

BUCKS COUNTY CONSORTIUM

Thursday, April 7, 2016

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 7, 2016, 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:

Dana Cozza, Buckingham Township
Sandra Zadell, Chalfont Borough
John Davis, Doylestown Borough
Caroline Brinker, Doylestown Borough
Stephanie Mason, Doylestown Township
Autumn Canfield, Doylestown Township
Bill Wert, Dublin Borough
Don Delamater, Hilltown Township
Terry Fedorchak, Lower Makefield Township
John McMenamin, Lower Southampton Township
Joseph Galdo, Lower Southampton Township
Stephanie Teoli Kuhls, Middletown Township
Scott Sadowsky, Middletown Township
Sam Bryant, New Britain Borough
Angela Benner, New Britain Township
Eileen Bradley, New Britain Township
Robert Pellegrino, Northampton Township
Jamie Gwynn, Northampton Township
Bob Armelin, Northampton Township
Michael Walsh, Northampton Township
Carolyn McCreary, Plumstead Township
Mark Fournier, Telford Borough
Alison Smith, Tullytown Borough
Herb Schoell, Upper Southampton Water & Sewer Authority
Joseph Golden, Upper Southampton Township
Steve Wiesner, Warminster Township
Timothy Hagey, Warminster Township Municipal Authority
Christian Jones, Warrington Township
Gail Weniger, Warwick Township
Kyle Seckinger, Warwick Township
Greg Lippincott, West Rockhill Township
John Boyle, Yardley Borough

Sponsors:

Chris Englebert, Beirne Wealth Consulting
Brian Jeter, Comcast
Rick Lee, DVIT
Hough Associates
Severine Zarza, Royal Bank

Community Updates:

The local managers went around the room and introduced themselves and briefly shared “Front Burner” issues affecting their community. Sponsors in attendance also shared updates or current issues in their field of expertise.

3. Approval of Minutes – March 3, 2016:

Upon motion by Eileen Bradley, seconded by Stephanie Mason, the Minutes of March 3, 2016 were approved as presented.

4. Treasurer's Report and Payment of Bills:

Bill Wert reviewed the treasure report for March 2016.

5. Presentations:

Presentation: State Representative Kate M. Harper, Esq.

Mr. Wert introduced State Representative Kate M. Harper, Esq., Chair of the House Local Government Committee.

House Bill 340: Brought forward by Representative Saccone, is an Act amending Title 65 (Public Officers) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in open meetings, further providing for definitions, for executive sessions and for penalties. Representative Harper stated that bill was never brought forward to the Local Government Committee and that the bill is a bad idea. It would require municipalities to tape executive sessions and keep those tapes on file for 1 year. Therefore, making it impossible to discuss employee issues and requiring union negotiations to be done at a public meeting. She urged everyone to send letters to their legislators against the proposed bill.

House Bill 1823: Sponsored by Representative Harper, amends the Second Class Township Code by amending Article XVI of the Code to clarify that a township may impose penalties and late fees on solid waste rates and charges, sewer rental fees, water rents and charges for other township services that are not expressly collected under Article XXXIII (Collection of Assessments) of the Code. The bill also prohibits penalties and late fees from being imposed unless a charge is delinquent by no less than thirty days. Consistent with existing law, the amount of the delinquency, penalties and late fees will constitute a lien against the property receiving the services and may be collected by action of assumpsit or as otherwise provided by law.

To address a court decision, the bill was amended by the House Local Government Committee to further require a township to provide notice of the delinquency and the amount and rate of penalties and late fees to the owner of the property receiving the service, by first class mail, at least twenty days prior to the filing of any municipal claim to recover the delinquency, penalties and late fees.

Budget: Representative Harper stated that the State Budget was passed by Governor Wolf with no new taxes, however the Governor vetoed the Fiscal Plan. Representative Harper stated that 40% of the budget is for K-12 Education. The cost of education continues to rise and was up 20% from previous year due to increase in salaries and pension expenses. The money in the budget for K-12 education is distributed to distressed school districts first. 20% of the Budget is for Health and Human Services. Representative Harper stated that the Governor wants to increase the education budget and wanted to spend an addition \$4 billion on education. Representative Harper stated that recycling is being done more and more and it needs more funding. There is also dedicated funding for Grants, however, the Governor's office has refused to attend grant meetings, delaying the funding of majority of grant programs.

Representative Harper encouraged municipalities to show the value of local government to their constituents through educating their residents on how their tax dollar is spent.

Mark Fourier stated that electronic recycling has become a large problem for municipalities. Since there is nowhere for residents to dispose of their electronics they are being left curb side or dumped throughout municipalities, becoming the municipalities problem. Representative Harper stated that the law states that electronic stores, like Best Buy, are supposed to take back the electronics. Government needs to find a way to deal with electronic recycling and come up with someone to enforce the law making electronic companies handle the recycling.

Chris Englebert expressed his concerns with Auditor General calculating the State Aid that goes towards municipality's pension plans. With a new agency handling the State Aid Funding, it could mean a delay in funding that municipalities count on. If municipalities do not receive the funding in October and there is a delay with the funding it could affect the

municipalities actuary report. Representative Harper stated that it is part of the budget to have the Auditor General's office handle the State Aid.

Gail Weniger requested an update on Pension Reform and Statewide Pension. Representative Harper stated the FOP is not on board with the bill before the Finance committee. The FOP's perspective is that the State Police do not have Social Security and if Pension changes, it will affect how much they make at retirement. Representative Harper stated that 3rd class cities want the state to bail them out of their pension problems and 2nd class Townships want to be left alone. She urged municipalities to pay attention and continue to contact legislators to make sure pensions are left alone.

Bob Pellegrino asked for an update on the Act 111 movement. Representative Harper stated that it is bound up with the Pension issues. It is currently in the Senate's Local Government Committee.

6. Discussion:

Verizon Franchise Renewal Agreements: Mr. Pellegrino announced that he received a proposal from Dan Cohen, however he is unhappy with fee structure and has requested it be revised to reflect an hourly rate. For those municipalities interested, it is proposed that the fee be broken up by population, which would favor smaller municipalities. Once the revised proposal is received, an email will be sent out to everyone to see who is interested in participating and to find out who is already built out.

7. Other Business:

APMM Scholarships: Mr. Wert announced that the Executive Committee decided to award three applicants the APMM Scholarship. The Scholarships were awarded to Autumn Canfield, Sam Bryant, and Scott Sadowsky.

Salary Survey: Mr. Wert stated that the Salary Survey information has been received by all but six municipalities. The Survey will be finalized and email out within the week.

Emerging Leaders Training: Ms. Benner announced that in replace of the Annual ICMA training, the Executive Committee is planning an Emerging Leaders Training event that will focus on negotiations. The date of the training is June 10th at the Talamore County Club. Registration flyers will be emailed by the end of April.

Fuel Bid Announcement: Ms. Benner announced that Lower Southampton Township has sent out the Fuel Participation Forms. If any municipalities have not received a participation form and would like to participate they should contact Ann Alker.

FEMA/PEMA Kickoff Meeting: Mr. Wert announced that the Kickoff Meeting for FEMA/PEMA in regards to the Blizzard of 2016. The meeting will be held at 10:30am on April 11th at the Bucks County Public Safety Training Center in Doylestown.

9. Adjournment:

Upon motion by Mrs. Mason, seconded by Ms. Bradley, the meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

The next meeting was scheduled on May 5, 2016 at the Mercer Museum hosted by Doylestown Borough.

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela P. Benner
Consortium Coordinator