

Allegheny County Council

*County of Allegheny
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Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 1, 2007

6:00 PM

Conference Room 1

Special Committee on Government Reform

Rich Fitzgerald, Chair -- Committee of the Whole

I. Call to Order

Summary: *The meeting was called to order at 6:03.*

Invited Guests:

Mark Flaherty, County Controller of Designee

Jim Flynn, County Manager or Designee

Summary: *Invited Guests or designees Present: Mr. Flaherty*

Recognized Attendees: Guy Tumolo, Controller's Office

Council Staff Present: Barker, Liptak

II. Roll Call

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

III. Agenda Items

Ordinances

3187-07

An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, to amend the Code of the County of Allegheny, Division 1, by the addition of a new §5-203.08, requiring that all County authorities delineated within the Administrative Code make information pertaining to their budgets available to the public on their respective websites.

Sponsors: Rich Fitzgerald, Jim Burn, Michael Finnerty, Joan Cleary, Brenda Frazier, John DeFazio, Bob Macey and William Russell Robinson

Action: **Released from the Committee**

Discussion Topic:

Controller's Status Update on Row Office Consolidation

Summary: *The Chair gave a general overview of row office consolidation and deferred to Mr. Flaherty.*

Mr. Flaherty summarized the initial cost savings estimate and current status of row office consolidation.

In response to a question from Mr. Finnerty, Mr. Flaherty indicated that it is difficult to tell for the Medical Examiner at the moment, but the Jury Commissioners consolidation has saved roughly \$100,000.

In response to a question from the Mr. Flaherty indicated that a report on the consolidation was due in July.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. Flaherty described his vision for the restructuring of the Courts.

In response to a question from Ms. Frazier, Mr. Flaherty addressed the user-friendliness of the new Court functions.

Mr. Finnerty expressed his concern is that in January, we are going to see a superclerk sitting on top of basically an organizational structure that is identical to the current one.

Mr. Flaherty indicated that the Courts have said that they do not want to totally assume responsibility for the recordkeeping. They only want to be able to say what operating systems are to be used by our offices (which they can already do). They have said that they would like a voice in the selection of the superclerk, but the administration of the office would still be done by the County Manager and the Administration.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. Flaherty indicated that fully combining the court's recordkeeping offices into one would save maybe 10-15% in these three offices.

In response to questions from the Chair and Mr. Finnerty, Mr. Flaherty discussed how consolidation might work with regard to the Recorder of Deeds.

In response to a question from Ms. Cleary, Mr. Flaherty noted that more rapid cycling of properties subject to tax liens could yield significant revenues for the County.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. Flaherty described how new construction could be added to the tax rolls faster in the wake of consolidating the Recorder of Deeds.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. Flaherty noted that roughly \$5 million to \$6 million in unpaid taxes exist, but are not available to the County due to inefficiencies in the sheriff sale process.

IV. Adjournment

Summary: *The meeting was adjourned at 6:57.*