

# **Allegheny County Council**

*119 Courthouse  
436 Grant Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
Phone: 412-350-6490*



## **Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, February 11, 2016**

**5:00 PM**

**Conference Room 1**

## **Committee on Appointment Review**

*Ed Kress, Chair  
Committee of the Whole*

## I. Call to Order

*The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.*

## Invited Guests:

*Invited Guests Present: Austin Davis, Executive Assistant, County Executive's Office*

*Staff Present: Joe Catanese; Stephanie Buka*

## II. Roll Call

**Members Present:** 4 - Ed Kress, Michael Finnerty, Paul Klein and Sam DeMarco

**Members Absent:** 10 - Tom Baker, Cindy Kirk, John Palmiere, Nick Futules, Chuck Martoni, Bob Macey, DeWitt Walton, Jim Ellenbogen, Denise Ranalli-Russell and John DeFazio

**Members Phone:** 1 - Sue Means

## III. Approval of Minutes

## IV. Agenda Items

### Appointments

#### [9434-16](#)

Approving the reappointment of Maria Silva to serve as a member of the Allegheny County Juvenile Detention Board of Advisors for a term to expire on December 31, 2018.

**Sponsors:** Chief Executive

*In response to a question from Councilwoman Means, Ms. Silva stated she was first appointed to the board last December. Ms. Silva described the board's difficulty obtaining statistical information because there is no crossover computer system. Ms. Silva reported that the board was unable to obtain statistics concerning youth that present with mental health problems and/or Children Youth and Families (CYF) involvement. The board estimates, that at intake, at least 20 percent of juveniles need immediate mental health treatment and 30 percent are involved with CYF. Chairman Kress wanted to know why a crossover system has not been implemented, to which Ms. Silva replied that the county is working on developing such a system, but confidentiality and access to the system will be an issue. Chairman Kress acknowledged Mr. Davis, and Mr. Davis stated that the County Manager would be able to address that question. Ms. Silva and Councilman Finnerty discussed mental health, medication and family involvement.*

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

#### [9435-16](#)

Approving the appointment of Maria Silva to serve as a member of the Allegheny County Mental Health/Intellectual Disability Advisory Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2018.

**Sponsors:** Chief Executive

*When asked by Councilman Kress why she would like to serve on this board, Ms. Silva*

*told members that she is passionate about these issues. She stated that she is the mother of a son and a daughter with mental health/intellectual disabilities. Her son has Prader-Willi Syndrome, a complex genetic disorder that causes obesity and intellectual disability and for which there is no cure. Affected individuals develop an insatiable appetite, which leads to chronic overeating and obesity, and many will die from obesity related problems. In response to a question from Councilman DeMarco, Ms. Silva assured members that she would successfully handle the additional responsibility of serving on this board.*

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

[9436-16](#)

Approving the reappointment of Daryl Jackson to serve as a member of the Allegheny County Mental Health/Intellectual Disability Advisory Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2018.

**Sponsors:** Chief Executive

*Mr. Jackson told members that he is the father of a 29 year old son with autism. He is passionate about helping families learn about services available in Allegheny County and how to navigate the system in order to obtain the appropriate service. He noted that he was first appointed to the board in 2013 and attends the meetings on a regular basis. Councilman Klein asked about the composition of the board, and Mr. Jackson replied that there are 8 members and the majority of members have a family member with a disability. Mr. Jackson discussed raising awareness of the board's existence.*

**A motion was made by Finnerty, seconded by Klein, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

[9437-16](#)

Approving the reappointment of Lynda Marnoni to serve as a member of the Allegheny County Mental Health/Intellectual Disability Advisory Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2018.

**Sponsors:** Chief Executive

*Ms. Marnoni discussed her career and her involvement in the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) and the Peer Support and Advocacy Network (PSAN). She commented on a mandate that Allegheny County is under to find housing for individuals with a mental health/intellectual disability and registered under Pennsylvania's Megan's Law. In response to a question from Councilwoman Means, Ms. Marnoni recommended bringing new psychiatrists to the county or permitting registered nurses to renew prescription medication.*

**A motion was made by Klein, seconded by Means, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

[9438-16](#)

Approving the reappointment of Kathleen Testoni to serve as a member of the Allegheny County Mental Health/Intellectual Disability Advisory Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2018.

**Sponsors:** Chief Executive

*Ms. Testoni told members that she has a 35 year old son that has had epilepsy and other issues since the age of three. She reported that she is also the mother of an alcoholic daughter with mental health issues, and has been admitted to the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic twelve times over the past 12 years. She told members that she*

serves as Vice-Chair of the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) Board. Ms. Testoni discussed the board's meeting schedule and her ideas to make the meetings more accessible and convenient for the public.

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

[9439-16](#)

Approving the reappointment of Barbara Wolvovitz to serve as a member of the Allegheny County Mental Health/Intellectual Disability Advisory Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2018.

**Sponsors:** Chief Executive

*Ms. Wolvovitz told members that she is the mother of a son with Fragile X syndrome, an inherited genetic condition which causes mild to severe intellectual disability, and affected individuals may have sensory processing issues, behavioral problems and autism. She said 25 years ago, no one knew much about the condition, so she conducted her own research and study in order to help her son. Ms. Wolvovitz noted that the board was formed in 1967, and she was first appointed 9 years ago. Ms. Wolvovitz discussed her concerns with a federal edict which came about after the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice filed a suit against the State of Rhode Island claiming it discriminated against people with intellectual/developmental disability by failing to provide state services in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs. Ms. Wolvovitz suggested that some individuals may not benefit from integrated employment and would perform better in a sheltered workshop or facility-based day program. Chairman Kress recognized Ms. Silva, and she added that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), signed into law in July 2014, provides that individuals with disabilities earn wages consistent with wages paid workers without disabilities in the community performing the same or similar work, and earn at least minimum wage. As a result, sheltered workshops are determining what would be considered "sufficient integration" and how to best comply with the new laws.*

**A motion was made by Finnerty, seconded by Means, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

[9440-16](#)

Approving the reappointment of Abbie E. Scanio nee Garrighan to serve as a member of the Allegheny County Drug and Alcohol Planning Council for a term to expire on December 31, 2018.

**Sponsors:** Chief Executive

*Ms. Scanio reported that she is a former chair of the council, and she would like to remain a member. She told members that she is the middle child of two brothers, and explained that she lost one brother to addiction 5 years ago, and for the past 16 years, she has worked to help her other brother overcome his addiction problem. She discussed her education and the family business, which helps people with addiction problems. In response to a question from Councilman Klein, Ms. Scanio stated that there are 5 members of the council, and they meet every other month. Ms. Scanio and Councilman Kress discussed the heroin epidemic, the frequency of providers prescribing opiates and the number of overdose deaths in Allegheny County.*

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

[9441-16](#)

Approving the appointment of Debra Romanelli to serve as a member of the Allegheny County Drug and Alcohol Planning Council for a term to

expire on December 31, 2018.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

**Held in Committee**

**V. Adjournment**

*The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.*