

Allegheny County Council

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



Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 13, 2005

4:00 PM

Conference Room 1

Committee on Budget and Finance

*William Russell Robinson, Chair; John DeFazio, Ron Francis, Brenda Frazier,
Vince Gastgeb, Jay Jabbour, and Doug Price*

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, Assistant County Manager

Summary: *Invited Guests present: Derek Uber and Peter Schepis for Amy Griser*

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

II. Roll Call

Summary: *Non-Committee Council Members present: Council Members Cleary, Kress, and Watt*

Roll Call: Present: William Robinson, Ron Francis, Brenda Frazier, Vince Gastgeb, and C.L. Jabbour

Absent: John DeFazio, and Doug Price

III. Approval of Minutes

2129-05 Motion to approve the Minutes of the June 28, 2005 Budget & Finance Committee Meeting.

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

IV. Agenda Items**Discussion Topic:****Discussion of the 2006 County Council Budget Process**

Summary: *The Chair referred to a Memorandum that he sent to all Members of Council and staff providing a schedule for preparing the 2006 County Budget. The document will be included in the hard copy of these minutes.*

He said that this is a tentative schedule and that he tried to accommodate departments as best as he could. He asked the committee to review the schedule and let him know if there were any problems, and if there were, he would try to adjust the schedule to accommodate.

He said that the Charter is very specific on the number of days that Council has to prepare a budget. He explained that the Charter provides that the Chief Executive has to submit the Fiscal Plan no later than 75 days before the end of the year, which would be October 18, 2005. That is the date that the Chief Executive plans to submit it. Mr. Gastgeb asked if he could submit it any earlier than that. The Chair said that if it is the will of the committee he will send a letter to the Chief Executive asking him to submit it earlier. Mr. Gastgeb said that he did not think that 8 weeks was enough time for Council to deliberate, and said that he would like the Chair to send that letter. The Chair also said that even though the schedule lists October 6th as the day that Council

passes a budget, they could extend that day if they need to. Mr. Francis asked why the administration needs so much time. Ms. Liptak said that she asked them to submit it earlier but they indicated that October 18th was in compliance with the Charter, and that is the day they are going to submit it.

The Chair said that he would ask the administration to submit the plan on October 4th, and if they can't, he will ask them to provide a specific reason why. He said that he would send the letter on September 14th.

Mr. Francis expressed concern that Council will not know the assessed value of property in time for the budget deliberations, and that could cause trouble in their planning since a lot of revenue is based on that. He said that he hopes that Council can make a decision on the budget independent of what is happening in the assessment area.

The Chair reminded the committee that the budget process is solely the purview of this Council, and that if anyone has any proposed changes to the plan they should share that with the committee and the committee will try to accommodate the changes.

Ms. Frazier asked if she could review the schedule and get back to him on any changes in the schedule she may need. The Chair said that he would give them a week to do that.

Mr. Jabbour asked the Chair what would happen if the administration refuses to submit the Fiscal Plan earlier. The Chair said that Council is free to start the budget process and begin crafting a budget. He said that he hopes that they can come to some understanding with the administration regarding this.

Mr. Gastgeb said that it would be helpful to know which grants the administration plans on awarding. The Chair said that Council needs to set a schedule that accommodates them. He said that if any Member of Council disagrees with any budget item that the administration submits, they must be able to plug in their own number and identify the funding sources and provide justification. The Chair indicated that due to staffing issues, from now until the end of the year he would not be pursuing any other legislation not related to the budget, and he urged the committee to do the same.

Resolution

2119-05

A Resolution of the County of Allegheny amending the Grants and Special Accounts Budgets for 2005 (Submission #14-05).

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Summary:

Ms. Liptak provided an explanation and summary of the bill. She said that everything appears to be in order and that there are no County matches involved in any of the grants.

Mr. Jabbour asked if any of the grants were increases from last year. Ms. Liptak said that except for one, all the grants were either the same or less.

There were no further questions.

Action:

A motion was made by Francis, seconded by Gastgeb, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried unanimously.

Enactment No: 37-05-RE

V. Adjournment

Summary: *The meeting adjourned at 4:40 PM*