DAUPHIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

WORKSHOP MEETING

MARCH 18, 2015
10:00 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jeff Haste, Chairman
Mike Pries, Vice Chairman
George P. Hartwick, III, Secretary

STAFF PRESENT

Chad Saylor, Chief Clerk; Marie E. Rebuck, Controller; Janis Creason, Treasurer; Joseph A. Curcillo, III, Esq., Solicitor; Randy Baratucci, Director of Purchasing; Fred Lighty, Esq., Solicitor’s Office; Bruce Foreman, Esq., Solicitor’s Office; August Memmi, Director of Community & Economic Development; Dave Schreiber, Human Resources; Kay Lengle, Human Resources; Jennifer Simpson, Court Administration; J. Scott Burford, Deputy Chief Clerk; Amy Harinath, Press Secretary; Troy Petery, Deputy Court Administrator-MDJ; Ruby Doub, Commissioners’ Office and Richie-Ann Martz, Assistant Chief Clerk

GUESTS PRESENT

Robert M. Couch, Dick Crow, James Walmer, Robert Wentzel, Larry Mummert, Brad Jones, George Asimos, Barb Miller, Karl Singleton, Gloria Giambalvo, Rick Hossman, Harold Bowers, Stephen Holmes, Leah Pearlman-Storch; WGAL and WHP

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Haste, Chairman of the Board, called the meeting to order at 10:19 a.m.
MOMENT OF SILENCE

Everyone observed a moment of silence.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There are several sets of Meeting Minutes that will be considered at next week’s Legislative Meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS HELD BETWEEN MEETINGS

Mr. Saylor reported that there was one Executive Session held this morning to discuss matters of Litigation.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was none.

DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS/GUESTS

A. Dauphin County Commissioners

1. Proclamation – Tall Cedars of Lebanon of North America Week

Mr. Haste indicated that it is always a pleasure to read the following Proclamation.

We, the Dauphin County Board of Commissioners, are delighted to join the many outstanding members of the Tall Cedars of Lebanon of North America, their family members, friends and community supporters in celebrating the organization’s 113th anniversary during Tall Cedars Week from March 15 to March 21, 2015;

Whereas, an achievement for which they can be justly proud, the Tall Cedars of Lebanon was chartered 113 years ago to promote a stronger bond with ALL Freemasons and to further the goals and tenets of Freemasonry;

Whereas, living up to its motto “Fun Frolic & Fellowship,” this esteemed group has offered every Master Mason an opportunity to enjoy a fuller, more enriching life;

Whereas, with more than 13,000 members who share an unwavering commitment to helping those suffering from neuromuscular diseases, the Tall Cedars have truly made a difference in the lives of many;

Whereas, from former U.S. Presidents Gerald Ford and Franklin D. Roosevelt to professional golfer Arnold Palmer, the Tall Cedars have thousands of distinguished and dedicated members;
Therefore, we join the 270,000 residents of Dauphin County in honoring our local Tall Cedars for their extraordinary 113 years of remarkable service to mankind; we wish this caring and committed organization many more years of service and success; and in recognition of their enduring efforts to make the world a better place, we proudly proclaim March 15 to March 21, 2015 as “Tall Cedars of Lebanon of North America Week” in Dauphin County.

Grand Tall Cedars Mike Couch presented Commissioner Haste with a rose, as the head Chairman and a Tall Cedar. Mr. Couch introduced the following Tall Cedars: Larry Mummert, past Trustee and also the Muscular Dystrophy Events Chairman; Bob Wentzel, Trustee; Jim Walmer, Junior Deputy Grand Tall Cedar and also the Tall Cedars Foundation Director; Rick Hossman, Trustee; Harold Bowers, Head Trustee and Dick Crow, Photographer.

He noted that in 64 years they raised for their charity about $20 million for muscular dystrophy. The pancake jamboree will be held on April 11, 2015 from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon at the Zembo Shrine. The money is donated to the Muscular Dystrophy Association. The goodwill ambassador for MDA, Mary Kiehl, will be there. She is very happy to be a part of this Forest. He thanked the Commissioners for everything that they do for the Cedars. It really is appreciated.

Mr. Haste indicated that it is a fun day. Long before he became a member of the Tall Cedars, he was aware of the community outreach. When he was a student at Shippensburg, his Fraternity reached out to some college students and they got involved with the Chambersburg group. They did a lot of good things in the community. Before he fully understood the meaning behind the Tall Cedars, he knew of their community spirit. It is not just here, almost anywhere you go you can find that spirit. It is a pleasure for him to be a member. He thanked the Cedars for all they do.

(Pictures were taken.)

B. Brad Jones, CEO, Harristown and George Asimos

1. Presentation on the Urban Land Institute Study for City Island

Mr. Jones thanked the Commissioners for allowing him to appear before the Board. He is with Harristown and his colleague, George Asimos was the co-chair of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) panel for City Island. Back in 1984, there was a study done, similar to this, by the Urban Land Institute on City Island. At a meeting with the Mayor and some of his top aides, they talked about that study and how there were still many things that seemed unrealized and with the City’s full support he worked with the HHRVB folks who then applied for a grant through the County to allow them to hold a two-day Technical Assistance Panel under the ULI’s model. Harristown basically served as the project manager. They organized the structure of this with the ULI, getting the stakeholders, the people who would be interviewed, of which there were 51 folks interviewed from all walks of life and across the community. Those interviews were held on November 5 & 6. An oral report was provided to the public on the second day. He thanked the County for making the resources available to help look at this situation
again. You will find the report very interesting. Mr. Asimos served on many different ULI functions and he will talk about the content of the report.

Mr. Asimos thanked the Commissioners for allowing them to talk about their work and for assisting in sponsoring the work. He is a real estate transaction and land use lawyer at Saul Ewing. He is here as a volunteer with the ULI. ULI is a national organization with about 33,000 members, everyone devoted to some aspect of the real estate and development business, consultants, engineers, developers, financial people, lawyers and others who like to spend their free time advancing leadership in smart growth and in community development. One of the programs that ULI does around the country is these technical assistance panels. They collect volunteers from among the ULI membership, blended to the sort of experience they think is needed for a particular project for two days and address a series of questions that a community might have presented to them. They do that as volunteers. They are all professionals in different realms. Some of them also do volunteer work outside of that. He has been a Township Supervisor and has been involved in Township government for 17 years and 8 years on his county planning commission. It is a regional panel. You may have a few people who know the project personally, but many of them don’t. They come with a fresh view and they look to bring ideas that they have experienced professionally or as community leaders in other places. The two-day program is structured as the first day is all interviews. There were 51 interviews. They break up into groups and interview and take notes. These are all stakeholders that the community has selected as people who have an interest in or know about the project that they are looking at. Because some of them have no experience with the project and others have some, they listen with a variety of perspectives. They listen with a new set of ears to what is going on. At the end of the day they start talking about how they prioritize and what observations were made with the interviews. The second day they spent consulting with each other in an orderly and organized format to come up with the things that they would like to draw out. They end with a verbal report, which is open to everyone, including the press and then a written report, which the Board probably has.

They were asked to consider four questions.

1. What is the additional development potential for City Island?
2. How can the City maximize the potential of City Island to enhance recreation, tourism and entertainment assets?
3. How can the City optimize the revenue potential of City Island?
4. What measures can be taken to improve mobility and connectivity to City Island from the East and West Shores?

They made some initial assessments and then in each of those categories they made short-term and long-term observations. The Technical Assistant Panel (TAP) doesn’t view itself as telling the community what to do. Its purpose is to draw out from the community and apply some community development principles and priorities to that to make some recommendations for what the community might do going forward. In each of these categories they did some short-term recommendations and some long-term.
The short-term are those that could be done quickly and get some momentum. The long-term are things that would take longer – more organization and resources. They view City Island as a tremendous resource, economically already, historically and ecologically. It is an important historic corridor and has been recognized as such by the Federal government. Ecologically, it is part of an archipelago that has endangered bird species nesting in the northern most part of Pennsylvania – the Great Heron. This is a very special place. There is unmet potential there. The right mix is the key. There are both ecological and naturalistic experiences to be had or enhanced, but also more conventional like sports and other types of recreation as well. It is important to have a good plan to integrate those and not have one defeat the other.

The island also has passionate users. They got some incredible ideas and insights from the people of Dauphin County who use the Island. As to the question “What is the additional development potential for City Island?” There was a strong sentiment that year-round activities would be a good thing and perhaps some investment could be made in finding some winter activities. Long-term was an idea for a museum of the Susquehanna. They understand that there isn’t one. The museum would highlight research and education on the ecology and history of the Susquehanna. It is a big idea. Another question “How can the City maximize the potential of City Island?” There were a number of ideas. There was a strong feeling of a need for some unified leadership around the Island and drawing in the stakeholders as a way to do that. Also, preserving and expanding the soccer stadium. “How can the City optimize the revenue potential of City Island?” There are a lot of folks using the Island. It is practically booked all the time with community events. Permit costs could be looked at as one example. Long-term recommendations included such things as a regular calendar of enhanced programming to attract vendors and more events in the stadiums than what occurs right now. “What measures can be taken to improve mobility and connectivity to City Island from the East and West Shores?” There was a feeling that perhaps traffic congestion and a connection to the City parking and going back and forth between the Island, before and after games, would be a good project to work on and could be done short-term. Long-term, there were discussions about enhancing the connection to the other shore using the existing bridge that is there.

In summary, the two central things that the panel thought needed to be focused on was developing a master plan – landscaping, pedestrian access, where areas are ecologically sensitive and could be enhanced, what uses could go in place without negatively affecting other uses. It is going to be complicated, but really worth the effort. Centralizing management – there was a strong feeling among the active users now that a core group of decision-makers would make the Island function more smoothly. There are folks that do boating rentals of different types. There are folks that use it for fishing. There is a sense that perhaps there could be more enhanced kayaking and canoeing access. All those things need to be integrated with centralized management. That is a summary of their report.

Mr. Jones added that he knows that the vendors who are very passionate about the Island have been meeting on their own and working more as a team to try to address
some of these issues. That was one of the things that came out of this report right from the beginning, which was sort of a “friends of City Island” group that could act to promote the Island as a destination.

Mr. Hartwick asked who does one go to as it relates to a single source of management related to decision-making for new uses, a master plan, for the ability to begin to plan strategically and from a larger perspective. He asked if it is through City planning. He asked what that process is.

Mr. Jones stated that it is the City’s Island. The City is in charge of the Island. Jackie Parker, the Economic Development Director, has had some role in working with the vendors. Karl has also been involved in working with the vendors. The City would like to take a leadership role in that. The friends of City Island group can be a unifying liaison group to allow the City to have a spokesperson as a head of that group to allow those interests to be worked in.

Mr. Hartwick asked if there was some level of plan in place currently for City Island. It was suggested a master plan for the Island. The idea of trying to take a look at an overall process, he asked if that would be a City process.

Mr. Jones stated that it could be a City process, but it also could be a process that could be done like this process where with the City’s support, he knows the City is strapped for resources right now, but maybe there is a way to do that in cooperation with some other groups and with the City’s blessing and careful oversight.

Mr. Hartwick asked if there has been any sort of suggestion of a structure or group to pull together to do such a master plan.

Mr. Jones stated not yet.

Mr. Hartwick asked if they are really just presenting to the Board, not a request, just a summary of initial findings.

Mr. Jones indicated that was correct.

Mr. Saylor stated that this study was funded by a tourism grant. The study was completed last year, but this report was actually produced this year. That is why they wanted to come back and present the results.

Mr. Pries stated that the County had representation on the Board – Skip Memmi and George Connor for the Office of Economic Development. Obviously City Island is the jewel of Dauphin County. The Board is very interested in what is being done on the Island. He thanked them for the time they spent on this.
HUMAN RESOURCES

Ms. Lengle asked if there were any questions on the Personnel Packet. (There was none.)

The Personnel Packet will be considered at next week’s Legislative Meeting.

PURCHASE ORDERS

Mr. Baratucci indicated that the Board should have received the Purchase Order Packet yesterday. He will see that the required budget adjustments are made. He asked if there were any questions. (There was none.)

The Purchase Order Packet will be considered at next week’s Legislative Meeting.

TRAINING PACKET

It was moved by Mr. Hartwick and seconded by Mr. Pries that the Board approve #1, #2, #4 and #16 of the Training Packet.

Questions: Mr. Haste – Aye; Mr. Pries – Aye and Mr. Hartwick – Aye; motion carried.

SOLICITOR’S REPORT – JOSEPH A. CURCILLO, III, ESQ.

Mr. Curcillo reported that everything will be ready for next week. He has nothing for today.

Mr. Hartwick asked if he could get a copy of Item G on the Solicitor’s Report.

CHIEF CLERK’S REPORT – CHAD SAYLOR

Mr. Saylor stated that he has nothing to report unless there are questions of him. (There was none.)

COMMISSIONERS’ COMMENTS

Mr. Hartwick stated that it was brought to his attention and he circulated to the Board about a piece of Legislation that he is going to be asking, hopefully next week, for a resolution about the support of an opportunity to create a funding source for the Statewide Affordable Housing Trust Fund. It is a mechanism by which dollars from the Impact Fee (Marcellus Shale), which is currently being collected and being able to be used for this purpose in 36 counties throughout the Commonwealth that have spud-wells within their counties will be expanded and extended to all 67 counties in the Commonwealth. There is now a mechanism through the Department of Revenue that if
the realty transfer tax increases and it is projected potentially over the next five years that it may reach a maximum of $25 million in this fund. That would provide an immediate infusion of dollars to be able to use for affordable housing projects here in Dauphin County. It is one that has been supported by a multitude of organizations. It is almost a no-brainer as it relates to this Board’s consideration of where it wants to go with redevelopment and to be able to take a look at other sources of revenue to be able to take care of infill and other redevelopment and housing projects. He would be glad to provide some additional information about the actual piece of legislation. It is Senate Bill 566 in its current form. He is going to talk to the Solicitor about preparing a resolution to support this particular piece of legislation.

Mr. Haste indicated that he had some questions.

Mr. Hartwick indicated that he will take a look at them before next week.

Mr. Haste stated that his concerns could be easily addressed.

Mr. Pries indicated that he and Mr. Libhart will be testifying before the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee today on 9-1-1 Legislation.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved by Mr. Hartwick and seconded by Mr. Pries that the Board adjourn; motion carried.