

HUNTERDON COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS

Main Street County Complex, 2nd Floor
Flemington, New Jersey 08822

September 15, 2009

The regular meeting of the Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders convened at 3:03 p.m. in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act.

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

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

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, 2009, 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."

Freeholders Mennen and Melick recused themselves from the meeting at 3:04 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

See Page 09/15/09-1A **RESOLUTION**

RESOLVED, Executive Session to discuss the status of the litigation involving the condemnation of land involving County Route 523/517 road project for land held by Melick LLC.

See Page 09/15/09-1B **RESOLUTION**

RESOLVED, Executive Session for the possible selection of a conflicts counsel to serve as counsel for the County in the matter of the condemnation involving the Melick LLC.

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

Freeholders Mennen and Melick returned to the meeting at 3:06 p.m.

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded these:

See Page 09/15/09-1C **RESOLUTION**

RESOLVED, Executive Session to discuss the status of law enforcement unit negotiations.

See Page 09/15/09-1D **RESOLUTION**

RESOLVED, Executive Session to discuss a personnel investigation concerning an incident in the County.

See Page 09/15/09-1E **RESOLUTION**

RESOLVED, Executive Session to discuss a portion of the issue regarding furloughs concerning legal requirements and the process related to consider implementing furloughs and those portions of the proposed plans that impact labor negotiations.

See Page 09/15/09-1F **RESOLUTION**

RESOLVED, Executive Session to discuss the status of the closing for property on Horseshoe Bend Road.

See Page 09/15/09-1G **RESOLUTION**

RESOLVED, Executive Session to review executive session minutes of June 02, 2009, June 16, 2009 and July 21, 2009 to determine what portion can be released.

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

The Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders went into Executive Session at 3:07 p.m. and reconvened in Open Session at 5:00 p.m.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

FOR DISCUSSION

Initiation of a Furlough Plan

The Board discussed a resolution which has been distributed to the Board and public, which has attached to it a draft conceptual temporary layoff (furlough) plan.

Director Mennen advised this is the first step in moving the process forward, this is not the implementation nor is it the commencement of furloughs but this starts the process; a process which is timely prescribed and defined by the N.J. Statutes and the N.J. Administrative Code. This attempts to follow the procedure as laid out in the Administrative Code.

Director Mennen advised that the draft, conceptual plan which is attached to the resolution is the sum and substance of a great deal of work, effort, research and analysis by the County Administrator, the Human Resources Director, the Finance Director, the County Treasurer and by the entire Administrative staff of the County. This is not an action which this Board takes lightly; this is an action that this Board needs to be commencing given circumstances which are extraneous to this Board, and part and parcel of the overall economic situation effecting not just Hunterdon County but municipalities, the state and the entire country.

Director Mennen explained that the Board did commit, during 2009, not to seek any layoffs and as October, 2009 approaches, the Board can say it has met that commitment. This is an action which the Board commences with a heavy heart. Director Mennen stated this does not commence anything specifically other than beginning the process. This does not implement the plan and it does not commence furloughs; it just starts the process that takes 4 to 6 months.

Mr. Sworen confirmed this is the process to begin the discussion and to allow the County Administration to begin discussion about it as an official start of the process.

Director Mennen stated there is a process laid out in the Administrative Code that must be followed before the plan can be sent to the State Department of Personnel.

Mr. Melick agreed with Director Mennen, stating this is being done as a last resort by this Board. The County is faced with declining revenues and the County has to repair itself in order to stream line government. The Freeholders have to set the tax rate.

Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Peterson seconded this:

See Page 09/15/09-2A **RESOLUTION**

RESOLVED, Approving a resolution to begin the furlough process.

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

Mr. Melick recused himself from the meeting at 5:10 p.m.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION

Mr. Peterson moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

See Page 09/15/09-2B **RESOLUTION**

RESOLVED, Approving a Deed of Easement and Grant agreement for a Development Easement acquisition from DW Vineyards, LLC, Block 17, Lot 16.03, East Amwell Twp, consisting of 25.433 acres, (SADC-\$213,637.20, Township-\$71,212.40, County-\$71,212.40), amount of \$356,062.

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

Mr. Peterson moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

See Page 09/15/09-2C **RESOLUTION**

RESOLVED, Approving a Deed of Easement and Grant agreement for a Development Easement from Richard and Melissa Crouse, Block 12, Lot 19, Kingwood Twp, consisting of 53.383 acres, (SADC-\$212,864.71, Township-\$61,684.06, County-\$55,091.25), total amount of \$329,640.02.

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

Mr. Peterson moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

See Page 09/15/09-2D **RESOLUTION**

RESOLVED, Approving a Deed of Easement and Grant agreement for a Development Easement from Betty Leverton, a/k/a Betty Harrison Leverton, Executrix of the Estate of Hazel M. Harrison, for Block 27, Lots 46 and 46.05, in East Amwell Township, consisting of 28,987 acres, (SADC-\$226,098.60, Township-\$75,366.20, County-\$75,366.20), total amount of \$376,831.

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

Mr. Peterson moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

See Page 09/15/09-3A

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving a Deed of Easement and grant agreement for a Development Easement from John and Susan Michek, for Block 17, Lot 45.01, in Delaware Township, consisting of 51.54 acres, (SADC-\$309,264, County-\$103,088, Township-\$103,088) total amount \$515,440.

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

Mr. Melick returned to the meeting at 5:14 p.m.

PURCHASING

Mr. Peterson moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

See Page 09/15/09-3B

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the award of County Bid #2009-11, for 87 Octane Unleaded Gasoline Reformulated, for the County, to Rachles/Michele's Oil Co., Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$538,253.10.

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

Mr. Peterson moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

See Page 09/15/09-3C

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the award of County Bid #2009-12, for Fine Paper and Envelopes, to Paper Mart, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$77,820.51.

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

Mr. Peterson moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

See Page 09/15/09-3D

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the award of County Bid #2009-15, for Resurfacing and Storm Water Improvements of County Route 523, in Raritan and Readington Townships, to Top Line Construction Corporation, in an amount not to exceed \$2,414,187.77.

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

Mr. Peterson moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

See Page 09/15/09-3E

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the award of County Bid #2009-16, for Resurfacing of various County Roads in various Municipalities, to Top Line Construction Corporation, in an amount not to exceed \$1,163,401.86.

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

Mr. Peterson moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

See Page 09/15/09-3F

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing a modification to County Bid #2008-15, to provide the Road Operations Function of the County Consolidated Transportation System, with Easton Coach Company, to reflect the "Basis for Billing".

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

ROADS and BRIDGES Update

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

- The preconstruction meeting for the Route 523 project is scheduled for tomorrow with Top Line Contractors.
- The stone veneering on the retaining walls in Pittstown, County Route 579, is around 60% complete.
- The HBO application for a small project in Frenchtown is near complete and will be submitted for approval for construction.
- Plans are near complete for County Route 635. A municipal agreement will be put together with Hampton Borough before the end of the year.
- InterCounty Bridge B-26-W will be closed on Monday; the deck will be resurfaced.
- County Bridge D-345 will be closed on October 02, 2009.

- A public meeting will be held for County Bridge E-140 and E-142-M tomorrow at the historic Court House, to discuss the replacement of a superstructure. This is a joint project with Mercer County.
- The concrete deck for Bridge M-110 will be poured on September 21, 2009 because of an issue with the steel.
- A public meeting is scheduled for September 23, 2009 at County Route 12, Building #1, to talk about the Alexauken Creek Road Bridge in West Amwell Township.
- Mr. Glynn is looking for Board authorization to proceed with the design concept for the Multi-Purpose Trail Bridge. He has talked with the Finance Department and there is adequate funding within the current capital ordinance. The remaining balance to complete the project for design is \$23,253.82. Mr. Glynn explained he would like authorization to complete the design and have the project ready to go; then it can be determined how the project will be funded.

Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded a motion authorizing the design team to finalize the design with their current contract, in the amount of \$23,253.82, for the Multi-Purpose Trail Bridge and confirmed with Mr. Glynn that the necessary permit has been received from the State Department of Environmental Protection. Mr. Glynn advised the permit is good for 5 years and it will take 4 months to do the design. This is the interconnection bridge between the County Arboretum and Echo Hill Lodge. The construction would be prefabrication and should take roughly 4 months.

Director Mennen asked if this is a critical project. Mr. Glynn explained he was given this task by a previous Freeholder Board. There were some reservations but they proceeded with it and it is at the point of decision making.

Mr. Peterson stated he was in on those discussion, and this was a wish list type thing that was to be done in phases because it was not that important, expect it would be something nice to have connecting the two parks over a waterway.

Director Mennen expressed concern in light of the action taken at the beginning of tonight's meeting concerning furloughs. He realizes money has to be spent in order to potentially get a grant of money but the permit is good for 5 years. Director Mennen stated that good work and effort has been put into this project by the Department of Roads, Bridges and Engineering and the vendor but he's not sure the County should be spending money on wish list projects when the Board is talking about furloughs.

Mr. Peterson stated the County should try and get stimulus money for those projects that are critical to the infrastructure of the County and for public safety and not for these types of items because there is only so much stimulus money available and it should be placed where it is critical to the welfare of the citizens of the County.

Mr. Glynn explained to the Board that Hunterdon maximizes its Highway Funding allocation for specific highway transportation projects. As part of the Highway Funding Bill, there is a percent of funding for enhancement projects and those are the funds that would be completed for. Mr. Glynn said there would be some cost savings with the operations of the Parks and this was discussed with previous Board. He assured the Board this is a separate dedicated source of funding.

Mr. Sworen confirmed with Mr. Glynn that any stimulus money the County would receive is already allocated on projects. He also confirmed this is additional funding allowable under the Highway Funding Act for enhancement projects. Mr. Glynn confirmed there are other pools of money which are dedicated for this type of project. He noted that the Hamden Bridge was done under this type of project.

Mr. Melick and Mr. Peterson asked that this project be placed on hold on a month or so. Mr. Glynn confirmed the feeling of the Board is to defer the design.

Mr. Holt asked for a call on his motion.

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

Mr. Glynn confirmed with the Board the design contract will be deferred for 60 days. Mr. Melick said if the Board makes a decision by December 2009, construction can begin in March 2010.

Project Update continued

- Guiderail will be put on County Bridge A-39 next week; then the project will be completed.
- A small culvert in Pattenburg on Main Street has been closed and will remain closed for around 4 weeks.
- A proposal will be submitted for County Bridge F-45; the design consultant was asked to look at the minimum width of the bridge.
- The NJTPA projects are on schedule.
- The contractor has started to mobilize on County Bridge T-102 on Water Street. The bridge will be taken apart tomorrow, the superstructure will be saved and the stone veneer will be salvaged.
- Proposals have been received for County Bridge T-88. Mr. Glynn recommended the County agree to the alternative which includes the stone veneer because this is the replacement of the wing wall and a piece of the abutment wall. The remaining parts of the bridge will be stone.

Mr. Melick moved to approve this contract without the stone veneer. Motion died for lack of a second.

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

See Page 09/15/09-5A

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving Emergency Quote #0064-2009, for the Reconstruction of County Bridge T-88, in Tewksbury Township, with Kalogridis Contracting, in an amount not to exceed \$127,302.00, including alternate Item #26, subject to review by County Counsel once the contract is received, and to approve this agreement with the alternate for stone veneer.

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

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Peterson seconded this:

See Page 09/15/09-5B

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving Emergency Quote #0060-2009, for the Reconstruction of County Bridge T-102, in Tewksbury Township, with HC Contractors, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$325,532.31.

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

- The Stone Hill Mills section retaining wall will be done in-house. Application has been made for state aid discretionary funding.
- The contractor has a construction schedule for T-102, for September and October and the bridge should be open by Thanksgiving.

SHERIFF's Office

Undersheriff George D. Muller came before the Board concerning a request to provide a Sheriff's Officer at the New Jersey State Motor Vehicle Commission in Raritan Township.

Mr. Muller stated as a taxpayer of the County he wanted to pay his respects to the Board for their efforts on these difficult decisions on behalf of the County's taxpayers.

Mr. Muller advised in the past the Board has received information from the Sherriff in reference to the Sheriff's Office providing security at the new, New Jersey Motor Vehicle Offices located on Route 31 in Flemington.

Mr. Muller stated the Freeholders have, throughout the year, tried to make cuts and adjustments to the County's budget and it is a difficult thing but this venture would bring income into the County.

Mr. Muller introduced Kenneth Shoey, Director of Security and Investigations with the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission and advised that Sheriff Deborah Trout is also present to answer any questions for the Board.

Mr. Muller reported that other counties in New Jersey have entered into similar contracts. This is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to provide the services. The contract is \$112,000 a year, which is paid monthly to the County and would run for whatever period the MOU is written for. Mr. Muller advised the Sheriff's Office estimates the costs to operate this under the hours required, which includes overtime to be around \$60,000 a year. Mr. Muller stated this does not include putting on an additional officer. The Sheriff Office would have the agreed to compliment of officers which is 16 and this would not change that in anyway, shape or form. Mr. Muller again stated there would be \$112,000 coming in and the costs for expenditures would be \$60,000.

Mr. Muller introduced former Raritan Township Police Chief Brown, stating that Raritan Township used to hold this contract and stated the reason the Township did not renew this contract with the New Jersey Division of Motor Vehicles is because the cost of maintaining that post was more than what it cost to the Township when the agreement was first entered into. Also, during vacation or sick time for the officer, the Township needed to put another officer at the post but in the Sheriff's Office, that position would be used on a rotating basis so an officer would be assigned to the post for a week at a time and overtime money would be used for adjustments. Mr. Muller stated there would be no increase in officers and no worry about backfilling on vacation time or sick time.

Mr. Melick feels there is a lot of overhead involved and doesn't feel all the costs have been considered. Mr. Muller said the cost is the person's hourly rate.

Mr. Melick advised the Sheriff's Office currently has a problem providing security at the Justice Center and the scheduling of personnel. There are memorandums concerning the closing of the Justice Center when the courts needed it open. Mr. Muller stated that has been addressed.

Mr. Melick questioned if a vehicle would be involved to transport the officer and also asked about the payment of benefits for this person. Mr. Muller stated those costs could be added to the number for the person assigned.

Mr. Melick stated the Sheriff's Office has tremendous administrative costs. The Sheriff's salary is over \$100,000 and there are three Undersheriff's which is around \$500,000 for administrative salaries.

Mr. Muller advised the Sheriff's Office does bring income into the County through Sheriff's Sales and grants.

Mr. Melick reported Raritan Township got out of this contract because it was costing them money. Mr. Muller replied that Sheriff's Officers are not paid the same as Raritan Township Police Officers are.

Former Raritan Township Police Chief Brown informed the Board that when Raritan Township entered into the agreement with the New Jersey Department of Motor Vehicles, he had a senior officer who wanted to do that post because he was tired of working roads and the rotating shifts. The Township felt it could hire another officer at a much lower rate if this senior officer were placed at the Motor Vehicle Agency. In the beginning the Township was making money; it's the same as the Sheriff's Office is doing at this point. The new Raritan Township Chief of Police decided the one officer would no longer be assigned to the Motor Vehicle Agency and it was felt if that officers' salary with benefits was considered, then what was received from the state wasn't enough.

Director Mennen confirmed with Mr. Muller that the \$60,000 figure did not include benefits for the Sheriff's Officer. Mr. Holt confirmed no personnel would be added for this venture. Director Mennen explained there was no budget submitted with this request. He informed Mr. Muller that it would be helpful if the Board had an excel spreadsheet showing the hours, which he confirmed were 49.5 hours a week. Director Mennen advised also to be considered are fringe and administrative costs.

Director Mennen advised he would like to save time and recommended the Sheriff also provide a copy of the draft Memorandum of Understanding with the State Motor Vehicle Agency.

Mr. Shoey explained to the Board that the program they have is an enhanced security for the Motor Vehicle Agencies; there are currently 43 agencies throughout the state and 37 agencies have a uniform law enforcement officer in the agency during hours of business, including Saturdays.

Mr. Shoey advised there are currently four County Sheriff's Departments' which provide security: Sussex, Essex, Bergen and Somerset counties. Essex County covers two agencies in their County, Newark and East Orange. The program is extremely successful; it provides a sense of security and safety not only to the customers but to the employees. It is a first line against identify theft and against document fraud. They make about 400 arrests throughout the state per year in the motor vehicle agencies. The presence of a law enforcement office has had a profound effect. He said this is a unique viable program and it is one of the two major tenants of the fixed DMV Act which was adopted by the legislature in 2002/2003; one being customer service and the other being security. Mr. Shoey feels that the presence of an officer is a deterrent. The Raritan Township Police Office did an excellent job for the Motor Vehicle Agency and he was a big part of the operation of the agency. Mr. Shoey added that he feels the presence of an office turns away anyone who would consider committing a crime.

Mr. Melick confirmed that no one has approached the Borough of Flemington to determine if their police department would be interested in providing a presence at the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Agency. Mr. Shoey advised since the agency is in Raritan Township, that is the first law enforcement agency they contacted; then his office was contacted by the Hunterdon County Sheriff's Office on providing services once Raritan Township Police stepped away from the contract.

Mr. Melick asked if the Sheriff's Office approached Mr. Shoey's Office. Mr. Shoey believes the Sheriff's Office came to him or his office may have put overtures out. They act with the investigators in the County so it could have been either way. He doesn't know exactly how that happened. There has been an ongoing dialog with the Sheriff's Office since Raritan Township decided to leave.

Mr. Holt would like to see a simple spreadsheet outlining costs versus revenue. This would be revenue that could be added at a time when the County is seeing revenues decrease. He asked Sheriff Trout to come back to the Board with a spreadsheet so the Board can see some real numbers. Mr. Melick recommended that the Finance Department and Human Resources also be involved in this also.

Mr. Peterson questioned why the state does not use private security. Mr. Shoey advised the state is using a private security firm in two Motor Vehicle Agencies. That was started as a pilot project and the costs are not any different but the difference is on how they can respond to the crimes. Private security cannot make arrests and police officers can. Mr. Shoey stated this has been reviewed and it is felt the best defense is to have uniformed law enforcement officer and that has been the State Motor Vehicle Commission's standard. Private security at an agency can produce a presence and can be seen but they cannot take action, they cannot intercede if there is a fight in the agency, they can only call 911 like anyone else.

Mr. Shoey informed the Board that he believes the best situation is to have a law enforcement officer present at the Motor Vehicle Agencies as opposed to having private security. Mr. Peterson confirmed Mr. Shoey believes it is important that the officers should be carrying a weapon.

Mr. Peterson confirmed the Memorandum of Understanding has a provision whereby there is a certain amount of time for either party to terminate the contract without cause. Mr. Shoey believes there is a 30 days clause where the MOU can be dissolved.

Mr. Peterson confirmed with Mr. Shoey that there is not requirement for the law enforcement officer to have a vehicle at the agency.

Mr. Peterson confirmed with Undersheriff Russo that no more people would be need to be hired in order to provide this service at the Motor Vehicle Agency. Mr. Russo said the money that is derived from this would be used to backfill, if necessary, that officer with part time security people. That would provide the money for the security people and to backfill an officer position, if it became necessary.

Mr. Peterson confirmed the Sheriff's Office is going to come back to the Board with a spreadsheet showing figures. He said this is not as simple as one employee because you stood here before and stated to the Board that you have to count an employee and three quarters, or something like that. Mr. Peterson said there have been problems with the Justice Center/Court House where the Sheriff's Office has threatened to close it down and threatened to cut back the hours with the current number of officers on staff and now today, you are saying you can provide services at the Motor Vehicle Agency which will require 1.75 employees and you need to add in the overtime hours; plus if someone is arrested you have to add in court time. If you extrapolate this out, it probably comes out to 2.5 people.

Mr. Peterson advised his concern is that the Sheriff's Office has obligations, with the primary obligation is to provide security at the Justice Center/Court House, serve warrant and legal papers and to do foreclosures. Mr. Peterson advised he is very skeptical about this plan because the Sheriff's Office says it doesn't have enough people but there is going to be enough people to do this extra job and it won't cost the County anything more. He questioned how that is going to work. Mr. Peterson doesn't feel a detailed enough plan has been furnished on how this is going to work. Also, this is going to have an impact on the plan that was derived for the security at the Justice Center/Court House.

Mr. Peterson would like to see a detailed plan on how this will happen because the most important duty of the Sheriff's Office is to ensure that the duties of the Sheriff that are required are carried out. The security at the Justice Center/Court House has to be the primary objective and if someone is out sick, how will the office be able to cover security at the Motor Vehicle Agency at the same time? He would like to see something in writing on how the constitutional obligations will be carryout. It is important that the Justice Center/Court House be open all the hours that it is supposed to be open; that the process gets served in a timely manner and that the foreclosure sales happen as prescribed by statute. Mr. Peterson stated he would need more than a spreadsheet to understand that this is not going to jeopardize the duties at the Justice Center/Court House.

Mr. Muller asked the Board to bear in mind that the Sheriff's Office is supposed to have a compliment of 16 officers and currently there are 15. The security committee that met with the Assignment Judge Ciccone and this Board agreed there should be 16 officers and this would be able to fund that position. This is funding a position that the Freeholders have agreed to have. Mr. Muller added that it is his responsibilities to see that the civil duties are carried out and he can assure the Board that will be done and he will document it for the Board. Presently, he does serve papers and he will serve more papers if it is necessary. He also stated the Sheriff's sales go on, on schedule each week and the Sheriff's Office is keeping up with the warrants. Mr. Muller reminded the Board that the Sheriff's Office is still down own officer from what was agreed to by the security committee.

Mr. Peterson said his understanding was the compliment of 16 officers was said to be the minimum that was needed to perform all the constitutional duties. There is the idea that the one officer isn't needed so they can be placed over at the Motor Vehicle Agency. Mr. Peterson advised it isn't going to be one officer; it is going to be 1 ½ and 1 ¾ person because there is a multiplier effect because of overtime.

Mr. Peterson said when the security committee with the Assignment Judge came to the agreement that 16 officers was the minimum needed to carry out the constitutional functions at the Justice Center/Court House wasn't accurate at that point in time and it was somewhere less than that; perhaps 2 people less than that. At the same time, you are saying the hours at the Justice Center/Court House have to be reduced. This Board budgeted for 16 officers and this will not pay for the 16th officer because the Freeholders have already budgeted for the 16 officers. Mr. Peterson advised there is more work that needs to be done so that he has the confidence that the duties which are obligated by the Sheriff Office to be carried out and the additional obligation which may be undertaken is not going to be a drain on the taxpayer and that it will be enough money to make it worthwhile to take this on.

Mr. Muller said he will provide the information which Mr. Peterson is looking for but if the Freeholder Board does not embrace this concept then it should be stated. Mr. Muller advised it is felt that this venture will bring income at a time when the County is asking for additional income.

Mr. Melick advised Mr. Shoey his recommendation would be that the Division of Motor Vehicles go to Flemington Borough and inquire if they are interested.

Mr. Sworen stated this is a good idea and could be a good use of County resources and a source of income but more information is needed before he could make a final decision. Also information is needed concerning the full compliment of officers.

Director Mennen asked Sheriff Trout if it is her perspective that the \$112,000 will be an additional amount that would be available for salary and wages or does she anticipate that the County could use the \$112,000 to offset what it already gives to the Sheriff's Office as a budgetary allotment for salaries and wages. Sheriff Trout stated she does not expect to see their salaries be reduced by the \$112,000 next year from what it is this year.

Director Mennen informed Mr. Shoey if he needs an answer within 2 weeks, he should look elsewhere but if he has the ability to wait three weeks, and the Sheriff's Office can provide the information needed by the Board to make a decision, then it will be back on the agenda in three weeks. Director Mennen feels the Board will be opened minded in the way the information is received.

Sheriff Trout apologized to the Board of Chosen Freeholders for the September 04, 2009 letter which she sent to the Board, because the letter was not detailed because the December 01, 2008 letter was detailed and she did not see the need to detail it out again.

Director Mennen asked the Sheriff and Undersheriff Russo to provide an action plan on how they would deal with a situation where two officers resign as there would be conflicting responsibilities, a contractual responsibility and a constitutional responsibility and how the office would deal with that. Director Mennen feels that is not just his concern; but the concern of the entire Board.

Director Mennen said he isn't going to probe but he will give the Sheriff three weeks to think about Undersheriff Russo's comment and reduce it in writing; his comment about using the funds to backfill additional security guard hours. Director Mennen said 20 hours of a security guard is half an employee; 40 hours is a full employee. He asked the Sheriff, Undersheriff's Muller and Russo to think about that statement because he is going to be curious as to what that really meant and if it was a correct statement. Undersheriff Russo said it means what it means. Director Mennen advised the word "backfill" means additional and it has been stated that there would be no additional employee. He asked the Sheriff and Mr. Muller to put a plan together so the Board can look at the whole proposal.

The Sheriff and Undersheriff Muller thanked the Board for their time.

SMALL CITIES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

Frank J. Bell, County Project Administrator and Alan Johnson, Coordinator for the Small Cities Grant came before the Board.

Cynthia J. Yard, County Administrator explained as a preface to the public hearing, this is a requirement for the County of Hunterdon to apply for the 2010 Small Cities Community Development Block grant. The County was not eligible to apply until there was a certain drawdown on the County's current grant, which was for \$450,000. The County took over from the Hunterdon County Housing Corporation the 2007 Small Cities Grant and so far \$420,000 has been spent. Once a certain amount has been spent the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs allows an application for another grant.

Mrs. Yard reported in the Freeholders' packet of information on the Small Cities grant is a Display Ad which becomes a bone of contention when applying for these grants. This Display Ad had to meet certain qualifications and thankfully it is able to be deducted from the grant. The cost of the Display Ad is \$600 but it is required in order to apply for the grant.

Mr. Johnson reported the 2007 Small Cities grant round is winding down. The County received a \$450,000 grant of which \$300,000 came from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Small Cities program and the \$150,000 was a match from the County of Hunterdon and that is being used to generate a revolving fund so as liens are retired on this program, the fund becomes replenished and will be used for furthering the operations. Currently the County is under contract for approximately \$420,000 of the \$450,000 and everything is being done to get as close as possible to that amount, even though this is a two to one match for the state funds.

Mr. Johnson advised being recommended for the 2010 Round that the grant be increased to \$600,000 so \$400,000 would come from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs and the County's match would be \$200,000 out of the revolving fund. Mr. Johnson reported he has checked with the Finance Director and that is a viable amount for the County.

Mr. Johnson reported on August 15, 2009 they began the outreach for the 2010 Small Cities Grant round. He explained that the past year provided quite an education in terms of the policies and procedures and the County would like to have answers to the questions before they are asked by the state. It was found out that the applicants should be prequalified because it would assist in terms of knowing what has to be dealt with. Applications started being taken on August 15, 2009. The application deadline for prequalification is September 18, 2009 and the application deadline is October 02, 2009. So far 41 applications have been requested and that doesn't take into account any applications taken off of the County's webpage. As of this afternoon, the webpage at 440 hits in the one month the webpage has been up with the application and the income guidelines. More than 155 telephone calls have been received and there were 22 walk-in requests on this program.

Mr. Johnson feels the program is very successful and added that there is a need for the continuation of the program.

Mr. Bell explained the reason they are requesting the grant amount be increased to \$600,000, is because there have been a number of septic system issues that had to be dealt with this year; and it was discovered through practice that \$25,000 does not cover the cost. The more realistic

cost is \$40,000 per septic and in the applications received, there are a large number regarding septic issues.

Mrs. Yard reported Mr. Bell and Mr. Johnson make this a very personal interaction; they go into people's homes and talk with them; they meet with the contractors and they do a lot of handholding. Mr. Johnson added that Mary Gamatko is the third member of the team assisting with the Small Cities program on behalf of the County.

Mr. Melick asked if administrative costs are being overspent. Mr. Johnson advised that at this time no administrative costs have been billed to the grant. The County may want to consider applying a portion of the secretary's, Mary Gamatko's, salary toward the grant and that would be an administrative expense.

Mr. Peterson stated he truly believes in the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant program and how it helps people. He asked if there is grant money for septic repair that could be used. He feels there maybe grant money that could supplement this for septic issues.

Mr. Peterson confirmed the revolving fund is money that comes back to the County. He asked if there is enough money to cover \$200,000. Mrs. Yard reported that the County is still settling up with the Hunterdon County Housing Corporation, so there is money coming in that they set aside for the dissolution process.

Mr. Peterson asked if the County accepts contributions into the revolving funds. The banks are charged with putting money back into the community for low income housing things and he was wondering if the County could capture some of those dollars into this program because that was something the Hunterdon County Housing Corporation was doing. Mrs. Yard confirmed Mr. Peterson is asking the County to solicit banks to put their money into this program. Mr. Bell will look into this further.

The Board thanked Mr. Bell and Mr. Johnson for their hard work on this program and asked that they convey their thanks also to Mary Gamatko.

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Melick seconded this:

See Page 09/15/09-9A

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the Hunterdon County Housing Rehabilitation Program Policy Manual.

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

Director Mennen opened the public hearing on the 2010 Small Cities Community Development Block Grant program for the County of Hunterdon.

Frances Gavigan, East Amwell Township resident asked the criteria for a citizens or someone to get any type of help under the Small Cities grant.

Mr. Johnson explained that this program is primarily income driven and based on the income guidelines provided by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Mrs. Gavigan questioned if a septic has to be proven failed. Mr. Johnson explained that anytime there is consideration of a septic system there are environmental engineering firms under contract who test the system to see if it is failed. Mr. Johnson advised there are people who apply and would like to have repairs done on occasion that are not necessary to be done; such as lowering countertops for accessibility issues they ask to have a granite replacement and that is cosmetic and not acceptable.

Mr. Johnson confirmed for Mrs. Gavigan that a septic would have to fail to be eligible under this program. An evaluation would be done for the condition of the septic and it would be referred to an environmental engineer and if the septic has failed or will be failing shortly within guidelines, a value judgement would be made.

Mrs. Gavigan stated this is a mechanism for helping senior and she feels this is a terrific idea.

There being no further questions or comments from the press or public, Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Peterson seconded a motion to close the public hearing.

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

Mr. Melick moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

See Page 09/15/09-9B

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving an application for the 2010 Small Cities funding round in the amount of \$400,000 with a County match of \$200,000.

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

Mr. Johnson informed the Freeholder Board that he has received the report of the recycling rates in Hunterdon County from the State Department of Environmental Protection and the County's rates have increased from 21.8% to 26.8%.

COUNTY Update

Cynthia J. Yard, County Administrator informed the Board that an In-Kind print request has been received from the Borough of Frenchtown for printing the Borough's annual information flyers and notices. Mrs. Yard reported that Bob Thurgarland, Director of Central Printing and Mail indicated there would be no anticipated overtime or operational interruption to provide this request. Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Melick seconded a motion granting permission to authorizing Central Printing and Mail to provide this service for the Borough of Frenchtown.

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

Mr. Melick asked when the County will reach a point when it can no longer fulfill these in-kind requests. Director Mennen feels when the projects start to involve overtime would be a factor is not approving these requests.

Mrs. Yard reported Freeholder Sworen is working on the Shared Service concept and they are looking at realistic fees; not to pay for something in total but to offset a request in a more fair and equitable manner. Mr. Thurgarland has discussed this with Mrs. Yard and she is aware that Mr. Thurgarland has talked about this with Mr. Sworen also.

CONSENT AGENDA

Director Mennen 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. Peterson moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion to approve the claims in accordance with the Claims Register dated September 15, 2009.

See Page 09/15/09-10A CLAIMS REGISTER

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

Mr. Peterson moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion to approve the regular session minutes of July 07, 2009, July 21, 2009 and August 18, 2009.

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

Mr. Peterson moved and Mr. Sworen seconded these:

See Page 09/15/09-10B RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Farah Mahmud appointed temporary, as needed Student Assistant, Library.

See Page 09/15/09-10C RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Subah Mahmud appointed temporary, as needed Student Assistant, Library.

See Page 09/15/09-10D RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Anthony Ikotidem appointed temporary, as needed Student Assistant, Library.

See Page 09/15/09-10E RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Brittany Wade appointed temporary, as needed Student Assistant, Library.

See Page 09/15/09-10G RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Kevin Yard appointed temporary, as needed Laboratory Assistant, Health Department.

See Page 09/15/09-10H RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the release of a performance bond, #1017391, to D&D Developers, Inc., in the amount \$40,730.

See Page 09/15/09-10I RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Authorizing the release of a performance bond, #0358565, to Raritan Valley Developers, in the amount of \$111,745.

See Page 09/15/09-11A

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving an Operating Assistance Agreement with New Jersey Transit Corporation for the Section 5311 program, in the amount of \$269,995, (NJ Transit-\$134,998 and a County Match of \$134,998).

See Page 09/15/09-11B

RESOLUTION

RESOLVED, Approving the Emergency Operating Plan for the County Department of Public Safety.

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

PROCLAMATION

Mr. Peterson moved and Mr. Sworen seconded this:

See Page 09/15/09-11C

PROCLAMATION

RESOLVED, Recognizing Kuhl Corporation on their 100th Anniversary.

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

GRANTS

Mr. Peterson moved and Mr. Holt seconded this:

See Page 09/15/09-11D

PROCLAMATION

RESOLVED, Approving a Health Services Grant with the New Jersey Department of Human Services to provide indigent clients substance abuse treatment; outpatient services; short term residential and prevention services, in the amount of \$254,697, (State funding-\$226,291 and a County Match of \$28,406).

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

CORRESPONDENCE

A request was received from the Hunterdon Harmonizers, requesting permission to use the restroom facilities in the rear of the historic Court House during the 25th Annual Craft Fair, on September 19 and 20, 2009. Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded a motion granting permission.

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

A request was received from the Milford Merchants Association, requesting permission to close a portion of County Route 519 on Sunday, October 25, 2009, for Milford's Annual Halloween Parade, starting at 1:00 p.m. Mr. Sworen moved and Mr. Holt seconded a motion granting permission provided this event is coordinated through the County's Department of Roads, Bridges and Engineering.

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

FREEHOLDERS COMMENTS/REPORTS

Discuss permitting municipalities to use the County's Health Benefits Plan

Mr. Sworen stated the Freeholders have been looking for ways to cut taxes for the residents and taxpayers of the County. A majority of municipalities in Hunterdon County have the State Health Benefits plan and that plan anticipates an 18% increase in premiums for the average coverage for municipalities and a 24% increase for schools. Mr. Sworen advised the state is also anticipating between a 12 to 18% increase again next year because the plan is not funded well and there are a lot of bad risks in the state plan.

Mr. Sworen advised he met with the County's Human Resources Director because he would like to help out the municipalities and the taxpayers to talk about this and to see what could be done and if there was a possibility for municipalities to join the County's health plan and if there was a penalty in doing that or additional costs.

Mr. Sworen reported a problem municipalities have when going to a different provider is they have to pay between \$2,000 to \$6,000 to have their experience rated and that may have to be paid two or three times when looking at different providers. The Human Resources Director talked with the County's provider and County's Agent, on whether the County's municipalities could join the County's plan. He stated it is possible for municipalities to join the County's plan and it would not affect the County's experience. The process is that the Freeholder Board would have to approve this to happen and the municipalities who choose to join would have to adopt resolutions allowing them to do this. There is a 60 day period under the state plan that they have to be notified when someone is leaving. Renewal for the state plan is January 01st for the next year.

Mr. Sworen advised he took it upon himself, with the help of the Human Resources Director, to review the County's plans. The County has a traditional plan, a POS, a PPO and an HMO. There are only 3 people in the HMO and the agent is going to try and get away from that plan. The tradition plan could be in the mix but it isn't a preferred plan because it is the most expensive plan. Mr. Sworen reviewed the POS which is similar to the State's NJDirect 15 plan except it provides better coverage, lower co-pays and lower deductibles; and it also has a better prescription plan. The POS plan also has similar to the State AETNA and CIGNA coverage plans which are HMO's except it provides better coverage, lower co-pays and lower deductibles. This plan would provide a 12.6 to 18.4% reduction in costs to municipalities over the CIGNA and AETNA plans.

Mr. Sworen stated the County's PPO plan, which is the premium plan, the costs are similar to what municipalities would be paying with the 18% increase in 2010. Also, there are towns without dental programs or eye programs available and if they were to join with the County, it would be offered.

Mr. Sworen advised this would work by the County having to sign up municipal employees and bill municipalities for the cost. The municipalities would worry about payroll deduction; if people have to pay part of their costs; if they were choosing dental or eye care.

Mr. Sworen stated the initial set up costs to the County would be nothing. It could be handled during the normal enrollment plan in October. It would just be adding new employees. Not every municipality will sign up all at first. The only cost to the County would be to register additional members. A small municipality with 8 employees signing up for the POS could save about \$20,000 in health care costs. If you look that that across 26 municipalities, it could be a taxpayer savings of around \$750,000 or \$1 million that could be saved by municipalities.

Mr. Sworen said this is an opportunity for the County to provide something to the taxpayers in taxpayer savings.

Mr. Sworen stated he worked with Shared Services to make sure there were no issues or objections or state rules on things that can not be done and the answer is no. Mr. Sworen handed out to the Board a resolution drafted from Shared Services for the Board to consider.

Mr. Peterson confirmed with County Counsel DeSapio that the County has to provide something that is equal to or better than the State's plan. Mr. DeSapio explained it has to be equal to or better than the present coverage. Without negotiating the County cannot lower the coverage, increase the deductible or change what procedures are not covered.

Director Mennen reported he also spoke with the Human Resources Director on this and there is a thought that there maybe a minimal administrative fee for the start up costs within the savings figure, and it would be an ongoing cost to the County. He questioned her about precedent about a nominal administration fee and the Human Resources Director believed COBRA has a built in 2% administration fee. Mr. Sworen informed Director Mennen the first consideration was to provide relief for municipalities. Regarding the administrative fee, it could be a one time fee of around \$25 or \$50 to sign someone up or a dollar value could be done per year per employer. Mr. Sworen stated an initial bill would have to be set up through the Finance Department to bill municipalities once a month or once a year.

Director Mennen asked the Human Resources Director to put together what her thoughts are about an appropriate administrative fee. Mr. Sworen agreed.

Mr. Sworen said if the Board adopts this resolution tonight, then the information can be sent to municipalities who will then be in a position to make a decision in October during the County's open enrollment period and that would also provide them the 60 day cancellation period with the state.

Mr. Peterson questioned that Mr. Sworen is asking this Board to adopt a resolution without the benefit of a breakdown and figures. Mr. Sworen advised this is time sensitive and the Board could wait for the next meeting but it would shorten the municipalities' time.

After further discussion, Director Mennen asked that this be revisited at the October 06, 2009 meeting with more information for the Board to consider. Mr. Holt asked that someone from the County's Health Care Insurance provider be at the meeting on October 06, 2009 to answer questions. Director Mennen noted if the County were to take action on October 06, 2009, it would provide municipalities with six weeks to take action.

After further discussion, the Board agreed to meet at 2:00 p.m., on Tuesday, October 06, 2009, to discuss with the County's Health Broker to discuss a proposal to provide health benefits to the County's municipalities and how that would effect the County's pricing and what hoops each municipality would have to go through to get into the County's plan without effecting the County's costs.

Discuss Flu Shots for employees and MRC volunteers

Director Mennen recognized John Beckley, Health Director and Rose Poule of the Health Department.

Mr. Beckley informed the Board he has several issues he would like to raise this evening because of the timing of the H1N1 season. The first issue relates to the seasonal flu. He is asking the Board for a final decision on whether or not the Health Department can take delivery of the 300

doses of the seasonal flu that the vendor has been holding for the County. Mr. Beckley stated the intent is those doses would be made available for free to as many County employees interested and as many MRC volunteers who would be interested also. The cost for the 300 doses is around \$2,500 and it could be paid through the Senior Health Services Trust account. He has checked with the County Finance Director and there are sufficient funds in the trust account. Mr. Beckley advised this would provide the opportunity for hands on training a new bunch of MRC vaccinators in a mini clinic setting. It would also be an investment in a healthier County workforce, it would reduce absenteeism and the convenience factor of offering it to County workers on County property would cause more employees to take advantage.

Mr. Beckley said if the vaccine isn't offered to County employees and they want the vaccine, they will go to their doctors during the day, using sick time to get the vaccine. Mr. Beckley reported the cost to the County to purchase a vaccine dose and syringe is \$8 each. There would be no cost to the County to run a flu clinic for this, as MRC people could administer the vaccine, and there could be an afternoon clinic with people coming as they can. Mr. Beckley added, this would be a nice gesture and build moral among the County employees.

Mr. Holt stated the issue is if the Board is willing to continue with the policy of offering flu shots to County employees for free. The correct method would be to purchase the vaccine and syringes through the MRC program; which is around one-third the cost if someone attended a clinic. If the Board is not going to continue the program of free flu shots, then the vaccine isn't needed.

Mr. Peterson questioned if this is an appropriate use of County money. He confirmed the County's health insurance covers flu shots but you have to pay the co-pay.

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion to purchase 300 vaccines for County workers and MRC volunteers. Mr. Beckley stated the vaccines would be marked with the availability of the doses and all County workers would be encouraged to take advantage. Dr. Poulle advised not everyone chooses to take the vaccine. Mr. Melick confirmed with Mr. Beckley that if the Board did not provide this vaccine, it would cost employees a co-pay to get a flu vaccine from their private physician. Mr. Melick also confirmed that funding for the vaccines would come from the Senior Health Services Trust account. He also confirmed with Mr. Beckley that the trust account funds could be used to offset other expenses. Mr. Beckley advised the funds in the trust account are from when Medicare was billed in past years and when the revenue comes back to the County, it goes into that trust account. There is currently around \$37,000 in that trust account.

Mr. Peterson asked how the Senior Health Services Trust account was created. Mr. Beckley believes it was created by the County's Finance Department around 20 years ago. The trust account was specifically set up to provide flu vaccines.

Mr. Peterson asked if the trust account could be used for anything other than flu vaccines and also questioned if that is an appropriate use for those funds. Mr. Peterson asked County Counsel DeSapio to see if there is a statute that governs this.

Mr. Holt stated the question before this Board is whether the County wants to be in the business of providing flu shots.

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

Director Mennen explained he does not have any confidence in the administration, internally, of the flu shot program; based upon the exorbitant costs that the County has spent for this in previous years. He questions the effectiveness and efficiency.

Director Mennen asked if the Board wants to reimburse County employees their co-pay for the flu vaccines or pay to have them have a flu shot at a clinic or nothing. Mr. Beckley asked about the MRC (Medical Reserve Corp volunteers).

Mr. Peterson does not feel asking someone to pay \$10 is much to get a flu shot since the general public has to pay for their vaccines. Anyone who is inclined to get a flu shot will get one.

Mr. Melick stated this Board has to make several changes in the way this government is run and administrative bureaucracy has to be cut out.

The issue of flu vaccines was left that the County will not pay for flu vaccines and employees can pay their co-pays to their physicians to obtain a flu shot.

Health Preparedness Contract

Mr. Beckley asked for authorization from the Board of Freeholders to proceed with a revision of the Hunterdon Medical Center Public Health Preparedness contract because a couple of new H1N1 response activities have been identified and he wants to work with the HMC and the current contract does not have any language in the contract in regard to that. The first activity is the disposal of medical waste. Mr. Beckley advised questions have come up and there is going to need to be an outlet for all of the spent syringes and vials. The County does not have a way to dispose of this waste and the HMC has a contract with a vendor to remove such waste.

Mr. Melick suggested contacting the County's Purchasing Department to get something in place.

Dr. Poulle cautioned the Board that regulated medical waste disposal is an extremely complex business. HMC has an existing contract which is highly regulated. Things have to be traced from the point of origin to its disposal with paperwork.

Mr. Peterson feels Mr. Melick is recommending the County bid this.

Dr. Poulle said administratively the costs could add up.

Director Mennen confirmed this is not just the act of hiring someone to do this; there is a license involved and such. He confirmed with Mr. Beckley that if the Hunterdon Medical Center were to do this disposal, it would be a pass through for the County. Director Mennen further confirmed this is for the limited purpose related to the H1N1 which the County would be receiving federal funds for. He confirmed with Mr. Beckley this would be covered by a federal grant.

Mr. Holt asked Mr. Beckley to briefly inform the Board about H1N1 and what the County will receive grant funding for.

Mr. Beckley advised his department just received a letter, electronically, indicating the County will be getting additional Phase III federal funding, bring the grant total of federal H1N1 response funding to \$260,000. Those are the funds that would be used under the scope of the contract with the Hunterdon Medical Center.

Mr. Holt confirmed with Mr. Beckley that the H1N1 doses are now reduced to one dose instead of two. Dr. Poulle said that is for most individuals. Mr. Beckley said that would be for adults and youth among a certain age and it is believed that age is 10.

Mr. Holt asked if Mr. Beckley feels the \$260,000 in federal funds will cover the County's costs for H1N1. Mr. Beckley stated it depends on how much supplemental staff is paid that will have to be hired versus how much volunteerism comes out.

Mr. Beckley advised no one knows at this time what level of demand there will be among the public for the vaccine. A Roper's Survey was done nationally in July and 60% of parents said they would have their child vaccinated. The Medical Director of the Hunterdon Pediatric Associates said based upon interactions they are having with their patients; the County should plan on 80%. Also, the Health Department is partnering with the Medical Offices in Hunterdon County to do part of the work. It is not know what percent will fall to the County as the default mass clinic provider.

Mr. Beckley stated another factor is the media and if they are going to do sad stories that get people deeply concerned about the threat or will there be media stories about the mildness of the disease and a side effect issue. No one knows at this time. His office is planning for what maybe the worst scenario and they are going by the 60% figure as a planning assumption.

Mr. Beckley advised there are six different work groups and one of those is the Public Health/Health Care Task Force and in talking with them about ways in which the County can assist them in doing more vaccinations of the younger children and help the County Health Department get more done, the idea came up of creating a centralized H1N1 Call Center which the public can call and appointments could be made with every medical office in the County has part of the HMC system. That would include Delaware Valley Health Center, Phillips Barber Health Center and all four of the Hunterdon Pediatric offices and most of the family physician offices. The cost of doing that would be roughly \$20,000 for a 12 week period. Mr. Beckley explained this would advertise a single phone number for anyone in Hunterdon County who wanted to get their vaccine through their medical home; they would call that number and someone would answer and they would have through the Hunterdon Medical Center's electronic medical records system, they would draw down that practice and look at the appointments. They would be able to block off appointment times for H1N1 and they could populate those appointments just with a phone call to one location. Mr. Beckley stated that is not only convenient for the public but it protects the integrity of the doctor's offices that may be getting bombarded with telephone calls from parents. He wanted to take the burden off of incoming phone calls going to all the doctor's offices. This was an idea that came about. Mr. Beckley stated the Hunterdon Medical Center has experienced people they can put on this and they would staff the center from 8:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. and use a single phone number. This enhances the HMC's ability to help the County Health Department get more doses out to the patients. Mr. Beckley added that the state likes this, he ran it by the State Health Department and they said fine and it's a great idea. Mr. Holt confirmed the funding comes out of the grants. Dr. Poulle stated that this would take the burden of scheduling the clinics out of their office staff that have to deal with ill people.

Mr. Beckley stated he is looking for authorization from the Freeholder Board to proceed with preparing a revision to the existing Hunterdon Medical Center Public Health Preparedness Agreement. It's one paragraph. He has talked with the County's Purchasing Agent, John Davenport about this and provided him with a draft. Mrs. Yard advised Mr. Davenport is waiting on the amount to be placed in the revision of the contract with the Hunterdon Medical Center. Mr. Beckley stated he only received today an estimate of what the actual medical costs will be.

Mr. Sworen confirmed the modification is for the medical waste disposal and also for a centralized H1N1 Call Center for appointments and that cost would be around \$2,000 for the disposal and \$20,000 for the Call Center and it would be paid for through grants.

Mr. Beckley informed the Board that the County will reimburse the Hunterdon Medical Center for their personnel costs of having additional staff man these phones. The HMC will invoice the County for their costs.

Director Mennen asked if the \$20,000 figure was given to the County Health Department by the HMC for this Call Center. Mr. Beckley explained HMC was asked to put together a proposal for this. He explained it was felt that children under 6 should go to their pediatricians and there are people over 60 that have chronic health problems. Those medical homes know who they are. This would only be needed for the duration of the flu season and it will probably be less than \$20,000. This is an investment in helping the County's health care provider/partners do more in terms of getting the doses. He feels there will be a lot of people who want to get their dosing through their medical home and this helps facilitate that.

Mr. Peterson confirmed this is not a call center that the Hunterdon Medical Center already has set up. He asked Mr. Beckley how much the Hunterdon Medical Center will be contributing because they are going to benefit from this. Mr. Beckley advised the County is asking HMC to do something that is beyond the scope of what they normally would do. This program would allow the programmer to schedule appointments in the doctor's calendars for citizens who called into this 800 number to schedule a flu shot with their personal physician's office.

Mr. Melick asked why parents would not just call their pediatricians. Mr. Beckley explained this concept was recommended by the Director of Hunterdon Pediatrics.

Mrs. Yard asked how the vaccines are paid for. Mr. Beckley stated they are free.

Mrs. Yard confirmed the \$260,000 in federal funds does not include the vaccines. Director Mennen said the dollars are for the actual service provided. He understands the importance of a centralized scheduling but he's struggling with the \$20,000 figure and if it is worth that.

Mr. Holt advised it is important to remember, that almost every penny of the \$260,000 is to provide services. There is a team of people from every stakeholder involved in this, and it has been determined that a centralized appointment scheduling system is necessary if the H1N1 flu goes to the level that is expected and it will increase efficiency in providing vaccinations. Dr. Poulle stated the idea is to maximize the ability of the health care system to handle the people.

Mr. Peterson asked if the County is supplementing the Hunterdon Medical Center's costs. Dr. Poulle said her answer is that the HMC is being asked to do something that they have not done before. Mr. Peterson said this is to the advantage of the HMC as well as the County. This is to everyone's advantage.

Mr. Holt stated the County Health Department is responsible for the production and implementation the plan. It then draws its partners in to make sure, that the breakout of ages zero to four goes to their pediatric doctors and four to whatever goes to the County and the rest goes to their doctors and the funding comes to the County.

Director Mennen stated Mr. Peterson is asking is would the Hunterdon Medical Center call staff, who answers the call have the ability to dispatch or send a potential patient to a doctor or to the hospital to administer the inoculation. Would the HMC have the ability to capture a phone call and steer a patient, either through the scheduling computer or elsewhere, to a scenario where the HMC stood to generate revenue. Mr. Beckley said the HMC does have a physician referral program. Mr. Holt stated people calling in are getting scheduled in their doctor's offices.

Mr. Peterson stated there is a benefit to the Hunterdon Medical Center for the Call Center; they know all their affiliated physicians. All he asked is if the Hunterdon Medical Center is contributing to the costs because there is a benefit to them or is the County carrying the entire burden. Is the Call Center costing \$20,000 or is it costing \$30,000 and HMC is picking up \$10,000.

Dr. Poulle advised HMC is providing the space.

Mrs. Yard confirmed with Mr. Beckley that the answer is that the County is paying the \$20,000 to enable the Hunterdon Medical Center to do this.

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion authorizing the County Freeholder Director to sign a modification to the existing Hunterdon Medical Center Public Health Preparedness Agreement to include \$2,000 for medical waste disposal and \$20,000 for a Call Center, subject to the review of the County Purchasing Agent and County Counsel.

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

Mr. Beckley asked for permission to move ahead with the Human Resources Director to create a series of new temporary, hourly, as needed job titles. There is no problem with the State Department of Personnel according to the Human Resources Director because they will be time limited. This is to create job titles, with job descriptions with credentials, with a different hourly rate for each of the various jobs that would need to be recruited. Mr. Beckley stated he and Dr. Poulle have had two discussions with the Human Resources Director on this issue. The titles needed are Vaccinator, Pod Manager, Clinical Manager, Data Entry Clerk.

Mr. Holt moved and Mr. Sworen seconded a motion authorizing the establishment of a series of temporary, hourly, as needed positions which will allow the Health Department to prepare for the H1N1 plan. Mr. Beckley advised all the resolutions for these temporary positions will come before the Board for approval at a regular Freeholder Meeting.

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

Mr. Beckley said he would like to have a waiver from the no food policy so sustenance can be provided to the people working these clinics. He's talking about snacks and such. Mrs. Yard advised that is okay because it is not food at a meeting, this is a medical event and it can be handled administratively.

Six County Coalition

Mr. Holt reported that the Six County Coalition met on September 02, 2009, and one of their topics covered was capital. The Coalition will be getting together and they are asking for the Finance people from each of the six municipalities to begin to work on putting together language on the counties' position that can be taken to the State regarding capital items. Once the six counties get their positions together they are going to take it to NJAC (New Jersey Association of Counties) in order for them to support all 21 counties.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Director Mennen opened the meeting to the public who wished to address the Board.

Frances Gavigan, East Amwell Township resident, informed Freeholder Sworen that regarding shared services, things move slowly and she doesn't believe there is anything in place by November 01st with municipalities to be able to come into the County's Health Benefit program. She suggested that for the October 06, 2009 meeting that the County not only invite the provider but also invite various municipalities so they can get information and ask questions.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Director Mennen adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Denise B. Doolan
Clerk of the Board**