

Meeting Minutes
Lehigh Tax Collection Committee
Thursday, January 20, 2022 2:00 P.M.

I. Roll Call/Quorum determination

A special meeting was held on Thursday, January 20, 2022 at 8:30 am at the South Whitehall Municipal Building. The purpose of the meeting was to continue the process of compliance with Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Act 32.

Officers in Attendance were:

<i>Shane Pepe</i>	<i>Chairperson</i>
<i>Cathy Bonaskiewich</i>	<i>Vice Chairperson</i>
<i>Jack Meyers</i>	<i>Secretary</i>
<i>Steven Miller</i>	<i>Solicitor</i>
<i>Ron Kistler</i>	<i>Treasurer</i>
<i>David Woglom</i>	<i>Executive Director</i>

The meeting was called to order at 8:35. Meyers took the roll call vote for the delegates. There were a requisite number of delegates from both the School Districts (5/9) and Municipalities (17/25) in attendance for the meeting. Therefore, a quorum was met for the purposes of conducting the meeting and resolving issues.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. New Business

Discussion of Contract for Tax Officer Services – Woglom and Atty. Miller discussed the update with the contract with Berkheimer, the only substantive changes would be in the commission rate paid to Berkheimer for their services. This would be tied to the commission rate paid by the Montgomery TCC. The rate for 2022 would be 1.10% (it is presently 1.30%). Years 2023-2027 would see a commission rate of 1.20%. Woglom provided the information to the membership to determine the aggregate savings each could expect to receive.

The original contract was revised, and also contains addenda, which Woglom said could be wrapped into a new single contract. Atty. Miller and Woglom provided two options to the delegates (1) to authorize the solicitor to prepare a contract that the Executive Committee will review and approve prior to execution, or (2) to authorize the solicitor to prepare a contract that the delegates shall review and authorize officers to endorse the same.

Woglom believed that this could be achieved with one meeting. Atty. Miller preferred to have all parties review and then authorize the Executive Committee to execute.

Woglom discussed current developments on the Tax Officer contract with Berkheimer, and whether or not the Committee was comfortable with the approval of the new terms of the contract. Roth questioned whether the revisions would be retroactive to January 1, 2022. They would be. Atty. David Gordon and Atty. Miller would be charged with creating a new contract.

Kistler queried whether the ties to the commission with the Montgomery County and Northampton County would remain. Woglom indicated in the affirmative, and that this would include the original contract as well as all addenda thereto. This would include the 2017 extension which, in part, placed conditions on the Tax Officer staffing a business office within the Coty of Allentown.

A major question to be answered was whether the Committee was comfortable with voting on these changes at one meeting or wait until the next scheduled meeting to make a final decision. The resolution of the Allentown satellite office and the continuation of this service was not easily resolved. Pepe believed that it is in the best interests of the Committee to retain the language in the contract and deal with it later. Atty. Miller explained at length the issues at hand. In a collaborative effort, he would work with legal counsel for Berkheimer in crafting the draft agreement. There were issues such as defining Sue Ruch as the contact person (she is no longer the Berkheimer representative) that appear in the contract.

Woglom indicated that if another meeting is needed, that the regularly scheduled April 2022 meeting be moved to March and that would serve as the regular meeting for the Committee. Pepe agreed.

Carl moved, seconded by Roth, to have the solicitor prepare a contract that the Executive Committee shall review and approve prior to endorsement. Berkheimer's representative, Ashley Rowe, urged the Committee to move this matter forward, in that each delay creates issues for the Tax Officer to retroactively apply the new rate. She was advised to begin using the new rate. The motion was adopted unanimously.

IV. Adjournment

The date for the next regular meeting is April 21, 2022. Woglom will verify the availability of the South Whitehall Public Meeting Room. There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made (Roth) and seconded (Frisbee) to adjourn the January 20, 2022 meeting at 2:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jack D. Meyers
Secretary