

Allegheny County Council

*County of Allegheny
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Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 2, 2008

4:00 PM

Conference Room 1

Committee on Budget and Finance

William Russell Robinson, Chair; Jim Burn, Joan Cleary, John DeFazio, Matt Drozd, Mike Finnerty, Vince Gastgeb, Amanda Green, Bob Macey, and Chuck McCullough - Members

I. Call to Order

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

Invited Guests:

Jim Flynn, County Manager or Designee

Amy Griser, Director, Budget & Finance

Derek Uber, Deputy County Manager

Summary: *Invited guests in attendance: Ms. Griser and Mr. Uber*

Recognized attendees: Joe Rizzo, Sheriff's Office; Randy Brockington, Human Services; Peter Schepis, Budget & Finance; Dennis Biondo, Kane Hospital; and Jerry Tyskiewicz, Courts.

Council staff in attendance: John Mascio, Jennifer Liptak, Joe Catanese, and Jared Barker

II. Roll Call

Roll Call: Present: Joan Cleary, Matt Drozd, Michael Finnerty, Vince Gastgeb, Amanda Green, Bob Macey, Chair William Robinson, Council Member Jan Rea, and Council Member Nick Futules
Absent: Jim Burn, John DeFazio, and Chuck McCullough

III. Approval of Minutes

4212-08 Motion to approve the Minutes of the June 24, 2008 Budget & Finance Committee Meeting.

Action: **A motion was made by Finnerty, seconded by Macey, that this matter be Passed. The motion carried unanimously.**

IV. Agenda Items**Resolutions**

4186-08 A Resolution of the County of Allegheny amending the Grants and Special Accounts Budget for 2008 (Submission #10-08).

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Summary: *Ms. Liptak provided the Committee with a summary of the bill. She said that everything seemed to be in order.*

Action: **A motion was made by Finnerty, seconded by Cleary, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried unanimously.**

4214-08 A Resolution of the County of Allegheny amending the Grants and Special Accounts Budget for 2008 (Submission #11-08).

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Summary: *Ms. Liptak provided the Committee with a summary of the bill. She said that everything seemed to be in order.*

Mr. Finnerty addressed the grant for Improving Outcomes for Children. He wanted to know if the County ever receives information as to how the program is functioning. Mr. Brockington said that this was the first time that they received a grant like this and that it was designed to benchmark the progress over time. He said it would identify performance outcomes in child welfare. Mr. Finnerty asked Mr. Brockington to keep him informed of this. Mr. Brockington said he would.

The Chair mentioned that Mr. Drozd introduced a bill requesting the County to pursue money from the State for the operation of the Courts. He said that he has not heard anything yet and instructed Ms. Liptak to ask the Courts if the State acknowledged the debt and if the Courts were going to pursue this. He said that this information would be very useful to Council for the budget process. He said it would be good to know if that will be a source of revenue for the Courts.

Mr. Drozd said that the proposed bill requests Council to pursue the money, not the Courts. The Chair said that he would rather see what the Courts are doing in this regard before bringing the bill before Council.

Action: **A motion was made by Finnerty, seconded by Macey, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried unanimously.**

4215-08

A Resolution authorizing the issuance of a Tax and Revenue Anticipation Note in the maximum principal amount of \$14,700,000; providing for the date, interest rate, maturity date, place of payment and prepayment provisions in respect of the note; accepting the proposal of The Bank of New York Mellon for the purchase and financing of the note; providing for the security of the note; authorizing the proper officers to execute and deliver the note; authorizing and directing the preparation, certification and filing of the proceedings with the Department of Community and Economic Development; providing for a paying agent; setting forth a form of note; and repealing inconsistent resolutions.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Summary:

Ms. Liptak provided the Committee with a summary of the bill. She said that the County participated in the Program for over 15 years and that a prior Bill, Bill No. 4216-08, has been introduced as companion legislation authorizing the County to participate in the program for one additional year, extending the program through the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

She also said that the program assists the Department of Public Welfare in generating additional funding and maximizing the amount of federal funding available for both county and private nursing homes in Pennsylvania and that some areas of funding include long term care, outpatient medical assistance, and behavioral health and mental retardation services. She also said that the program is designed to permit the repayment of the loan the same day as it is executed.

Mr. Biondo also provided the Committee with a summary of the bill. Mr. Drozd asked if there is any cost to the County for participation in this program. Mr. Biondo said there was not. He said that other Counties also participate.

Ms. Green asked if there were any issues with repayments in past years. Mr. Biondo said there were not, and that even if there were, the County is indemnified.

Action: **A motion was made by Macey, seconded by Green, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried unanimously.**

Discussion Topic:

2009 Budget Process

Summary: *The Chair provided the Committee with a description of the upcoming budget process, the role of the Budget Committee in that process, and instructions on how the Committee plans to proceed.*

Ms. Liptak distributed a memorandum dated August 15, 2008, that he sent to various elected officials and staff. The memorandum contained a tentative schedule for the preparation of the 2009 County Budget. He reminded the Committee that this memorandum was introduced as a Communication at the August 26, 2008 Regular Meeting and has been numbered and duly recorded for the Record by the Clerk. He asked that all Members of Council review the schedule to make sure that all or most of the dates coincide with their schedules.

He encouraged Committee Members and all Members of Council to coordinate with Ms. Liptak any particular concerns or areas of the budget that they wish to explore. He said that if any Member of Council has any legal questions relative to the Budget that they should direct those questions to County Solicitor Mike Wojcik or Council's Legal Advisor Jack Cambest.

Mr. Drozd asked the Chair to send a letter to Chief Executive Onorato asking him to follow certain procedures and to present budget information in a timely fashion. The Chair said he would do that.

The Chair briefly discussed his proposed continued spending bill which would allow Council to take budgetary actions after December 31st should there be a need to do so. He said that if this need does arise, he will bring that bill up for a vote. Mr. Gastgeb and Mr. Drozd asked that they be listed as co-sponsors of that bill. The Chair said that he has no objections to listing them as co-sponsors.

V. Adjournment

Summary: *The meeting adjourned at 4:50 PM*