge Rich Lewis; Bruce Foreman, Esq., Assistant Solicitor; Sandy Snyder, Register of Wills; Carl Dickson, Fort Hunter; Barry Wyrick, MH/MR Administrator; Tom Guenther, Information Technology Director; Randy Baratucci, Purchasing Director; Sharon Way, Personnel; Kay Sinner, Personnel; Elke Moyer, Human Services; David Schreiber, Personnel; Carolyn Thompson, Court Administrator; Richie Martz, Commissioners' Office; Jena Wolgemuth, Commissioner's Office; Kacey Truax, Commissioners' Office; Diane McNaughton, Press Secretary; Garry Esworthy, Risk Manager; Gary Serhan, Deputy Controller; Edgar Cohen, Facility Maintenance Director; and Shari Eagle, Information Technology

GUESTS PRESENT

Jack Sherzer, Patriot News; Paul S. Rothman, Comprehensive HealthCare Solutions, Inc.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Haste, Chairman of the Board, called the meeting to order at 10:00 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 will take up at next week's meeting.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS/GUESTS

Mr. Haste: At this time I would ask Judge Lewis and Mr. Wyrick to come forward.

A. President Judge Lewis and Barry Wyrick, Director of MH/MR

1. Present the results of the Diversion Study.

Mr. Wyrick: I want to take the opportunity today to present to the Board of Commissioners the information that was provided to my office and to Judge Lewis from a study that was completed by the staff of Open Minds looking at the possibility of mental health diversion from the criminal justice system in Dauphin County. We present this information this morning not asking for any specific action by the Board but rather in general three things from the Commissioners.

The first would be just the general support of the idea of diverting individuals with serious mental illness from the criminal justice system and again emphasizing we are talking about non-violent offenders when we are talking about this diversion process.

The second would be support for the leadership group that is recommended in these recommendations from Open Minds.

And thirdly, while additional grants would be brought before the Board for specific approval, just support in general of the idea of pursuing additional grant funding for diversion activities that are mentioned in this grant.

During the summer of this year, the staff from Open Minds did four things. First, they reviewed national models of best practice for this diversion programs. Secondly, they contacted key stakeholders in Dauphin County to survey them about their ideas about diversion of individuals with mental illness. Thirdly, they met with a team of those key stakeholders on two different occasions to review their findings. And then finally they presented their final recommendations to Dauphin County.

In the review of the national best practices they looked at twenty-five different programs. What they found there were several key features and those key features are listed on page 3 of your handout material. I really don't want to go through all of those but point out a couple of key features.

The first of those would be a collaborative system that involves all of the organizations that are involved. One of the remarkable things that occurred during the study process was the level of involvement plus many different organizations within the County and very active involvement.

The second key feature is the involvement of the court and that in whatever process that is developed there remains the accountability to the court. So Judge Lewis' participation in the process was very important for us to maintain that accountability to the court.

Next they completed a survey of stakeholders within Dauphin County. They actually contacted forty-three different individuals which included the District Attorney, Public Defender, Adult Probation staff from the Prison, District Justices, Judges here in the County, police chiefs, drug and alcohol providers and mental health provider organizations. The survey also clearly indicated that the incarceration.....

Mr. Haste: Any clients?

Mr. Wyrick: No, this was more about the identification of the professional's experience with the process. Those individuals clearly identified that the incarceration of individuals with mental illness is a significant problem in Dauphin County. They identified that the major reason for that incarceration is a lack of treatment options and community support within the community.

Finally, there were additional training opportunities that were identified. Based on the results of the national best practice models and the survey, the basic recommendations that the group brought forward was that Dauphin County should develop a comprehensive diversion program. And by comprehensive, we're talking about a broad based program where at every point that the individual contacts the criminal justice process that there is an opportunity to identify the individual as having a serious mental illness and the opportunity to divert them from going any further in the criminal justice process.

The final recommendation was that the need for improved access to mental health services is absolutely necessary for success. One of the programs that we had put forward, as our plan for closing the Harrisburg State Hospital, is an example of one of the key treatment resources that is necessary in the community and that is a twenty-four hour supervised living arrangements for individuals that are involved in the criminal justice system. The forensic CRR program is one of the types of facilities that they are talking about in this survey that they say is lacking. That has

already been identified as lacking. Put that in our plan and at some point in the next year that program will be up and operational giving a real resource to the diversion process. When we identify individuals that need that level of care, we actually will have some place in the community to place those individuals. We don't have that right now.

The recommendations involved a three-year phase-in of the implementation. During the first year, the consultants recommended that we begin to hold quarterly stakeholders' meetings involving individuals within the systems that have budget and policy making authority. It was the recommendation of the consultants for that the committee to be chaired by Judge Lewis and one of the Commissioners and that would probably be Commissioner Hartwick since he is oversight of the mental health system. But certainly the Commissioners could decide who they would like to co-chair that stakeholders' meeting.

Secondly, they recommended a monthly meeting of the key people, the doers, in each of the systems. That would be the staff that actually work with the individuals, probation officers, mental health caseworkers, people out of the various offices within the county that have the hands-on process and have a monthly meeting to coordinate the planning for and eventually implementation of diversion activities.

Thirdly, would be committing resources to training all of the parties in the system. Frequently in the past what we have done is identify that police officers and probation officers need training on mental health issues but what we have failed to recognize is the mental health professionals need training on probation and criminal justice issues as well. So there would be a full system training as a part of this project with identification of measurable performance indicators to be able to see whether we are making a difference or not as we begin to implement this project. And finally developing communication protocols because one of the things that was recognized as a major problem was a lack of regular communication between all of the parties that were involved with an individual. And finally to begin looking at additional possibilities for implementation with looking at the possibility of a police mental health response team, further expansion of residential services, further expansion of our community treatment team in our mental health services and also the possibility of a dedicated emergency psychiatric unit. Those would all be possibilities that should be looked into during the first year.

During the second year, we would be looking at sharing the funding between mental health and drug and alcohol for those individuals who have co-occurring disorders, both mental illness and drug and alcohol problems; and looking in that second year about the possibility of the expansion of pre-trial services. I should mention that the consultant said as they did the survey that the pre-trial services department was recognized by everyone that they surveyed as the star in the system right now. Kudos need to go to pre-trial and the consultants said, "you've got something that really works well. You probably should expand it." Finally, the creation of a dedicated diversion team including individuals who have experience and knowledge across both criminal justice and mental health systems. Finally, your pre-consideration should be given to the implementation of a mental health court for further enhancement of the community treatment services. Hopefully, by that time we could actually have an emergency psychiatric unit operational.

The funding strategies for this was one of the things that I told the consultant is you have to talk to us about how we can fund these things. Actually the only concrete funding that we have is our own internal resources. Within the mental health system we have resources that are being dedicated to the residential treatment facilities. There is the possibility of the shifting of some additional resources for treatment of individuals who have experience with the criminal justice

system. Additionally for any emergency services, our health choices partner, CVHMP, also could be tapped for the funding of those emergency services. But for any activities that would occur in the enhancement within the court, within adult probation, within the Prison, within police departments in the community, we really are looking at grant opportunities for funding those improvements. So we would be looking at both state and federal grants as well as the application to local foundations that may be interested in supporting this activity.

President Judge Lewis: First and foremost, Barry has been the heart and soul of this initiative and I'm not quite sure what we're going to do next month when he leaves for sunny Florida. We'll certainly have to address that issue. He has been the mover and shaker in getting this organized and getting this study done. I certainly want to thank him for his efforts in this regard. Actually, Barry did sum up everything very well. All we are asking the Commissioners for at this particular point in time is quick things. Number 1 – to support the idea of this stakeholders' group consisting of not only a representative of the Commissioners but the District Attorney, Public Defender, probation, Barry and whoever is going to take Barry's place, the police, district justices, as well as myself. All of us have, if not budget authority, certainly policy authority and we're just asking the Board to support the recommendations of the stakeholders as we go along. Secondly, we're asking for your support of additional grants that we may apply for along the way. Thirdly, asking for your support of the entire concept of diverting mental health cases early in the system. I don't know if you have looked at the executive summary and some of the comments in it, but some of the statistics from the prison were rather shocking. Even though the number of inmates with a serious mental illness is relatively low in percentage, their recidivism rate is extraordinarily high and I think that should cause all of us concern.

Barry did hit it on the head when he said that the easiest way to begin implementing this system is to expand the pre-trial services who have input already at night court where a lot of these cases come in after hours and there will be a central location for us to begin the diversion process. Again, we are asking for your support. We think this is a, not only legitimate, but noble effort to divert some of these cases from the system.

Mr. Haste: I know, unless you've been asleep for the last two years, you know you have my support.

President Judge Lewis: Yes, absolutely and we appreciate it.

Mr. Haste: It is something that I've talked about and in fact I'm very happy Barry followed through with this. I think early on when I came to the County and we started talking, this is one of the things that I started raising the issue about. We're constantly reminded about it. Last Friday was another reminder of it. When I sit and look at the whole thing, the whole system, I can't say what went wrong, but when you looked at it, the whole thing stunk from 15 years ago to today. It had a tragic ending. It is definitely needed.

Mr. DiFrancesco: Again, it becomes more clear. I'm not sure what the statistics are in here but I know that, was it 40% or 20% of the prison population is on some sort of.....

Mr. Haste: 40%.

Mr. DiFrancesco: That's what I thought. It is like 40% of the prison is on some type of psychotropic drugs. This is a real problem in our community. It is an unfortunate problem because a lot the people that end up in the prison probably shouldn't be there. If we had a stronger system in place, if we had better coordination there is a good chance that we could

either divert as this program points out, people from the system or even find better places for the people that may be in a controlled environment. Again, I think this is a great starting step. I think we do have a lot of work to do and I think that is going to require a very strong commitment from this Board to follow through on some things that are certainly going to be costly to us and making sure that we have appropriate housing in place would be a challenge. That is always a very hot topic. It generates a lot of discussion from the communities that may be impacted. As a whole, all of Dauphin County would benefit from a stronger system that has better services or coordinated efforts and better communication throughout. Training goes at all levels. We've had to have intensive training for all. I read in here where it says about the possibility of a response team among police departments. I'm not so sure that is a great idea. I think that we need to have very broad based training for all police officers because often the situations are not conducive to waiting for the response team to arrive. It's got to be the guy on the scene that knows what's going on and can read the situation when they are dealing with someone with mental issues. I think whatever system is implemented, it's got to be broad based training from police officers to the judges, and all the professionals in between.

Mr. Haste: That's a very good point, Nick. Maybe that is something we ought to work on within the municipal academy on developing a course or a portion of the academy.

Mr. DiFrancesco: We've seen lots of examples in the past where an incident gets out of hand. The person has documented series of events that deal with mental illness and police show up and handle the scene as best they know how. If they had more training maybe they could handle it better. I think that is a role for the County to make sure that those types of programs are being handed down because we've got the professionals that know how to deal with it. The bench is so important too, the judges, etc. This is a great start and there is a lot of work to be done.

Mr. Haste: The only tweaking of it that I would do, I would co-chair with the President Judge. Overseeing the prison, overseeing adult probation, etc., this is a hot topic on both my CCAP and NACo committees. Criminal justice is a passion I have and I have spent enough time at the prison to see where it is going wrong.

Garry will you come forward?

B. Garry Esworthy, Dauphin County Risk Manager and Paul S. Rothman from Comprehensive HealthCare Solutions, Inc.

1. Prescription Drug Discount Program

Mr. Esworthy: This morning I brought Paul Rothman who is the President of Comprehensive HealthCare Solutions. He will give you an oversight of the discount drug program for county residents that we spoke about two weeks ago. I want to briefly speak about the program and how it is working in Lehigh County and the process that we would like to look at and make our selection if that is the direction you want to go.

Mr. Rothman: We have a very simple product. We offer medical discount cards, not insurance, and the cards range from hospital, doctor, chiropractor, etc. I want to talk about just the pharmacy card right now. What we do in the counties is, we give out these cards free of charge. We contract with about 55,000 pharmacies nationwide, all the major chain stores and many of the mom and pops. What people do, is they walk in with their prescriptions assuming they have no insurance or their insurance expired and they receive a discount of about 20% on

all drugs, brand names, generic and mail orders. It is as simple as that. It is a good product to use when someone has a gap in their insurance or no insurance at all. It is a wonderful product that works very simply.

Mr. Haste: We had some discussions after Garry brought this to our attention about two weeks ago. If someone is insured, but their insurance doesn't cover a certain drug or criteria drug, this will work?

Mr. Rothman: Correct, it will. It won't work with insurance. If someone has a typical co-pay plan where you pay \$10, \$15 for their drugs, this card is not for them. But if someone had a gap in their insurance or drugs not covered, this card works. This card ranges from 10-15% but the average is 20%. That is what someone could expect when they go into a pharmacy. There are times also when a specific manufacturer like Pfizer, for a lack of a better term, is cushioning a certain medication, like Lipitor and is selling Lipitor at a reduced rate, well within the discounted price. All the pharmacists in the country have a contract that says the individual must receive the lower of the discount price or the sale price. It typically happens about 15% of the time. So no way will the individual pay more than the lowest price available.

Mr. Haste: If we were to do this, I like the idea, people may misunderstand this, they walk in thinking they will get 20% off, even the ones with insurance, go in using this card thinking they're going to get 20% on top, they're going to get their co-pay reduced 20% and it doesn't happen, and they want to call someone to gripe.

Mr. Rothman: They're going to be calling us. We have our administrative offices in Atlanta and they'll call the operators there. Everyone that has a card will give the membership number, tell them what the problem is and it will be rectified on the spot.

Mr. Haste: So the number will be right on there for them?

Mr. Rothman: The 800 number will be on the card. When we designed the card we tried to put as many directions here as possible. There is very little to say about it beside go with your prescription and get your discount. We put more words on here to make it more descriptive for people. But sometimes there are problems with people either not getting a discount or misunderstanding something. The operators are handy.

Mr. DiFrancesco: How did this come about and what is your company's role in it? You've done it as a simple process, you request a card, you use the card and you get a discount.

Mr. Rothman: I'll tell you how it all started. About three years ago we bought a company in Texas that was a chiropractic only discount card. In the southeast the people use chiropractors like we in the northeast use physicians. They use them many times. Someone down there developed a chiropractic discount card. On your insurance right now you probably have a twenty visit maximum for a chiropractor. That is very common. After that you pay full price. So a person in Texas developed a card, he went to develop a network of chiropractors and when you exhausted your benefits you bought this chiropractic discount card for \$35 a year and you receive a 25% discount. You have to have twenty visits and then you get 20-25% off whatever the number was. When we bought that company we realized how limited that value was and we expanded it to dental, vision, hospital, doctor, prescriptions, etc. So we have a card to cover all those things. The reason why the card exists is because of the high cost of health insurance. We pay \$1,300-1,400 a month for family coverage just for medical coverage not dental and not vision. That is a lot of money no matter who you are. If you are a small business owner, it is a

fortune. Our experience in the insurance business, and we have insurance background, is even when we go to large corporations, they are receiving 10-15% rate increase in health insurance that they can't afford. So what are they doing, they're passing some of the cost onto the individual workers and throwing certain things overboard such as dental, vision, etc. So our card is developed to fill those gaps. So anyone who buys our dental card goes to a specific dentist and gets a discount of about 31% on a national average. Everything is covered, braces for the children, root canal, etc. There are no age restrictions, health restrictions, pre-existing condition, etc. It is a non-insurance product. The prescription card is developed for the same reason. There will be no people dropping their prescription benefit or their major medical to save money. We also know there are tons of people that are underinsured and uninsured. The underinsured market, I learned recently especially with the unions, in the New York area and Florida, too, the retirees have no benefits for prescription. They work 35 years and have no benefits. So the card was developed to fill that need. We don't contract ourselves with individual providers. We go to a network that already exists and for the pharmacy, too. So we contract with those networks to supply a discount.

Mr. Haste: What are the benefits to the pharmacist, just more trade?

Mr. Rothman: Exactly, the same with the dentist, chiropractor, etc. Their lights are on anyway, they want more bodies. So maybe when you come into the pharmacy, you'll buy toothpaste, etc. Maybe, you'll refer a friend. All these pharmacies already are contracted with all these different pharmacy networks because they want to get business.

Mr. DiFrancesco: So that card would be able to be used through pretty much in the major stores in this area?

Mr. Rothman: In all these chains throughout the country and the mom and pops. We cover about 84% of the pharmacies in the country.

Mr. Haste: So someone from here could use it in Texas?

Mr. Rothman: In traveling, by all means. You just walk into a pharmacist, the pharmacist will take the card, punch in the numbers to make sure they are valid, hooked up with a network in Atlanta, and the pharmacist will re-price the drug on the spot. So another reason why the provider likes it, is if Lipitor, I'm just making up numbers, cost \$75 on the retail side and on the wholesale side and say \$60 without discount. He'll get paid \$60 on the spot, no claim forms and he doesn't need to wait for Oxford or Blue Cross to pay him or her. They get paid on the spot. It is a win-win for everybody.

Mr. DiFrancesco: Again, no cost to the county and no cost to the people using it.

Mr. Rothman: You are 100% correct. This is practically a no brainer. It doesn't cost anyone money. My analogy is, if you go into this super market every day, I can give you a card to get you 20% off all your groceries as many times as you want to go with no restrictions, no black out weeks, would you take the card from me? Of course!

Mr. DiFrancesco: This is America and we ask you, what is the catch?

Mr. Rothman: We get paid a transaction fee, so does the pharmacist by the way, every time someone fills a prescription. I don't get paid obviously if I just give you a card but when you use the card, there is a transaction every time it is used.

Mr. Haste: That is paid by the.....

Mr. Rothman: By the pharmacy benefit manager, called a PBM. Just to give you an analogy as to what that is, we use Sygnet. Then we use different PBM's and different networks for our pharmacy. I don't know who you have; but Advanced PCS, Medco, Cadilist, that organization pays use and the pharmacist.

Mr. Haste: Again, the reason they want to do this with you is for more traffic?

Mr. Rothman: Correct, that is the only reason and the pharmacist like cash on the spot. We share in that transaction fee with the counties or our private clients, too. Our clients range from nationally know clients like Sygnet, you've heard of them. They own various real estate companies, Avis, Budget, Hertz, etc. In any event, that is the catch, there is no catch. We get paid transaction fees. We share it with the counties as well as our private clients, brokers and whomever. The card works and you get a discount. There is nothing else to it.

Mr. Esworthy: The interesting thing about this through looking at the comparison between the two entities that provide this, is that Comprehensive HealthCare really does a good job of marketing. They put full page ads in the local newspapers and the idea of that is not just the marketing but making sure that those individuals that pick up the card are informed as to what is going on. The mailing is at no cost to the County to get this information out, so that it is there. The explanation is great and again at no cost. The ads in the paper are at no cost. The mailing is at no cost.

Mr. Haste: Those ads appear when your mailing?

Mr. Rothman: This is an example of Carbon County and it just tells you that the card is free and there are a bunch of places where you can pick the card up in the county. So we coordinate that at the same time we give every office a Plexiglas stand that holds something like this that has your name on it. There is a pocket for all the cards so people can walk into the department of Aging after they see the ad, with the Plexiglas stand on the desk and take a card. When the cards run out, they will call us and we will replace the cards.

Mr. Haste: How do we get these out to the people? Do you do it through a mass mailing or do you do it through organizations?

Mr. Rothman: Mass mailing.

Mr. Haste: So you do a mass mailing plus put these out?

Mr. Rothman: Correct.

Mr. Haste: What would stop someone from Cumberland County coming over and picking it up or does it not matter?

Mr. Rothman: It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter to either one of us because we'll get paid if someone uses it as long as it is a Dauphin County card, you'll get paid as well.

Mr. Haste: I'll just put them in my pocket and start handing them out.

Mr. Rothman: We'll develop posters that you can put in the hallway with a blank space saying, "pick up a card in room #212". We try to hit people as many times as possible to make it easy for people to get the cards.

Mr. Haste: So you're just happy your name is not on it, for the phone calls? I'm talking to Sharon.

Mr. Rothman: The phone calls have to come to us because we have the computers and the expertise to answer them. There are times in the ad that we will use your website. It will be linked to ours so if someone wanted to check to see the pharmacies in the network, they click on the www. that goes right to us and they can see the pharmacies there. They're certainly welcome to use my website or call us directly on the 800 number.

Mr. Esworthy: Sandy Moore was looking into this and we were talking a little bit more about this. When Lehigh County first started they had about I think she said 400 phone calls the first month they went into it, the county itself. After that it just dropped dramatically off. After all the information is out and they had the information, she checked Lehigh and they had initial phone calls and after that nothing else is occurring.

Mr. Haste: I was just thinking, given the discussion we had, I would want a stack of those as everybody is released from the prison and we hand them one of those. Some of the problems we run into is folks come in there, they get on a medication to correct some problem they have, they leave and don't have a means by which to go pick it up.

Mr. Rothman: The same is true with many elderly people, too, they cut them in half even though the pill is not evenly distributed, taking a half today, a half tomorrow.....our only weakness is that our discount average is 20% and not 50%.

Mr. Haste: What do we have to do from here?

Mr. Rothman: We have a contract for review, get signed and once you sign it, I give you a copy, it probably takes about 30 days for all of us to coordinate timing in terms of the ad, the mailing, distribution of the card. I have a letter prepared that you can use as a template that goes to all the county offices asking for their participation in distribution. All the names you see in that ad, a letter went out to all those county organizations from you to.....various counties have different strong holds as to where they think the card could be distributed.

One other idea that we've been using lately, too, it is working great in some places and a disaster in others, is going to doctor's offices. It is a very targeted market.

Mr. Haste: Now why is it a disaster?

Mr. Rothman: Some county medical organizations think that we are selling something or it is going to hurt them somehow which is obviously not the case. Some take it and say it is great, my patients can use it, why not.

Mr. Haste: You'll see that the contract gets to Bill.

Mr. Esworthy: Yes.

Mr. Haste: I have one more question. It says on here, a two year eligibility, how do they re-up?

Mr. Rothman: The two year eligibility is an option by the County. Our card also goes on phone cards, those phone discount cards that you buy in Seven – Elevens for \$10, the manufacturer of those phone cards when people buy phone cards, as soon as that \$10 runs out, so we put that on a 90 day expiration date. The truth is the card never expires. Carbon County wanted a two year expiration on it.

Mr. Haste: Why even put an expiration date on it?

Mr. Rothman: You shouldn't and we told them that but all we can do is make our suggestions.

Mr. Haste: Sandy and Tom.

C. Sandy Snyder, Register of Wills and Tom Guenther, Director of IT

1. Discuss the selection of a vendor for the automated Register of Wills/Clerk of Orphans Court software.

Ms. Snyder: We would like to update you concerning the present status of the computerization in the Register of Wills/Clerk of Orphans Court Office. In early 2004, Tom Guenther notified me about the updating of equipment in Information Technology and the soon to be eliminated county mainframe. As the present computerization in the office is on the mainframe, planning was started to ascertain what direction we should take to find a new computerization system for the office which would save the present information, update and enhance technology in the office and thus making this office more user friendly, improve availability of information to the public, attorneys using the office and the Orphans Court, also streamlining the office functionality. Initially, we met with a consulting firm which does design, analysis and implementation of office and document automation. Then during an Act 8 meeting the use of Act 8 money to fund the computerization system for the office was discussed and received an affirmative vote. We visited other Register of Wills office in the state to evaluate the available system. I also had conversations with numerous Register of Wills discussing their systems, the pros and cons, implementation, service, software applications, equipment, office knowledge of the vendors and technical help. I.T. and I then wrote an RFP detailing office functionality, equipment needs, vendor services, etc. Upon receipt of the RFP's they were evaluated, graded and a decision was made to enter into contract negotiations with IMR. This new computerization system will include probate, inheritance tax, marriage license, Orphans Court, accounting and the ability to scan our documents. The microfilm rolls needed for archival requirements will then be made from CD's thus eliminating the preparation for microfilm and sending files to an outside vendor for microfilming. It will be internet ready to allow further remote access for subscription customers and we'll have the capability of electronic filing. This system will increase our ability to better serve the citizens of Dauphin County without increased cost to the citizens due to the funding through the Act 8 fund. Tom, do you have anything to add?

Mr. Guenther: You said it very well.

Mr. Haste: My understanding is we won't be internet ready yet but it is going to be that when we do switch over, you'll be able to go on?

Ms. Snyder: Correct.

Mr. Haste: How will we have the people pay for that? They pay when they file now but if we go on the internet are you going to do the credit card or are they going to have to have an account or how are we going to do that?

Mr. Guenther: You're talking about internet ready for the processing not just the research component?

Mr. Haste: Correct.

Mr. Guenther: I think what most of the people are doing is some kind of credit card in that scenario where there is a credit card for electronic service. More from a research standpoint, we might be looking at a subscription service. So this could be an office where we have a combination of the two different payment mechanisms.

Mr. Haste: When do you think that we will be at that point?

Mr. Guenther: At this point, we haven't really addressed it. This gets us up and running on the system. From a research standpoint, we are not at the point where we are doing any of the back file conversion and scanning to load any of the electronic images into the system. We're going to have to look at that as another component after the software is up and running. I think the research angle is going to be something that is moved down the road as we can acquire additional Act 8 funds to go back and bring some of those older documents on line. It is a little bit different market in her office than in the Deeds Office because you know some of that research is a different market for the people that are using that service. The electronic service for processing I see that we would be moving on that early on in the system implementation.

Ms. Snyder: There are several Register of Wills/Clerk of Orphans Court Offices within the state that are using that now and subscription customers are different attorneys' offices where they can instead of coming to the Courthouse, bring up things, send things, send probate papers, etc.

Mr. Haste: Our best use is when we get your office, Jim's and Steve's all on and Lowell because a lot of times in those searches they need to go to more than one office.

Ms. Snyder: Correct.

Mr. Guenther: Jim and I were out with the Economic Development Task Force meeting yesterday and that was the exact discussion that we had because even as we bring his system up on line to do that there are still other reasons to come in.

Mr. Haste: The only way we eliminate them from coming in that would be a real value to them is when we get them all.

Mr. Guenther: That was one of the points that we made yesterday. They need to help identify exactly what they need. What are the most important elements to them?

Mr. Haste: When you say, they, you mean the client?

Mr. Guenther: The client, we encourage the people that were at the meeting yesterday through Home Builders Association, the realtors to help provide us with that information on what is important in their world so they can help prioritize. This is a great step for her office. Again the use of Act 8 funds really makes this a great project and easy for us to do.

Mr. DiFrancesco: Sounds great.

Mr. Guenther: While I'm here, just to let you know the Public Defender's scheduling system is up and running and has been placed in their office. I know that was of interest to all of you. That is functional.

SALARY BOARD

The Minutes of the Salary Board are on file in the Commissioners' Office.

PERSONNEL

Ms. Sinner: We have requests to fill several vacancies. Spring Creek is requesting permission to fill an assistant director of nursing position because one of their ADON's resigned. An LPN position for Spring Creek. The Conservation District received word that they will continue to receive funding from the State for the Agricultural Specialist so they are requesting permission to fill that. District Attorney's office is requesting permission to fill the Victim Witness Coordinator position. EMA has two telecommunicator trainer vacancies that they are requesting permission to fill. The Prison has another correctional officer position to fill as well as a Treatment Specialist and a Lieutenant position. Domestic Relations has an enforcement officer position vacant. That is it. We have two changes and some separations. It is a very small packet. I also have in the packet a request to carry over vacation leave for an EMA employee because he's not able to get the time in right now at the end of the year because of some obligations with his job. Then there is a request for overtime from the Prison and overtime reports.

Mr. DiFrancesco: The EMA person had his leave scheduled to be taken and with negotiations with the radio project he volunteered not to take that scheduled leave but carry it over so that he could be available for any technical expertise that may be needed throughout this final negotiation period.

Mr. Haste: How long is he carrying it over? I saw the correspondence but I don't think there was any time listed. I think we ought to do that. You don't need this approved this week, do you?

Ms. Sinner: No, I was thinking based on the chart he was trying to use some but I think it was just what he was carrying over.

Mr. Haste: I would suggest between now and next week we find a timeframe.

Ms. Sinner: Okay.

Mr. DiFrancesco: Absolutely.

Ms. Sinner: I also have an addendum regarding a Schaffner employee returning to work.

Mr. Haste: There is no action needed this week?

Ms. Sinner: No.

Mr. DiFrancesco: None.

PURCHASE ORDERS

A. Bid Award

1. Fort Hunter Everhart Covered Bridge
2. Office Supply Contract

Mr. Baratucci: First of all we don't have a purchase order this week believe it or not there were no emergency requests so if we don't get any for next week we'll actually make it through with our cutoff intact.

There are two items and if you would like to take action on these today, that would be great and if not you can take a week to decide.

The first one is the one for the Fort Hunter covered bridge. There is a letter from Pennoni Associates who was our engineer on the project and attached also is a summary of the bid. They are recommending that we go with the low bidder, Taryn Company at the cost of \$198,625.00. They are recommending that we allow them to issue the intent to award letter which is also attached and again a summary of the bids are there also. I believe that Carl told me that this is under budget. Of course if there are any questions, Carl is here for that. If you have no objection, it would be great to act on it today so that we can have the engineer move forward.

Mr. Haste: Carl can you explain the project.

Mr. Dickson: We're constructing the other hard covered bridge at Fort Hunter based on a promise we made 25 years ago when we received the gift of the property. We raised 80% of the funds outside of county monies.

Mr. Haste: And it will be done?

Mr. Dickson: In time for a celebration on June 10 and you're all invited.

Mr. Haste: Are there any other questions? (There were none.) Is there a motion to award the bid to Taryn Company.

It was moved by Mr. DiFrancesco and seconded by Mr. Haste that the Board award a bid to the Taryn Company in the amount of \$198,625.00 for the Fort Hunter Everhart Covered Bridge; motion carries.

Mr. Baratucci: The second item that I need is our yearly bid for our contract for the central supplies. These are the items that are downstairs in our inventory that consists of basic office supplies such as pens, pencils, pads and computer supplies, cartridges, toners, etc. We do a yearly contract on these items and as you can see by your list we always generate a lot of interest. We have it divided into part A and part B because there are some companies that only sell one or the other. We award them as a group, part A being the office supplies and part B being the computer supplies. We did receive six bids on part A and nine bids on part B. The low bids are circled. The company Office Basics who is low bidder on part A is our current supplier. They have done an excellent job this year so I would recommend that we award part A to them. The Esah Company is the low bidder on part B and I would recommend them. They are somebody that we've used in the past. They were low bidder a couple of years ago and they did fulfill all the requirements then. So I would recommend that we award the two low bidders, part A and part B. Again this is something if you want to act on today would be great because we do want to try to have this in place for the first of the year. It would give us a little bit more time to contact these people unless you have any questions.

Mr. DiFrancesco: How do the state prices stack up with our sole source bidding that whole thing that Governor Ridge implemented?

Mr. Baratucci: I believe the company that is being pushed by them is the Office Depot. They are on page 2. If you look at their bid for our items, they were \$1,000 as opposed to \$35. That is not to say there may be some items where they might be lower but we basically try to concentrate on the items that we use and we give the vendor a full year's guarantee that they are going to get all of our business on these items and we tell them approximately how many of the items that we're going to use which is what the totals represent. We found and that is what I told this gentleman, I invited him to bid and I can't say that his bid was exactly the prices he offered to the state but didn't fair to well on our bid. We feel that we've done it this way for a number of years and it doesn't

mean that it is always the best way but in this particular case, we think we have a good deal here on the office supplies that we bid for.

Mr. DiFrancesco: How can we and again I'm assuming that the things you are purchasing are things we could purchase through state contract which would be those negotiated items.

Mr. Baratucci: Correct.

Mr. DiFrancesco: That would be the sole sources purchasing things that we would piggyback on.

Mr. Baratucci: We're allowed to piggyback on any of the state contracts.

Mr. DiFrancesco: So, shouldn't we be seeing how those prices compare? I would be interested in seeing how those prices compare. That is just a question that we get asked occasionally.

Mr. Haste: As he said, Office Depot is a good indication.

Mr. DiFrancesco: But that was a bid to us not necessarily the state price.

Mr. Haste: The only thing that I can tell you, in one of my previous lives with another employer, when I used to work with municipalities, I used to tell people and people would be surprised, when you talk to vendors. If an individual municipality or government body goes out and does it's own bid it often times beats the state price because the company already knows that is the bottom line that they have to beat because they know if they can't beat it...there is no reason to do it.

Mr. DiFrancesco: It's more business that they'll be losing.

Mr. Haste: Right, so it actually helps. I told people when I used to work with municipalities in buying salt, asphalt or anything, use that as a baseline to start from and you can often times beat that price because if the vendor is hungry enough and wants the business, they know they have to beat that.

Mr. Baratucci: Many times what happens on some of the state contracts, and they aren't all like this, the people that bid those have to offer that price whether you're buying one, ten, a thousand and they offer it statewide. So for instance if a company locally here would get the state contract now you know they have offices elsewhere but they have to sell that pen or that legal pad for instance for that price to anybody who can piggyback whether they are calling up and ordering a dozen, one case or whatever. Where in this particular situation, we're basically telling them we're going to order from you every week and we're going to order in quantities that is going to make it worth your while to ship it to one place and we're going to order only these items in a quantity that's going to make it worth your while to deliver it. So that also factors into people's pricing.

Also, it depends on the specifications of the product. A pen is not necessarily a pen. I don't know what the state specifies but we use a pretty much standard stick pen. Sometimes people make fun of those. They're not the most expensive pens in the world but I believe they cost us about six or seven cents a pen. File folders or something like that, we use a pretty basic one. We don't ask for the most expensive. Our specifications are geared so that we don't get junk but we also don't get the Cadillac of some of the office supplies. They've been tried and tested over time. We have specifications in there that allow us to opt for a quality item if the equal of what they are bidding is not acceptable to us. And we've had occasions to do that where somebody tried to slip in an inferior product and we said no this doesn't write or whatever and we've gotten them to replace it. The way the specs are written for us if we can't agree on an acceptable item then they supply the item specified and in this particular place we specified a Bic product or equal. I'm just using that as an example. It's a tried and true process that we've done over the years. I feel that this is how we're getting our best deal. Certainly, we could pick out a few items on the state contract and I would be safe to say, there are some that would be less and some that would be more. We concentrate on the 104 items in part A and 46 items in part B. That is 150 items that probably make up a good 80% of our office and computer supply usage. The other 20% we still do buy on the open market. What we try to do there is, we try to buy as much as we can from local vendors from Dauphin County. Unfortunately, in this case the low bidders are not Dauphin County based vendors but we still try to work with them as long as we can get a fair price on the items that are not on the contract.

Mr. Haste: How hard would it be for you to do a comparison of those 146 items and do our price and the state price and total it up?

Mr. Baratucci: It would take some time because I would have to go down to that area and compare apples to apples. It could be done.

Mr. DiFrancesco: You have a link to the system, is that how you do it? You go on line and check it out?

Mr. Baratucci: I have to check to see, they've done some changes recently so I don't know if it is exactly right there for you to print or whether you have to actually go to the vendor that has it and get that information. Certainly, I can get that to you if you would like to take a look at it. I will say again, you should be careful about the comparisons on the specifications because some of the specifications are different. I'll try to look at that for you. We're ready to do this now for 2006. I would ask and I'm pretty sure you're not going to find that this is a bad idea. If you are okay and comfortable, we could award it and then I could do that research and if for some reason you want to change it for next year, we can do that. It doesn't preclude us from doing it anytime we want. We're not guaranteeing that we would buy every office supply from them only the 150 that are on this contract.

Mr. DiFrancesco: If you could do that review and give it to me. You're asking for a vote on this today?

Mr. Baratucci: If you are comfortable with it, it could wait a week but I don't think that I would have that research done that you're wanting in a week.

It was moved by Mr. DiFrancesco and seconded by Mr. Haste to award to the lowest bidders part A of the office supplies to Office Basics and part B the computer supplies to Esah; motion carried.

Mr. Baratucci: I should make a note that on page 2, it appears to be lower than the \$129,000 but they missed seven items which one of the requirements first of all was to be a responsible bidder you had to bid on all the items and when you look at those seven, that would throw them much higher than the \$129,000. I don't know why they did that.

TRAINING PACKET

Mr. Haste: We have nothing for the training packet that needs approved today.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Mr. Saylor: We have a note from Middle Paxton Township regarding their tax collector. That needs to be acted on, Item B.

Mr. Haste: Actually, I like it when our Treasurer is tax collector. I guess if they appointed one we need to follow suit. It will just make life difficult for the residents.

Is there a motion to approve Tonya Pomeroy as the Middletown Tax Collector?

It was moved by Mr. DiFrancesco and seconded by Mr. Haste that the Board appoint Tanya Pomeroy as the tax collector for Middle Paxton Township; motion carried.

A. Advisory Board Applicants

1. Ag Land Preservation
 - a. Paul E. Clugston
2. Capital Area Transit
 - a. Eric C. Bugaile
3. Dauphin County Social Services for Children and Youth's Citizens Advisory Committee
 - a. Lori Leitzel
 - b. Gary Shank

4. Counsel on Aging
 - a. Virginia Bruner
 - b. Michael E. Donaldson
 - c. Marielle Hazen

5. Board of Trustees for Fort Hunter
 - a. Thomas Drummond
 - b. Tom Potter
 - c. Clair Powers

6. General Authority
 - a. Doug Gelder

7. Industrial Development Authority
 - a. Bill Woolf

8. Library System
 - a. Dr. Thomas Carey
 - b. Sara Jane Cate
 - c. Carole DeSoto
 - d. Marilyn Kanenson
 - e. Linda Ruff

9. MH/MR
 - a. Margaret M. Chapman
 - b. Jerome F. Davis
 - c. Loren D. Prescott, Jr.

10. Parks and Recreation
 - a. Dave Bimler
 - b. Kirk Fox
 - c. Warren E. Guenther
 - d. Joe Kerwin
 - e. Albert Smith
 - f. William C. Seeds, Sr.
 - g. Lori Kieffer-Yeich

11. SARAA
 - a. James I. Scheiner

12. Tourism
 - a. Timothy Bugas
 - b. Gary Luderitz
 - c. Chad Saylor

13. Workforce Investment Board

- a. Toni Arnold
- b. Joseph A. Crown, II
- c. Linda Figueroa
- d. August "Skip" Memmi

B. Resignation of Middle Paxton Township Tax Collector Sonnie Kuntz-Smith and appoint Tanya Pomeroy as the Middle Paxton Township Tax Collector. (*****A VOTE IS REQUESTED 12/21/05**)

C. Change in IRS issued mileage rates for expense reimbursement. Effective January

1, 2006 rate will adjust from 48.5 cents per mile to 44.5 cents per mile.

D. Dauphin County Liquid Fuels Funds 2005 End-of-Year Encumbrances for the following projects:

- 1. County Bridge No. 122 (South Hanover/Derry Township) -- \$300,000
- 2. County-Wide Bridge Guide Rail Updates -- \$250,000

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Mr. Tully: Nothing to add to the report and happy to answer any questions.

CHIEF CLERK'S REPORT

Mr. Saylor: Commissioners, it is end of the year and a number of your advisory boards have members whose terms have expired. So as you see on this agenda, we have numerous appointments. There are a few that we are still waiting for the applications to come back and we expect those in time for next week. I just want you to direct your eyes to that to make sure everything is in order for you.

Mr. Haste: Are there any questions for Chad? (There were none.)

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Mr. Haste: Are there any Commissioners' comments?

Mr. DiFrancesco: The only one that I want to make and I think it is the best time to make it. In the personnel packet, we are advertising for an assistant director of nursing and I think that it is appropriate in a public setting that I say that we are going to be losing a very valued employee who has found an opportunity elsewhere. But I think it is important to know publicly that Mary Ellen Kable through the transition of the old administration to the new administration and throughout this past year has been just an instrumental player in making sure that the quality of care at Spring Creek is restored. She has been a terrific employee and I just wanted to publicly acknowledge that and

wish her well as she moves on. Unfortunately, it was an offer that we could not match. But Mary Ellen has just been a terrific employee. The Board may recall that she and her husband own a restaurant and they voluntarily brought in Mexican food and had a Cinco de Mayo celebration. Her passion for the people at Spring Creek went way beyond her professional employment out there. She truly cares for the residents in that facility and she cares about the quality of life that goes on out there. She was just a very, very committed employee who did a lot to turn that building around. I think it is important to note that. She's taking another nursing job elsewhere.

Mr. Haste: Is there anything else? I would like to, with staffing being short, to some I would like to thank Kacey, Jena and Lena for pitching in for time while Jule and Richie are off. Thank you very much for being Santa's helpers while they are gone.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Haste: We are 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

It was moved by Mr. DiFrancesco and seconded by Mr. Haste to adjourn the meeting; motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Chad Saylor, Chief Clerk/Chief of Staff

Transcribed by: Julia E. Nace, Asst. Chief Clerk
December 21, 2005

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