



THE COUNTY OF CHESTER

COMMISSIONERS:
Carol Aichele
Terence Farrell
Kathi Cozzone

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS
Courthouse, 2 N. High St. Suite 512
P.O. Box 2748
West Chester, PA 19380-0991
610-344-6100



November 18, 2010

EDITORS: The following is for immediate release. If you have any questions, please contact Evelyn Walker, Chester County Chief Management Officer, at (610) 344-6024 or Rebecca Brain, Communications Coordinator, at (610) 344-6279.

Chester County Commissioners approve resolution changing holiday displays

WEST CHESTER _ The Chester County Commissioners, by a vote of 2-1 today, changed the regulations concerning private unattended winter holiday season displays on the Chester County historic courthouse property.

The resolution was offered by Chester County Commissioner Terence Farrell during Tuesday's Sunshine meeting. Farrell pointed out that United States military personnel have been continuously defending the nation's freedom in foreign lands, "far from family, home and loved ones." He noted that the war in Afghanistan is now entering its 10th year.

Farrell said, "To that purpose, I propose that we, the Commissioners of Chester County, sponsor a winter holiday display for the upcoming season dedicated to our troops and to the principles of freedom, liberty and peace they have pledged to protect and defend."

Chester County Commissioner Chair Carol Aichele said she fully supported Farrell's motion. She recounted the times her family members who have served in the military have been away during Christmas. Aichele said receiving a phone call on Christmas morning from a far away duty station was not the same as having them home for the holidays.

Aichele said the county will strictly adhere to the guidance set for by the United States Supreme Court concerning holiday displays. The court has designated traditional symbols of the holidays that are permitted to be displayed on government property.

Commissioner Kathi Cozzone was opposed to the resolution for several reasons. She noted that the board had already spent considerable time over the last several years to refine and enact a policy and

expressed concern about the county spending money to purchase displays. “Let me be very clear,” she said, “I absolutely support a display to honor veterans and the men and women currently serving in the armed forces. My opposition to this resolution is not about support of or opposition to a particular display. We already have a policy in place and I don't see any reason to change that. It is my belief that we should allow all displays or no displays. Given the budget issues we are facing, this is the wrong time to be considering purchasing displays.”

Planning for the holiday display will take place in the future.

Chester County is the first county in Pennsylvania to initiate a strategic planning process and has a Aaa rating on its bonds from Moody's Investors Service as well as AAA ratings from Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings. Established by William Penn as one of Pennsylvania's three original counties, Chester County has been named by Forbes.com as one of America's best places to raise a family and is ranked the healthiest county in Pennsylvania by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.