

Allegheny County Council

*County of Allegheny
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Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 14, 2008

4:00 PM

Conference Room 1

Committee on Budget and Finance

William Russell Robinson, Chair; Jim Burn, Joan Cleary, John DeFazio, Matt Drozd, Mike Finnerty, Vince Gastgeb, Amanda Green, Bob Macey, and Chuck McCullough - Members

I. Call to Order

Summary: *The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM*

Invited Guests:

John Weinstein, County Treasurer or Designee

Jim Flynn, County Manager or Designee

Amy Griser, Director, Budget & Finance

Derek Uber, Deputy County Manager

Summary: *Invited guests in attendance: Mr. Weinstein, Ms. Griser, and Mr. Uber*

Recognized attendees: Janice Vinci, Treasurer's Office

Council staff in attendance: John Mascio, Jennifer Liptak, Jared Barker, and Joe Catanese

II. Roll Call

Roll Call: Present: Joan Cleary, John DeFazio, Matt Drozd, Michael Finnerty, Bob Macey, Chuck McCullough, Chair William Robinson, and Council Member Jan Rea
Absent: Jim Burn, Vince Gastgeb, and Amanda Green

III. Approval of Minutes

4398-08 Motion to approve the Minutes of the September 30, 2008 Budget & Finance Committee Meeting.

Action: **A motion was made by Macey, seconded by Finnerty, that this matter be Passed. The motion carried unanimously.**

IV. Agenda Items

Summary: *Chair elected to discuss the bills collectively as two budget related packages of legislation. He said that the bills on the agenda represent two complete budget packages and the details are in the specific legislation. He pointed out that there were two budget package proposals, one from him and one from the Chief Executive. He said that he instructed Ms. Liptak to put together a comparison of the two budget proposals.*

Ms. Liptak distributed 5 sets of documents which contained comparisons of each segment of the budgets prepared by the Chair and by the Chief Executive. Ms. Liptak provided the committee with an explanation and summary of each of the five documents.

She began with the distribution of documents which compared the millage rate and drink tax comparisons. She provided the committee with an explanation and summary of the documents. She then distributed a document which compared the 2009 Operating Budgets. She provided an explanation and summary of this document.

Next she distributed documents containing comparisons between the Capital Budgets and comparisons between the Grants and Special Accounts Budgets. She provided the committee with a summary and explanation of these documents.

The Chair encouraged members to review this material and communicate with him or Ms. Liptak relative to any suggestions or ideas they may have regarding the budget packages. He also said that he will be sending out additional inquiries to the administration regarding any areas of concerns the committee or council members may have.

Ordinances

4337-08

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

Action:

Held in Committee

4341-08

An Ordinance amending the Allegheny County Code of Ordinances, Division 1, entitled "Administrative Code," Article 808.A, in order to establish the rate of County taxation on the sale at retail of liquor and malt and brewed beverages within the County at eight percent (8%).

Sponsors: William Russell Robinson

Action:

Held in Committee

4391-08

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. (Chief Executive)

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Action:

Held in Committee

4392-08

An Ordinance amending the Allegheny County Code of Ordinances, Division 1, entitled "Administrative Code," Article 808.A, in order to establish the rate of County taxation on the sale at retail of liquor and malt and brewed beverages within the County at seven percent (7%). (Chief Executive)

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Action:

Held in Committee

Resolutions

4345-08

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, 2009 and ending December 31, 2009.

Sponsors: William Russell Robinson

Action: Held in Committee

4346-08 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, 2009 and ending December 31, 2009.

Sponsors: William Russell Robinson

Action: Held in Committee

4347-08 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, 2009 and ending December 31, 2009.

Sponsors: William Russell Robinson

Action: Held in Committee

4393-08 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, 2009 and ending December 31, 2009. (Chief Executive)

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Action: Held in Committee

4394-08 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, 2009 and ending December 31, 2009. (Chief Executive)

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Action: Held in Committee

4395-08 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, 2009 and ending December 31, 2009. (Chief Executive)

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Action: Held in Committee

Discussion Topic:

Treasurer Weinstein will provide the Committee with an update on the County's 2008 revenue collections.

Summary: *Treasurer Weinstein provided the Committee with an update on the County's 2008 revenue collections. Mr. Weinstein distributed to the Committee a document which contained a summary of revenue for the 1st through 3rd Quarter of 2008. He provided the committee with a detailed description and summary of each revenue source, including Real Estate Collections, License Revenue, Hotel/Motel Revenue, Interest Earnings, Alcoholic Beverage Tax, and Rental Vehicle Tax.*

He discussed his efforts to enforce compliance of the Alcohol Beverage Tax. The document he distributed included sample copies of delinquent alcohol tax notices his office sent to licensed alcohol vendors who were not in compliance. It also contained a list of 45 establishments that have not submitted the tax. He described the processes and procedures involved in the collecting of this delinquent tax and the penalties which these establishments would incur if they fail to do so. He said that the program has been very successful in getting these establishments to comply.

He said that the vehicle tax is 100 percent in compliance.

Mr. Macey asked Mr. Weinstein if he knew how much revenue was owed the county from those not in compliance. Mr. Weinstein said that his office estimated approximately half a million dollars.

Some discussion took place between Mr. Weinstein and the Committee relative to revenues collected from the drink tax.

County Fee Recommendation

Summary: *The Chair asked members of the committee if they had any recommendations to adjust fees. Councilman McCullough was the only member of council to submit fee adjustment recommendations. The Chair distributed a document submitted by Councilman McCullough which contained his recommendations of fee adjustments. His recommendations included increases in Court Fees, Orphans' Court Fees, Department of Real Estate Fees, Property Assessment Fees, Real Estate Website subscriber fees, and the creation of a new Essential Services Fees. Mr. McCullough reviewed this document with the committee. Mr. McCullough distributed four documents containing information relative to Essential Services Fees.*

The Chair suggested that members review this material and determine if any of these recommendations should receive consideration. He said that he will make sure that every member of council receives a copy of these documents.

V. Adjournment

Summary: *At 5:10 PM the Chair recessed the meeting at the call of the Chair.*