

Allegheny County Council

*119 Courthouse
436 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Phone: 412-350-6490*



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 29, 2020

4:30 PM

Conference Room 1

Committee on Appointment Review

*Bethany Hallam, Chair
Committee of the Whole*

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:33pm.

Invited Guests:

II. Roll Call

Members Present: 7 - Olivia Bennett, Patrick Catena, Nick Futules, Cindy Kirk, Paul Klein, Anita Prizio and Bethany Hallam

Members Absent: 4 - Sam DeMarco, John Palmiere, Robert Palmosina and DeWitt Walton

Members Phone: 4 - Tom Baker, Tom Duerr, Bob Macey and Paul Zavarella

III. Approval of Minutes

[11382-20](#)

Motion to approve the minutes of December 4, 2019 meeting of the Committee on Appointment Review.

IV. Agenda Items

Appointments

[11377-20](#)

Approving the reappointment of William Ondek to the Board of Property Assessment Appeals and Review for a term to expire on December 31, 2022.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Chair Hallam thanked Mr. Ondek for willingness to serve and what he brings to the Board. He responded that he has over 40 years experience and as been serving.

Ms. Kirk asked why similar properties are differently assessed. Mr. Ondek responded that board is on a market assessment system. Mostly looking at comparable units that were recently sold. Takes into consideration upgrades as no such thing are alike.

President Catena asked if board can do anything better. Mr. Ondek said they do a good job as they have multiple fields covered with board members expertise. Cannot make everyone happy but members take responsibilities seriously.

Chair Hallam asked about conflicts and he said he has none.

Ms. Kirk asked if Council can better prepare board and Mr. Ondek said nothing.

[11378-20](#)

Approving the reappointment of Wayde Fargotstein to the Board of Property Assessment Appeals and Review for a term to expire on December 31, 2022.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Chair Hallam asked what Mr. Fargotstein brings to the board and he talked about his current experience.

Mr. Klein vouched for his character and Mr. Fargotstein thanked him.

Chair Hallam asked about no conflicts and none.

[11379-20](#) Approving the appointment of Jenna R. Cramer to the Allegheny County Conservation District Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2023.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Chair Hallam thanked her and asked what she brings to the board. Ms. Cramer said she brings her experience in green building to the board.

Ms. Kirk talked about the benefits the board has generated for businesses to make things easier related to green building issues. Ms. Cramer does not want to stop anything that is working. There is no one answer to move processes forward.

President Catena stated her resume is impressive. Mentioned that Ms. Prizio will be joining her on the board.

Chair Hallam asked about conflicts and none.

[11380-20](#) Approving the appointment of Maria Graziani to the Allegheny County Conservation District Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2023.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Chair Hallam thanked her and asked what she brings to the board. Ms. Graziani asked about her work at the Penn State Extension.

Ms. Kirk asked about farms and Ms. Graziani talked about educating the public about the plight of farmers. Ms. Kirk mentioned about the purple stripes for property accessibility and Ms. Graziani talked about more education. Ms. Kirk mentioned lead source was more soil than water according to former Health Director.

Ms. Bennett asked about urban farming and whether Ms. Graziani was involved. She mentioned Black Urban Farmers organization and the work that they do. She has been involved in many urban farms. Also discussed farmer incubation programs to start in the cities and move to more farm-like areas.

Mr. Klein talked about Hillcrest Farm and if it is still in use. Ms. Graziani said that it is and there are programs in place to keep green space. Bloomfield Garfield corporation interested in maintaining green space.

President Catena asked about Farmland Preservation Program. She is very supportive and it is essential for farmers to continue family farms. Allegheny County has less farms so not as big of an issue but essential to every county.

Ms. Prizio asked about hydroponics and Fifth Season. Ms. Graziani talked about some programs between Slippery Rock and North County brewing on this matter.

Chair Hallam asked about conflicts and she said none.

[11381-20](#) Approving the reappointment of Barbara M. Pares to the Allegheny HealthChoices Inc. Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2023.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Chair Hallam thanked her and what Ms. Pares brings to board. Ms. Pares talked

about her education and career and what she has done in past roles to prepare her for this role.

Ms. Kirk asked what the board does. Ms. Parees stated in the late 90's, the Federal government moved Medicaid money from there to states for certain programs. State took a unique approach to deliver services and contracted with a company which created the current board. They provide oversight to these services.

Ms. Bennett asked about gender equity and what the board can do to help. Ms. Parees stated she will research and get back to Council.

Chair Hallam asked about conflicts and none.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:57 pm.