

Allegheny County Council

436 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Phone (412) 350-6490



Meeting Minutes - Approved

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

4:00 PM

Conference Room 1

Committee on Budget and Finance

*Michael Finnerty, Chair;
Nick Futules,
Amanda Green Hawkins,
Heather Heidelbaugh,
Bob Macey,
Sue Means,
John Palmiere and
Jan Rea
-Members*

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4 PM.

Invited Guests:

William D. McKain, CPA - County Manager or Designee

Mary C. Soroka - Director, Office of Budget and Finance or Designee

Christopher Beichner, Executive Director- Allegheny Land Trust

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

Ms. Soroka, Ms. Celestino, and Mr. Cox were present from the Department of Budget and Finance.

Mr. Exler and Mr. Earley were present from the Department of Economic Development.

Mr. Beichner was present from the Allegheny County Land Trust.

Mr. Barker and Mr. Szymanski were present from the Office of County Council.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: 5 - Finnerty, Heather Heidelbaugh, Bob Macey, Sue Means and Jan Rea

Members Absent: 3 - Barbara Danko, Amanda Green Hawkins and John Palmiere

Members Phone: 1 - Nick Futules

III. Approval of Minutes

[8897-15](#)

Motion to approve the minutes of the Budget and Finance Committee Meeting of Allegheny County Council held on March 18, 2015

Passed

IV. Agenda Items

Resolutions

[8888-15](#)

A Resolution of the County of Allegheny amending the Grants and Special Accounts Budget for 2015 (Submission #04-15).

Sponsors: Chief Executive

At the request of the Chair, the clerk read the title of the bill and Mr. Szymanski summarized its provisions.

Ms. Means described the firearms safety grant in greater detail, noting that it will facilitate safety in firearms testing activities undertaken by the Medical Examiner.

In response to a question from Ms. Means, Mr. Exler provided additional detail relating to the revenues received through the 2014 and 2015 Emergency Solutions Grants, and discussed how those revenues are spent and how proposals for homelessness relief activities are prioritized for funding.

Mr. Exler and Ms. Means discussed how funding can be made available under some circumstances to pay rental fees for individuals who are about to be evicted from their residences.

Ms. Means asked if the required matching funds had been budgeted, and the Chair indicated that they had been.

In response to a question from Ms. Means, Mr. McKain indicated that a map of the properties to be acquired with the grant funding could be made available to the committee, together with some additional information.

In response to questions from Mr. Futules, Ms. Soroka noted that the grant revenues would be used for acquisition of property to be converted to trails in the future, and that the appropriations that would be used to cover the matching funds would be various park trail appropriations.

At the request of the Chair, Mr. Szymanski distributed handouts pertaining to the Year 41 CDBG program.

The Chair described the Council's previous activities to remain abreast of CDBG funding, and noted that the timeline for the Year 41 CDBG approval contemplated final approval at the May 5 regular meeting. The Chair suggested that the Members take some time to digest the materials distributed, with an eye toward having a thorough discussion at a future committee session, and asked that the Members bear in mind that not all municipalities submitted requests for Year 41 funding, and that not all requests could be granted.

Mr. Exler provided a general overview of the Year 41 CDBG program, noting a slight decrease in federal program funding from 2014 to 2015, contributing to a five year decrease of over \$24 million in federal CDBG program. Mr. Exler described the program guidelines as they relate to providing funding for low to benefit low to moderate income residents, and discussed the mechanics of the County's interactions with the Department of Housing and Urban Development in developing the annual funding programs.

The Chair and Ms. Rea discussed the wisdom in forwarding questions to the Department as they arise, rather than waiting until the next committee session, to the extent possible.

The Chair invited Mr. Beicher to the table, and he provided a brief presentation summarizing the role and function of the Allegheny County Land Trust.

In response to a question from Ms. Means, Mr. Beichner noted that certain types of development are, on occasion, permitted on properties owned by the Land Trust, but that the determination is made on a case by case basis.

Ms. Heidelbaugh and Mr. Beichner discussed the Land Trust's activities as they relate to flooding in certain municipalities such as Millvale, and as they relate to the protection of urban green spaces and the Land Trust's cooperative efforts relating to farming.

The Chair noted that he is on the Board of the Allegheny County Conservaton District, indicated that the Conservation District and the Land Trust do interact on occasion, and highlighted the importance of this type of conservation work.

Discussion Topic: The Allegheny Land Trust

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V. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:49.