

RESPONSE TO LUZERNE COUNTY PUBLIC MEETING

The Multi-Purpose Stadium Authority of Lackawanna County and Lackawanna County have been fully committed to the promotion and enhancement of professional baseball in Northeastern Pennsylvania since the acquisition of the Franchise in 1986. After thoroughly and diligently evaluating many factors and options, including deteriorating stadium conditions, declining attendance and future litigation costs, it was determined that the anticipated sale of the Franchise and stadium enhancements -- made possible by the State's commitment of \$25 million in grant funds and the SWB Yankees' willingness to enter into a long-term lease agreement with greater protections and financial commitments in the amount of \$37 million on their part -- is the best way to revitalize interest in professional baseball and ensure that baseball remains in Northeastern Pennsylvania for decades to come, at no additional cost to the taxpayers. If not for the over \$20 million in investments made by Lackawanna County to preserve and enhance the value and marketability of the Franchise, the team would no longer be located in Northeastern Pennsylvania and this project would not be possible.

The County and Authority pursued and exhausted all options to meet their mounting financial obligations, including seeking the financial assistance and/or cooperation of Luzerne County which, unfortunately, refused to provide any such assistance or cooperation, even when the International League informed the team of its ability to remove the team from Lackawanna County because of the failed drainage system by letter dated July 7, 2009, a copy of which is maintained in the Archive of Baseball Documents on the County's website.

Despite their statements to the contrary, the Luzerne County Commissioners were included and involved in the proposed project from its inception, starting with the joint public hearing on the future of baseball held in September, 2009, followed by multiple and detailed presentations, meetings and/or phone calls with the Governor, representatives of the SWB Yankees and the Lackawanna County Commissioners, as well as their consulting professionals. Although the Luzerne County Commissioners did not voice any objections during this process, newspaper reports have confirmed that the Luzerne County Commissioners were secretly planning to sue Lackawanna County violating the trust and confidence of the Lackawanna County Commissioners. This secret litigation strategy was meant to thwart the sale of the team, renovation of the facility and the ancillary job creation stemming therefrom.

With the limited exception of a few individuals with strong personal, emotional and/or political ties to the initial acquisition of the Franchise, the proposed sale of the Franchise and related stadium enhancements have met with overwhelming support from the local business community, building trades and the public at large. We will not allow the lawsuit filed by Luzerne County or any related actions, including the solicitation of Franchise appraisals and this evening's public hearing, to sway that support or distract or deter us from our anticipated course of action.

In their politically-charged, self-serving quest to challenge the value of the Franchise purchase price, Luzerne County has intentionally and conveniently overlooked and discounted many factors, including the appraisal/valuation of the Franchise secured by Lackawanna County in 2006 at the time it arrived at the purchase price amounts set forth in the current Option Agreement with the SWB Yankees. The results of that appraisal are, and have been, maintained in the Archive of Baseball Documents on the County's website.

Luzerne County has had every opportunity to be a joint participant in this project, but summarily and steadfastly refused to do so, turning down \$62 million in funds pledged by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the SWB Yankees and guaranteed jobs for its local building trades in favor of its obdurate, dilatory and costly litigation strategy.

Through their actions, it is now apparent that Luzerne County never had any intention of saving baseball but, instead, have seized upon this anticipated project as a selfish opportunity to unjustly and inequitably benefit its coffers at the expense of the future of baseball.

Again, while we will not litigate the merits of that suit in public or through the press, we are extremely confident in our position and fully expect to prevail as the case runs its course through the judicial process.

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Solicitor
Multi-Purpose Stadium Authority of
Lackawanna County