

BUCKS COUNTY CONSORTIUM

Thursday, April 6, 2017

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order:

A meeting of the Bucks County Consortium was held at 9:00 a.m. at Northampton Township, on April 6, 2017, and called to order by Consortium President William Wert.

2. Roll Call, Introductions and Community Updates:

The following Bucks County communities were represented at the meeting:

William Cmorey, Bensalem Township
Sandra Zadell, Chalfont Borough
Darrell Card, Chalfont Borough
John Davis, Doylestown Borough
Autumn Canfield, Doylestown Township
Angela Benner, Dublin Borough
Anne Vidunas-Gladwell, Lower Makefield Township
John McMenamain, Lower Southampton Township
Stephanie Teoli Kuhls, Middletown Township
Scott Sadowsky, Middletown Township
Mike Walsh, New Britain Township
Cathie Thomas, New Hope Borough
Robert Pellegrino, Northampton Township
Bill Wert, Northampton Township
Carolyn McCreary, Plumstead Township
Alison Smith, Tullytown Borough
Herb Schoell, Upper Southampton Municipal Authority
Joseph Golden, Upper Southampton Township
Gregg Schuster, Warminster Township
Amanda Zimmerman, Warminster Township
Tim Hagey, Warminster Township Municipal Authority
Barry Lubber, Warrington Township
John Boyle, Yardley Borough

Sponsors:

Chris Englebert, Beirne Wealth Consulting
Elisabeth Sibely, Hough Associates
Jeff Hugo, InR
Chris Tomlinson, InR
Dan O'Brien, RBC Capital Markets
Michael Davidson, Uninvest
David Ohman, Uninvest

2. Presentations:

State Representative Frank Farry: Mr. Wert introduced Representative Frank Farry.

Representative Farry provided measures to support our firefighters and EMS as well as provide literature regarding these measures.

First Responder Peer Support: Rep. Farry stated that a peer support pilot program has been created to help provide a support system to Police, Firefighters, and EMS. The telephone lines are staffed by members of the Police, Firefighters

and EMS. Parx casino donated \$10,000 to get peer support through 2017. Fundraising will take place to help finance peer support.

School District/Community College Partnerships: Rep. Farry stated that several community colleges are partnering with local schools to offer courses for those students who would like to become first responders. Additionally, Rep. Farry stated that he believes providing a college loan forgiveness to volunteer first responders will help attract and maintain more individuals to this calling.

Fire Company Billing: Rep. Farry stated that another measure would be to authorize volunteer fire companies to bill for "actual and reasonable costs," which does not include manpower. This would allow fire companies to recoup the costs for responding to emergencies.

Use of Fire Relief Funding: Rep. Farry stated that this would empower the State Fire Commissioner to oversee Fire Relief Fund administration, a duty currently held by the Auditor General.

Senate Resolution No. 6: Rep. Farry provided everyone with a copy of Senate Resolution No. 6 that would establish a special bipartisan, bicameral legislative commission to recommend improvements to the delivery of emergency services in the Commonwealth and develop and promote legislation in furtherance of its recommendations.

Preserving Volunteers: Rep. Farry stated that an article was published two years ago that included a section on municipalities working with Volunteer Fire Companies. There is a cost calculator website that can provide you with a cost estimate for paid fire fighters based on demographic but it doesn't provide info on apparatus.

EMS Vending Machines: Rep. Farry stated that Dr. Wydro has worked with implementing vending machines in hospitals for EMS use. The vending machines would have certain supplies that the EMS needs to restock after responding to a call. For example, when epinephrine is used on a call, they can get a replacement from the vending machine.

Rep. Farry ended by stating that there many great things in the works for emergency services. In addition to those listed above is EIT tax credit and volunteer ID Discount card (similar to VA Cards). Rep. Farry encouraged everyone to share any ideas they might have to help obtain volunteer firefighters to let him know. Representative Harper added that some fire companies are adding fitness centers to their facilities to help draw in younger volunteers.

State Representative Kate Harper: Mr. Wert introduced Representative Kate Harper.

Doyle Heffley Bill Amendment: Rep. Harper stated that Doyle Heffley's Bill Amendment would allow builders to hire their own guy for inspections and Heffley believes it will pass because people do not like Code Enforcement Officers. The local government committee has fought to have him withdraw the bill.

2nd Class Township Bill: Rep. Harper state that the 2nd Class Township Bill allows storm water fees to be implemented. This year the local government committee is trying to get boroughs, 1st class townships, and bloomsberg to also pass. Rep. Harper stated that Storm water is a large problem in Southeast PA and this bill allows municipalities to charge a fee that the municipality can use where they would like.

Tax Collectors: Rep. Harper stated that the house has passed a bill that would require tax collectors to have checks written out to say Jane Doe, Tax Collector, instead of just Jane Doe. This is to help prevent embezzlement. It is now before the Senate.

Local Radar Bill: Rep. Harper stated that it is hard to get the local radar bill through the general assembly. Enforcing speed is a must. If municipalities want local radar they should talk to their local legislators. Make it clear that tickets are not a large source of revenue for municipalities.

State Budget: Rep. Harper stated that 40% of the state budget is for K-12 education. The funds are given to school districts on a need basis. Another 40% goes to health and human services. Both the cost of education and health and human services keeps going up. Transportation is funded by the gas tax, and everything else is funded in the remaining

20% of the budget. Rep. Harper stated that the budget should be done on time and everyone including the Governor is dedicated to getting it completed in time.

State Police: Rep. Harper stated that it has been proposed to charge \$25/head to residents of municipalities who are served solely by the State Police. A study has shown that \$300 million is coming out of transportation funding and going into the State Police Department budget. The money could be going towards roads and bridges and charging \$25/head is a way to keep money in the transportation fund. If municipalities had to create their own police department it would cost at least \$300/head. The problem is that in the House the leadership is all rural PA who does not want the bill to pass. Rep. Harper encouraged those municipalities that would like the fee to be implemented to speak to local legislators

State Pension: Rep. Harper stated that it would be easier to implement pension reform for new hires only, otherwise negotiations would need to happen with the police. Raising the age of retirement could help the pension as well. Rep. Farry stated that they are looking at changing the pension so that the last 5 years are looked at when calculating for retirement instead of last 3 years. Rep. Harper stated that implementing change for new hires makes it easier and provides a greater acceptance.

Mr. Wert thanked Representatives Frank Farry and Kate Harper for joining the consortium and providing updates that relate to our municipalities.

3. Approval of Minutes – March 2, 2017:

Upon motion by Carolyn McCreary, seconded by Joe Golden, the Minutes of March 2, 2017 were approved as presented.

4. Treasurer's Report:

Upon motion by Carolyn McCreary, seconded by Joe Golden, the March 2017 Treasurers Report was approved as presented. Mr. Wert presented the Treasurer's Report for March 2017.

5. Discussion:

Verizon Franchise Agreement Update: Mr. Wert stated that only 18 communities have provided him with an engagement letter. The deadline to participate in the compliance review is May 1st. Mr. Wert also stated that the 1st group meeting is scheduled for May 22nd at Warrington Township at 2:00 p.m. with Dan Cohen.

6. Other Business:

Recycling Grant: Barry stated that he received an email from Hough Associates stating the municipalities that jointly participate in a recycling grant are now required to pass an unified ordinance. Elisabeth Sibley with Hough Associates stated that everyone who is affected by this will be receiving an email if they have not already and the email will include all the information that is needed for the ordinance. If anyone has any questions they can contact Hough Associates.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela P. Benner
Consortium Coordinator