

# Allegheny County Council

*County of Allegheny  
436 Grant Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
Phone (412) 350-6490*



## Meeting Minutes

**Wednesday, December 12, 2018**

**4:45 PM**

**Conference Room I**

### **Committee on Health & Human Services**

*John Palmiere, Chair; Patrick Catena, Nick Futules, Cindy Kirk, Paul Klein, Bob Macey  
and Sue Means, Members*

## I. Call to Order

*The meeting was called to order at 4:45.*

### Invited Guests:

**William D. McKain, CPA, Allegheny County Manager or designee(s)**  
**Dr. Karen Hacker, Director, Allegheny County Health Department**

*Mr. McKain was present from the Office of the County Manager*

*Mr. Kelly and Ms. Sanberg were present from the Health Department.*

*Mr. Barker was present from the Office of County Council.*

## II. Roll Call

**Members Present:** 4 - Cindy Kirk, Paul Klein, Sue Means and John Palmiere

**Members Absent:** 1 - Bob Macey

**Members Phone:** 2 - Patrick Catena and Nick Futules

**Members** 1 - Anita Prizio

**Non-Members:**

## III. Approval of Minutes

## IV. Agenda Items

### Resolutions

#### [10890-18](#)

A Resolution of the Council of the County of Allegheny ratifying asbestos abatement permit application fee increases approved by the Allegheny County Health Department pursuant to the Allegheny County Code of Ordinances, Section 505-49.C(8).

**Sponsors:** Chief Executive

*At the request of the Chair, the clerk read the title of the bill and Mr. McKain indicated that the County had received quite a bit of positive feedback regarding asbestos abatement activities, and noted that the revenues received from the fees go into a special revenue fund. Mr. McKain noted that the Department had noticed that municipally funded demolitions created an inequity in the fee structure, to the extent that large commercial entities were paying the same fees as municipalities. Ms. Sanberg summarized the fee increases for the largest scale projects, noting that they are intended to improve equity for the very largest projects, which can entail tens of thousands of square feet of asbestos containing material for large office buildings and the like. Mr. McKain suggested that the lower fees for municipalities may be able to do more demolitions as a result of the less burdensome fees. Mr. Kelly stressed the hazards attendant to asbestos contamination, particularly in the context of renovation and demolition, and noted that the new fees are based on the amount of time that inspectors spend on-site.*

*In response to questions from Ms. Kirk, Ms. Sanberg discussed the annual operations and management permit, noting that it is intended to allow certain entities to undertake small projects on an emergency basis, and provided a frame of reference for the surface area calculation.*

*In response to a question from Ms. Kirk, Ms. Sanberg noted that charging fees based on the number of inspection visits would potentially have led to much higher fees, and Mr. Kelly indicated that the formula for a visit-based fee system would have been fairly complex.*

*In response to a question from Ms. Kirk, Mr. McKain noted that there are generally just under 700 inspections per year, and the new revenues would be used to hire personnel and upgrade computer tracking software. Mr. Kelly noted that, once the tracking system is in place, the administrative overhead will reduce and the inspectors will be able to spend more time in the field.*

*In response to a question from Mr. Klein, Mr. McKain noted that the last adjustment to these fees was in 2016, and offered to forward information regarding the exact amount(s) of the adjustments.*

*In response to questions from Ms. Means, Mr. McKain noted that the additional fees should amount to \$100,000 to \$145,000, and that all of that revenue would be kept in a special fund. Ms. Sanberg noted that the Department currently has three inspectors, and that more would be desirable. Mr. Kelly noted that Allegheny and Philadelphia are the only two counties that have their own programs only because they are the only two counties in the Commonwealth that have full clean air enforcement programs.*

*In response to questions from Ms. Means, Mr. McKain and Ms. Sanberg discussed the Department's inspection activities, and noted that the biggest project costs will run in the millions of dollars, so those fee increases will not be viewed as significant.*

*Ms. Prizio expressed support for the notion of assisting the municipalities in their demolition efforts.*

*In response to question from Ms. Means, Ms. Sanberg discussed the types of building materials that tend to have asbestos in them.*

*In response to a question from Ms. Kirk, Ms. Sanberg noted that the Department does not regulate private home abatement activities.*

*In response to a question from Ms. Means, Mr. McKain noted that the County would not be deriving income from the new fee structure, and indicated that the County spends significantly more on the program than it will receive in the form of fees.*

*In response to a question from Mr. Klein, Ms. Sanberg noted that the new fees are generally comparable to similar programs around the country.*

*The Chair expressed support for the proposed changes, and indicated that he would like to see additional inspectors.*

**A motion was made by Catena, seconded by Klein, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

## V. Adjournment

*The meeting was adjourned at 5:14.*