

# **Allegheny County Council**

*County of Allegheny  
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## **Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, October 30, 2007**

**4:00 PM**

**Conference Room 1**

## **Committee on Budget and Finance**

***William Russell Robinson, Chair; Jim Burn, Susan Caldwell, Joan Cleary, Matt Drozd, Mike Finnerty, Brenda Frazier, Vince Gastgeb, and William E. Lestitian -  
Members***

**\*\*\*AGENDA REVISED 10-30-07\*\*\*****I. Call to Order**

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

**Invited Guests:**

**Mark Flaherty, County Controller**

**Jim Flynn, County Manager or Designee**

**Amy Griser, Director, Budget & Finance**

**Derek Uber, Deputy County Manager**

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

*Recognized attendees: Guy Tumolo, Controller's Office*

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

**II. Roll Call**

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

**III. Approval of Minutes**

**3508-07** Motion to approve the Minutes of the September 18 and October 16, 2007 Budget & Finance Committee Meetings.

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

**IV. Agenda Items****Ordinance**

**3502-07** An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, amending and supplementing the Allegheny County Code of Ordinances, Article 801 of Division 1, entitled "Comprehensive Fiscal Plan," in order to establish a mechanism for the enactment of a continuing spending resolution in the event that a balanced budget cannot be passed more than 25 days from the end of the current fiscal year.

**Sponsors:** William Russell Robinson

**Summary:** *The Chair provided the committee with a summary of the bill. He said that the bill would create a new subsection of the Administrative Code which would authorize the passage of a continuing spending resolution in the event that Council cannot pass a balanced budget at least 25 days before the end of a calendar year, as is required by the*

*Code and Charter.*

*The continuing spending resolution would have to be approved by the Chief Executive, and would only be permitted to be effective for 30 days, and could only authorize the expenditure of up to one twelfth of the prior fiscal year's total expenditures. If a balanced budget could not be passed by February 1, the new section would function to automatically enact the prior fiscal year's budget.*

*The Chair also introduced an amendment to the bill which would allow for continuing spending on a month by month basis as opposed to having to pass a budget by February of the next year, which is in the original bill.*

*Mr. Fitzgerald requested that the County Solicitor provide a Legal Opinion on the amendment. The Chair said he was reluctant to ask the County Solicitor for an opinion on the amendment for fear that it would cloud the issue. Mr. Fitzgerald then withdrew his request for the Legal Opinion.*

*The Chair said that if the committee passes the amendment, he would then hold the amended bill in committee.*

*Mr. Finnerty made the motion to approve the amendment, and Mr. Drozd seconded the motion. The motion failed by a vote of 4-1, with Council Members Finnerty, Drozd, Caldwell, and Robinson voting yes, and Council Member Cleary voting no.*

**Action:**           **Held in Committee**

**Discussion Topic:**

**2008 Grants, Special Accounts and Capital Budget Presentation**

**Summary:**       *Ms. Liptak provided the committee with a visual power point presentation of the 2008 Grants, Special Accounts and Capital Budgets. She also distributed hard copies of the presentation.*

**2008 Operating Budget Scenarios Presentation**

**Summary:**       *Ms. Liptak provided the committee with a visual Power Point presentation of the 2008 Operating Budget scenarios. She distributed hard copies of the presentation to the committee*

*The Chair complemented Ms. Liptak on the presentation*

**Controller Mark Patrick Flaherty will address the Committee regarding the financial status of the County.**

**Summary:**       *Prior to Mr. Flaherty's arrival Mr. Tumolo addressed the financial status of the County. Mr. Finnerty asked him to describe non-departmental items. Mr. Tumolo said that entailed general cross county expenses such as TIF's, Port Authority, Constable Fees, Insurance, judgements and losses, tuition reimbursement, and other similar expenses.*

*Mr. Flaherty then provided a detailed explanation of the nature of non departmental funds. He then distributed a document to the committee entitled, " 2007 Fringe Benefit*

*percent of Final Budget". This document shows department fringe benefit expenditures as of August 31, 2007 and highlights those departments that have exceeded the target percentage rate of 67%.*

*Discussion took place regarding fringe benefits and health care. There was much concern over the rising costs of these benefits.*

*Following the presentations, the Chair reminded the committee to please inform him or Ms. Liptak of any changes they would like to see in the 2008 proposed fiscal plan. He announced that there will be Budget Hearings on November 1st and 2nd and that after the hearings, he will send out an inquiry to the administration based on questions that were brought up at the hearings.*

**V. Adjournment**

**Summary:** *The meeting adjourned at 5:25 PM*