

# Allegheny County Council

*County of Allegheny  
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## Committee Meeting Minutes

**Wednesday, March 25, 2009**

**5:00 PM**

**Conference Room 1**

## Committee on Public Safety

*Jim Burn, Chair; John DeFazio, Matt Drozd, Jim Ellenbogen, Vince Gastgeb,  
Chuck Martoni, and Bill Robinson - Members*

**I. Call to Order**

**Summary:** *The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM*

**Invited Guests:**

**Jim Flynn, County Manager or Designee**

**Michael Wojcik, Allegheny County Solicitor**

**William T. Simmons, Director, Shuman Center**

**Summary:** *Invited guests in attendance: Mr. Flynn, John Woltz for Mr. Wojcik, and Mr. Simmons.*

*Council Staff in attendance: John Mascio and Jared Barker*

**II. Roll Call**

***Roll Call:*** Present: Matt Drozd, William Robinson, and Jim Burn  
Absent: John DeFazio, Jim Ellenbogen, Vince Gastgeb, and Chuck Martoni

**III. Approval of Minutes**

**4734-09** Motion to approve the Minutes of February 26, 2009 Public Safety Committee Meeting.

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

**IV. Agenda Items****Ordinances**

**4660-09** An Ordinance authorizing the County of Allegheny to acquire the Municipal Courts Building located at 1st Avenue, City of Pittsburgh, County of Allegheny, PA 15219 Block & Lot No. 0002-P-00299 from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for One (\$1.00) Dollar.

**Sponsors:** Chief Executive

**Summary:** *Mr. Flynn provided the Committee with a summary of the bill. He said that the bill would authorize the County to lease the Municipal Courts Building from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for One (\$1.00) Dollar for a period of twenty (20) years. At the conclusion of the lease period the County will acquire the building outright.*

*He said that the building is currently owned by the City of Pittsburgh, jointly operated by the County and the Court of Common Pleas and jointly occupied by the Court of Common Pleas and the City of Pittsburgh. According to the ordinance, the Commonwealth desires to enter into an Agreement of Sale with the City of Pittsburgh whereby the state will acquire from the City all right, title and interest for the sum of \$9,000,000.00*

*Mr. Robinson asked Mr. Flynn if the building was inspected. Mr. Flynn said it was and*

*described the inspection process. Mr. Robinson asked him who would be responsible for the maintenance of the building. Mr. Flynn said that issue needs to be explored depending on the needs. Mr. Robinson asked him if it was possible to contract those services out. Mr. Flynn said that could be a possibility.*

*The Chair asked Mr. Woltz if he had an opportunity to review the lease. Mr. Woltz said he did.*

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

**Discussion Topic:**

1. Shuman Center Update

**Summary:** *Mr. Simmons provided the Committee with an update on the status of Shuman Center with regard to processes, procedures, and repairs. He said that the facilities are up to standards and the Certificate of Operation has been restored. He described in detail the progress of completed and on-going renovations and Capital improvement at the Center.*

*Mr. Robinson said that he would like to explore the feasibility of building a new facility for the Center. He said that he thinks that issue should be at the top of their agenda. He said that no matter what the County does to retrofit the Center, in the near future it will be deemed inadequate by the State. He asked Mr. Simmons if he is involved in or aware of any discussions on a feasibility study on building a new facility. Mr. Simmons said that he is not involved in any discussions regarding that, but is in the process of gaining more information on the subject. Mr. Robinson asked him if he could initiate those discussions. Mr. Simmons said that he would defer to Mr. Flynn on that.*

*Mr. Robinson said that he is concerned that there is a lot of attention focused on the negative aspects of the facility and that is what is prompting him to want a new one. He said that it seems inadequate and he thinks that any attempt to fix it just delays the inevitable, which is the possibility of building a new one. He suggested that the County may be able to join forces with outside sources for funding assistance with this project. He said that as Chairperson of Council's Budget & Finance Committee he will make a commitment to find money in the County's budget to fund a feasibility study for this.*

*Mr. Simmons described many positive aspects of the Center. The Chair asked Mr. Simmons to explain the accreditation process, which he did.*

*Mr. Drozd said that capital improvements alone do not build character and that they need to look within to find better ways of rehabilitating the young people there. Mr. Simmons further described policies and programs which he said are having a positive impact on the kids.*

*The Chair asked Mr. Flynn what his thoughts were on conducting a feasibility study on building a new facility. Mr. Flynn said that he was open to that idea and would like to explore it as a comprehensive approach for all County facilities. He said they may need to develop a new master plan or review the current master plan and incorporate what they have done so far and adapt it to the present.*

*Mr. Robinson told Mr. Flynn that he thinks they should review the last master plan, determine what was accomplished and then consider the next step to make it comprehensive.*

*The Chair asked Mr. Flynn how he thinks they should proceed. Mr. Flynn said that they should develop a working group for this purpose. The Chair said that he will propose a Motion to that affect and introduce it at the next Regular Meeting of Council.*

**V. Adjournment**

**Summary:** *The meeting adjourned at 5:45 PM*