

Allegheny County Council

*County of Allegheny
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Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 6, 2006

4:00 PM

Conference Room 1

Special Committee on Government Reform

Rich Fitzgerald, Chair -- Committee of the Whole

I. Call to Order

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

Invited Guests:

Jim Flynn, County Manager or Designee

Tom Donatelli, Director, Public Works or Designee

Jeanne Clark, Director of Communication, Penn Future

Heather Sage, Manager of Outreach, Penn Future

Summary: *Invited Guests Present: Derek Uber for Mr. Flynn; Phil LaMay for Mr. Donatelli; Ms. Clark; and Ms. Sage.*

Recognized Attendees: Richard Rothauer and Andrew Clearfield - Penn Future

II. Roll Call

Roll Call: Present: Joan Cleary, John DeFazio, Michael Finnerty, Brenda Frazier, Vince Gastgeb, Chuck Martoni, and Chair Rich Fitzgerald
Absent: Jim Burn, Susan Caldwell, Matt Drozd, Dave Fawcett, Rich Nerone, Jan Rea, and William Robinson

III. Agenda Items

Ordinance

2680-06 An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing the donation of a John Deere Gator cart to the Morningside Baseball Association.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Summary: *Mr. LaMay indicated that a request was sent from the Morning side Baseball Association to Council Member Frazier and forwarded to Public Works. He said that Public Works happened to have this piece of equipment and it has been deemed to be of no current or future use to the County. He also said that there is no liability to the county regarding the use of this equipment.*

Action: **Released from the Committee**

Resolution

2605-06 A Resolution of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, urging the Chief Executive to explore the use of renewable energy sources, specifically solar energy, invest in photovoltaic technology and consider procurement practices that give preference to sustainable energy sources, systems, products and designs within Allegheny County.

Sponsors: John DeFazio, William Russell Robinson, Michael Finnerty, Matt Drozd, Jim Burn, Joan Cleary, Bob Macey and Rich Fitzgerald

Summary: *The Chair explained that this resolution would request that the Chief Executive*

investigate the use of photo voltaic energy in County facilities, either as primary energy sources or as supplements to existing sources. The resolution also includes a request that the Chief Executive explore other means of increasing the County's renewable energy use.

He said that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has required that at least 0.5% of the state's energy resources be provided through photo voltaic technology by the year 2020. This requirement is the highest in the United States, and it is estimated that, when fully implemented, it will result in the reduction of emissions of carbon dioxide by 11.5 million tons, of nitrogen oxide by 27,000 tons, and of sulfur dioxide by 100,000 tons annually.

Ms. Clark said that they asked the County to become involved in this because it was the only area of the state in which there is no sustainable energy development fund. She said that Penn Future is currently negotiating with Duquesne Light to create one, and would appreciate support from the PUC.

A detailed discussion took place on how solar programs operate.

Mr. Rothauer said that they were working with the Heinz endowments for an energy grant.

Ms. Clark referred to a letter that she sent to Council President Rich Fitzgerald. She indicated that their desire is to discuss the potential for creating a Solar Grant Program in Allegheny County. She said that it would improve the air quality and support an important new regional industry: solar energy technologies. She also said that a solar grant program could be used to help individual citizens, public interest organizations and institutions, municipalities, and county-owned facilities switch some of their electricity use to clean, non polluting solar power.

Mr. Finnerty asked what is the life span of a solar panel. Mr. Rothauer said around 30 years.

A detailed discussion took place on the operation and use of solar panels.

Ms. Frazier asked if this was feasible for residential customers or was it for high income people only. Ms. Clark said that is why they are asking the County to get involved so that this could be available to more people. Ms. Frazier asked what kind of jobs this would generate. Mr. Rothauer said many positions would be entry level and that the Trades involved would be electricians, roofing contractors, builders and architects.

Ms. Clark requested that Council write a letter to the PUC asking them if they grant a rate hike to Duquesne Light that some of the funds should be used for renewable energy. Mr. Fitzgerald asked how the letter should be worded. Ms. Clark said that they would help them draft it.

Mr. Gastgeb asked who would receive the grant. Ms. Clark said that she did not know. Mr. Fitzgerald and Mr. Gastgeb said that they need to find out who would be the administrator of the grant.

Action: Held in Committee

IV. Adjournment

Summary: *The meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM*