

Allegheny County Council

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Meeting Minutes - Approved

Tuesday, March 31, 2015

4:00 PM

Conference Room 1

Committee on Economic Development & Housing

Amanda Green Hawkins, Chair

Members:

Tom Baker

Michael Finnerty

Nick Futules

Ed Kress

Bob Macey

John Palmiere

Jan Rea

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 PM.

Invited Guests:

William D. McKain, CPA-County Manager or Designee
Robert D. Hurley-Director, Economic Development

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

Lori Sicard was present from Council staff.

Council Member Sue Means was present as a non-committee member.

Cassandra Collange, Angie Hicks, and Robert Hurely were present from the Department of Economic Development.

Bridget Mancosh, Senior V.P. of Finance and Operations, and Christopher Hill, V.P. of Operations, Physical Plant, represented Point Park University.

Gregg D. Bernaciak was present as bond attorney from Eckert Seamans.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: 3 - Green Hawkins, Michael Finnerty and Bob Macey

Members Absent: 5 - Barbara Danko, Nick Futules, Ed Kress, John Palmiere and Jan Rea

Members Phone: 1 - Tom Baker

III. Approval of Minutes

[8855-15](#)

Motion to approve the minutes of the Economic Development and Housing Committee meeting of Allegheny County Council held on March 5, 2015
Passed

IV. Agenda Items

Ordinances

[8496-14](#)

An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing the conveyance of the County of Allegheny's interest in two (2) vacant parcels located on Sprage Street in Wilmerding Borough known respectively as Block 545-N, Lot 108 and Block 546-A, Lot No. 20 to Robert J. Comunale.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Ms. Collange came to the table with Mr. Hurley to review the proposed property transfer. They presented plans sent by Mr. Comunale regarding a proposed storage unit.

The School District took the lead in taking the parcels to sheriff sale and were set for

sale at \$500 each, the Department set the purchase price higher.

It was stated that Mr. Communale needs the parcels for zoning set back requirements and to secure a hill to build a storage unit.

Ms. Collange asked for questions from the Members.

Mr. Finnerty asked for further clarification regarding the proposed building plans and map of the parcels. Ms. Collange and Mr. Hurley supplemented their explanation with aid of the maps, explaining the set back requirements and zoning issues making it necessary for the parcel transfer.

Ms. Means inquired about the sheriff's sales that occurred in the past. Ms. Collange explained the history of the transfers and how they came to the current purchase price.

Ms. Means pointed out that the ordinance does not mentioned the sales price and should.

Ms. Collange stated that they would be willing to change the ordinance to reflect the sales price.

The Chair made comment about the map and how it lent itself to the value consideration as the land seemed to have little value but for the set back requirements.

Mr. Macey stated that he is familiar with the area and agreed that the parcels gave more room to Mr. Communale.

Mr. Macey made a motion for affirmative recommendation Mr. Baker seconded.

Affirmatively Recommended

Enactment No: 11-15-OR

Resolutions

[8837-15](#)

A Resolution of the County of Allegheny approving a project for the benefit of Point Park University to be financed by the Allegheny County Higher Education Building Authority by the issuance of the Authority's tax-exempt and/or taxable revenue obligations to be issued in an aggregate principal amount not in excess of \$12,000,000, provided that the taxing power of the County of Allegheny, Pennsylvania, shall not be obligated in any way with respect to the obligations, and determining that the purpose of the financing will be to benefit the health and welfare of the citizens of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Ms. Hicks came to the table to review the proposed bond issuance with the clarification that the 12 million would be used to build a theater and for an expansion and renovation of the existing library. Gregg Bernaciak, attorney from Eckert Seamans, Bridget Mancosh and Chris Hill representing Point Park University were also invited to the table to speak to the resolution.

Ms. Means inquired about the location of the theater. Mr. Hill stated that the lot was

*between Forbes and Fourth Ave. Currently being used as two parking lots.
Ms. Means inquired about the effect on this project on student enrollment. Ms. Mancosh stated that the project will expand performances and grow the enrollment for the program.*

Mr. Finnerty asked for further clarification on the parcels and location. Mr. Hill and Ms. Mancosh stated that they are currently deconstructing the facades of the buildings.

Mr. Macey gave commendations for the project and made an affirmative recommendation.

The Chair seconded.

Ms. Means inquired about possible parking issues due to the project. Ms. Mancosh explained that additional parking was being constructed downtown to accommodate.

Mr. Bernaciak, project bond attorney, explained the requirements under the Municipal Authorities Act and its relation to the bond issuance. Ms. Hicks explained that the Higher Education Building Authority acted like a conduit for the bond issuance. The County does not actively "back" the issuance. Mr. Bernaciak added that the County is merely signing off on the health and welfare requirement for the project.

Mr. Exler explained that the savings realized by the University would be about \$500k because of the tax exempt status and because the County is stating that it meets the health and welfare requirement then the University gets the tax exempt status.

Mr. Macey asked Mr. Exler to clarify that the Department does not use tax payer dollars for these projects.

The Chair inquired as to the students that enroll in these programs.

Affirmatively Recommended

Enactment No: 9-15-RE

V. Adjournment