Easton, Pennsylvania    July 1, 2014

A regular meeting of the Northampton County Council was held on the above date with the following present: Glenn A. Geissinger, Vice-President; Mathew M. Benol; Kenneth M. Kraft; Lamont G. McClure, Jr.; Scott Parsons; Hayden Phillips; Seth Vaughn; Robert P. Werner; Frank E. Flisser, Clerk to Council, and Philip D. Lauer, Solicitor to Council. Absent was Margaret L. Ferraro, President.

Prayer

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

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Parsons 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 June 19, 2014 meeting shall be approved.

Mr. Phillips seconded the motion.

The minutes were approved by voice acclamation.

Courtesy of the Floor

Mr. Ken Tillman, 521 Garibaldi Avenue, Roseto, PA – advised he was the Vice President of the Roseto Borough Council and was appearing on their behalf. He further advised in 2012, they celebrated their 100th Anniversary and he would like to present their Anniversary Book to County Council.

Mr. Tillman stated they wanted to thank County Council for working with the Department of Community and Economic Development in presenting them with a grant of approximately
$63,000 for their Westside Dam Project. He further stated they would be starting this project on Monday and hoped to have it finished by the end of July.

Mr. Tillman advised this project was important because due to the problem with the dam, not only did the lower end of Roseto flood, but also all of 5th Street in Bangor. He further advised by fixing the drainage pipe, it should be able to hold the water and stop the flooding issue.

Mr. Tillman stated they may be coming to County Council with an additional request sometime in the future because they were trying to get the Department of Environmental Protection to give them permission to clean out the retention pond near the dam.

County Executive’s Report

Mr. John A. Brown, County Executive, advised he did not have anything to report.

In answer to Mr. Parsons’ question as to where he was in the process of filling his cabinet, Mr. Brown stated he had been evaluating the work that was done by each of the positions because he wanted to establish a high performing team so it was going to take some time.

Mr. Werner advised the Auditor General Office, in their report, recommended the Sheriff’s Department establish an adequate system of internal controls with regard to bank slips so he wondered if that issue was being addressed.

Mr. Brown stated he would work with the Sheriff’s Department to make sure this matter was addressed.

Mr. McClure advised recently Ms. Cathy Allen, Deputy Director of Administration, had to publicly address the issue of a potential tragedy that occurred in the Borough of Bangor as its Council President.

Mr. McClure stated during the time of crisis, the County was often looked to as the spokesperson for how response was being met. He further stated he was a little concerned about the cross pressures of holding both offices and Ms. Allen’s
handling of this potential tragedy did not instill confidence. He then asked Mr. Brown for his view on the matter.

Mr. Brown advised he was not aware of the full details of the potential tragedy, but Ms. Allen would be stepping down from her role on the Bangor Borough Council as part of her transition to the County.

Mr. Brown stated as far as her handling of this incident there have been several reports and Mr. McClure was entitled to his opinion.

When Mr. Geissinger reviewed Mr. Brown's remarks about his cabinet, Mr. McClure advised this Administration had been hobbled in its five months. He further advised Mr. Brown should have done the basic work during the transition period so he could govern from the beginning and not propose million dollars in consultant fees to substitute for having a Director of Administration, a Sheriff and a Director of Fiscal Affairs.

Mr. McClure stated these positions were essential to County government and five months in, the County was not under control or heading in the right direction.

Mr. Geissinger advised he felt it was necessary for someone to come in and first investigate what had to be done and then determine how to accomplish it.

Mr. Werner stated comments were made that there was a sense of urgency to take over, do the right thing and to make sure the sins of the past were not repeated. He further stated there were still three positions that were not filled, a response had to be addressed regarding the Auditor General's report by the Sheriff Department and there were a number of projects that had to be completed.

Mr. Werner advised he believed County Council should receive some information on who was being interviewed and where the County Executive was going with it.
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Introduction of the Ordinance Providing for an Amendment to the Number of Individuals Serving on the Gracedale Advisory Board

Messrs. Werner and Geissinger introduced the following ordinance:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 546-2012 AND PROVIDING FOR CHANGES IN THE COMPOSITION OF THE GRACEDALE ADVISORY BOARD

WHEREAS, Ordinance No. 546-2012, 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," was enacted on March 20, 2012; and

WHEREAS, subsequent to the enactment of Ordinance No. 546-2012 the Gracedale Advisory Board (Board) requested an increase in the number of individuals who can serve on the Board, from a minimum of nine up to a maximum of fifteen.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ORDAINED AND ENACTED that the following section of Ordinance No. 546-2012, shall be amended as indicated hereafter (sections marked with **bold underline** have been added and sections marked with *strikeout* have been deleted):

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 a **minimum of** nine (9) members **up to a maximum of fifteen (15) 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.
In response to Mr. Kraft's question as to why they were looking to increase their membership, he was informed a discussion could not be held until the next meeting.

Mr. Geissinger advised the public hearing, debate, and possible vote for this ordinance was scheduled for the July 17, 2014 County Council meeting.

Consideration of the HOME Investment Partnership Resolution

Mr. Geissinger stated the Economic Development Committee met earlier this evening, in part, to review the HOME investment partnership resolution.

Mr. Kraft introduced the following resolution:

R. 61-2014

RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF A REQUEST FOR REVISION OF THE 2010 HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (HOME) WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania through the Department of Community and Economic Development (PADCED) has awarded FFY 2010 HOME program funds to the Northampton County Department of Community and Economic Development (NCDCED) on behalf of Community Action Committee of Lehigh Valley in order to rehabilitate vacant and sub-standard homes in Easton's West Ward neighborhood as part of an affordable rehabilitation housing project; and

WHEREAS, activities have been substantially complete with all homes to be marketed and sold within the grant period; and

WHEREAS, through discussion with the PADCED, a portion of funds currently budgeted for administrative expenses may be budgeted to allow for continued project delivery expenses; and

WHEREAS, the PADCED requires approval of the governing body as a condition of submitting this revision request to the PADCED.
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED AND IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the Northampton County Council that:

1. The NCDCED, on behalf of the County of Northampton, is authorized to request a revision to its 2010 HOME Program from the PADCED in order to modify the budget to provide an additional $400 to project delivery expenses from funds previously budgeted for administrative costs.

As there were no questions or comments, Mr. Geissinger called for the vote.

The vote: Kraft, "yes"; McClure, "yes"; Parsons, "yes"; Phillips, "yes"; Vaughn, "yes"; Werner, "yes"; Benol, "yes" and Geissinger, "yes".

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

Gracedale Laundry

Mr. McClure advised he was wondering if Gracedale’s laundry equipment was underutilized and whether there had been any discussions regarding bringing in institutional laundry from other facilities to increase Gracedale’s bottom line.

Mr. Vaughn stated it had been discussed, but Mr. Millard D. Freeman, Gracedale Administrator, was currently working on some other issues. He further stated they were trying to put together a spread sheet that reflected where money was actually being spent.

Mr. Vaughn advised there have been different proposals made with regard to the laundry services and agreed it was an issue that should be reviewed.

In response to Mr. McClure’s request to have this matter looked into, Mr. Vaughn stated he would bring it up at the next meeting.

Mr. Werner stated in 2012, there was supposed to be money set aside for Gracedale in a Special Revenue Fund so he would like Mr. Vaughn to determine the status of that fund.
Mr. Phillips advised he would like Mr. Vaughn to look at the status of the privatization of the maintenance, housekeeping and laundry services at Gracedale.

Economic Development Committee Report

Mr. Kraft stated at the Economic Development Committee meeting, a discussion was held with regard to the Community Development Block Grant program. He further stated a report would be presented to County Council in August.

Adjournment

Mr. Kraft made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. McClure seconded the motion.

The motion to adjourn passed unanimously by acclamation:

Frank E. Flisser
Clerk to Council

(J:\2014\nccmin\070114)