A regular meeting of the Northampton County Council was held on the above date with the following present: 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 Joshua Fulmer, Acting Solicitor to Council. Absent were: John Cusick, President, and Philip D. Lauer, Solicitor to Council.

Prayer

Mrs. Ferraro led County Council in prayer to open the meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. McClure 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 September 6, 2012 meeting shall be approved.

Mr. Kraft seconded the motion.

The minutes were approved by voice acclamation.

Courtesy of the Floor

Mr. Neil Brown, Service Employees International Union 668 – stated he represented the non-Gracedale employees in the Department of Human Services. He further stated they have had discussions concerning the fact that several units were going to be closed and the services contracted out privately.

Mr. Brown advised they were told the reason was that the State changed the funding to a fee for service so the money those divisions received was going to be reduced. He further
advised some of the employees did not want to leave the unit they were in or did not want to bump someone with lesser seniority out of a job.

Mr. Brown stated in the Aging Waiver Program, the County had been told by the State that there was no qualified provider to take over this program so the question becomes what happens to the elderly residents who received this service.

Mr. Brown advised in the Developmental Program, the problem was even though there was going to be a bumping process that was going to take time and the County planned to end services as of October 1, 2012.

Mr. Brown stated they have not received any clear answers as to how this was going to affect the employees and the clients. He further stated they understood the State was not doing its job by cutting the funding, but they believed the County had to do what it could to increase that funding so these services would continue to be provided.

Mrs. Ferraro advised a lot of this was discussed at the Human Services Committee meeting earlier this evening and there were potentially three qualified providers being considered. She further advised at this time, it looked like no employees would lose their jobs. She noted the State has been continually cutting their funding and the County had been picking up the slack, but it was becoming harder and harder.

Presentation of the Northampton County Chapter of the Pennsylvania Association of School Retirees

Mrs. Ferraro introduced Ms. Linda Stubits from the Northampton County Chapter of the Pennsylvania Association of School Retirees (PASR).

Ms. Stubits stated this organization represented anyone who had ever done any type of work within the public school system in Pennsylvania. She further stated members of the Northampton County Chapter of PASR were extensively involved in community service work.
Ms. Stubits advised PASR partnered with the Keystone Research Group to determine how many public school retirees were actively engaged in volunteer activities, the average number of hours they each contributed and the type of activities that were involved. She further advised they then calculated all the hours and broke them down for each Chapter and then connected a dollar amount to it.

Ms. Stubits stated the Northampton County Chapter had contributed 135,033 hours, which calculated a savings to the Northampton County community of $2,884,303. She further stated she was presenting this evening a mock check representing this amount to the County to create an awareness of what this organization was doing and the hours they were volunteering to better the community.

Confirmation of Appointments

Mr. Kraft introduced the following resolution:

R. 81-2012 RESOLVED, by the Northampton County Council that the following individuals shall be confirmed in their appointments/re-appointments as indicated hereafter:

AIRPORT AUTHORITY

Appointments: Terms to Expire: 12/31/17
Anne Baum
3621 Hickory Hill Road
Bethlehem PA 18015

T. J. Rooney
2736 Bridle Path Place
Bethlehem PA 18017

Re-appointment: Term to Expire: 12/31/16
Marc A. Troutman
421 A Paxinosa Avenue
Easton PA 18042
AREA AGENCY ON AGING
ADVISORY COUNCIL

Appointments: Terms to Expire: 7/1/14
Vivian Gualberti
2336 Second Street
Easton PA 18042

Sandra A. Massetti, NHA, LSW
1995 Springtown Hill Road
Hellertown PA 18055

HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Re-appointments: Terms to Expire: 12/31/17
Shawn M. Donahue
1948 Quarter Mile Road
Bethlehem PA 18015-5138

Shawn K. Langen
203 West Monroe Street
Easton PA 18042

As there were no questions or comments, Mrs. Ferraro called for the vote.


The resolution was adopted by a vote of 8-0.

County Executive Report

Mr. John Stoffa, County Executive, advised he had no report this evening.
Consideration of the Director of Corrections Resolution - Permanent Status

Mrs. Ferraro stated the Personnel Committee met yesterday to review the County Executive’s request to make the appointment of Acting Director of Corrections permanent.

Mr. Kraft introduced the following resolution:

R. 82-2012  WHEREAS, the Northampton County Council approved the confirmation of Arnie Matos as Acting Director of Corrections via the adoption of Resolution Number 61-2012 on July 19, 2012; and

WHEREAS, on September 13, 2012, the Northampton County Executive requested that Arnold Matos be appointed to permanent status in the position of Director of Corrections.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that Resolution Number 61-2012 shall be amended as indicated hereafter (sections marked with strikeout have been deleted and sections marked with bold underline have been added).

“Number 61-2012

  WHEREAS, Section 906 (a) of the Northampton County Home Rule Charter provides: “Section 906. Heads of Agencies Under the County Executive (a) Appointment. The County Executive shall have the power to appoint the head of any agency immediately under his direction and supervision, who is a member of the exempt service subject to confirmation by the County Council. An appointment shall not be effective unless the County Council by resolution confirms it or fails to reject it within sixty (60) days after the appointment. The appointee shall serve until so rejected by the County Council or until his removal from office, whichever is sooner; and

  WHEREAS, Section 202. (3) Powers of the Northampton County Home Rule Charter provides: “The County Council shall have, among others, the following powers: (3) to confirm the appointment by the County Executive of the heads of agencies immediately under his direction and supervision.
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, By the Northampton County Council that Arnie Matos shall be confirmed in his permanent appointment as Acting Director of Corrections at pay grade CE-VI, step 2-B, $79,047, and effective July 6, 2012."

As there were no questions or comments, Mrs. Ferraro called for the vote.


The resolution was adopted by a vote of 8-0.

Mr. Matos advised 16 inmates were moved to the West Easton Treatment Center on Wednesday without incident. He further advised during the next few weeks, they were going to go through the process of intake assessment and getting a treatment plan set up.

Mr. Matos stated they were fully staffed and the inmates seemed pleased with their surroundings and being given the opportunity to complete some programs, which were requirements of their parole, before they were released.

Mr. Matos advised he was thankful for the opportunity to serve as Director of Corrections and thanked County Council for giving him that opportunity.

Mr. McClure congratulated Mr. Matos, but stated this was a job with many challenges and that County Council would be there to support him when they could and question him when they must.

Consideration of the Administrative Code Article XIII Contract Approval Request – Vehicle Maintenance Services

Mrs. Ferraro advised the Finance Committee met yesterday to review the County Executive’s request to award contracts for vehicle maintenance services.
Mr. Gilbert introduced the following resolution:

R. 83-2012  WHEREAS, Northampton County Administrative Code Article XIII Procurement and Disposition of County Property, Section 13.16 Contracts and Agreements c. (1) requires approval of County Council for "...any contract exceeding $100,000, which was awarded using the Competitive Negotiation, Negotiation After Competitive Sealed Bidding, and Non-Competitive Negotiation source selection methods. For contracts with renewal clauses, the entire potential payout if all renewal clauses are exercised under the terms of the contract must be considered when determining if Council approval is necessary"; and

WHEREAS, on August 17, 2012, the Northampton County Council received a request from the County Executive for County Council to adopt a resolution approving a contract for a total of $72,000 for the first year, with the potential for three years being $216,000, with Brown Daub KIA, Easton Auto Body, Jeff’s Automotive, Inc. and Route 12 Wash and Gas, Inc. T/A Shammy Shine Car Washes for vehicle maintenance, emissions, inspection, body work, tire repair or replacement and/or washing services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northampton County Council does hereby concur with the recommendation of the County Executive to award a contract to Brown Daub KIA, Easton Auto Body, Jeff’s Automotive, Inc. and Route 12 Wash and Gas, Inc. T/A Shammy Shine Car Washes for vehicle maintenance, emissions, inspection, body work, tire repair or replacement and/or washing services.

Mr. Dietrich stated this contract represented responsible government as far as how the County used taxpayer dollars because it defined the County’s expenses going forward and allowed the County to keep better track of them.

As there were no further questions or comments, Mrs. Ferraro called for the vote.


The resolution was adopted by a vote of 8-0.
Consideration of the Administrative Code Article XIII Contract Approval Request – Medical Transport Services

Mrs. Ferraro advised the Finance Committee met yesterday to review the County Executive’s request to award a contract for medical transports at Gracedale.

Mr. Parsons introduced the following resolution:

WHEREAS, Northampton County Administrative Code Article XIII Procurement and Disposition of County Property, Section 13.16 Contracts and Agreements c. (1) requires approval of County Council for "...any contract exceeding $100,000, which was awarded using the Competitive Negotiation, Negotiation After Competitive Sealed Bidding, and Non-Competitive Negotiation source selection methods. For contracts with renewal clauses, the entire potential payout if all renewal clauses are exercised under the terms of the contract must be considered when determining if Council approval is necessary"; and

WHEREAS, on September 14, 2012, the Northampton County Council received a request from the County Executive for County Council to adopt a resolution approving a contract for a total of $315,600 for the first year, with the potential for three years being $946,800, with LifeStar Response for medical transport services (non-emergency) for Gracedale residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northampton County Council does hereby concur with the recommendation of the County Executive to award a contract to LifeStar Response for medical transport services (non-emergency) for Gracedale residents.

Mr. William Schreck, Bangor, PA – stated he was an employee of the Nazareth Ambulance Corps (Nazareth) and suggested County Council take a better look at the bid process. He further stated LifeStar had indicated they planned to put Gracedale’s name on the side of their ambulance, however, that offer was not made to the other bidders.

Mr. Schreck advised when Nazareth obtained the Gracedale contract, the County was applauded for hiring a local company. He further advised he understood the contract was for non-emergencies, but some of these larger companies tell their
clients to call them first and they will determine if it is an emergency or not.

Mr. Schreck stated a comment was made at yesterday’s meeting that nurses were going out on transports, but the truth was it was nurses’ aides that went out.

Mr. Schreck advised there seemed to be more behind the scene things going on with the bid process and he would hope County Council would table this matter until it could be further reviewed.

Mr. Mike Snyder, Nazareth Ambulance Corps – stated he was all for saving money in government, but he was also in favor of keeping jobs local. He further stated the members of Nazareth have given a lot to Gracedale over the years and 75% of their Corps could be lost if County Council awarded this contract to LifeStar.

Mr. Snyder advised he believed the residents were going to suffer because LifeStar did not have a vested interest in the community, noting the parent company was not even located in the United States. He further advised since Nazareth was from the community, they knew and bonded with these residents. He noted not everything in life came down to dollars and cents and sometimes a stand had to be taken for the seniors in the community.

Mr. Snyder stated while watching the video of yesterday’s meeting, he noticed a lot of misinformation was being provided. He further stated one example was LifeStar was not the back up for Nazareth, noting they used other local companies who would have a much faster response time.

Mr. Snyder requested that County Council table this matter until there could be a more open discussion.

Ms. Nancy Jacoby, Nazareth Ambulance Corps – advised she had worked for Nazareth for two and half years and had two of her family members in Gracedale. She further advised they knew the residents they dealt with and the chances to get the same drivers with a larger company were slim to none. She noted the loss of jobs was going to be devastating not only to those families, but to the area.
Ms. Jacoby stated it was only money, but sometimes you get what you asked for so she wanted County Council to table this matter and to talk to other people.

Mr. McClure advised it was very difficult for County Council to micromanage the bidding process, but it was their responsibility to vote on this contract.

Mr. McClure made a motion to table this resolution.

Mrs. Thierry seconded the motion.

Mrs. Ferraro called for the vote.


The motion was passed by a vote of 8-0.

Mr. Gilbert stated he would like to see these two companies come back to the table and requested Mr. Parsons sit in on the discussions as County Council’s liaison.

Mr. Werner advised he was impressed by the statements that were made tonight, but there was a process in place and it was not as simple as giving a contract to someone who was local.

Mr. Kraft stated when the contracts were reviewed, they should look at the length of service of the employees and that the compensations they received were comparable.

Human Services Committee Report

Mr. Dietrich advised a Human Services Committee meeting was held earlier wherein discussions were held regarding the Aging Waiver Program, the Developmental Program and the Attending Care Program and how the County was doing its best to make sure the clients continued to receive these services. He further advised it was anticipated that no employees would lose their job.
Mr. Dietrich stated they also discussed the human services budget and were provided updates regarding Gracedale. He further stated they discussed how the Wound Care Team was being structured and moving forward and how they were marketing Gracedale to the hospitals.

**Gracedale Liaison Report**

Mr. Werner advised the average time from referral to acceptance was now 32 minutes. He further advised they found more than $100,000 in savings through controlled and computerized documentation of treatment products. He noted Gracedale was being marketed by two individuals with sales and marketing background. He further noted they were getting positive increased input and communication among staff and management producing higher efficiencies.

Mr. Werner stated they received positive feedback from the families and public at the Family Fair that was held last week. He further stated the work being done at Gracedale was ahead of schedule.

Mr. Werner advised the most important thing to note was Gracedale was approximately $1.5 million below budget and that was done in less than eight months.

**Adjournment**

Mr. McClure made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Werner seconded the motion.

The motion passed by acclamation.

Frank E. Flisser
Clerk to Council