

Allegheny County Council

*County of Allegheny
436 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Phone (412) 350-6495
Fax (412) 350-6499*



Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 27, 2007

4:00 PM

Conference Room 1

Committee on Budget and Finance

***William Russell Robinson, Chair; Jim Burn, Susan Caldwell, Joan Cleary, Matt Drozd, Mike Finnerty, Brenda Frazier, Vince Gastgeb, and William E. Lestitian -
Members***

I. Call to Order

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

Invited Guests:

Mark Flaherty, County Controller or Designee

Jim Flynn, County Manager or Designee

Amy Griser, Director, Budget & Finance

Marc Cherna, Director, Human Services

Derek Uber, Deputy County Manager

Richard Garland, Director, One Vision One Life

Summary: *Invited guests in attendance: Mr. Flaherty, Mr. Flynn, Ms. Griser, Mr. Cherna, Mr. Uber, and Mr. Garland.*

Recognized attendees: Pete Schepis, Budget & Finance; Jack Excler, Economic Development; and Jerry Tyskiewicz from the Courts.

Council staff in attendance: John Mascio, Jennifer Liptak, Jared Barker, and Stephanie Buka

II. Roll Call

Roll Call: Present: Matt Drozd, Michael Finnerty, Brenda Frazier, Chair William Robinson, and Council Member Bob Macey
Absent: Jim Burn, Joan Cleary, and William Lestitian
Phone: Susan Caldwell, and Vince Gastgeb

III. Approval of Minutes

3067-07 Motion to approve the Minutes of the January 30, 2007 Budget & Finance Committee Meeting.

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

IV. Agenda Items**Resolutions**

2992-07 A Resolution of the County of Allegheny amending the Grants and Special Accounts Budget for 2007 (Submission #01-07).

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Summary: *The Chair referred the committee to supporting documentation on the bill. He asked Ms. Liptak to provide a summary of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) budget block and the process by which this is accomplished.*

Ms. Liptak said that as per the request of the Chair, she requested the Department of Economic Development to provide preliminary copies of the proposed CDBG budget for

distribution to all members of Council so that they could be aware of the projects in their districts. She said that in January the Chief Executive sent out letters indicating that each Council Member was a cooperative in the grant.

She said that in regards to the bill in its entirety, everything seems to be in order

Ms. Caldwell asked how Ms. Liptak's explanation relates to the bill. Ms. Liptak said that the purpose of explaining the process was to familiarize council with the new process which was recently put in place by the Chair.

The Chair explained the process to Ms. Caldwell.

Mr. Drozd asked if there was a process in place to seek other types of grants - Federal, State, or private. Mr. Excler explained the process by which the county obtains matching funds. Mr. Drozd asked that his department provide Council with a presentation of this process. Mr. Excler said he would be happy to coordinate that.

Mr. Drozd asked how vendors are chosen, particularly Digital Solutions, Inc., for the Courts. Mr. Tyskiewicz said that the vendors are on state contracts. He said that the state bids them out and the county selects them.

The Chair explained the county's process of selecting professional services contracts.

Mr. Gastgeb asked if foundation money is ever used for CDBG matching grants. Mr. Excler said that it is. Mr. Gastgeb asked if council sees how those funds are applied. Mr. Excler said that a lot of the matches are already built in to the grant. Mr. Gastgeb asked if those funds are indicated in the budget blocks. Mr. Excler said they are not. The Chair reminded Mr. Gastgeb that at some point all funds are approved by Council.

Mr. Gastgeb said he would like to see a historical report on the use of those funds. The Chair said that Ms. Liptak will work with Economic Development Director Davin and Mr. Excler to put that information together.

A discussion took place relative to the CDBG process.

The Chair told Mr. Gastgeb that if he has concerns of a policy nature that they should not be addressed to Mr. Excler but to the Chief Executive and Mr. Davin. He said they could arrange for a meeting to discuss that if he so desires.

Mr. Gastgeb said that he would like to remove the CDBG item from the bill. The Chair said that he would not recommend doing that.

Mr. Gastgeb said that Council Members are officers of the county and should be able to participate in the process as they see fit. He said that Ms. Caldwell was criticized by the administration for taking part in a presentation of funds, and that she had a right to that since the appropriations are within Council's spectrum.

The Chair said they will monitor the disbursement of funds by district. Ms. Caldwell said that she looks forward to working with the Chair, Mr. Gastgeb, and the administration in this regard.

Action: A motion was made by Finnerty, seconded by Chair Robinson, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: Yes: 4 - Drozd, Finnerty, Frazier and Chair Robinson
No: 1 - Gastgeb
Absent: 3 - Burn, Cleary and Lestitian
Phone: 1 - Caldwell
Non-Member: 1 - Council Member Macey

3020-07 A Resolution of the County of Allegheny amending the Grants and Special Accounts Budget for 2007 (Submission #02-07).

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Summary: Ms. Liptak provided the committee with a summary of the bill. The Chair asked if anyone had any questions on the bill. There were none.

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

3047-07 A Resolution of the County of Allegheny amending the Grants and Special Accounts Budget for 2007 (Submission #03-07).

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Summary: Ms. Liptak provided the committee with a summary of the bill. The Chair asked if there were any questions on the bill. There were none.

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

Discussion Topic:

Controller Flaherty will give a presentation regarding his review of Allegheny Correctional Health Services, Inc.

Summary: The Chair described the recent audit by the Controller regarding Correctional Health Services and deferred to Flaherty.

Mr. Flaherty summarized the review by noting that the nonprofit was formed in response to a federal mandate to improve correctional health services, which was done, and now the concern is that there is a lack of internal controls and procedures within the nonprofit that need to be addressed.

He recommended that the nonprofit obtain some outside help with regard to managing their costs. He also said that they need to consider what kind of jail we want. He said that there are a lot of people in there that are mentally handicapped or ill, and that are just being put there for holding purposes by a judicial system that otherwise doesn't know what to do with them, and that costs the county money.

Department of Human Services - On Vision One Life Program

Summary: The Chair introduced DHS/One Vision One Life and deferred to Mr. Garland and Mr. Cherna.

Director Cherna summarized the program as an attempt to stem the tide of gang related,

drug-related, and other violence. He said that the program is 100% funded (\$800k) by sources other than the County (Commonwealth, foundations, etc.), and works in some of the higher risk areas.

Mr Garland described the actual operations of the program, noting that they use ex offenders to go into the community and mediate conflicts and the like. He said that they also partner with the Pittsburgh Police, The US Attorney General, and the District Attorney's Office. He said that the idea is to provide services to at-risk kids and families, even to the point of sending people to White Deer Run for rehabilitation services.

V. Adjournment