

Allegheny County Council

*County of Allegheny
436 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Phone (412) 350-6495
Fax (412) 350-6499*



Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 29, 2005

4:00 PM

Reconvened meeting of November 17, 2005

Conference Room 1

Committee on Budget and Finance

*William Russell Robinson, Chair; John DeFazio, Ron Francis, Brenda Frazier,
Vince Gastgeb, Jay Jabbour, and Doug Price*

Reconvened Meeting of 11-17-05

Roll Call: Present: William Robinson, John DeFazio, Brenda Frazier, Vince Gastgeb, and C.L. Jabbour
Absent: Ron Francis, and Doug Price

I. Reconvene

Summary: *The meeting reconvened at 4:00 PM*

Invited Guests:

Jim Flynn, County Manager or Designee
Amy Girser, Director, Budget & Finance
Derek Uber, Assistant County Manager

II. Agenda Items**Resolutions**

2206-05 A Resolution of the County of Allegheny approving certain Inter-Departmental Transfers in the Operating Budget for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2005 and ending December 31, 2005.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Enactment No: 50-05-RE

This bill was given an affirmative recommendation at the November 17, 2005 Budget & Finance Committee Meeting.

2207-05 A Resolution of the County of Allegheny amending the Grants and Special Accounts Budgets for 2005 (Submission #19-05).

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Enactment No: 54-05-RE

This bill was given an affirmative recommendation at the November 17, 2005 Budget & Finance Committee Meeting.

2217-05 Resolution of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, adopting an Operating Budget pursuant to Article IV, §2 and Article VII, §4 of the Home Rule Charter, by setting forth appropriations to pay the expenses of conducting the public business of Allegheny County and for meeting debt charges for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2006 and ending December 31, 2006.

Sponsors: William Russell Robinson, Rich Fitzgerald, John DeFazio, Brenda Frazier and Joan Cleary

Summary: *Mr. Jabbour proposed an amendment to the bill which would increase the appropriation to the Clerk of Courts Office by \$54,200 and decrease the appropriation to*

Administrative Services - MIS by that same amount. Mr. Jabbour indicated that he believed that the amendment was necessary to create an appropriation that reflects the operational needs of this office. Ms. Griser said that she had no significant objections or concerns with this amendment. The amendment was unanimously approved.

Mr. Kress proposed an amendment to the bill which would increase the appropriation to the Allegheny County Police by \$75,000 and decrease Administrative Services - MIS by that same amount. He indicated that the amendment would provide funding to add 2 additional uniformed police officers to the County Police roster.

At that time Mr. Kress was not present and Mr. Gastgeb spoke on his behalf, indicating that Mr. Kress met with the police union and they told him that they would be short 2 officers. He said that Mr. Kress would like to have 37 additional officers instead of the proposed 35 additional officers.

Ms. Griser said that she has serious concerns with this amendment. She spoke against the amendment. She said that the administration believes that the class of 35 officers is sufficient to meet the needs of the police department.

At that time, Mr. Kress entered the room. He said that there would be 2 vacancies due to 2 officers being sent to Iraq. He spoke in favor of adding 2 additional officers. Ms. Griser again maintained the position that the number of positions that were funded was adequate. Greg Casciato from the Office of Budget and Finance addressed the committee indicating that lower overtime costs has reduced the appropriation. He also said that some officers are retiring earlier in order to receive a higher pension check, but they will be replaced at a lower rate.

A general discussion took place regarding police classes.

Mr. Gastgeb said that if the union told Mr. Kress that they needed the additional officers, then now would be the time to budget for them. Mr. Jabbour cautioned that eventually these officers would return from Iraq and the county would need to keep these positions open for them. Again, Ms. Griser said that the appropriation in the budget was sufficient for the number of officers that the county needs.

Mr. Kress decided to hold the amendment at this time.

The Chair raised the issue of the Chief Executive contemplating the sharing of purchasing services with the City of Pittsburgh. He said that he wanted to remind the administration that Council reversed an action by the County Commissioners regarding this and put in place cooperation agreements which would require Council's participation in the approval process. He said that it would be a violation of the law if Council were not involved in any consolidations. He said that he is not in possession of any communication or document from the administration relative to this issue. He said that he and Ms. Liptak did consider the potential budget ramifications of this. He said that if there is any intention to consolidate services then he would like someone from the administration to point it out to him and tell him where it is.

Mr. Gastgeb agreed with the Chair, and pointed out that there are 2 County Ordinances in place that stipulates that any intergovernmental agreements with the City of

Pittsburgh would have to come before Council. He said it is disrespectful to this Council that there is no proposed legislation regarding this.

The Chair said that he understands that Pittsburgh City Council is adopting an Ordinance to this effect. He said that if what City Council adopts contains the word "consolidation" in it, then he would recommend that the County does not sign that contract. He said that is not the way for them to proceed. He said that they do not have enough information before them to determine the impact this would have on the 2006 budget. He said that they need to meet with the administration regarding this and that the law of the county says that Council must be in the loop. He said that he will speak with Council President Rich Fitzgerald and allow him enough time to present to council his recommendation as to how they should proceed. Ms. Frazier agreed with the Chair and Mr. Gastgeb.

Mr. Jabbour suggested that council send a letter to the administration informing them of their position and telling them that the door is open to discuss this. He said that he represents the Mon Valley and is not interested in bailing out the City of Pittsburgh. Ms. Cleary echoed Mr. Jabbour's sentiments. Mr. Gastgeb again spoke against the administration entering into any cooperation agreements without the approval of Council.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN ON THE BILL ITSELF. THE CHAIR INDICATED THAT HE PLANS TO RECESS THIS MEETING AT THE CALL OF THE CHAIR AND COMMITTEE ACTION WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE RECONVENED MEETING.

Enactment No: 55-05-RE

This bill was amended and held at the November 17, 2005 Budget & Finance Committee Meeting.

2218-05

Resolution of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, adopting a Capital Budget pursuant to Article IV, §2 and Article VII, §4 of the Home Rule Charter by setting forth appropriations to pay the expenses for capital expenditures during the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2006 and ending December 31, 2006.

Sponsors: William Russell Robinson, John DeFazio, Rich Fitzgerald, Brenda Frazier and Joan Cleary

Summary:

Mr. Gastgeb proposed an amendment to the bill creating a County bond project appropriation entitled North Park Improvement Project in the amount of \$100,000 and creating a County bond appropriation entitled South Park Improvement Project in the amount of \$100,000, and decreasing the County bond project appropriation for the HAVA Complaint Voting Machines project by \$200,000. Mr. Gastgeb explained his reason for the amendment. He said that the county needs capital improvements in the parks because the cost of deferred maintenance is becoming unbearable. He said that he is taking the money from the HAVA project because he thinks that project was over budgeted.

Ms. Cleary expressed concern over taking the money from the HAVA project. She said that she would be more comfortable taking the money from somewhere else. Ms.

Frazier agreed with Ms. Cleary. The amendment was unanimously approved.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN ON THE BILL ITSELF. THE CHAIR INDICATED THAT HE PLANS TO RECESS THIS MEETING AT THE CALL OF THE CHAIR AND COMMITTEE ACTION WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE RECONVENED MEETING.

Action: Amended & Held in Committee

Enactment No: 56-05-RE

2219-05

Resolution of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, adopting the Grants, Special Accounts, and Agency Fund Budgets, by setting forth appropriations to pay said expenses during the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2006 and ending December 31, 2006.

Sponsors: William Russell Robinson, John DeFazio, Rich Fitzgerald, Brenda Frazier and Joan Cleary

Summary: *The Chair proposed an amendment to the bill correcting a clerical error in the Agency Fund allocation of the estimated Hotel Room Rental Tax available to fund the Sports & Exhibition Authority. The amount was amended from the incorrect amount of \$928,114 to the correct amount of \$1,331,950. The amendment was unanimously approved.*

Action: A motion was made that this matter be Amended and Affirmatively Recommended as Amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Enactment No: 57-05-RE

Ordinance

2212-05

An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, establishing the tax levy upon all real property subject to taxation within the limits of Allegheny County.

Sponsors: William Russell Robinson, John DeFazio, Rich Fitzgerald, Brenda Frazier, Joan Cleary and C.L. Jabbour

Enactment No: 53-05-OR

III. Adjournment

Summary: *At 6:10 PM the meeting was recessed at the call of the Chair.*