

**MOTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF COUNCIL OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY**

Requesting that the Property Assessment Appeals and Review Board investigate the allegations of impropriety on the part of hearing officers employed by the board including a review of the practice of allowing hearing officers to represent taxpayers in assessment appeals and the practice of allowing hearing officers to hear the appeals of other hearing officers; further requesting the investigation to include a determination as to whether there is a possible conflict of interest in such practices, an explanation of any change in procedures that are made in such practices to bar any improprieties; and requesting that the Board report to Council and the Chief Executive on its findings and any recommendations for change within thirty (30) days.

**WHEREAS**, a local television station reported that hearing officers are representing taxpayers in assessment appeals and that hearing officers are hearing the appeals of other hearing officers; and that in those cases, property owners won reductions averaging thirty percent (30%) in all but two of the cases, exceeding the average reduction for taxpayers within the County; and

**WHEREAS**, the practice of hearing officers being allowed to represent property owners in appeals as well as hearing fellow officers appeals suggests a conflict of interest that causes further damage to the process of property assessment within this County and the Department of Property Assessment, a department that already reflects a lack of confidence by the taxpayers; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 1013.09 F(1) of the Accountability, Conduct & Ethics Code, contained within the Allegheny County Code, provides restrictions on private business and/or financial interests of individuals covered by the Code as a standard of conduct; and

**WHEREAS**, this Council has an interest in addressing matters that are of concern to the general operations of this County and its members believe that concerns with employee conduct, such as the conduct raised by the local television investigation, should be fully investigated and a determination made as to whether the issue needs to be further addressed.

**NOW THEREFORE, IT IS MOVED, AND IT IS THE SENSE OF THE COUNCIL OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY**, that the Property Assessment Appeals and Review Board be requested to investigate the allegations of impropriety on the part of hearing officers employed by the board including a review of the practice of allowing hearing officers to represent taxpayers in assessment appeals and the practice of allowing hearing officers to hear the appeals of other hearing officers; further requesting the investigation to include a determination as to whether there is a possible conflict of interest in such practices, an explanation of any change in procedures that are made in such practices to bar any improprieties; and requesting that the Board report to Council and the Chief Executive on its findings and any recommendations for change within thirty (30) days.

**SPONSORED BY COUNCIL MEMBER FONTANA**

## Mascio, John

---

**From:** Mascio, John  
**Sent:** Monday, May 12, 2003 10:28 AM  
**To:** Roddey, Jim; Webb, Robert; Mekkelsen, Norman; Gambino, Dominick  
**Subject:** Motion of Council - Bill No. 1156-03

At the Regular Meeting of Council held on May 6, 2003, Council passed the attached motion (Bill No. 1156-03) requesting that the Property Assessment Appeals and Review Board investigate the allegations of impropriety on the part of hearing officers employed by the board including a review of the practice of allowing hearing officers to represent taxpayers in assessment appeals and the practice of allowing hearing officers to hear the appeals of other hearing officers; further requesting the investigation to include a determination as to whether there is a possible conflict of interest in such practices, an explanation of any change in procedures that are made in such practices to bar any improprieties; and requesting that the Board report to Council and the Chief Executive on its findings and any recommendations for change within thirty (30) days.

Your attention to this motion is requested.

John Mascio



1156-03 Fontana  
Motion re Hrng...