

Bradford County Newsletter

Your Government Working for You!

Bradford County Releases 2009 Budget

By: Michelle Shedden

Bradford County 2009 budget is \$57,327,972.00 and will include a .5 mill tax increase. Chairman Mark Smith discussed the budget in his [2009 Report to Taxpayers on the State of Bradford County](#).

“It has been a challenging year in Bradford County, especially in these financially uncertain times. All county departments and elected officials have had the duty of balancing the cost of services and infrastructure against the cost to the Bradford County

taxpayers. In these economic times it has been more difficult to budget than usual.”

“The largest contributor to the budget challenges as in many prior years is the continuous stream of unfunded mandates from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.”

“This will be the first year that we are being required to pay the full time salary for the district attorney, which will cost the taxpayers of Bradford County

\$154,000.”

“We are facing tougher regulations, inspections and citations from the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections.”

Last minute Human Services cuts from the state also made this years budget an interesting challenge.

See the full budget here...

[2009 Bradford County Budget](#)

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“Chairman’s Report to the Taxpayers on the State of Bradford County”

[Click Here](#)

Bradford County Announces Reorganization at Bradford County Manor

PRESS RELEASE

The Bradford County Commissioners and Complete Healthcare Resources, the management firm at the Manor, announced today that they will be undertaking a reorganization of the Bradford County Manor in an effort to ensure adequate staff support to the residents while remaining fiscally responsible to the County taxpayers. The

county owned nursing facility has required assistance from the County over the past several years to meet its financial obligations. Cash flow loss from operations of Bradford County Manor has been \$146,000 and \$180,000 for the years ended 2006 and 2007, and the cash loss for 2008 is projected at \$299,000. In addition,

capital improvements in the respective years at the facility further increased the County’s assistance to Bradford County Manor. The reorganization will better position the facility to provide the same high quality care and services while diminishing the need for County taxpayer funding.

Current market conditions have impacted the popula-

tion at the nursing facility which has seen a drop in residents over the past three years. In addition, current financial concerns at the state and federal levels have limited reimbursement to nursing facilities across Pennsylvania. Decreased recuperation time following surgery has impacted the length of stay for therapy residents and even though the number of admissions to the facility

has remained steady, the length of stay has decreased.

The reorganization plan involves restructuring ancillary support departments and outsourcing the laundry services for linens. Total estimated annual savings as a result of the reorganization plan is \$200,000. Direct care nursing staff will

not be affected. Ancillary staff positions will be vacated through attrition or job transfer and some layoffs are expected. A total of 18 positions will be eliminated. The affected laundry services will be outsourced to the Bradford County Correctional Facility. The linens will be done overnight by female

inmates at the correctional facility. The outsourcing of laundry is expected to save the county \$120,000 of the \$200,000 noted above. Resident's personal clothing will continue to be laundered at the nursing facility by facility staff.

Bradford County Manor will continue to provide

excellent rehabilitative and skilled nursing services to the residents of Bradford County, continuing its long history of compassionate service. This plan will help them provide those services more efficiently and cost effectively.

A Word on Human Services Budgeting from the Director

By: Bill Blevins

Three weeks into the new job and I'm told we are doing the budget on a new system in a very unstable economy. While learning the new system, the Human Services staff were bombarded daily with dire predictions out of Harrisburg for budget and service cuts. Our mission was to design a budget that would maintain our services, hold down costs, and keep the county share at a minimum.

We began the process by looking at each service and position to determine which were mandated, which were voluntary, and how

they were performing. We also took a very close look at these services to try to envision the long-term impact of their elimination on the County. We were really looking at cost effectiveness and outcomes. Throughout the process, we were being advised of funding cuts from the state. We watched the new round of cuts that we all knew were coming and are prepared to "improvise, adapt and overcome" as they are announced. We expect to do adjustments throughout the next six to twelve months in response to the economy.

As if the economic difficulties and the news out of Harrisburg were not enough, the commissioners really took their job seriously. Hours were spent going over the budgets line by line and it was obvious they had done their homework. The end result is a budget we can live with. On a personal note, as the "new guy" in Human Services, I found the process to be both exciting and a valuable learning experience.



Human Services Director
Bill Blevins

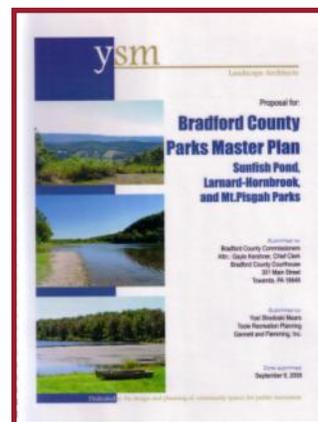
Update: Bradford County Parks Master Planning

By: Ray Stolinas

On September 9, 2008, Bradford County Commissioners accepted nine (9) proposals for consideration, consisting of a majority of firms from Pennsylvania, one from Owego, NY and another from Broomfield, CO. The County Parks Advisory Committee (CPAC) reviewed the proposals and agreed to interview three (3) candidate firms that retained experience with municipal park and recreation planning and familiarity with the

coordination of the public input process. Based on these criteria and work accomplished previously in Bradford County, the CPAC interviewed the three firms on October 15, 2008, at the Planning Office. The consultants that presented their individual approach to the Master Plan included *Larson Design Group* (Williamsport), *Herbert, Rowland & Grubic* (State College) and *YSM/Toole Recreation Planning/Gannett Fleming* (York).

All three firms and their respective teams conducted a presentation of their "scope of work" for the development of the County Parks Master Plan and illustrated their overall qualifications and experience in developing similar representative projects. The CPAC deliberated immediately after the presentations and voted upon the choices and made the following recommendation to the County Commissioners and Cindy Dunlap, our



grant project manager at Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR).

The majority of CPAC

members voted to recommend the planning team of YSM/Toole Recreation Planning/Gannett and Fleming Inc. to assume our consultant duties for the County Parks Master Plan at a cost of \$79,927. The PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources approved a Community Conservation

Partnership grant in the amount of \$129,800, however, the Commissioners, DCNR and CPAC agreed that this type of Master Planning effort can be accomplished at a much lower price, and a ceiling had been set at \$80,000.00 in the Request for Proposals. This is a 50/50 cost share grant be-

tween DCNR and Bradford County. In-kind services will be provided from Office of Community Planning and Grants staff during the project duration to lower the county share.

The County Commissioners approved the CPAC recommendation on November 13th, as did the DCNR on November

17th. The Consultant Agreement will be fully executed at the December 4, 2008, Commissioners' meeting. Actual work should begin at the beginning of 2009 and will embark on a fifteen (15) month planning and public input process to examine and prioritize needs within our county park system.

Toys for Tots Charity Basketball Game a Success

By: Mark W. Smith

The mood was one of good spirit at Northeast Bradford High School as the Bradford County employ-

pouring into the gymnasium bringing in a load of toys for the Toys for Tots Charity Basketball game. The first half of

was not to last. In the fourth quarter Don Stewart, Warden and organizer of the event, rallied his team to close the gap within just a few points. The fourth quarter was



Bradford County employees warm up for the game.

full of exciting action as the players grew more serious and competitive. The crowd also became more boisterous and the action intensified as cheering and screams grew louder with every play of the game. The last minutes of the fourth quarter were the most exciting of the game as the plays at each end of the court became fast, furious and full of fouls in a race to be on top as the clock wound down in its last few seconds.

It was not meant to be for Bradford County as Susquehanna held off the strong rally at the finish. It was Susquehanna 62 and Bradford County 60 when the buzzer sounded at the finish of the last second of the game.



The Bradford County "Dream Team" **Top from Left:** Kelly Stewart, Don Stewart and Jim Shadduck, **Middle from Left:** Nick Foust, Darrin Lindsey, John Harrison, Kevin Prickett and Calvin Vanderpool, **Bottom from Left:** Derrick Chaffee, Elissa Slotter, Lionel Hyatt, Mike Shaw and Travis Peppard

ees prepared to take on the Susquehanna County employees on Saturday night November 29, 2008 in a charity basketball game. As Bradford County warmed up in prison stripes the crowd was still

the game was close with a score of 28-24 with Susquehanna County leading. The third quarter proved to be a challenge for Bradford County employees as Susquehanna rallied to, what was at one point, a 20 point lead. But it

Hometown Heroes Banner Program

Kelly Bradley is directing a project in cooperation with Towanda Borough, Friends of Bradford County Library and the Bureau of Veterans Affairs which offers the public a chance to purchase an 18" x 36" banner that will be dis-

played on street lights, honoring Bradford County Veterans who have served their country from the Civil War to today. Each banner will be unique and honor a specific Veteran. The cost of sponsoring a banner is

\$ 200.00. For more information on the Hometown Heroes Banner Program contact Kelly Bradley at 570-746-3815 or email bradcohometownheroes@epix.net or visit the website at www.bradfordcountyhometownheroes.org



Update: Clean and Green

By: Mark Smith

The issue with Clean and Green is ongoing at the state level and was discussed at the recent County Commissioners Association meeting in Hershey. Commissioners in the Marcellus Shale area continue to struggle with its implementation with many counties administering the law in many different ways. County Commissioners in-

cluding Bradford County discussed the law at the Agricultural Committee meeting on Sunday November 24, 2008, and it was decided to take the vote to the full body of Commissioners for consideration to be set as a priority for Commissioners Association in 2009.

In the House of Representatives State Representative Bob Godshall (R) of Montgomery County has introduced legislation, HB 2819, which would exempt natural gas drilling from the Clean and Green rollback taxes. Similar Legislation that exempts windmills has been

considered in the legislature for over a year. It is unclear, at this point, whether bill 2819 will be successful or, if so, how fast it will progress through the legislative process.

County Government Directory

Accounting	265-1723	Area Agency on Aging	265-2896
Assessment	265-1714	Airport	265-4900
Auditor	265-1716	Library	297-2436
Bradford County Human Services	265-1760	Correctional Facility	297-5047
Bradford County Manor	297-4111	911 Center	265-9101
Collections	265-1746	Conservation District	265-5539
Commissioners	265-1727	Coroner	297-0720
Courts	265-1707	District Justice (Troy)	297-3880
District Attorney	265-1712	District Justice (Towanda)	268-5057
Domestic Relations	265-1718	District Justice (Wysox)	265-9393
Elections	265-1717	District Justice (Athens)	888-6324
Hearing Master	265-1711	Emergency Management Agency	265-5022
Jury Commissioners	265-1732	Planning	268-4103
Maintenance	265-1719		
Information Technology	265-1720		
Personnel	265-1722		
Probation	265-1706		
Prothonotary	265-1705	Bradford County Court	
Public Defender	265-1713	House	Phone: 570-265-1727
Register & Recorder	265-1702	301 Main St.	Fax: 570-265-1729
Sheriff	265-1701	Towanda, PA 18848	www.bradfordcountypa.org
Treasurer	265-1700		
Veterans Affairs	265-1704		
Victim Witness	265-1759		
Penn State Agricultural Extension	265-2896		

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