

Allegheny County Council

*County of Allegheny
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Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 28, 2009

5:00 PM

Conference Room 1

Committee on Government Reform

***Rich Fitzgerald, Chair; Jim Burn, Jim Ellenbogen, Nick Futules, Vince Gastgeb,
Amanda Green, Bob Macey, and Chuck McCullough - Members***

I. Call to Order

Summary: *The meeting was called to order at 5:06 PM*

Invited Guests:

Mark Flaherty, County Controller or Designee

John Weinstein, County Treasurer or Designee

Jim Flynn, County Manager or Designee

Susan Frietsche, Senior Staff Attorney, Women's Law Project

Summary: *Invited guests in attendance: Mr. Weinstein, and Stan Kaczowski representing Mr. Flaherty.*

Recognized attendees: Michael McCabe, Treasurer's Legal Counsel on Delinquent Taxes

Council staff in attendance: Jared Barker and Jennifer Liptak

II. Roll Call

Roll Call: Present: Nick Futules, Amanda Green, Rich Fitzgerald, and Michael Finnerty

Absent: Jim Burn, Jim Ellenbogen, Vince Gastgeb, Bob Macey, and Chuck McCullough

III. Approval of Minutes

4586-09 Motion to approve the Minutes of the December 10 & December 15, 2008, Government Reform Committee Meetings.

Summary: *No action was taken on this bill*

Action: **Held in Committee**

IV. Agenda Items**Ordinances**

4201-08 An Ordinance amending and supplementing the Allegheny County Code of Ordinances, Division 2, entitled "County Government Operations," Chapter 215, entitled "Boards, Commissions and Committees," through the creation of a new Article V, entitled "Human Relations Commission," in order to establish a Countywide nondiscrimination requirement in housing, employment, and other contexts, as well as to establish a formalized means of resolving disputes based on allegations of such discrimination.

Sponsors: Amanda Green, Rich Fitzgerald, Jim Burn, Nick Futules, William Russell Robinson, John DeFazio, Joan Cleary and Chuck Martoni

Summary: *The Chair read the bill, indicated his intent to hold the bill, outlined his intended course of proceeding, and deferred to Ms. Green.*

Ms. Green noted that she had invited Ms. Frietsche to discuss definitions contained

within the bill.

Ms. Frietsche discussed the need for protections for sexual orientation, gender expression and gender identity.

4517-08

An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny authorizing the County to enter into a cooperation agreement with the City of Pittsburgh, School District of Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority pursuant to the Pennsylvania Intergovernmental Cooperation Act for the purpose of jointly cooperating in the collection of Delinquent Taxes.

Sponsors: Treasurer

Summary: *The Chair Read the bill, invited the Treasurer to the table, and the Treasurer introduced Mr. McCabe, who gave a brief presentation on tax collection within the County.*

The Chair asked for a description of the process that would be applied to collecting the taxes on a given account after the April 30 payment deadline, and the Treasurer & Mr. McCabe described it.

Ms. Green asked about the fees charged to property owners during collections, and the Treasurer explained them.

Mr. Finnerty asked about attorney's fees, and Mr. McCabe and the Treasurer discussed those.

Mr. Futules asked about savings that could be realized through consolidation, and the Treasurer discussed those.

The Chair called Stan Kaczowski from the Office of the Controller to the table, and he discussed the recent review of the tax lien process.

Mr. Finnerty asked about how address and other owner information is shared between offices, and Mr. Kaczowski and the Treasurer described the process.

Mr. Kaczowski discussed the Controller's issue regarding the reimbursement of delinquent tax amounts after Jordan Tax Service takes its share.

Action: Held in Committee

V. Adjournment

Summary: *The meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM*