

Allegheny County Council

436 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Phone (412) 350-6490
Fax (412) 350-6499



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 22, 2017

4:00 PM

Conference Room 1

Committee on Public Works

*Bob Macey, Chair; Patrick Catena, Samuel DeMarco, Jim Ellenbogen, Nick Futules,
Cindy Kirk, Paul Klein, Denise Ranalli-Russell and DeWitt Walton - Members*

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:01.

Invited Guests:

William D. McKain, CPA, Allegheny County Manager or designee(s)
Stephen Shanley, P.E., Director, Allegheny County Department of Public Works

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

Mr. Shanley was present from the Department of Public Works.

Mr. Evanto and Ms. Delancey were present from the Department of Administrative Services.

Mr. Barker and Mr. Szymanski were present from the Office of County Council.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: 4 - Macey, Sam DeMarco, Cindy Kirk and DeWitt Walton

Members Absent: 4 - Jim Ellenbogen, Nick Futules, Paul Klein and Denise Ranalli-Russell

Members 1 - Sue Means

Non-Members:

III. Approval of Minutes

[10043-17](#)

Motion to approve the minutes of the January 24, 2017 meeting of the Committee on Public Works.

A motion was made by DeMarco, seconded by Kirk, that this matter be Passed. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

IV. Agenda Items

Ordinances

[10013-17](#)

An Ordinance delegating to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Secretary of Department of Transportation, the right to acquire in the name of Allegheny County right-of-way necessary to rehabilitate Pine Creek Bridge No. 8, and to take such further action as may be necessary under applicable law, including the Eminent Domain Code.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

At the request of the Chair, the clerk read the title of the bridge and Mr. McKain discussed the general parameters of the delegation.

Mr. Shanley noted that the bridge is in need of rehabilitation and discussed the location and general rehabilitation process.

In response to a question from Ms. Kirk, Mr. Shanley discussed the circumstances under

which additional right of way or construction easements can be needed. Mr. McKain noted that eminent domain is always regarded as a last resort.

The Chair expressed support for the concept of undertaking whatever reasonable actions are necessary to render the County's roads and bridges as safe as possible.

In response to a question from Mr. DeMarco, Mr. Shanley noted that the project cost will be 95% reimbursed by Federal and Commonwealth funds. Mr. McKain noted that the Commonwealth undertaking the property acquisition process saves the County a nontrivial amount of effort, as the process can be time consuming.

In response to a question from Ms. Means, Mr. Shanley noted that these are temporary construction easements, and the property will revert to its current owners at the conclusion of the project. Mr. McKain noted that the process of discussing the easements with the various property owners has not yet started, as the authorization has not yet passed.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. Shanley provided additional detail regarding the location of the bridge in question.

In response to a question from Ms. Kirk, Mr. Shanley noted that the rehabilitation project will likely start sometime in the summer.

A motion was made by DeMarco, seconded by Kirk, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

10014-17

An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, establishing rules, regulations and rates relating to the conduct of certain activities held on and about the Courthouse Grand Staircase, Gallery and Courtyard and the County Office Building lobby.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

At the request of the Chair, the clerk read the title of the bill and Mr. McKain summarized its provisions and described the history of the rental rules, regulations and rates for various County facilities. Mr. McKain noted that the proposal is to combine rental of the Courthouse Courtyard and the Grand Staircase, as most individuals wanted to rent both simultaneously, and also indicated that the new structure is intended to give a round number for rental amounts. Mr. McKain and Ms. Delancey noted that the County had compared their rental amounts to the rates charged by comparable facilities in the City.

Mr. Evanto noted that the combination of the Grand Staircase and the Courtyard makes logistical sense and discussed the rationale behind the changes to the rental rates.

Ms. Delancey discussed the happenstance that led to the concept of leasing the Family Court Courtyard, and Mr. McKain noted that the Courts are in support of the idea.

Mr. DeMarco, Mr. Evanto and Ms. Delancey discussed the marketing efforts undertaken by the County. Mr. Evanto noted that the general public tends not to come through security into the Courthouse unless they have a specific reason for doing so, and that people tend to be enthusiastic about the spaces once they see them. Mr. McKain noted that more individuals are leasing the facilities, and that the leasing structure only applies to events that take place during non-business hours.

In response to a question from Ms. Kirk, Mr. McKain and Ms. Delancey noted that, at this

time, the County does not require that any specific vendors be utilized for events in the locations at issue. Mr. Evanto suggested that the best way of proceeding may be to see if the individuals using the spaces tend towards using the same few vendors, and to go from there. Ms. Means suggested that florists in particular may be best specified, as familiarity with the spaces might provide insight to the best arrangements to be used.

In response to questions from Mr. Kress, Mr. Evanto noted that the County is working with Visit Pittsburgh, and Ms. Delancey discussed her efforts to work with wedding planners, hotels, and the like. Mr. Evanto discussed his efforts at being fair to all of the local hotels and building expansive relationships.

In response to a question from Mr. Kress, Mr. McKain noted that there are discussions taking place regarding using the County lot for event parking on weekends, but that the County has not yet made a decision either way.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. McKain provided additional detail regarding how County staff is assigned to these types of events, and noted that various collective bargaining agreements may bear on those decisions.

In response to questions from Ms. Kirk, Ms. Delancey noted that there is no military discount, nor is there a seasonal discount. Mr. McKain noted that there is no non-resident surcharge for renters who live outside the County.

In response to a question from Ms. Means, Mr. McKain noted that it may be difficult to quantify, but if individuals travel to Pittsburgh for weddings that take place here, there will also be hotel/motel tax, drink tax, and car rental tax revenues generated in the process.

In response to a question from Mr. Kress, Mr. McKain noted that the County Office Building lobby has not yet been rented under this program.

In response to a question from Mr. Kress, Mr. McKain noted that the Courts authorized only the use of areas outside the Family Court building on weekends in order to avoid potential conflicts with court proceedings.

In response to a question from Mr. Kress, Mr. Evanto estimated that advertising the program has probably cost a few thousand dollars to date.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. McKain discussed recent efforts at cleaning and improving various Courthouse facilities, including the Grand Staircase, Courtyard, and Family Court Courtyard.

In response to a question from Mr. Kress, Ms. Delancey described efforts have been made to reach out to local law firms and Mr. McKain discussed efforts that have been made through the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. Evanto discussed the process for using tents or pavilions in the courtyard.

In response to a question from Mr. DeMarco, Ms. Delancey discussed security measures that are in place within the Courthouse. Mr. McKain noted that County personnel do walk-throughs after events, and the Sheriff's deputies are in the building at all times.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. McKain discussed the Courthouse's lost & found procedures.

A motion was made by DeMarco , seconded by Kirk, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:49.