

# **Allegheny County Council**

*County of Allegheny  
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## **Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, March 21, 2007**

**5:00 PM**

**Conference Room 1**

## **Special Committee on Government Reform**

*Rich Fitzgerald, Chair -- Committee of the Whole*

\*\*\*REVISED\*\*\*

**I. Call to Order**

**Summary:** *The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM*

**Invited Guests:**

**John Weinstein, County Treasurer**

**Jim Flynn, County Manager or Designee**

**Jim Eichenlaub, Builder's Association of Metropolitan Pittsburgh**

**Summary:** *Invited guests in attendance: Derek Uber for Mr. Flynn; Mr. Stanizzo; and Tom McIntyre for Mr. Vogt.*

*Council staff in attendance: Jared Barker*

**Rich Stanizzo, Business Manager Pittsburgh Building Construction Trades**

**Greg Vogt, IBEW Local 5**

**II. Roll Call**

**Roll Call:** Present: Jim Burn, Matt Drozd, Bob Macey, Michael Finnerty, Brenda Frazier, Vince Gastgeb, and Chair Rich Fitzgerald  
Absent: Susan Caldwell, Joan Cleary, John DeFazio, Dave Fawcett, Chuck Martoni, Jan Rea, and William Robinson  
Non-Member: William Lestitian

**III. Agenda Items**

**Ordinances**

**2330-06** An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, to facilitate the reporting and recording of information by contractors operating within Allegheny County.

**Sponsors:** Rich Fitzgerald, Chuck Martoni, Jim Burn, John DeFazio, Vince Gastgeb, C.L. Jabbour, Eileen Watt, Rich Nerone, Joan Cleary, Michael Finnerty and Jan Rea

**Summary:** *The Chair provided the committee with a summary of the bill. He said that the bill would create a program in which contractors doing business within Allegheny County could obtain a yearly certificate from the County once they place basic information about their business (name, address, and the like) and certifications regarding their business on record. He said that as the bill is currently written, the required certifications are that the business is fully bonded and insured if so required under state law, that the business employs individuals who are eligible to work in the United States, that the business complies with all federal, state and local tax laws, and that the business will notify all employers of the registration status of all subcontractors that they employ.*

*The program would primarily be administered by the Office of the Treasurer.*

*Proceedings to appeal the Treasurer's denial of an application or revocation of a certificate would be conducted by a newly created seven member Contractor Certification Board (four members would be appointed by Council, two would be appointed by the Chief Executive, and the last member would be the District Attorney).*

*He said there is no penalty provision contained within this bill; participation in the program would be strictly voluntary on the part of the contractors. The bill would, however, permit the County to keep centralized records on complaints filed against contractors participating in the program for the use of the public.*

*He said that an application fee would be paid by contractors seeking licenses in order to cover the cost of administering the program. License applications could be denied or certificates revoked for a variety of reasons, including falsification of an application, a licensee engaging in unlawful activities, and so on.*

*Mr. Burn expressed support for the bill. The Chair said that he agrees with Mr. Stanizzo who said that if the county is Home Rule, then we should be able to pass the bill without state intervention.*

*Ms. Frazier said that the last time this bill was in committee the Treasurer expressed concerns about administering the program. She said she likes the idea but if the Treasurer is unwilling to administer it, then they would need someone to fill that role.*

*Mr. Stanizzo said that with a voluntary program that has no penalties for non compliance, there is no incentive to enforce it because there is nothing for the county to collect.*

*The Chair said that he understands their concern but is still inclined to release the bill.*

**Action:**

**Released from the Committee**

**2602-06**

An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, amending Part 2, Article 203 of the Administrative Code, by adding a new § 5-203.07 to provide for the explicit extension of the County's policies for participation by disadvantaged business enterprises to the County Authorities recognized in §5-203.01 of the Administrative Code.

**Sponsors:** William Russell Robinson, Jim Burn, Joan Cleary, Michael Finnerty, Rich Fitzgerald and Bob Macey

**Summary:**

*The Chair provided a summary of the bill. He said the bill would create a new section in the Administrative Code which would explicitly extend the County's policies for participation by M/W/DBE businesses to the County Authorities*

*The new Code section would require that all County authorities develop an M/W/DBE participation policy. This policy would have to be consistent with the County's M/W/DBE policy, and would not be permitted to reduce the participation guidelines contained therein. The bill would also require that the authorities submit their policies to Council in ordinance form for final approval, and explicitly would prevent those policies from taking effect until such approval is given.*

*He said that the bill would also place an obligation on the Department of Minority, Women and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises to monitor the progress of the authorities, and submit regular reports to Council and the Chief Executive.*

*Mr. Finnerty said that he thinks the bill should be released and passed. Ms. Frazier requested to be added as a sponsor of the bill.*

**Action:** Released from the Committee

**2747-06**

An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, amending the Allegheny County Code of Ordinances to include a new Chapter 271, entitled "Allegheny County Contractor Web Site."

**Sponsors:** Vince Gastgeb

**Summary:** The Chair discussed bills 2747-06 and 2382-06 simultaneously.

*Mr. Gastgeb said that he believes the sponsors of the bill made a good effort with regard to contractor licensing but was concerned that the bill has not progressed. He said that the bill is at least a start in the right direction. He said that if the county had a web site it would be a process that would be an incentive for good contractors and the fly-by-night contractors would tend to hide underground.*

*Mr. Stanizzo said that he did not think that anything voluntary would work but Council has to wrestle with the issue of what can be done. He expressed concern that the county has a Home Rule Charter and still has to ask the state for permission. He said he thinks they should just pass what they think is right and tell the state to challenge them if they think it is wrong. He said that everyone knows how to proceed and that they should proceed.*

*Mr. Vogt said that while he would prefer something more encompassing, if the provisions of this bill is the best they can do, then they should proceed with it.*

*Gastgeb said that Mr. Stanizzo and Mr. Vogt support would be vital to the bill, and since they support it he said that would prompt the best contractors to register.*

*Mr. Burn said that when council first introduced this concept they talked a lot about senior citizens being taken advantage of by contractors. He said that he strongly supports the bill.*

*Mr. Finnerty said that this would be a good first step and that the cooperation of the trade unions would help make sure that they would have a list of reliable contractors.*

**Action:** Released from the Committee

**Resolution**

**2382-06**

A Resolution of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, calling on the Pennsylvania General Assembly and the Governor, to assist in protecting the residents of Allegheny County by specifically authorizing the implementation of a contractor licensing program in Allegheny County.

**Sponsors:** Vince Gastgeb

**Summary:** *See discussion on Bill No. 2747-06.*

**Action:** Released from the Committee

**IV. Adjournment**

**Summary:** *The meeting adjourned at 5:42 PM*