

Allegheny County Council

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Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 2, 2020

4:00 PM

Conference Room 1

Committee on Budget and Finance

Robert Palmosina, Chair; Liv Bennett, Sam DeMarco, Tom Duerr, Nick Futules, Cindy Kirk and Bob Macey, Members

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:01.

Invited Guests:

William D. McKain, CPA, County Manager or Designee(s)

Mary C. Soroka, Director, Budget and Finance or Designee(s)

Mr. McKain was present from the Office of the County Manager.

Ms. Soroka was present from the Department of Budget & Finance.

Mr. Chimka was present from the Department of Economic Development.

Ms. Roka and Mr. Varhola were present from the Office of County Council.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: 1 - Robert Palmosina

Members Absent: 0

Members Phone: 7 - Olivia Bennett, Sam DeMarco, Tom Duerr, Nick Futules, Cindy Kirk, Bob Macey and Patrick Catena

Members 2 - Tom Baker and Bethany Hallam

Non-Members:

III. Approval of Minutes

[11464-20](#)

Motion to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2020 meeting of the Committee on Budget & Finance.

A motion was made by Macey, seconded by Duerr, that this matter be Passed. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

IV. Agenda Items

Resolutions

[11454-20](#)

A Resolution of the County of Allegheny amending the Grants and Special Accounts Budget for 2020 (Submission #02-20).

Sponsors: Chief Executive

At the request of the Chair, the clerk read the title of the bill and Mr. McKain summarized its provisions, noting that the grant in question is from the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts. These funds will be used for security for the Magisterial District Courts in Allegheny County and to purchase alarms, lighting, ballistic panels, CCTV, and other security items.

A motion was made by Futules, seconded by Bennett, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

[11461-20](#)

A Resolution of the County of Allegheny amending the Grants and Special Accounts

Budget for 2020 (Submission #03-20).

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Mr. Macey proposed an amendment and Ms. Bennett seconded the motion.

Mr. McKain and Mr. Chimka summarized the substance of the amendment, noting that this amendment would authorize the acceptance of additional grant revenue, all relating to COVID-19 assistance efforts.

Mr. Chimka discussed the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). He noted that the CDBG is a flexible federal grant program that provides communities with resources to address community needs such as demolition, recreation, affordable housing, and human service activities. Mr. Chimka further noted that CDBG is a standard pool of money that is targeted at assisting low-income communities and encompasses about 30% of overall funding and about 80% of federal funding that the Department of Economic Development receives. He noted that funding has decreased over the last few years, but Economic Development continues to manage it well. Mr. Chimka noted that Economic Development received 182 applications and this process was open to 125 of 135 municipalities. He noted that McKeesport, Pittsburgh, and Penn Hills receive their own CDBG funding and these funds would be used in 61 different municipalities and would be broken up geographically and diversely. Mr. Chimka noted that funding touches every Council district in some way and community needs change on a daily basis.

Mr. Chimka discussed the grant in question named CDBG - Cares. He noted that this is another grant from the CDBG program by HUD. This amendment is the result of the Coronavirus, Aid, Relief, and Economic Securities (CARES) Act that will be consistent with the 2020 CDBG Grant with a special focus on assisting individuals, communities, and businesses recover from COVID-19. He noted that immediate needs include housing stability and food access and midterm needs include stabilizing municipal fundings and assisting with small businesses.

Mr. Chimka discussed the grant in question named Emergency Solutions Grant (HESG) - Cares. He noted that this is a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development's Emergency Solutions Grant Program (HESG). This amendment is also the result of the CARES Act that will be consistent with the 2020 ESG Grant with a special focus on assisting individuals, households, and vulnerable populations recover from COVID-19.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. Chimka noted that time is of the essence for the recovery of this money in order to help combat COVID-19.

Mr. McKain summarized the provisions of the grant in question named Emergency Action Fund COVID-19. He noted that this grant funding is awarded to Allegheny County by various foundations and private organizations to support response and recovery efforts related to COVID-19. He noted these efforts include temporary housing spaces for those who are unable to self-quarantine to avoid COVID-19 exposure and spread. Mr. McKain also noted that this funding would allow for the purchase of critical supplies and technology, which will help to combat the pandemic. He stated that professional services will also be conducted to help monitor the pandemic and to assess the continued impact in Allegheny County. Mr. McKain noted that the Health Department is on the front lines helping to battle this pandemic and the department needs to upgrade their technology, but they have been able to adapt during these trying times. He noted that Human Services assists individuals who are deemed sensitive and vulnerable due to this

pandemic and all of this funding would support these individuals or those who are directly impacted by COVID-19.

In response to a question from Ms. Hallam, Mr. McKain noted that the County will submit a list of ideas to the four foundations and they will decide if the causes are worthy or not. If the ideas are approved, then the funds will be provided to the County.

Mr. McKain noted his thanks for the expedited process in amending the submission to help combat COVID-19 by receiving additional funding.

The Chair noted his gratitude to the County and all employees during these difficult times.

A motion was made by Macey, seconded by Bennett, that this matter be Amended and Affirmatively Recommended as Amended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:23.