

**HUNTERDON COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS**

Main Street County Complex, Second Floor

Flemington, New Jersey 08822

**March 04, 2008**

The regular meeting of the Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders convened at 4:37 p.m. in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act.

**PRESENT: MR. PETERSON, MR. MENNEN, MR. HOLT, MR. MELICK, MR. SWOREN.**

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT**

Deputy Director Mennen announced: "This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate notice has been given by posting throughout the year a copy of the notice on Bulletin Boards on the First and Second Floor of the Main Street County Complex, Building #1, Flemington, New Jersey, a public place reserved for such announcements. A copy was mailed on or before January 02, 2008, to the Hunterdon County Democrat, Lambertville Beacon, The Express, Courier News, Trenton Times, Hunterdon Review and The Star Ledger, newspapers designated to receive such notices and by filing a copy with the Hunterdon County Clerk."

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION REQUESTS**

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Mennen seconded these:

**See Page 03/04/08-1A**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Executive Session to discuss personnel issues.

**See Page 03/04/08-1B**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Executive Session to discuss legal issues.

**See Page 03/04/08-1C**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Executive Session to land issues.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES)**

**MR. SWOREN, MR. MENNEN, MR. HOLT, MR. MELICK,  
MR. PETERSON.**

The Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders went into Executive Session at 4:39 p.m. and reconvened in Open Session at 6:12 p.m.

**Introduction of Jerry Vernotica**

**County Superintendent of Schools**

Director Peterson introduced the new County Superintendent, Jerry Vernotica.

Mr. Vernotica stated he looks forward to working with the Board of Chosen Freeholders. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to meet with him. He is looking forward to working with everyone in Hunterdon County to help the quality of education and help save tax payers dollars.

Mr. Melick asked Mr. Vernotica to expand on his background for the Board and what his mission is .

Mr. Vernotica stated his mission for the new position will be to have more authority dealing with new budgets; to look at new possibilities in ways to work with people and to look at consolidation. He has a three year term to work with everyone so they can put plans together in order to effect these changes. He is a person of conscience and he looks forward to working with everyone to see what is best without eroding the quality of education in Hunterdon County.

Mrs. Yard informed Mr. Vernotica that Freeholder Melick sent the Superintendent of School's Office and OPRA request for information from all of the schools concerning their titles and salaries. The response was the County had to reach out to each school individually. Mrs. Yard looks forward to discussing this with Mr. Vernotica.

**Residents Acknowledged/Kingwood property**

Director Peterson advised he is aware that many members of the public have come to the meeting tonight to discuss a property in Kingwood Township. He stated the Board is still in discussion of this and will not be taking any action on that issue at this meeting. He wanted to let the public know this, up front, in case they wanted to leave.

Director Peterson stated everyone is more than welcome to stay and watch County government in action but if anyone wanted to leave the Board would not be insulted.

A member of the public asked if they could ask a question regarding the state of progress that has been taken thus far with this matter and when a discussion might be made.

Director Peterson advised the Board will discuss the matter more because it has been given a lot of information which needs to be considered. He feels that there may be more questions presented by the Board on this matter.

A member from the public offered to have a piece of paper to list the names of the people who have attended this meeting this way if the Board has any questions they will have a list of contacts they can reach out to that may be able to assist with their questions.

Director Peterson also stated that members of the public should feel free to write letters or emails to the Board of Chosen Freeholders to share their thoughts and concerns and communicate to the Board.

Mr. Sworen stated that if Director Peterson is accurate, in his estimate of time to get through the agenda, that they should be at the Open to the Public section within an hour and that the members of the public who wish to speak on this issue may stay to voice their concerns. Public comment is allowed at every meeting and it will be allowed at this meeting. He stated Board wants to be able to get through certain things on the agenda.

#### **COUNTY UPDATE**

Cynthia J. Yard, County Administrator informed the Board that Kingwood Township is requesting in-kind services from the County through the County's Department of Central Printing. Bob Thurgarland, Print Shop/Mail Director has completed a cost estimate and has been in touch with Kingwood. He quoted the cost of this service at \$454 and at this time, it would not involve any overtime but that is subject to change as the department has time sensitive requests. If the work were to be done at this time, it will not involve any disruption of operations. The County's In-Kind Policy, adopted on May 26, 2005, outlines that every In-Kind request has to come before the Board of Chosen Freeholders for approval. Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded a motion granting approval.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. SWOREN, MR. HOLT, MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK,  
MR. PETERSON**

#### **COUNTY PROJECT UPDATE**

Frank J. Bell, AIA, County Project Administrator updated the Board on various County buildings and facilities:

- There have been issues with the Route 12 Fuel systems and they had to shut the fuel systems down. The contractors have been out to the site to work on the problem to get it resolved. Mr. Bell stated that there is a leak in the fuel system.
- The HVHC curbs have not been sealed properly and it is believed to be part of the leaking issue they have had. The contractor will also look into this situation. Weather permitting the contractor will go back up when the rain ends.
- Drawings for the Everittstown Garage are done and are ready to go out to bid for the 40 foot storage building. He asked if the Board could revise the resolution due as there is not enough funding left over from last year to take care of this.
- The Warehouse/Records Retention Center has had the PARIS Grant submitted by Mr. Thurgarland. It is ready to go and is in the State's hand at this point.
- Buildings and Maintenance has been working at the Heron Glen Golf Course, on the club house, repairing the floors. It may cost around \$200- \$225 to repair the trailer and there is about \$10,000 that they anticipate in roof work. They do not need to bid this project.
- Small Cities Housing Grant is moving ahead. Alan Johnson has received new applications for this program and will be going out next week to interview new applicants to certify that they are eligible for the program. Mrs. Yard stated that they are still trying to reconcile some out standing issues with this program.

Mr. Sworen asked about the Hall of Records.

- Mr. Bell stated that they are waiting for the mill work or case goods from the contractor. Once that is received installation can take place. At this time, the County Clerks Office cannot be moved because there are no counters and the space will not be able to address the publics' issues. Mr. Bell has spoken to the County Clerk on this issue and she agrees because she does not want to move the office until the public counters are in. Once that occurs the County Clerk's Office will move in to the space. The windows are all fixed in the Hall of Records space.

#### **HEALTH DEPT. UPDATE**

Noted for the record that John W. Beckley, Health Director, was unable to attend the meeting and Rose Puelle, from the Public Health Nursing Office, came forward to speak about Operation MVP. She asked how many people present attended a Flu Clinic? She stated that the seasonal Flu Clinic ran a little differently this year and that is because they were running as a part of the normal clinic, they ran an exercise called Operation MVP and are going to submit this report to the State, and this report is actually part of a Homeland Security requirement.

Denise Doolan stated to the Board of Chosen Freeholders that there is an agreement from the Health Department with the Hunterdon Medical Center.

Motion made by Mr. Holt and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

**See Page 03/04/08-2A**

#### **RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Approving an agreement with the Hunterdon Medical Center to provide a public health nurse and public health epidemiologist, as part of the Local Core Capacity Infrastructure Bioterrorism Grant, in the amount of \$112,626.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK,  
MR. PETERSON.**

## **PLANNING BOARD**

Sue Dziamara, Planning Board Director came before the Board to discuss a request from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, asking if Hunterdon County is willing to accept wastewater management planning responsibility.

Ms. Dziamara brought Ken Bogen from the Planning Board staff with her, stating he is here to talk about Wastewater Management at the County level. The Board of Chosen Freeholders had received a letter from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection asking if the Board would accept responsibility on the County level. If the Board chose to accept then the Board would need to appoint a contact person.

Ms. Dziamara explained the plans need to be done within nine months of the adoption and will remain in effect for a time period of six years. There is a chance for grants from DEP; and at this time they are estimating about \$100,000 per County will be available. In the counties around Hunterdon; such as Somerset County they have a pilot for a County wide wastewater management plan and has requested \$300,000 from their Freeholder Board and Morris County has requested \$500,000. Warren County has chosen a different direction; they are sending a letter to their municipalities to see if they want the County to accept this responsibility. They have appropriated no funding for this project. Hunterdon County has been involved with Wastewater Management Planning through the Highlands. Clinton Township also has the pilot program for this. If Hunterdon accepts this rule, it will be responsible for preparing, mending and advising the County Plan and there will need to be one for each of the 26 municipalities.

Ms. Dziamara stated that the Board of Chosen Freeholders has the choice to accept this role or not. If the County does not accept the role then it falls onto the municipalities. The Planning Board has looked at what is going on around the area and feels there are benefits of this program to the County. One is to develop a closer working relationship with the municipalities. Second, it could prove to be an opportunity for shared services. It is an opportunity for the County to improve the GIS data levels. The costs could be shared not only by the County but by participating municipalities as well, as the cost of preparing the plans could be shared. This could be a major supporting tool for the County with the municipalities. The Planning Board supports this opportunity and believes that these updates are over due. Currently there are no municipalities in Hunterdon County that have wastewater management plans.

So Ms. Dziamara feels this is something that is needed and the information that the Planning Board has put together will help not only with the wastewater management planning but will help to refine the data layers so when they are working to address other issues that may present themselves down the road it will benefit the County in other areas.

Mr. Mennen asked about the creation of the plan, if it would be all in house or would the County need to get outside consultants.

Ms. Dziamara would like to have this as an in house effort and thinks since this is new that the Planning Board will have a better idea as to how it moves and what directions they may need to take.

Mr. Sworen thinks part of the issue is if the Board agreed, that the County would be responsible and in control of the wastewater plans for all 26 municipalities. Today the approval goes through the State and not the County. The County could have an impact and control of future plans.

Ms. Dziamara feels the relationship would be one of Hunterdon County representative dealing with the State for all twenty-six municipalities. Currently, the Division of Watershed Management is dealing with 161 entities that do watershed planning and this would reduce that number to 21, which would cause an improved relationship with the County and they would be there to offer assistance.

Mr. Melick said today, we live in a very troubled State. The letter from the DEP is like a slap in the face because the State is saying that they do not have the funding but would like the Counties to put forth the funding. This is all taxpayers funding.

Mr. Holt stated that he has sat on the Planning Board since 2007 and has had a chance to review this plan with Ken Bogen for a few hours to see what the Boards options are. His conclusion on this matter is that to often the mandate that used to exist no longer applies and the State has offered \$100,000 to undertake this. Whether it is absorbed by the County or the 26 municipalities it is not nearly enough money to handle this. He is concerned that the cost of 26 separate plans will hurt the County more. He fully understands the Planning Board. The data collected can be placed in the system and can be used on other projects that may come up down the road. He believes this is the direction the Board should go with. Mr. Holt recommended the County send a letter to the municipalities clearly making sure they understand what the requirements are and asking if (A). they are interested in the County taking this plan knowing that there will be commitments from them, including time and money, and (B). he believes it will work down the road for Hunterdon County. He is in support of the Planning Board heading this effort.

Mr. Melick asked Ms. Dziamara to come up with an amount, this plan would cost each municipality.

Ms. Dziamara stated that is one of the items talked about and they have yet to receive guidance documents on that issue from the State as to what they are going to specifically ask for. That is just one of the components to be sorted out; the cost and how to equitably distribute the cost between the smaller municipalities and the larger municipalities. This is something to be figured out before sending the letters to each municipality to find their stand point.

Mr. Holt said that we need to know that under no circumstance will an action be done on this by the end of 2008. In the discussions they have had on this matter they feel it will take a minimum of two years to get through the financial problems and helping to plan it properly.

Mr. Sworen said Board needs to come to an initial concept of what this is going to cost so it can be made clear to the municipalities how they plan to implement this plan.

Director Peterson was unsure as to what the responsibilities would be of the County. He heard the County would be responsible to prepare and manage. Ms. Dziemara stated that the three responsibilities of the County would be to prepare, revise and amend the County Plan.

Director Peterson asked if the County would have to come up for a plan for all twenty-six municipalities. Ms. Dziemara reported that each municipality is a chapter in the plan and each municipality would be responsible for submitting information that is required to go into that document; so the County would be putting the pieces together, coordinating the information and checking what would need to be done.

Mr. Sworen said the State would not approve any of the municipalities plans until there was one final document and final approvals were done with the County; then the County can decide whether or not the State needs to review this.

Director Peterson confirmed the Board of Chosen Freeholders are suppose to come up with a plan based on information provided to them and once that plan is completed they will then submit it to the State to get approval for the County's plan. Once the State approves the plan what is the Counties role. Ms. Dziemara stated once the State approves the County's plan, it will stay in effect for six years, if there are amendments to service areas, then those would be submitted through the County to the State.

Mr. Mennen confirmed that the County would be responsible for keeping the plan current.

Director Peterson asked if the County decides to this can, can the Planning work be done with its existing staff. Ms. Dziemara stated at this time she is anticipating yes. Ken Bogen would be the principal planner involved with the project and then she would assign assistant planners or interns if necessary.

Director Peterson asked if this is a one time grant and then the County is on its own after that. Mr. Dziemara stated the State is offering \$100,000 grants.

Director Peterson asked if Mr. Melick is correct that the State is asking the County to take on this responsibility because they do not want to spend the State's money but they want the County to spend their own money on something they want to do. He feels this is a State mandate with funding but not significant funding.

Mr. DeSapio stated that this is a voluntary plan, they are asking the County to develop the plan and assume the main role in planning all the municipal plans. The State is not mandating the County to do this on a statue as a request asking for assistance.

Mr. Mennen assumes if the County takes on this responsibility that all 26 municipalities are then bond by the County and will then be unable to do their own plan. Ms. Dziemara confirmed that is correct.

Mrs. Yard stated that the Board needs to give the guidance to the Department Managers because they want to follow what the Board feels needs to be done. They have done this in the past with Stormwater Management and they are very clear about living within their needs to resource allocations.

Ms. Dziemara is anticipating a close working relationship with the State, using their resources and assistance. This will not only benefit the County but it will benefit each municipality, since it will combine all of the resources in one place. A response is needed. Ms. Dziemara stated they would like to know soon if the Board desires to move forward, this way they can start reaching out to the municipalities and letting them know that they will need to pick a staff contact to become involved in this process and that there may be a financial involvement from the municipalities.

Mr. Holt recommended the Planning Board draft a letter for Board review, prior to sending it out to the municipalities. This should be placed on the Board's March 18, 2008 for discussion again.

#### **Route 78 scenic**

Director Peterson advised correspondence was received regarding the Route 78 scenic. Time is of the essence as Somerset County has done this with their stretch of the highway. There is a company trying to put up huge billboards on that stretch of the highway. You are going to be able to see these signs for miles and miles beyond the highway; plus if you live anywhere above the highway you will be able to see it. Director Peterson said there are two applications, one in Clinton Township and one in Union Township. He was unsure about Bethlehem Township.

Mr. Mennen stated that there is a package that he saw in Bethlehem that sets forth the information and tells you what will be involved if these signs are placed on that stretch of the highway. He recommended finding out who the contractors are; to determine what the obligations are and what this will involve.

Ms. Dziamara stated her office has been in contact with the State City Coordinator Representative and this person has agreed to come to Hunterdon County and drive that stretch of highway. The Planning Board was looking to set up their next breakfast talk up in the Clinton Township area to discuss the I-78 issues; a few of the issues being the billboards; the scenic coordinator and the noise. The Planning Board has been reaching out to municipalities hearing their concerns. She suggested a resolution from the Board on what their decision may be.

Director Peterson directed Ms. Dziamara to contact all of the municipalities along the I-78 Corridor to get their support on this issue first; and report back to the Board. Once the information has been received, the Board will create a resolution for adoption.

### **ROADS and BRIDGES UPDATE**

John P. Glynn, Director, Roads, Bridges and Engineering, updated the Board on various road and bridge projects:

- Bids are currently being receiving on the Rt. 523 project in Whitehouse/Readington Township on April 3, 2008.
- The County has been working with Raritan Township on County Bridge Q-168 and a couple other parties. Field work has been completed. A meeting will be held tomorrow to identify the final alignment.
- A public information meeting will be held on March 19, 2008 in Holland Township for InterCounty Bridge H-64-W between Hunterdon County and Warren County. This is a rehabilitation project.
- A letter of support has been received from Alexandria Township regarding Mount Salam Bridge A-39.
- County Bridge R-99 on County Route 629, on Pleasant Run Road is scheduled to begin on the last day of school, June 23, 2008. This project will be done in house.
- There are still problems with the little bridge in Kingwood Township, K-129. The County is trying to get clarification in regards to permitting.
- The Parks' Fueling system plan has been finalized. Mr. Glynn is going to check the system to make sure it is the same software installed at the Route 12 County Garage Headquarters.
- White Bridge Road, the department has received authorization to prepare a Request for Clarifications and Proposals. The project will be advanced to final design.
- A report has been received concerning the Route 513, Exit 15 project; it has to be revised again and sent to NJTPA but the project is still moving forward.
- Intersection projects: Pittstown 519/579 they are going to receive bids on the 3<sup>rd</sup> for that project. He knows that Alexandria Township and Franklin Township are looking forward to having this project done because it has been on going for awhile now.
- Routes 517/523 meeting with County Counsel on Thursday to finalize the strategy on acquiring the necessary Right of Ways.
- 523 Project, Marvec is going along quiet nicely, this is the two signal projects in Raritan Township and there are no problems to report. They are about 60% complete with the storm drainage. Mr. Glynn feels once we get some clear weather and are able to get the stone in place it will help dry up the area so they can continue to work on the project at the pace they are currently working on it.

Mr. Glynn reported a request for support from the North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development Council was received concerning the "Walnut Brook Riparian Restoration: a model approach to restoring stream corridors in urbanizing areas" project. The project area includes the Mine Brook Park property, (a/k/a the Dvoor Farm). They are looking for assistance on the Mine Brook Stabilization. Mr. Glynn explained they are asking the County for some organic material. They have about 850 yards of organic material. The County wants to have a sample project that the people can look at for stabilization for the side slopes of the streams. If you go over to Dvoor Farm, the bank loses about three or four feet every time it rains. Mr. Glynn estimates the cost to be about \$9,500.

Mr. Glynn explained the reason he is suggesting the County participate is because this is located on Mine Street in Flemington and it is the oldest material eroding out of the park which is going into other areas. Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion directing the Department of Roads, Bridges and Engineering to advance this project, confirming there is money to do this and that this is where there are two bends where the creek turns that need to be stabilized.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK,  
MR. PETERSON**

### **PARKS and RECREATION**

No action taken regarding revising the 2008 Golf Facility rates for Heron Glen.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Director Peterson announced: "All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Hunterdon and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed below. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately."

Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Holt seconded a motion to approve the regular session minutes of September 25, 2007.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. MELICK, MR. HOLT, MR. PETERSON.  
(ABSTAIN) MR. SWOREN, MR. MENNEN.**

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion to approve claims in accordance with the Claims Register dated March 04, 2008.

**See Page 03/04/08-6A**

**CLAIMS REGISTER**

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK,  
MR. PETERSON.**

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion to approve the Social Services Funds report for February 2008.

**See Page 03/04/08-6B**

**SOCIAL SERVICES FUNDS REPORT**

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK,  
MR. PETERSON.**

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded these:

**See Page 03/04/08-6C**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Jason Theis appointed permanent, full time Correction Officer, Division of Corrections, Public Safety Department.

**See Page 03/04/08-6D**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Brian Decker appointed permanent, full time Senior Engineering Aide, Roads, Bridges and Engineering.

**See Page 03/04/08-6E**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Nancy Schepens appointed permanent, full time Supervising Housing Assistance Technician, Housing Division, Human Services Department.

**See Page 03/04/08-6F**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Stephen Raymond appointed permanent, full time Public Safety Telecommunicator, Division of Emergency Services, Public Safety Division.

**See Page 03/04/08-6G**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Robert Woodward appointed provisional, full time Assistant Fiscal Officer, Human Services Department.

**See Page 03/04/08-6H**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Sarah Pierro appointed provisional, full time GIS Trainee, GIS Division, Information Technology Department.

**See Page 03/04/08-6I**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Authorizing the Discharge of a Mortgage for John and Cheryl Pate, in East Amwell Township.

**See Page 03/04/08-6J**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Approving an agreement with Ernie Martinelli Management, for a performance on July 24, 2008, by The Coasters/Platters, as part of the "Music Under the Stars" concert series, in the amount of \$8,500.

**See Page 03/04/08-6K**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Approving a subcontract for the 2008 Subregional Transportation Program, with the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, Inc., in the amount of \$64,880. (Federal funds: \$51,904, County Match: \$12,976).

**See Page 03/04/08-6L**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Approving a Transportation Services Agreement with The ARC of Hunterdon County, to transport 85 consumers, amount to be received - \$189,667.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES)**

**MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK,  
MR. PETERSON**

**Heron Glen Golf Course**

The Board discussed the water quality basin at Heron Glen. This has been on going for some time and basically it is no cost to the County. This is where equipment and parts are washed off. John Trontis, Parks and Recreation Director and the South Branch Water Authority have been working together on a sample project to look at the water quality. This is the Back to the Nature Group and it really improves our operation. The pipe will be moved over about 300 feet to slow the water down and to drop out any of the organic material in the water before it gets into the stream. The Back to Nature Group has asked the County to sign an agreement,

Mr. Glynn asked the Board to support the agreement.

Mrs. Yard confirmed for the Board that Mr. Glynn would be the lead for the County for this project as it has everything to do with Roads, Bridges and Engineering. Mr. Glynn explained the Back to Nature group wanted Mr. Trontis and himself to sign the agreement, but he advised them that the Board of Chosen Freeholder's would have to approve the agreement and also sign it. Mr. Trontis has an agreement that insures that the County will be protected from a liability stand point.

Mr. Glynn stated that The Back to Nature Group is the contracting agency that is doing the work and he is unsure as to where the funding came from. They have all of the material and it needs to be in place by sometime in April.

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

**See Page 03/04/08-7A** **RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Approving a Memorandum of Agreement with the South Branch Watershed Association, Roads, Bridges and Engineering and the Parks and Recreation Department, with regard to the Water Quality Basin Maintenance area for Heron Glen.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK, MR. PETERSON.**

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

**See Page 03/04/08-7B** **RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Approving, upon the recommendation of the Shade Tree Commission, the Forestry Management Plan for Hunterdon County.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK, MR. PETERSON.**

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

**See Page 03/04/08-7C** **RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Approving Change Order #33, for County Bid #2005-47, Addition and Alteration to the Communications/Emergency Services Center, with DeSapio Construction, Inc., increase of \$1,213.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK, MR. PETERSON.**

**PROFESSIONALS**

The agreement for auditing services with Suplee, Clooney and Company, for the Public Housing Agency was held at this time.

**RECOGNITION**

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Melick seconded this:

**See Page 03/04/08-7D** **PROCLAMATION**

**RESOLVED**, Recognizing Nipun Tulshian for achieving the designation of Eagle Scout.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. SWOREN, MR. MELICK, MR. HOLT, MR. MENNEN, MR. PETERSON.**

**GRANTS**

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

**See Page 03/04/08-7E** **RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Approving the Final Application (Part II) Verification, for one (1) Ford E450 Startrans/Supreme Senator Minibus vehicle for the LINK, to be purchased through the 2006 Grant Year 5310 program, administered by New Jersey Transit.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. SWOREN, MR. HOLT, MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK, MR. PETERSON**

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

**See Page 03/04/08-7F** **RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Approving a Municipal Alliance Subgrant with the North Hunterdon Cluster, to implement substance abuse prevention services, in the amount of \$24,896.45.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN, MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK, MR. PETERSON.**

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

**See Page 03/04/08-8A**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Approving a Municipal Alliance Subgrant with the Voorhees Cluster, to implement substance abuse prevention services, in the amount of \$21,457.45.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. SWOREN, MR. HOLT, MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK, MR. PETERSON.**

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Melick seconded this:

**See Page 03/04/08-8B**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Approving a Municipal Alliance Subgrant with the Delaware Valley Cluster, to implement substance abuse prevention services, in the amount of \$19,544.45.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. MELICK, MR. MENNEN, MR. SWOREN, MR. PETERSON.**

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

**See Page 03/04/08-8C**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Approving a Municipal Alliance Subgrant with the Central Hunterdon Cluster, to implement substance abuse prevention services, in the amount of \$32,569.45.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. SWOREN, MR. HOLT, MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK, MR. PETERSON.**

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

**See Page 03/04/08-8D**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Approving a Municipal Alliance Subgrant with the South Hunterdon Cluster, to implement substance abuse prevention services, in the amount of \$15,819.45.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. SWOREN, MR. HOLT, MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK, MR. PETERSON.**

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Melick seconded this:

**See Page 03/04/08-8E**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Approving a modification to the "Senior Citizen and Disabled Resident Transportation Assistance Agreement", with New Jersey Transit, reducing the 2008 funding by \$66,960 to purchase two minivans.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. HOLT, MR. MELICK, MR. MENNEN, MR. SWOREN, MR. PETERSON.**

**CORRESPONDENCE**

A request was received from Somerset Wheelmen, again asking to conduct the Readington Time Trail on County Route 629 (Pleasant Run Road) on Saturday, April 12, 2008, with a turnaround about ¼ mile east of Route 523. The event will begin at 8:00 a.m. and conclude around 9:30 a.m. Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded a motion granting approval provided this is coordinated through the County Department of Roads, Bridges and Engineering.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. SWOREN, MR. HOLT, MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK, MR. PETERSON.**

Correspondence was received from the Lebanon Township First Aid Squad, requesting permission to hold Coin Tosses on May 24 and 25, 2008 and August 30 and 31, 2008, from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion granting approval provided this is coordinated through the County Department of Roads, Bridges and Engineering.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. MELICK, MR. SWOREN, MR. HOLT, MR. MENNEN, MR. PETERSON.**

A letter was received from the Whitehouse First Aid & Rescue Squad, Inc., requesting permission to hold Coin Tosses on April 19, 2008 and October 04, 2008. Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded a motion granting approval provided this is coordinated through the County Department of Roads, Bridges and Engineering.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. SWOREN, MR. HOLT, MR. MENNEN, MR. MELICK, MR. PETERSON.**

Correspondence from the Lambertville-New Hope Ambulance & Rescue Squad, requesting permission to purchase vehicle fuel through the County, is being held at this time.

## **FREEHOLDERS ASSIGNMENT REPORTS**

### **Housing**

Mr. Sworen stated the Hunterdon County Housing Corporation is no longer a private organization. A request has been received asking what the County is going to do to replace this organization which served as a contact point for the municipalities for the COAH obligations. If each municipality were to try and do their own program, it would be an extreme cost. The question is that the Board needs to have a plan as to how it is going to replace this agency, whether it is in house or not. The Housing Corporation was basically self-funded by fees that came from municipalities. The County needs to come up with a solution to this because it will affect all twenty-six municipalities.

Mrs. Yard explained that housing rehabilitation service was never a County service; it was provided by the Housing Corporation at a cost. The County assumed the administration of the Small Cities Grant for housing rehabilitation. The County will have to decide how to interact with the municipalities.

Director Peterson stated that this may be a good thing for the shared services program to look at and maybe the County should contact the Chamber of Commerce's Shared Services Coordinator.

Mrs. Yard advised this service was being used by only six of the County's 26 municipalities. It was not broad based to all municipalities in the County. There were more involved at the beginning of the program but many had dropped off.

Director Peterson feels that if the Shared Services Coordinator looks at this, he might be able to bring other municipalities into the program.

Mr. Sworen stated that this needs to be look at by July but he wanted to bring it to the Board's attention now; this way there is time to process all of the information sp a decision can be made sometime in July.

### **Thompson property**

Denise Doolan, Clerk of the Board brought to the Board's attention, a Management Agreement regarding the Thompson Property.

Director Peterson confirmed with Kevin Richardson, Open Space Trust Fund Coordinator, that this agreement does not need approval tonight. Mr. Richardson stated that there is sometime sensitivity but it can be discussed at the next Freeholders meeting so the Board can have the time to review the agreement.

## **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

### **Kingwood Township property**

Director Peterson opened the meeting to the public. He asked that any members of the public wanted to speak would stand, and clearly state their names and spell their last name. Also, please be mindful of the others who have come to speak.

Walter Holt, Kingwood Township resident came before to speak about the development on Horseshoe Drive. The Township would like to bring this development to the County level. He does not personally know much about it but is here to support that question to the Board.

Lisa Sennas, 30 Tumble Balls Road, Stockton Borough, came to support the Kingwood Township Trail Association and the New Jersey Horse Association, in have the property designated as the Equestrian Village Property West Hunterdon Park. This parcel would represent the real seed of the trail association within the Township and benefits others beyond the Township as a County Park. She is here to express her support on this matter.

James Burke, Deputy Mayor, Kingwood Township stated he has had a number of Township people present him with their concerns on having the County help take part in this. This concerns 120 acres. The property is used for hiking, mountain biking, the Girls Scouts and Boy Scouts also use this land. There is a lot of interest due to the location. He would hand the Board of Chosen Freeholders the list of the members of the public who are present to speak on this matter. He has a draft agreement for this development that he would like the Board to take a look at. He stated that Kingwood would agree to and maintain the buildings and the roads that go to this land, until which time the County may decide they do not want the Township to handle it.

Richard Dodds, Stockton Borough, stated it was interesting tonight that the County had a lot of talk on the County Golf Course. He and his wife do not play golf but they are taxpayers and there are many people in the area that do not play golf. The land they are interested in using would meet the needs and desires of many of the County taxpayers. The alternative to the County not participating in this project may result in a development. The result of that would be harmful to the environment and to the future taxpayers of the County. He appreciates the Board taking a look at this and asked them to not forget the taxpayers who have been paying taxes for a long time. He would like the Board of Chosen Freeholders to approve this purchase for a County Park. He would like to know from the Board when the Township would be hearing back from them and asked if it would be within the next three weeks, one way or another so they can move ahead with this.

Director Peterson explained to Mr. Dodds that this is the public's time to tell the Board their feelings. He does not want to get into the discussions, which the Board has been having on various land issues. It is hard to say anything without revealing their final thought as to what direction they are thinking on; but at this time, the Board would like to hear from the public.

Sandra McNichol, Frenchtown Borough advised she is very interested in having this as a park. As a resident of Kingwood Township for 25 years she takes advantage of all of the parks in her area. Unfortunately she is unable to do that in her own municipality and has to travel to various parks to enjoy them. Ms. McNichol is primarily interested in birds but respects her neighbors that hike and bike. She feels it is important for the Board to consider a park in the western part of the County, since most of the parks are available in the eastern part of the County. She thinks it would be good for the Board to consider this for this part of the County.

Phil Lubitz, Kingwood Township, advised they agree with Freeholder Melick and are happy with the low taxes and they do not ask for much but they do send a lot of their tax dollars out of the township. He does not think that Kingwood gets much of those taxes back into its area. For better or worse, a lot of the development in the County has been put on a hold but for Kingwood, they see the negative fall out of those things. He has lived in Kingwood for 27 years now and feels that this would be something that fits with the rural character of the area that people see as Kingwood. He said a lawyers job is not to solve problems, a lawyers job is to find problems and he is asking the Board not to be lawyers and help to solve this problem.

Linda Sserr, Kingwood Township resident for over 23 years and a Girl Scout Leader for 15 years, said her Girl Scout Troop believes in making the world a better place. A housing development in Kingwood Township would not be making Kingwood a better place but a County park would be utilized, not only by the scouts but all members of the community. She asked the Board to please consider this.

Ed Compton, Kingwood Township, pointed out that a housing development is going to cause more work to the roads in the area and would only cause additional costs to the County.

Thomas Sommo, Frenchtown Borough is concerned because a home development would cost the taxpayers more. If you look at Horseshoe Bend Road, it is questionable if it would support another 53 homes. He is sure it would cause more problems for traffic in the area and will affect everyone. He understands that the County is strapped for cash but he feels that if we wait on this matter it will only cost more in the long run. It would be saving a lot of money if we do this now. Many people have been working very hard on this matter and he asked the Board to give the Mayor and members of the community time to speak their concerns and be heard.

Will Wong, Kingwood Township and president of the Kingwood Rescue Squad informed the Board that he has been telling the township for a number of years how inappropriate it would be to develop this land because it will make it more difficult to get emergency services back in that area. A 55 house development would be putting a big strain on the services they provide to the community.

Jack McConnel, Kingwood Township stated he lives across from the property that would be purchased. There are two bridges there that would need to be realigned and rebuilt if they develop this area. He feels it would cost in the neighborhood of \$7 million to \$10 million dollars of County money even though the developer would give a portion back. The costs need to be weighed here. There are two eagles' nets in Kingwood Township and one is very close to this property. It is not often that you see a bald eagle that close. If this area could remain rural as it is now then we will be able to keep the bald eagles. There are approximately three miles of woodland in this area and if it is developed then that land is being lost and we will lose the animals there that we have. He offered if the County buys the property that he has a trailer and he would be willing to put in harvesting grass on this land to help preserve it in its current state. The developer told the members of the public that they could have 200 cars an hour on that road and those roads can not handle that much traffic.

Mason, Kayla, Rachel and Gabrielle, Members of the Girls Scouts, of Kingwood Township approached the Board. Rachel said if the houses are built in this area then the school and roads would be over loaded from kids and cars in the development. Kayla said that there should not be too many houses in one space and she said it would be like a city and we should have the houses as they are now, far apart, so it does not feel like a city and it will help the animals. Mason said that the houses would be taking away from animals' homes. Gabrielle said that she does not think the houses should be made because it would be taking away a lot of the trees and trees give air to us. Another reason would be that it would be much nicer to be able to go outside and play in a park.

#### **Sheriff's Office**

John Maloney, Undersheriff of Hunterdon County, came forward to ask the Board since it was not on the resolutions for this evening what the Board intends to do on Judge Ciccone's order as of Friday to place people on the payroll, as well as amending the budget as ordered by the judge.

Director Peterson stated that the Board just received a copy of the order yesterday. The Freeholders are not going to get into the order itself but have discussed it for awhile in executive session prior to the meeting and the Board plans to go back into executive session to discuss this further.

Mr. Maloney asked if the Board would be coming back out to public session again.

Director Peterson stated it is likely the Board will come back out into open session.

Mr. Maloney stated he would like to ask the Board of Chosen Freeholders to at least move the resolutions and second put people on board as to where they come down to whether it is a nay or yay.

### **Kingwood Township continued**

John Matthew of Stockton Borough, would like to spend a little time on what the Board should look at regarding the Kingwood Township property. He thinks housing should be the secondary issue; the County has a higher calling than that. He has been on the Kingwood Planning Board for 20 years and chairing it for the last 2 years. He is also on the Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance. He can recall maybe 10-15 years ago when the Freeholders were looking for a west Hunterdon Park, so this is not a completely new issue being brought to the Board. What we have here is a state of high priority for this parcel. This project offers not only a piece of land to preserve but it gives the rare opportunity to not have the public come back and being upset by what is being done. The County would be preserving a high rated land and would be getting a park out of the deal. One of the misleading things is what activities would consist of. People have complained about the trailers for the horses and the roads not being able to handle the size but that is not the case because the trailers are only one or two horses and they can fit on these roads. He thinks that preventing an acquisition would be a nice thing and for the County it is a minor issue but the bigger issue is the opportunity this land presents and the commitment from the community to help with the process. No one is expecting a discussion tonight but they are interested in the thoughts the Board has on this issue and what time line the community may see with this matter. He asked if the Board could reach a reasonable conclusion and take part in this matter.

Carolyn Moran, of New York stated she works in the area and is on the Board of State Farms. She is here in support of this issue and stated it is very important that this land be used as a park and not a development.

Janis Elsishans, of north New Jersey, advised she is the Trails Representative for the New Jersey Council. She wrote the book that is out now, "Where you can go to ride in New Jersey" Many people want to use new trails and it could have a big economic impact on the County. Horses are a large part of New Jersey agriculture.

Trisha Heartline of Lebanon Borough, came out to support this land being used as a park. This area needs more parks and hiking trails. She stated that to already have a piece of land that is already set up for these activities is a good thing and we should not let it pass by.

Lisa Hall, Readington Trail Association, Readington Township stated there is a tremendous amount of support and she is curious as to what the real issues are that are holding the County back from moving this matter forward. She is unaware of what the major road blocks are from the Board's point of view.

Ann Oven, Kingwood Township, stated she moved to this area for the open space and the horse trails. She has been a horse rider for 40 odd years. She supports open spaces and does not want them to go to developers. It would be a wonderful thing if this land were opened up as a park.

Katy Mathews, Pittstown Trail Association, advised that about 99% of their trails are private property. There is no contract it is just word of mouth for those who want to come. It is scary that they could lose it at any moment. If this land were used as a park it would benefit everyone.

Mary P., of Union Township, asked the Board to not loose this property.

Patricia Bounline, is concerned with the historic bridges on Horseshoe Bend and the impact that a development would have on the area that she enjoys.

Caroline Beidelman, moved to Kingwood Township 22 years ago and has always said that Horseshoe Bend Road is one of the most beautiful roads in the area. A development of 55 plus houses would lead to damage to the bridges and that amount of building on those roads will cause more traffic on other roads. Also, the community's Emergency Services are not prepared at this point to deal with such an impact and support that type of development due to the fact that it is a volunteer organization. It would be a win win situation for everyone involved to have a park in Kingwood that is not just playing fields but it will benefit all types of nature associations.

Lee Schmidt, Frenchtown Borough stated that horses are a big deal in Hunterdon County and riding in circles gets old really quick. When she has bought horses she would try to find barns that had big areas land to ride. This property could be used as a park and riding trail and it will benefit many people.

Bill Pandy, Kingwood Township Fireman, said the best asset to this area is its location and this location is super. The Township needs the Board's support to keep this land.

Nancy Hutchinson, Pittstown Resident, stated she has owned a small horse farm since 1984. One of the things she is sure the Board will be considering is the cost of maintaining the park and keeping it in good order. She feels the park could be maintained by volunteers, who would expect to get their hands dirty. She has no question, having done it for 20 years that there would be a big volunteer group willing to help maintain this area as parkland.

Jessica Weiciki of the Ringoes Amwell Valley Trail Association said she thinks that having a County park would be very helpful as others have stated. In this area they have lost land to golf courses and she does not want to see that happen with this piece of land because there are so many people who would use it.

Meg Sleeper of Kingwood Township advised she's never had a problem with a trailer on that road. They carefully go over the bridges and that is not an issue. If there were trails in this area the property value would increase in the entire County.

Dave Augustine, Kingwood Township, is in support of the park system in Kingwood Township. He is a life long resident of Kingwood Township. He agrees with everything that everyone else has stated before him and added that this would be a great asset to the Township and the County.

Sandy Turpe, Bethlehem Township and has been here for 40 years. She is always amazed by the people out walking and the diverse group that is out and about. She thinks that the County would be best for future generations if they preserved a piece of land like this.

Deborah Trout, Delaware Township resident and Sheriff of Hunterdon, told the Board that she agrees with everyone that has already spoken and agrees on Open Space. She feels the County is becoming over crowded with housing developments and thinks it would be great to have a park in this part of the County.

Sheriff Trout asked the Board as her Undersheriff did, if there is going to be a resolution tonight to put her staff on the payroll since the judge was very stern in her order to do so. Sheriff Trout stated she is unaware as to why there needs to be additional discussion in executive session when there is an order by the judge.

Russ Hockier advised he grew up in South Jersey and now rides in Hunterdon County. He would support this purchase and inform people if they were out this pay to ride horses.

Randy Sheir, Kingwood Township, wanted to say that she is the mother of two of the girl scouts here tonight. She knows there are many people in the area that would love to have the opportunity to have this area for camping and other kinds of outdoor activities. Also, the school is very small in Kingwood Township and if there is a development built it would cause more children to come into Kingwood which would put a strain on the school district. She is curious as to when the residents may be able to hear something from the Board on this issue.

The Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders returned to Executive Session at 8:31 p.m. and reconvened in Open Session at 10:00 p.m.

Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Mennen seconded this:

**See Page 03/04/08-**

**RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, Approving salaries for the Undersheriffs and Confidential Aide in the Sheriff's Office.

**ROLL CALL: (AYES) MR. MELICK, MR. MENNEN, MR. HOLT, MR. SWOREN,  
MR. PETERSON.**

Questions answered for the press.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Director Peterson adjourned the meeting at 10:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Denise B. Doolan  
Clerk of the Board