

# Allegheny County Council

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



## Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 30, 2020

4:00 PM

Conference Room 1

## Committee on Budget and Finance

*Robert Palmosina, Chair; Liv Bennett, Sam DeMarco, Tom Duerr, Nick Futules, Cindy Kirk and Bob Macey, Members*

## I. Call to Order

*The meeting was called to order at 4:00.*

### Invited Guests:

**William D. McKain, CPA, County Manager or Designee(s)**

**Mary C. Soroka, Director, Budget and Finance or Designee(s)**

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

*Ms Soroka, Ms. Javorsky, Mr. Cox, Mr. Rambo and Mr. Humenik were present from the Department of Budget & Finance.*

*Mr. Chimka was present from the Department of Economic Development.*

*Mr. Barker and Ms. Roka were present from the Office of County Council.*

## II. Roll Call

**Members Present:** 3 - Cindy Kirk, Bob Macey and Robert Palmosina

**Members Absent:** 1 - Nick Futules

**Members Phone:** 3 - Olivia Bennett, Sam DeMarco and Tom Duerr

**Members** 6 - Patrick Catena, Tom Baker, Anita Prizio, Bethany Hallam, DeWitt Walton and Paul  
**Non-Members:** Zavarella

## III. Approval of Minutes

[11547-20](#)

Motion to approve the minutes of the May 12, 2020 meeting of the Committee on Budget & Finance.

**A motion was made by Macey, seconded by Kirk, that this matter be Passed. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

## IV. Agenda Items

### Resolutions

[11543-20](#)

A Resolution of the County of Allegheny amending the Grants and Special Accounts Budget for 2020 (Submission #05-20).

**Sponsors:** Chief Executive

*At the request of the Chair, the clerk read the title of the bill and Mr. McKain summarized its provisions, noting that revenue was being accepted from a number of different sources with different enabling legislation. Mr. McKain gave a brief overview of the CARES Act, noting that the County will be receiving roughly \$212 million, with allocations for vulnerable populations consisting of varying programs administered by the Department of Human Services, summer meal programs, child care for individuals returning to work, outside school programs, volunteer fire and EMS services, the Kanesh, the 911 Call Center, and police functions. Mr. McKain noted that the revenue must be spent in its entirety by December 31, 2020.*

*In terms of mechanics, Mr. McKain and Ms. Soroka noted that the funding is to be used to cover COVID-19 -related costs that were not previously budgeted, that the funds cannot be used as revenue offsets, and that municipalities within the County are eligible to receive funding. Mr. McKain and Ms. Soroka indicated that the County is currently preparing to assist the municipalities with training, applying for funding, eligibility guidelines, and the like. Ms. Soroka noted that the municipal funding would be allocated no later than the end of November, in order to allow for the funding to be spent by the end of the calendar year.*

*Mr. McKain and Mr. Chimka summarized the funding that was available for rental assistance programs, noting that the purpose of the program is to assist with rental expenses for eligible households that can demonstrate adverse impacts upon their ability to pay rent due to COVID-19. Mr. Chimka noted that time is of the essence, insofar as the eviction moratorium is set to expire on July 10, and that the program is structured such that payments would be made directly to landlords, who in turn would agree not to evict the tenants to whom the funding applies. Mr. Chimka summarized some of the administrative challenges, noting that the County is partnering with a number of nonprofits and other entities to aid in educating the public with regard to the program. Mr. Chimka also touched upon some other resources that are not part of the funding that the resolution treats, but that will be made available to small businesses under funding that is administered by the Commonwealth.*

*Mr. McKain discussed funding to be made available through PEMA, noting that this revenue stream is more narrow insofar as it is available only to the County, and that it is to be used only for expenditures relating to the declared emergency. Mr. McKain and Ms. Soroka described how this portion of the funding fits together with the CARES funding, and discussed how to maximize the impact of both through appropriate coordination.*

*Ms. Soroka and Mr. Chimka discussed the Emergency Solutions Grant, noting that it is intended to help cover the costs associated with COVID-19 responses in the sheltered and unsheltered homeless population.*

*Mr. McKain described the two election assistance funding pieces, noting that one is intended to cover equipment, postage and the like, while the other is geared towards PPE and other protective measures for poll workers and voters.*

*The Chair expressed appreciation for the work that has gone into securing the grants under discussion.*

*In response to questions from Mr. Macey, Ms. Soroka discussed the training that was being prepared for the municipalities seeking funding under the CARES Act, and Mr. Chimka provided information regarding the small business funding to be administered by the Commonwealth. Mr. McKain offered to provide the information to all members.*

*In response to questions from Mr. DeMarco, Mr. McKain and Ms. Soroka discussed the mechanics of how the municipalities would be notified of the training sessions, the process of executing the necessary contracts with the participating municipalities, and the use of electronic filing to the extent possible in order to expedite the transmission of the necessary documentation of expenditures for which reimbursement is requested. Mr. McKain noted that the CARES election funding can be used for reimbursement of expenses incurred during the Primary or General elections this year.*

*In response to questions from Ms. Kirk, Mr. McKain discussed the total funding that was*

available for elections, and indicated a desire to review some election security measures.

In response to a question from Mr. Duerr, Mr. McKain indicated that, in light of the increasing COVID-19 case numbers, the goal of the Health Department is to utilize some of the funding to be received by the County to improve contact tracing and other COVID response efforts.

In response to questions from Mr. Walton, Mr. Chimka re-stated the entities that would be helping to administer the rental assistance program, and Mr. McKain described the Health Department's desire to account for diversity in contact tracing and other efforts.

In response to a question from Ms. Hallam, Mr. McKain noted that the total rental assistance program will run approximately \$35 million, including the County's augmentation of the Commonwealth program, and offered to keep the Committee updated regarding the program as it progresses. Mr. Chimka described how eligibility would be determined, noting that the concept is to remain consistent with the Commonwealth-administered PHFA program eligibility standards. Mr. McKain offered to provide additional information.

In response to a question from Mr. Catena, Mr. McKain indicated that, while the CARES Act funding must be expended by December 31, it will be possible to use those expenditures to prepare for COVID impacts that may run past 2020, so long as that preparation is funded this year.

In response to a question from Mr. Zavarella, Mr. McKain and Mr. Chimka summarized the extent to which the funding could be applied retroactively under each program.

Mr. Baker requested that the Council be kept apprised when municipal funding is approved and/or provided.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mr. McKain indicated that the plan is to allow for municipalities with greater needs to be able to spend any funds remaining near the end of the year.

**A motion was made by Macey, seconded by Kirk, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

## V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:41.