

Easton, Pennsylvania

September 17, 2020

The regular meeting of the Northampton County Council was held on the above date with the following present: Ronald R. Heckman, President; Lori Vargo Heffner, Vice President; John Cusick; Margaret L. Ferraro; Thomas A. Giovanni; Kevin Lott; William B. McGee; Kerry L. Myers; Tara M. Zrinski; Linda M. Zembo, Clerk to Council; Alene M. Shafnisky, Deputy Clerk to Council and Christopher T. Spadoni, Solicitor to Council.

Pledge of Allegiance

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

Approval of the Minutes - September 3, 2020

Ms. Vargo Heffner made the following motion:

Be It Moved By the Northampton County Council that the minutes of the September 3, 2020 meeting shall be approved.

Mr. Giovanni seconded the motion.

The minutes were approved by voice acclamation.

Courtesy of the Floor

As no one signed up for Courtesy of the Floor, Mr. Heckman asked if there were any questions or comments from the public.

There were no respondents.

County Executive Report

Mr. Lamont McClure, County Executive, stated he not only voted today, but had a COVID-19 test because he was frequently in contact with Gracedale's administration and he wanted to stand in solidarity with all its employees getting tested regularly. He further stated his test was negative.

Mr. McClure advised the Supreme Court cleared up many of the obstacles regarding the ballot issue and one of the things was someone could show up at the Elections Office and demand their ballot so he received his ballot and voted.

With regard to ballot on demand, Mr. McClure stated if someone did not want to stand in line on Election Day, they could come to the Courthouse and vote. He further stated starting on October 1, 2020, the Election Office was going to expand its hours from 8:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.

Mr. McClure advised if someone was on the mail-in ballot list, they could not demand a ballot, but had to wait for it to be mailed to them. He further advised they were hoping those ballots would be mailed out next week.

Mr. McClure stated the second wave of grants for small businesses have been distributed. He further stated during the first wave, 302 businesses received \$3,990,000 in grants and during the second wave, 349 businesses received \$4,510,000 for a total of 651 businesses receiving \$8,548,641.

Mr. McClure advised there were several grant items on tonight's agenda to lay the groundwork for recovery so he encouraged County Council to approve them.

Mr. McClure stated depending on the results of one test, Gracedale may be open to in-person visits next week. He further stated every resident and employee were routinely tested.

Mr. McClure advised during the first round of the testing there were six employees out of approximately 700 that tested positive. He further advised the one resident who tested positive was retested via the Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test and it was negative so Ms. Jennifer Stewart-King, Gracedale Administrator, was making an argument to the Department of Health that it should not be held against them.

Mr. McClure stated the six positive employee tests panicked the Department of Health and they were ready to test everybody over the weekend; however, once they were retested with the PCR test no one was positive. He further stated there was one resident pending and if they come back negative, they would be able to do in-person visitation.

Mr. McClure advised Coordinated Health/Lehigh Valley Health Network (CH/LVHN) have been an excellent partner in operating the test sites especially with schools reopening and the flu and cold season coming up. He further advised it provided the ability for the County to pick up trends with respect to infection rates and allowing them to keep people quarantined so they were not out in the community.

Mr. McClure stated during July and August, 382 people were tested and the County only paid for twelve of them as the others had insurance for a cost of \$8,060 and it was running at a 3.5% positive rate. He further stated as leaders of the community, it was important for them to emphasize the necessity to wear masks.

Mr. McClure advised all employees returned to County facilities on May 18, 2020 and since that time not one was positive for COVID-19. He further advised there have been no COVID-19 positive cases at the Jail since it went to universal masking; however, a prisoner that was transferred from Lehigh County for a Court case tested positive and was quarantined. He noted this individual was only in the facility for 10-12 hours.

Mr. McClure stated CH/LVHN needed to do their pre-operative COVID-19 testing somewhere and they were thinking of using the drive-thru site that they were operating in collaboration with the County. He further stated some of the parameters of the deal were there would be a 50/50 split on personnel costs and increased hours of operations (Monday, Wednesday and Friday - 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; Tuesday and Thursday - 12:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and every Saturday - 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.).

Mr. McClure advised CH/LVHN would provide testing for asymptomatic pre-procedure patients and employees who require COVID-19 testing, as well as employees of colleges, universities and Northampton County who needed symptomatic or asymptomatic testing.

Mr. McClure stated an estimated cost for personnel and Personal Protective Equipment was \$5,370. He further advised the 382 tests at \$100 per test was \$38,200 and the estimated total maximum would be \$43,570.

Mr. McClure advised he believed \$300,000 was originally set aside so the County could do the enhanced program with CH/LVHN until November 23, 2020, which was when the current Memorandum of Understanding would end. He further advised at that time it would be reviewed to see whether or not they should move forward.

Mr. Heckman stated he read Cedarbrook was having two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon of in-person visits so he wanted to know if Gracedale had set any hours.

Mr. McClure stated nothing specific had been set up, but he believed it would probably be more hours, noting Cedarbrook had not done any universal testing yet.

In answer to Mr. Myers' question as to whether new inmates coming into the Jail were put into isolation, Mr. McClure advised it was not isolation, but there was an intake tier where they had to stay for a certain period of time.

Mr. Mark Bartholomew, Deputy Warden of Classification at the Jail, stated when someone came in they were COVID-19 tested and remained in a quarantined unit until they received a negative result on that test.

In response to Mr. Lott's question as to how the laboratory was doing on the turnaround time for results, Mr. McClure replied two to three days.

In answer to Mr. McGee's question as to how they were reaching out to the public to let them know about the ballot on demand option, Mr. McClure advised information was on the County's Facebook page, but he may talk to Ms. Amy Cozze, Registrar of Elections, about sending out a letter.

In response to Mr. Myers' question as to whether the County received any feedback from the schools regarding the vouchers, Ms. Tina Smith, Director of the Department of Community and Economic Development, stated schools were distributing the vouchers and getting the approved list to the Individual Service Plans. She further stated Mr. McClure was looking into getting the information out through the press to garner additional interest.

Public Hearing on the Ordinance Entitled, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE NORTHAMPTON COUNTY COUNCIL AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON, EASTON, PENNSYLVANIA, TO LEASE APPROXIMATELY 2,400 RENTABLE SQUARE FEET OF SPACE AT 31C WEST FIRST STREET, WIND GAP, PENNSYLVANIA FROM JOSEPH DEPUE, PENNSYLVANIA"

Mr. Heckman advised Mr. Giovanni and Ms. Zrinski introduced the following ordinance at the September 3, 2020 meeting:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE NORTHAMPTON COUNTY COUNCIL AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON, EASTON, PENNSYLVANIA, TO LEASE APPROXIMATELY 2,400 RENTABLE SQUARE FEET OF SPACE AT 31C WEST FIRST STREET, WIND GAP, PENNSYLVANIA FROM JOSEPH DEPUE, PENNSYLVANIA

WHEREAS, Northampton County Administrative Code Article XIII, Section 13.14 Purchase, Sale and Lease of Real Estate Section b. Sealed Appraisals, provides, "The County shall not purchase, sell, or lease real estate without first obtaining sealed appraisals from two (2) professional real estate appraisers."; and

WHEREAS, Northampton County Administrative Code Article XIII, Section 13.14 Purchase, Sale and Lease of Real Estate Section c. (1) Purchase/Sale/Lease of Real Estate, provides, "The County Executive, or his designee, may negotiate a contract for the purchase, sale or lease (with the County as lessor or lessee) of real estate. Any such purchase/sale/lease shall be approved by County Council, and no such contract shall bind the County nor shall any conveyance be lawful, until County Council approves of the terms of the purchase/sale/lease."; and

WHEREAS, Northampton County Home Rule Charter Article 602 (a) (6) provides that the Northampton County Council shall enact an ordinance for any act which "purchase, conveys, leases or authorizes the purchase, conveyance or lease of any real property of the County".

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ORDAINED AND ENACTED by Northampton County Council that it does hereby authorize the County of Northampton, Easton, Pennsylvania, to enter into a two year Lease Agreement with Joseph Depue for approximately 2,400 rentable square feet of space at 31C West First Street, Wind Gap, Pennsylvania, for an initial rent of \$17.71 per square foot beginning January 1, 2021 and ending on December 31, 2022. The terms and conditions of the lease shall be in accordance with the lease agreement, a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part hereof as Exhibit "A".

Effective Date - This ordinance shall become effective thirty days after the date of enactment.

Public Hearing

Mr. Heckman asked if there were any questions or comments from the public.

There were no respondents.

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

The vote: Giovanni, "yes"; Zrinski, "yes"; Heckman, "yes"; Lott, "yes"; McGee, "yes"; Myers, "yes"; Vargo Heffner, "yes"; Cusick, "yes" and Ferraro, "yes".

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

Public Hearing on the Ordinance Entitled, "AN ORDINANCE OF THE NORTHAMPTON COUNTY COUNCIL AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON, EASTON, PENNSYLVANIA, TO LEASE APPROXIMATELY 3500 RENTABLE SQUARE FEET OF SPACE AT 1214 STEFKO BOULEVARD, BETHLEHEM, PENNSYLVANIA FROM DIETER FAMILY LIMITED PARTNERSHIP"

Mr. Heckman stated Ms. Vargo Heffner and Mr. Myers introduced the following ordinance at the September 3, 2020 meeting:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE NORTHAMPTON COUNTY COUNCIL AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON, EASTON, PENNSYLVANIA, TO LEASE APPROXIMATELY 3500 RENTABLE SQUARE FEET OF SPACE AT 1214 STEFKO BOULEVARD, BETHLEHEM, PENNSYLVANIA FROM DIETER FAMILY LIMITED PARTNERSHIP

WHEREAS, Northampton County Administrative Code Article XIII, Section 13.14 Purchase, Sale and Lease of Real Estate Section b. Sealed Appraisals, provides, "The County shall not purchase, sell, or lease real estate without first obtaining sealed appraisals from two (2) professional real estate appraisers."; and

WHEREAS, Northampton County Administrative Code Article XIII, Section 13.14 Purchase, Sale and Lease of Real Estate Section c. (1) Purchase/Sale/Lease of Real Estate, provides, "The County Executive, or his designee, may negotiate a contract for the purchase, sale or lease (with the County as lessor or lessee) of real estate. Any such purchase/sale/lease shall be approved by County Council, and no such contract shall bind the County nor shall any conveyance be lawful, until County Council approves of the terms of the purchase/sale/lease."; and

WHEREAS, Northampton County Home Rule Charter Article 602 (a) (6) provides that the Northampton County Council shall enact an ordinance for any act which "purchase, conveys, leases or

authorizes the purchase, conveyance or lease of any real property of the County".

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ORDAINED AND ENACTED by Northampton County Council that it does hereby authorize the County of Northampton, Easton, Pennsylvania, to enter into a ten (10) year Lease Agreement with Dieter Family Limited Partnership for approximately 3500 rentable square feet of space at 1214 Stefko Boulevard, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, for \$5,320 per month (based on \$18.24 per square foot) from the commencement of the term of this lease and continuing throughout the original lease term beginning January 1, 2021 and ending on December 31, 2030. The terms and conditions of the lease shall be in accordance with the lease agreement, a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part hereof as Exhibit "A".

Effective Date - This ordinance shall become effective thirty days after the date of enactment.

Public Hearing

Mr. Heckman asked if there were any questions or comments from the public.

There were no respondents.

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

The vote: Vargo Heffner, "yes"; Myers, "yes"; Heckman, "yes"; Lott, "yes"; McGee, "yes"; Zrinski, "yes"; Cusick, "yes"; Ferraro, "yes" and Giovanni, "yes".

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

Consideration of Personnel Requests Resolutions - Department of Administration - Elections

Mr. McGee introduced the following resolution:

R. 93-2020 **IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED** by the Northampton County Council that ten (10) temporary positions of Clerical Technician 2, pay grade CS-13-1A, salary \$30,962 (for a total amount of \$309,620 be created in the Department of Administration - Elections, effective September 17, 2020.

IT IS FURTHER HEREBY RESOLVED this resolution will be in effect until December 31, 2020. At that time, County Council will review the need to continue to implement the provisions of this resolution.

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

The vote: McGee, "yes"; Lott, "yes"; Myers, "yes"; Vargo Heffner, "yes"; Zrinski, "yes"; Cusick, "yes"; Ferraro, "yes"; Giovanni, "yes" and Heckman, "yes".

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

Consideration of a Resolution to Accept a Donation of Facemasks to the Department of Corrections

Ms. Vargo Heffner introduced the following resolution:

R. 94-2020 **WHEREAS**, Northampton County Home Rule Charter Section 202 (10) provides that County Council shall have, among others, the following powers: *"to accept on behalf of the County any gifts of real property and to provide for the acceptance by any agency on behalf of the County of other gifts;"* and

WHEREAS, CONCEPTSAD is desirous to provide three (3) grey facemasks with the Department of Corrections logo on one side per employee.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by Northampton County Council that it does hereby authorize the County Executive to accept, on behalf of the Northampton County Department of Corrections, the donation of three facemasks per employee from CONCEPTSAD.

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

The vote: Vargo Heffner, "yes"; McGee, "yes"; Myers, "yes"; Zrinski, "yes"; Cusick, "yes"; Ferraro, "yes"; Giovanni, "yes"; Heckman, "yes" and Lott, "yes".

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

Consideration of a Resolution Approving Funding for Small Business Development Center of Lehigh University via the COVID-19 County Relief Block Grant

Mr. Lott introduced the following resolution:

R. 95-2020

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR A COVID-19 SMALL BUSINESS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WITH THE SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER OF LEHIGH UNIVERSITY

WHEREAS, Act 24 of 2020 was signed by Governor Tom Wolf on May 29, 2020, and provides \$625 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act funding by means of block grants for Counties in the Commonwealth through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development; and

WHEREAS, this funding is authorized to be used for the following purposes:

1. Offsetting the costs of direct County response, planning and outreach efforts related to COVID-19.
2. Small Business Grant Programs to support businesses with fewer than 100 employees and to support businesses and other entities primarily engaged in the tourism industry.
3. Grant programs to support the following for costs related to assisting businesses during COVID-19 Disaster Emergency: Certified Economic Development Organizations, Local Development Districts Industrial Resource Center, Small Business Development Centers and Economic Development Corporations.
4. Assistance to cities, boroughs, incorporated towns or townships within eligible Counties for response and planning efforts related to COVID-19.
5. Behavioral health and substance use disorder treatment services.
6. Nonprofit assistance programs for entities that are an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

7. Broadband internet deployment with priority given to unserved or underserved areas; and

WHEREAS, Northampton County was awarded an allocation of \$27,569,940 of COVID-19 County Relief Block Grant Funding by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development; and

WHEREAS, The Council of Northampton County is desirous to allocate the amount of \$500,000 to provide COVID-19 Small Business Technical Assistance in collaboration with the Small Business Development Center of Lehigh University.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Northampton:

1. That the allocation of COVID-19 County Relief Block Grant totaling \$500,000 is approved.
2. That the County Executive of the County of Northampton is authorized to execute any and all necessary grant agreements to effectuate the COVID-19 Small Business Technical Assistance program with the Small Business Development Center of Lehigh University.

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

The vote: Lott, "yes"; McGee, "yes"; Myers, "yes"; Vargo Heffner, "yes"; Zrinski, "yes"; Cusick, "yes"; Ferraro, "yes"; Giovanni, "yes" and Heckman, "yes".

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

Consideration of a Resolution Approving Funding for Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania via the COVID-19 County Relief Block Grant

Mr. Lott introduced the following resolution:

R. 96-2020

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR A COVID-19 ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM WITH BEN FRANKLIN TECHNOLOGY PARTNERS OF NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

WHEREAS, Act 24 of 2020 was signed by Governor Tom Wolf on May 29, 2020, and provides \$625 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act funding by means of block grants for Counties in the Commonwealth through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development; and

WHEREAS, this funding is authorized to be used for the following purposes:

1. Offsetting the costs of direct County response, planning and outreach efforts related to COVID-19.
2. Small Business Grant Programs to support businesses with fewer than 100 employees and to support businesses and other entities primarily engaged in the tourism industry.
3. Grant programs to support the following for costs related to assisting businesses during COVID-19 Disaster Emergency: Certified Economic Development Organizations, Local Development Districts Industrial Resource Center, Small Business Development Centers and Economic Development Corporations.
4. Assistance to cities, boroughs, incorporated towns or townships within eligible Counties for response and planning efforts related to COVID-19.
5. Behavioral health and substance use disorder treatment services.
6. Nonprofit assistance programs for entities that are an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.
7. Broadband internet deployment with priority given to unserved or underserved areas; and

WHEREAS, Northampton County was awarded an allocation of \$27,569,940 of COVID-19 County Relief Block Grant Funding by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development; and

WHEREAS, The Council of Northampton County is desirous to allocate the amount of \$504,849.96 to provide support to early-stage technology companies and local manufacturers that have been impacted by COVID-19 for their survival and future growth in

collaboration with Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Northampton:

1. That the allocation of COVID-19 County Relief Block Grant totaling \$504,849.96 is approved.
2. That the County Executive of the County of Northampton is authorized to execute any and all necessary grant agreements to effectuate the COVID-19 Entrepreneurship Program with Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

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

The vote: Lott, "yes"; Vargo Heffner, "yes"; Zrinski, "yes"; Cusick, "yes"; Ferraro, "yes"; Giovanni, "yes"; Heckman, "yes"; McGee, "yes" and Myers, "yes".

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

Consideration of a Resolution Approving Funding for Northampton Community College via the COVID-19 County Relief Block Grant

Mr. Lott introduced the following resolution:

R. 97-2020

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR A COVID-19 RISK MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS RECOVERY AWARENESS TRAINING PROGRAM IN COLLABORATION WITH NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

WHEREAS, Act 24 of 2020 was signed by Governor Tom Wolf on May 29, 2020, and provides \$625 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act funding by means of block grants for Counties in the Commonwealth through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development; and

WHEREAS, this funding is authorized to be used for the following purposes:

1. Offsetting the costs of direct County response, planning and outreach efforts related to COVID-19.
2. Small Business Grant Programs to support businesses with fewer than 100 employees and to support businesses and other entities primarily engaged in the tourism industry.
3. Grant programs to support the following for costs related to assisting businesses during COVID-19 Disaster Emergency: Certified Economic Development Organizations, Local Development Districts Industrial Resource Center, Small Business Development Centers and Economic Development Corporations.
4. Assistance to cities, boroughs, incorporated towns or townships within eligible Counties for response and planning efforts related to COVID-19.
5. Behavioral health and substance use disorder treatment services.
6. Nonprofit assistance programs for entities that are an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.
7. Broadband internet deployment with priority given to unserved or underserved areas; and

WHEREAS, Northampton County was awarded an allocation of \$27,569,940 of COVID-19 County Relief Block Grant Funding by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development; and

WHEREAS, The Council of Northampton County is desirous to allocate the amount of \$200,000 to provide COVID-19 Risk Management and Business Recovery Awareness Training in collaboration with Northampton Community College.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Northampton:

1. That the allocation of COVID-19 County Relief Block Grant totaling \$200,000 is approved.

2. That the County Executive of the County of Northampton is authorized to execute any and all necessary grant agreements to effectuate the COVID-19 Business Community Risk & Recovery Awareness training program with Northampton Community College.

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

The vote: Lott, "yes"; Zrinski, "yes"; Cusick, "yes"; Ferraro, "yes"; Giovanni, "yes"; Heckman, "yes"; McGee, "yes"; Myers, "yes" and Vargo Heffner, "yes".

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

Consideration of a Resolution Approving Reimbursement of COVID-19 Related Expenses to the General Fund from Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act Funding

Ms. Vargo Heffner introduced the following resolution:

R. 98-2020

WHEREAS, Northampton County was granted over \$27 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act relief money to combat the impact of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, Northampton County has paid \$621,485.10 in hazard pay to essential employees supporting the community as front line workers during the COVID-19 pandemic that has not yet been identified by other sources for reimbursement; and

WHEREAS, Northampton County has incurred \$1,878,514.9 in related Information Technology costs not budgeted for to support the need for remote work early in 2020, teleconferencing options and network security; and

WHEREAS, Northampton County desires to remain fiscally responsible with the use of funding available to fulfill all expenses and insure the fiscal stability of the County's finances.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Northampton County Council directs the Department of Fiscal Affairs to reimburse \$2,500,000.00 of hazard pay and Information Technology expenses by

drawing from the CARES Act funding to reimburse the County's general fund.

In answer to Mr. Cusick's question as to whether there would be another round of municipal grants for those municipalities who did not receive funding in the first round, Mr. McClure advised there would be another round and those that did not receive any funding in the first round would be eligible to receive it in this round.

In response to Mr. Lott's question as to whether they would be reaching out to the municipalities, Mr. McClure stated they had multiple contacts with them.

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

The vote: Vargo Heffner, "yes"; Zrinski, "yes"; Cusick, "yes"; Ferraro, "yes"; Giovanni, "yes"; Heckman, "yes"; Lott, "yes"; McGee, "yes" and Myers, "yes".

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

Consideration of an Article XIII Contract: BSI Corporate Benefits

Ms. Vargo Heffner introduced the following resolution:

R. 99-2020 **WHEREAS**, Northampton County Administrative Code Article XIII Procurement and Disposition of County Property, Section 13.15 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."; and

WHEREAS, on September 9, 2020, the Northampton County Council received a request from the County Executive for County Council to adopt a resolution approving a contract in the estimated amount of \$58,453.20 per year (calculated at \$1.95 per enrolled employee and retiree per month) over a term of three years for a total of \$175,359.60 with BSI Corporate Benefits for brokerage services for health and ancillary benefits.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northampton County Council does hereby concur with the recommendation of the County Executive, as set forth in the attached documentation to approve a contract with BSI Corporate Benefits.

In answer to Ms. Zrinski's question as to whether they were the pharmaceutical consultant, Mr. Sean Hughes, BSI Corporate Benefits, advised they were the overall health care consultant.

In response to Ms. Zrinski's question as to whether the contract allowed the Controller to evaluate what they were doing without intervention from the Administration, Mr. Barron stated as this was a standard contract, the Controller could conduct an audit at any time of the health insurance trust fund, which was where the money was located to pay those bills. He further stated BSI never touched the money as it was under the purview of the Department of Fiscal Affairs.

Mr. McClure advised the Controller had specific duties under the Home Rule Charter, but County Council could ask the Controller to look at anything.

In answer to Ms. Zrinski's question as to how they justified big increases in the price of the cost of drugs and get compensated for them, Mr. Hughes stated their compensation was not impacted by the County's pharmacy spend. He further stated their job was to monitor the drug spend to find opportunities to cut down on wasteful spending and they were in the process of finalizing that for 2021.

In response to Ms. Zrinski's question as to whether the County received a fixed discount or rebate on the drugs, Mr. Hughes advised it was currently set up so the rebate would get passed back to the County.

In answer to Ms. Zrinski's question as to whether the County was tied to a specific pharmacy, Mr. Hughes stated the County's pharmacy was through Capital Blue Cross and they use Prime Therapeutics as the pharmacy benefit manager. He further stated it was more beneficial for the employees to have both the medical and prescription plans through Capital Blue Cross.

In response to Ms. Zrinski's question as to whether it was better for an employee to use Good RX or their insurance, Mr. Hughes advised Good RX promoted brand utilization. He further advised the prescription may look cheaper at that particular time,

but the manufacturer reimbursed the pharmacy because they want to get people on the higher cost drug. He noted when an employee used their insurance card, the co-pay would be put toward their deductible.

In answer to Ms. Zrinski's question as to how often they evaluated the cost of the drugs because they fluctuated so much, Mr. Hughes stated they evaluated them every year.

In response to Mr. McGee's question as to what was the percentage rate of the generic was for the County, Mr. Hughes advised it was between 80-90%, noting the Health Savings Account helped with that.

In answer to Mr. McGee's question as to what level was the stop loss, Mr. Hughes stated it was \$350,000 so the County paid every dollar up to \$350,000 and then the stop loss carrier paid every dollar after that.

An Ordinance Repealing Ordinance No. 617-2017, Entitled, "An Ordinance Providing for the Conveyance of Permanent and Temporary Easements Owned by Northampton County, Located in Lower Nazareth Township, to the Easton Suburban Water Authority to Enable Them to Provide Public Water Through its Public Water System"

Ms. Zrinski advised at the September 3, 2020 meeting this ordinance was tabled and as the issues have been resolved she made a motion to remove it from the table.

The motion failed due to a lack of a second.

Courts and Corrections Committee Report

Mr. Myers stated the Courts and Corrections Committee met earlier in the day and received an update on the Mental Health and Recovery Courts. He further stated it was also reported that everything was going well at the Jail.

Personnel and Finance Committees Report

Ms. Vargo Heffner advised the Personnel and Finance Committees met yesterday and reviewed the items that were presented tonight.

Economic Development Committee Report

Mr. Lott stated the Economic Development Committee met on September 3, 2020 and reviewed the COVID-19 Act grants that were approved tonight.

Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation (LVEDC) Liaison Report

Mr. Lott advised at the LVEDC Board meeting a discussion was held regarding the economy of the Lehigh Valley during the pandemic. He further advised it was felt the Lehigh Valley was going to do better than other areas because of its diversity in its business groups.

Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) Liaison Report

Mr. McGee stated there would be a LVPC next Thursday starting at 7:00 p.m., which he would be attending.

Adjournment

Ms. Vargo Heffner made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Myers seconded the motion.

The motion to adjourn passed unanimously by acclamation.

Linda M. Zembo
Clerk to Council