

BUCKS COUNTY CONSORTIUM

Thursday, October 5, 2017

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order:

A meeting of the Bucks County Consortium was held at 9:39 a.m. at the Washington Crossing Visitor Center, on October 5, 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
Tom Scott, Bristol Township
Sandra Zadell, Chalfont Borough
Stephanie Mason, Doylestown Township
Terry Fedorchak, Lower Makefield Township
John McMenamin, Lower Southampton Township
Sam Bryant, New Britain Borough
Eileen Bradley, New Britain Township
Cathie Thomas, New Hope Borough
Robert Pellegrino, Northampton Township
Bill Wert, Northampton Township
Carolyn McCreary, Plumstead Township
Paul Stepanoff, Richland Township
Dave Nyman, Upper Makefield Township
Herb Schoell Jr., Upper Southampton Municipal Authority
Joseph Golden, Upper Southampton Township
Tim Hagey, Warminster Municipal Authority
Christian Jones, Warrington Township
Gail Weniger, Warwick Township
John Boyle, Yardley Borough

Sponsors:

Anna Linn, Delaware Valley Insurance Trust
Chris Tomlinson, InR
Michael Davisson, Uninvest
David Ohman, Uninvest
Paul Bencivengo, Visit Bucks County
George Calaba, Washington Crossing Visitors Center

3. Presentations:

Senator Chuck McIlhinney: Mr. Wert introduced Senator Chuck McIlhinney.

Budget: Senator McIlhinney discussed the State Budget that was voted for in June. He indicated that the House has been unable to pass the budget due to disagreements concerning its funding. There is a \$1.2 billion structural deficit with an additional \$600 million in non-preferred programs. The Senator stated that everything in the budget will be funded and that a Bond has been utilized to plug the gap. The Governor will not be cutting expenses from the \$32 million budget. However, there should not be any impact on municipalities. The Senator indicated that the State would be facing the

same deficit next year with additional gaps yet to be seen. The Senator indicated that the State may not be able to fund new projects this year. Mr. Bryant asked if there were going to be any problems with CFA grants and the Senator stated that the State would only be processing previously awarded grants. The Senator indicated that special initiatives have been on the “backburner” as everyone has been focused on the Budget.

PFAS Contamination: Mr. Hagey asked the Senator if there was any funding in the works for communities affected by PFAS contamination (Warminster and Warrington Township). The Senator stated that he believes the Governor would make good on any promises made to Representative Stephens concerning PFAS contamination.

George Calaba, Park Manager, Washington Crossing Visitors Center: Mr. Wert introduced George Calaba, Park Manager at the Washington Crossing Visitors Center.

Mr. Calaba provided a brief history of the Washington Crossing Visitor Center (the Gem of Bucks County). Management of the facility has changed hands between PHMC and DCNR with the facility currently being managed by DCNR. He indicated that the Park has made the top 5 of State parks every year. DCNR works together in partnership with the Friends of Washington Crossing to operate the Park and the Center. Mr. Wert asked when the renovations took place. Mr. Calaba stated that the renovations took place in 2001 or 2002.

Paul Bencivengo, Visit Bucks County: Mr. Wert introduced Paul Bencivengo of Visit Bucks County.

Mr. Bencivengo conducted a Powerpoint presentation concerning “Visit Bucks County”. He indicated that there are approximately 12,000 jobs in Bucks County due to tourism/visitors. “Visit Bucks County” was created in 1960 with its base of operations located in Bensalem in front of the Parx Casino. Outdoor locations in Bucks County have performed best with digital advertising. Two “Destination Developers” have been hired and are working with the Bucks County Planning Commission. Mr. Bencivengo indicated that a “restaurant week” will be held soon. He stated that there is a publication and pamphlet advertising businesses and tourist attractions within Bucks County. The “Visit Bucks County” website sees over 2 million views per year. Their annual meeting will take place at the Sheraton on Friday October 13, 2017. He stated that 7 million visitors come to Bucks County annually (3 million overnight; 4 million day). Mr. Bencivengo stated that there are \$200,000 in grants available twice a year for tourism-focused 501(c)3 non-profit organizations.

4. Treasurer’s Report and Payment of Bills:

Upon motion by Eileen Bradley, seconded by Stephanie Mason, the Treasurer’s Report for September 2017 was approved.

5. Discussion:

Meeting Topics for 2018: Mr. Wert stated that members should email Mr. Jones meeting topic suggestions for 2018. His email is cjones@warringtontownship.org.

November Luncheon: Mr. Wert announced that the November Luncheon will be held at the Doylestown Country Club on November 2, 2017 at 11:45AM. Commissioner Charlie Martin will be speaking.

Bucks County Planning Commission: Mr. Pellegrino announced that Evan Stone will become the Chair of the Bucks County Planning Commission on October 16. Mr. Stone is also the Northampton Township Planning Commission Chair. Mr. Pellegrino also announced that there are 2 positions available on the Bucks County Planning Commission. He indicated that potential applicants should contact Brian Hessenthaler or Planning Commission members. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of every month.

Women in Local Government: Mrs. Mason announced that Stephanie Teoli-Kuhls is holding a Women in Local Government event in Fort Washington at 2PM today (10/05/2017). She asked that members send their female employees if they are interested.

Park Tour: Mr. Wert announced that Diane from the Washington Crossing Visitor's Center will be conducting tours after today's meeting (10/05/2017).

6. Other Business: There is no other business at this time.

7. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 10:42 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for 11:45AM on November 2, 2017 at the Doylestown Country Club.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christian R. Jones
Consortium Coordinator