A regular meeting of the Northampton County Council was held on the above date with the following present: John Cusick, President; Margaret L. Ferraro, Vice President; Thomas H. Dietrich; Bruce A. Gilbert; Kenneth M. Kraft; Lamont G. McClure, Jr.; Scott Parsons; Barbara A. Thierry; Robert F. Werner; Frank E. Flisser, Clerk to Council, and Philip D. Lauer, Solicitor to Council.

Prayer

Mr. Cusick led County Council in prayer to open the meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Kraft led County Council in the pledge of allegiance.

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. McClure made the following motion:

Be It Moved By the Northampton County Council that the minutes of the February 16, 2012 meeting shall be approved.

Mrs. Thierry seconded the motion.

The minutes were approved by voice acclamation.

Presentation of Commendations

Mr. Robert Meyers, Director of Corrections, read a letter he received from Mr. John Wetzel, Pennsylvania Secretary of Corrections:

“Dear Director Meyers:

Congratulations. The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections has approved your Basic Training curriculum. This
approval would remain effective until 27 January 2015, providing the program continues to meet Department’s minimum standards. Attached for your information is the County Prison Basic Training Curriculum Review Audit Report.

It is obvious to our Training Academy personnel who completed the comprehensive review of your program that Training Administrator Jose L. Garcia and Lieutenant Mark Lambert did an excellent job of developing and organizing your materials. This is a positive reflection on your facility’s commitment to staff development and training.

During this approval period, personnel from the Department’s Office of County Inspections and Services will perform an annual audit of your Basic Training course. We will contact you in advance with the necessary information to accommodate this part of our approval."

Mr. Meyers advised the training academy would be run by the County for its correctional staff. He further advised there were 67 Counties in Pennsylvania, of which 64 had County Correctional facilities, but only 18 of them had credited State certified training academies. He noted the County started its academy in 1999 and there have been approximately 300 graduates.

Mrs. Thierry presented Training Administrator Garcia and Lieutenant Lambert with proclamations of appreciation in recognition of the work they did in association with the training academy.

Courtesy of the Floor

Mr. Darin Steward, Northampton County Deputy Sheriff - stated every year, the Sheriff’s Department Association ran an Easter egg hunt for the children of County employees so he was present to request $700 to allow them to do it this year.

Mr. Cusick advised a resolution would be prepared for the next County Council meeting.

Ms. Megan McBride, Manager of the Easton Farmers Market and Assistant Manager of the Easton Main Street Initiative - stated even though these two organizations shared a common goal of
revitalizing downtown Easton, they maintained separate budgets, mostly separate staff and separate volunteer bases. She further stated ten years ago, the Easton Farmers Market had one vendor and now, it had more than 40 vendors and attracted more than three thousand customers.

Ms. McBride advised last year, the Easton Farmers Market was one of 12 markets nationwide to be recognized by the National Farmers Market Coalition and the United States Department of Agriculture for its outstanding contribution to the downtown economy. She further advised in 2010, they implemented an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) system that enabled shoppers who participated in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formally known as food stamps) to purchase healthy foods.

Ms. McBride stated with its success, there comes the need for added staff, volunteers and funding. She further stated the market currently employed a part-time manager, a market day assistant, an EBT coordinator and bookkeeper, a volunteer coordinator and a children program coordinator. She noted they did have a Farmers Market Advisory Board and more than 75 volunteers.

Ms. McBride advised aside from the 20% of their budget that came from vendor fees and the $11,000 they received from the City of Easton, the remaining $43,000 of the market’s budget depended upon obtaining donations, private sponsorships and grants. She further advised like many organizations, the Easton Farmers Market had seen a staggering reduction in funds provided by the State in the past few years.

Ms. McBride stated they wanted to sustain the success they had in the County and the city, but they needed the County’s help to do so and she hoped that something could be done.

Mr. Werner advised Ms. McBride was an outstanding, dedicated volunteer and manager for the City of Easton, who had done a lot for the city and the County so he hoped the County could do something to help this worthy cause.
Mr. Stoffa read the following statement:

“I WOULD LIKE TO SPEND MY TIME TALKING ABOUT THE SWAPTION IF I MAY. TONIGHT IS AN IMPORTANT EVENING NOT ONLY FOR COUNCIL BUT FOR THE CITIZENS AND TAXPAYERS OF NORTHAMPTON COUNTY. IT IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE TONIGHT WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO FINALLY END THIS NIGHTMARE OR WE CAN DELAY THE DECISION AND PASS THE CHALLENGE ON TO OTHER COUNCILS AND COUNTY EXECUTIVES WHO FOLLOW US.

IN RETROSPECT, I DON'T CRITICIZE ANYONE WHO VOTED FOR THIS SWAPTION. AT THE TIME I’M SURE IT SOUNDED LIKE A GOOD IDEA. I REMEMBER WHEN JIMMY CARTER WAS PRESIDENT AND MORTGAGE RATES WERE 18 PERCENT. KEN KRAFT JUST BOUGHT A HOUSE WITH A MORTGAGE OF WHAT KEN? 3.5 PERCENT? A GOOD FRIEND OF MINE HAS HIS INVESTMENTS AT MORGAN STANLEY, PARKED IN A SAVINGS ACCOUNT FOR AN INTEREST RATE OF .01. YES NOT .1, BUT .01. CAN IT GET ANY LOWER? THE POINT BEING, NO ONE CAN PREDICT THE FUTURE, ESPECIALLY IN THE FINANCIAL MARKET.

THE INFORMATION WE HAVE PROVIDED TO YOU IS CLEAR. WE MUST BREAK THE SWAPTION NOW. BREAKING THE SWAP WILL ALLOW THE COUNTY TO REFINANCE 2001 & 2006 BONDS RESULTING IN SUBSTANTIAL DEBT SERVICE SAVINGS ALLOWING THE COUNTY TO RECOVER A SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF THE SWAP EXPENSE OVER AN 8 TO 8 1/2 YEAR PERIOD. IT WILL ALSO REDUCE OUR DEBT PAYMENT IN 2012 BY $4.2 MILLION. IN ESSENCE, THE COUNTY HAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO RECOVER $20,863,974.70 OF A $25 MILLION PAYMENT WITHIN 8 TO 8 1/2 YEARS.

OUR FINANCIAL CONSULTANTS, GARY PULCINI & ROBERT FULLER, ARE HERE TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE. DORAN HAMANN IS ALSO HERE AS WELL. I STRONGLY URGE YOU TO VOTE TO BREAK THE SWAPTION AND REMOVE THIS ALBATROSS FROM THE TAXPAYERS OF THIS COUNTY.”

Discussion and Review of the Swaption Transaction

Mr. Cusick stated at the request of Mr. McClure, two resolutions were prepared with regard to terminating the Swaption approved in 2004. He further stated the first resolution stated it was the consensus of County Council that
Option #3, as set forth in Mr. Scott Shearer’s presentation of February 16, 2012, was the best option for terminating the Swaption agreement. He noted the second resolution stated it was the consensus of County Council that Option #3, as set forth in Mr. Shearer’s presentation was the best option for terminating the Swaption agreement, together with a payment of $10 million to reduce the present value of the cost of the transaction.

Mr. Cusick advised at the request of Mr. Gilbert, a resolution was prepared that called for the complete and full termination of the Swaption with County-saved funds.

Mr. McClure introduced his first resolution:

WHEREAS, on June 17, 2004, the then Northampton County Council adopted Resolution Number 34-04, which approved the Swaption transaction, with an exercise date of October 1, 2012; and

WHEREAS, on February 16, 2012, Scott Shearer presented County Council with a financial analysis (a copy of which is attached hereto and labeled as Exhibit “A”) for terminating the Swaption; and

WHEREAS, Option #3 appears to be the best available option: (1) to avoid a tax increase in the 2013 budget, (2) to avoid having the County’s excellent bond rating from being negatively impacted, (3) to ensure that the County continues to have the ability to assist Gracedale through its important period of transition and (4) to ensure that the County has the necessary resources to achieve the County Executive’s ambitious goals in the coming years.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Northampton County Council that it is the consensus of the Northampton County Council that Option #3, as set forth in Exhibit “A”, is the best option for terminating the Swaption agreement. Further, the Northampton County Council directs the County Executive and his staff to immediately begin to implement the Swaption termination using Option #3 as set forth in Exhibit “A.”
Mr. McClure stated he could talk more about paying ransom to the Bank of America and Wall Street, but, with respect to the people present who were trying to solve this problem, he did not think that rhetoric was appropriate.

Mr. McClure introduced his second resolution:

WHEREAS, on June 17, 2004, the then Northampton County Council adopted Resolution Number 34-04, which approved the Swaption transaction, with an exercise date of October 1, 2012; and

WHEREAS, on February 16, 2012, Scott Shearer presented County Council with a financial analysis (a copy of which is attached hereto and labeled as Exhibit “A”) for terminating the Swaption; and

WHEREAS, Option #3 appears to be the best available option: (1) to avoid a tax increase in the 2013 budget, (2) to avoid having the County’s excellent bond rating from being negatively impacted, (3) to ensure that the County continues to have the ability to assist Gracedale through its important period of transition and (4) to ensure that the County has the necessary resources to achieve the County Executive’s ambitious goals in the coming years.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Northampton County Council that it is the consensus of the Northampton County Council that Option #3, as set forth in Exhibit “A”, together with the payment of $10 million to reduce the present value of the cost of the transaction, is the best option for terminating the Swaption agreement. Further, the Northampton County Council directs the County Executive and his staff to immediately begin to implement the Swaption termination using Option #3, as set forth in Exhibit “A”, together with the payment of $10 million to reduce the present value of the cost of the transaction.

Mr. McClure advised the difference between this resolution and the previous one was that the County would make a payment of $10 million to reduce the present value cost of exercising the option.

Mr. Gilbert stated he wanted to thank Mr. McClure for
bringing in Mr. Shearer to provide another point of view because it enabled everyone to reach a better conclusion than if they did not have that point of view.

Mr. Gilbert advised there may be other entities where an extension would make sense especially if there was a continuity in leadership, however, the only continuum here was the taxpayer who would be burdened by either keeping or eliminating this debt. He further advised there was no winning scenario, but a choice of the lesser of three evils.

Mr. Gilbert stated it was impossible to predict the future and that was the reason the County could no longer ask the taxpayers to be a party to this transaction. He further stated it came to guarantee versus no guarantee because the enemy the County faced was unseen.

Mr. Gilbert advised the first risk the County had was the market risk, which was defined as unforeseen circumstances that could occur. He further advised the second risk was stand-alone risk that was the lack of diversification. He noted his comfort level waned when he had to look at the uncertainty down the road with the taxpayers still being at risk.

Mr. Gilbert and Mrs. Thierry introduced the following resolution:

R. 14-2012  WHEREAS, on June 17, 2004, the then Northampton County Council adopted Resolution Number 34-04, which approved the Swaption transaction, with an exercise date of October 1, 2012; and

WHEREAS, on January 5, 2012, Gary Pulcini, VALCO Capital, Ltd., and Robert Fuller, Capital Markets Management, L.L.C., presented a recommendation to the County of Northampton that full and complete termination of the Swaption was in the best interest of the County of Northampton; and

WHEREAS, the full and complete termination of the Swaption: (1) would not decrease the County’s debt capacity nor would it raises the County’s debt service, (2) would help to preserve the County’s financial flexibility and (3) would reduce financial volatility.
NOW, THEREFORE, IS IT RESOLVED by the Northampton County Council that it is the consensus of the Northampton County Council that it is in the best interest of the County of Northampton to fully terminate the Swaption prior to the exercise date. Further, the Northampton County Council directs the County Executive and his staff to immediately begin to implement the full and complete termination of the Swaption.

Mr. Gilbert stated this was the only guarantee because once the County terminated the Swaption, it was over and the County could move forward.

Mr. Werner advised the 2004 members of County Council entered into an agreement they were inexperienced with and should not have pursued, however, they were advised by advisors to use a financial tool that was created by banking industries under Act 23 that specifically targeted municipalities and equated to nothing more than a gamble with taxpayer money and only questioned the consequences of their actions after they voted. He further advised the Auditor General Jack Wagner stated these financial Swaptions should be outlawed.

Mr. Werner stated currently many banks were not offering Swaptions and were distancing themselves from them as fast as possible because they were awash in turmoil and were wrong. He further stated this County Council had been tasked with fixing problems of many past actions because there were many times in 2009 and 2011 when the Swaption should have been ended, but the past County Councils did not act on it.

Mr. Werner advised this County Council could remove the County’s debt capacity, preserve its bond rating, stop payment of debt service to counter parties, reduce termination costs, recoup approximately $20 million of the $25 million and remove the potential of this scenario from happening again with future County Councils.

In answer to Mrs. Ferraro’s question as to what other entities were doing to get out of their Swaptions, Mr. Robert Fuller, Owner, Capital Markets Management LLC, stated the Bethlehem Area School District terminated theirs.

Mr. Gary Pulcini, President, VALCO Capital Ltd., advised his experience had shown those entities that had the ability to
issue tax exempt bonds, had done so and some have issued taxable debt, but that was extremely expensive. He further advised school districts were different in that they had more resources. He noted they were breaking one now for a County who was issuing taxable debt because they had no other choice.

Mr. Pulcini stated in those entities where board members that voted for the original Swaption were still in office tended to kick the can down the road because to do otherwise would be an admission that they had the wool pulled over their eyes and it was more politically expedient than to solve the problem.

In response to Mrs. Ferraro’s question as to how it would be handled if they decided to wait, Mr. Pulcini stated it would continue to be monitored with no guarantee a decision would ever be made, noting the County had several chances to break it when the amounts were a lot lower. He further stated even though the rates were low, which made the break high, it allowed the County to save money with its refunding.

Mr. Dietrich advised right after the Bethlehem Area School District terminated their Swaption, there was a massive tax increase so he wondered if that would happen with the County.

Mr. Gilbert stated the Bethlehem Area School District faced more challenges other than the Swaption. He further stated Swaptions usually got prolonged for political reasons or because there was no money available, however, the County had the money put aside. Therefore, he questioned how this County Council was going to leave future County Councils, Administrations and most important, the taxpayers with a scenario that it would still have to come to a decision while facing an unforeseeable future.

In answer to Mr. McClure’s question as to whether anyone had paid more than $25 million to break a Swaption in Pennsylvania, Mr. Pulcini replied not to his knowledge.

In response to Mr. Cusick’s question as to how this would impact the budget for this year and the next should County Council choose to exercise the full $25 million, Mr. Doran Hamann, Acting Director of Fiscal Affairs, advised the only known impact would be the $6.6 million savings in debt service payments over the next two years. He further advised the debt service payment for this year was $10.7 million and if it was
exercised, it would be $4.6 million for 2012 and $2.2 million for 2013.

Mr. Cusick agreed there were no good answers, but his concern was the County paying off the mortgage while it still had two kids in college and the reason he was saying that was because there were approximately six contracts coming down from arbitration, Gracedale was running at an approximate $6 million a year deficit and this Administration was choosing to fund those areas in Human Services where the State was cutting back. He advised with the County facing these substantial expenses, the only alternative he saw if the County spent the whole $25 million, was a substantial tax increase next year.

Mr. Hamann stated in January, as part of the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 54 requirements, County Council established a $16 million Stabilization Fund, however, they later identified the minimum amount needed would be $8 million so that left an additional $8 million.

Mr. Parsons advised, as he understood it, the County had a Fund Balance of approximately $58 million so taking the $25 million would leave approximately $33 million and the County had $16 million put aside for GASB 54, which left approximately $17 million not budgeted.

Mr. Hamann stated the $17 million was being used to balance the 2012 budget, however, it may not all be spent.

In answer to Mr. Gilbert’s statement that if the County terminated the Swaption, the County’s debt capacity would not decrease nor would its debt service be raised, Mr. Hamann advised that was correct and in fact, it would decrease the debt payment.

In response to Mr. Gilbert’s question as to whether he believed the County would be put into a position where it could not continue to conduct business as it should be conducted, Mr. Hamann stated he believed it would be able to continue to do business as it was expected to be done.

Mr. McClure advised this was the exact opposite argument that was made during the past several years when he talked about the fund balance. He further advised there would not be
any room for any additional spending in this year or the next without requiring a tax increase. He indicated he would not vote for a tax increase if the County paid $25 million to terminate the Swaption.

Mr. Dietrich stated, referring to the handout that was given out (see Attachment #1), he took the $25 million subtracted the $20.8 million and came up with a difference of approximately $4 million so he wondered if that was the projected cost.

Mr. Pulcini advised to break the Swaption, the number was approximately $25 million and after subtracting the approximately $19 million savings from refunding the 2001 Bonds, the approximately $1.9 million the County already received and the approximately $980,000 savings from the refunding of the 2006 Bonds, the total cost would be approximately $2.2 million. However, the present value was approximately $4.6 million.

Mr. Dietrich stated the point he was trying to make was there was little difference in paying the $25 million and terminating the Swaption compared to only using $10 million to partially pay it off.

Mr. Fuller advised by partially paying it off, the County would have half the Swaption notional value remaining and the cash outpour to the counter party for the remaining term of that Swaption. He further advised short term interest rates were not expected to rise meaningfully for the next year or year and a half so if the County was willing to pay debt service on money it never borrowed that was the way to do it.

Mr. Fuller stated they understood County Council had to make a decision as to whether they wanted to pay cash today that could be available for something else or keep paying more slowly over time. He further stated if they decided not to pay the $25 million, they would have a principal amount of debt and the interest rate on that debt for money they never borrowed, never built anything with, but still had the privilege of paying for. He noted they thought the best way to approach this was to eliminate the cash flow out for the Swaption completely and allow the fund balance of the County to rebuild quickly by virtue of the fact that the Swaption would be gone and the benefits of refunding the 2001 and 2006 Bonds.
Mr. Dietrich advised his concern was that $25 million would go out the door and the County had a number of contracts that were being negotiated where the cost of living and health benefits were not factored into the budget so there was going to have to be either a retroactive tax increase, a large increase next year or programs would be severely cut. He further advised this option did not provide financial stability for the County.

Mr. Stoffa stated 2.25% was budgeted for the contracts. He further stated the human services building would be leased and not purchased and the archives building that was talked about would cost approximately $1 million so the County was not looking at spending any where near $10-25 million within the next two years.

In answer to Mrs. Thierry’s statement as to whether they felt the only way the County would receive any benefit from this was to pay it off, Mr. Fuller advised since interest rates in the bond market were so low, the breakage cost was high, however, by breaking the Swaption and then refunding the debt, it drove the overall actual cost to the County down as low as it may ever be for a long time.

Mr. Parsons stated Option #3 provided for a variable rate so there was no way a number could be put on it.

In response to Mr. Kraft’s question as to whether the County could refinance these bonds at a really low interest rate if they paid the $25 million, Mr. Pulcini stated that was what they were suggesting. He further stated the principal amount of the debt on the Swaption was $67.5 million and by refunding that, the County was going to save more than $19 million.

In answer to Mr. Kraft’s question as to what the interest rate would be, Mr. Pulcini advised that would not be known until the bonds were priced. He further advised right now, the average coupon on the 2001 Bonds was 5.196% and if it was refinanced, it would drop down to 2.922%.

Mr. Cusick called for the vote on Mr. McClure’s first resolution which called for no termination payment at this time.

Dietrich, “no” and Ferraro, “no”.

The resolution failed by a vote of 2-7.

Mr. Cusick called for the vote on Mr. McClure’s second resolution which called for a $10 million payment to reduce the present value cost.


The resolution failed by a vote of 4-5.

Mr. Cusick called for the vote on Mr. Gilbert’s resolution which called for the full and complete termination of the Swaption.


The resolution was adopted by a vote of 5-4.

Consideration of the 2012 Contingency Transfer Resolution – Slate Belt COG

Mr. Cusick stated at the request of Mr. Parsons, a resolution was prepared which allocated $1,150 from the 2012 Contingency account to the Slate Belt Council of Governments to serve as the County’s dues for that organization. He further stated the beginning balance of the account was $100,000 so the balance would then be $98,850, noting the enclosed resolution was identical to the one adopted in 2011.

Mr. Parsons introduced the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the County of Northampton adopted Ordinance No. 457-2006, in which it agreed to be a member of the Slate Belt Council of Governments.
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Northampton County Council that the sum of $1,150 shall be transferred from the 2012 Contingency account #05000-76050 and allocated to the Slate Belt Council of Governments. This contingency transfer shall constitute the Northampton County dues to the Slate Belt Council of Governments and thereby entitling Northampton County Council to representation on the Slate Belt Council of Governments.

In response to Mrs. Ferraro’s question as to whether these dues were in line with the other County Council of Governments, Mr. Parsons advised they were higher, but they were willing to accept what the County was paying to the other Council of Governments.

Mr. Stoffa stated the other Council of Governments received $250 in dues.

In answer to Mr. McClure’s question as to why the County would pay the Slate Belt Council of Governments $1,150 when the others were only getting $250, Mr. Parsons stated he only based this number on what was paid in the past, but he believed it allowed the County to be a voting member.

In response to Mr. McClure’s question as to whether the County was a voting member of the other Council of Governments, Mr. Stoffa replied they were.

Mr. McClure advised he believed there should be uniformity so he made a motion to amend the resolution from $1,150 to $250.

Mrs. Ferraro seconded the motion.

Mr. Cusick called for the vote on the motion to amend the resolution.


The motion passed by a vote of 9-0.

Mr. Cusick called for the vote on the following amended
R. 15-2012  WHEREAS, the County of Northampton adopted Ordinance No. 457-2006, in which it agreed to be a member of the Slate Belt Council of Governments.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Northampton County Council that the sum of $250.00 shall be transferred from the 2012 Contingency account #05000-76050 and allocated to the Slate Belt Council of Governments. This contingency transfer shall constitute the Northampton County dues to the Slate Belt Council of Governments and thereby entitling Northampton County Council to representation on the Slate Belt Council of Governments.


The resolution was adopted by a vote of 9-0.

Introduction of the Ordinance titled, “AN ORDINANCE AMENDING NORTHAMPTON COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE CODE ARTICLE XV AUTHORITIES, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS, AND PROVIDING FOR THE CREATION OF THE GRACEDALE ADVISORY BOARD”

Mr. Cusick stated this ordinance provided for the creation of the Gracedale Advisory Board. He further stated the ordinance would be introduced at this meeting and the public hearing, debate and possible vote would be held at the March 15, 2012 meeting.

Mr. Dietrich, Mrs. Ferraro and Mr. Werner introduced the following ordinance:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING NORTHAMPTON COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE CODE ARTICLE XV AUTHORITIES, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS, AND PROVIDING FOR THE CREATION OF THE GRACEDALE ADVISORY BOARD

WHEREAS, Northampton County Home Rule Charter Section 202
Powers (7) provides that the County Council shall have the power “to adopt, amend, and repeal the Administrative Code”;

WHEREAS, Northampton County Home Rule Charter Section 602. Ordinances (a) Acts Required (1) provides that the County Council shall “adopt an ordinance for any act which adopts or amends the Administrative Code...”; and

WHEREAS, Northampton County Home Rule Charter Section 1001 Establishment (a) provides, “The County Council shall have the power by ordinance to establish any authority, board, or commission and to abolish any authority, board, or commission not established by Subsection (b).”

WHEREAS, the Gracedale Advisory Board is being created in paragraph no. 18, which is set forth below. Further, the Gracedale Advisory Board shall be comprised of nine (9) members, one of which shall be a member of the Northampton County Council. In addition, in accordance with Northampton County Home Rule Charter Section 1004. Administration (b) Rules of Procedure., the Gracedale Advisory Board shall have the power to establish its rules of procedure, including methods of recruiting regular attendance at meetings. Such rules of procedure shall not become effective unless the County Council, by resolution, approves them.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDAINED AND ENACTED by the Northampton County Council that Northampton County Administrative Code, Article XV, AUTHORITIES, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS, shall be amended to read as indicated hereafter (sections marked with bold underline have been added and sections marked with strikeout have been deleted):

ARTICLE XV

AUTHORITIES, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Section 15.01 Establishment
15.02 Retirement Board

Section 15.01 Establishment
a. The following boards and commissions are established by the Charter:

   (1) Personnel Appeals Board,
   (2) Revenue Appeals Board,
   (3) Election Commission; and
   (4) Personnel Commission.

b. In accordance with Section 1304 of the Charter, the following authorities, boards, and commissions shall continue to exist unless specifically abolished by ordinance:

   (1) Joint Planning Commission of Lehigh and Northampton Counties;
   (2) Lehigh and Northampton Airport Authority;
   (3) Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority;
   (4) Northampton County Children’s Bureau Advisory Committee (designated as the Advisory Board to the Division of Children, and Youth and Families);
   (5) Northampton County Conservation District;
   (6) Northampton County Coordinating Committee of the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study;
   (7) Northampton County Drug and Alcohol Commission Advisory Board;
   (8) Northampton County Hospital Authority;
County Council Minutes -18- March 1, 2012

(9) Northampton County Housing Authority;

(10) Northampton County Industrial Development Authority;

(11) **Northampton County** Mental Health, Early Intervention and Developmental Programs **Advisory Board**;

(12) Northampton County Overall Economic Development Committee;

(13) Northampton County Park Board;

(14) Northampton County Re-development Authority;

(15) Northampton County Solid Waste Authority;

(16) Northampton County Prison Advisory Board; and

(17) Northampton County Area Agency on Aging Advisory Board; and

(18) **Northampton County Nursing Home (Gracedale)** Advisory Board.

All other authorities, boards and commissions are hereby abolished except as otherwise provided by ordinance or this Code.

**Section 15.02 Retirement Board**

a. Establishment. There is hereby established the
Northampton County Retirement Board.

b. Function. The Northampton County Retirement Board shall administer the retirement system of the County in accordance with applicable law.

c. Membership. The Retirement Board shall be comprised of seven (7) members. The members shall be the County Executive, one (1) member selected by the County Executive, three (3) members of County Council (one of whom shall be President of Council) and two (2) participating members in the retirement system one of whom shall be chosen from a list of three (3) nominees for appointment which shall be provided to the County Executive by the Northampton County Employee’s Retirement Association. The two (2) participating members shall be selected by the County Executive subject to confirmation by the Northampton County Council. All members of the Retirement Board shall have voting privileges relative to matters which are considered by the Retirement Board.

Economic Development Committee Report

Mrs. Ferraro advised the Economic Development Committee met earlier this evening and Ms. Jaime Whalen, Economic Development Analyst, gave a presentation regarding the Gaming Revenue and Economic Redevelopment Authority. She further advised a discussion was held regarding the Route 33 Interchange, noting the construction would begin in July.
Mrs. Ferraro stated that Mr. Pete Reinke from the Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation was present with Mr. Eduardo Eichenwald, Office of Minority and Women-Owned Business, who provided an update on that division.

Human Services Committee Report

Mr. Dietrich advised County Council had received the detailed Operation Assessment Report for Gracedale, which would be discussed at the next committee meeting to be held on March 15, 2012. He further advised they would also be discussing the creation of the Gracedale Advisory Board.

County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) Spring Conference

Mr. Cusick stated the CCAP Spring Conference was being held from March 25, 2012 to March 27, 2012 and if anyone was interested in attending, they should let Mr. Flisser know.

Adjournment

Mr. McClure made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Kraft seconded the motion.

The motion passed by acclamation.

Frank E. Flisser
Clerk to Council