

Allegheny County Council

*436 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Phone (412) 350-6490
Fax (412) 350-6499*



Meeting Minutes - Approved

Wednesday, October 1, 2014

4:00 PM

Conference Room 1

Committee on Budget and Finance

Michael Finnerty, Chair

Members:

Barbara Daly Danko

Amanda Green Hawkins

Heather Heidelbaugh

Bob Macey

Sue Means

Nicholas Futules, John Palmiere

Jan Rea

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 PM.

Invited Guests:

William D. McKain, CPA-County Manager or Designee

Warren Finkel-Director, Office of Budget and Finance or Designee

Andy Baechle-Director, Parks Department

William McKain was present from the County Manager's office.

Andy Baechle was present from the Parks Department.

Mary Siroko, Cathy Cellistino, Pete Schepis, Tim Cox, and Greg Casciato were present from the Office of Budget and Finance.

Michele Poulus was present to represent the Courts.

Amy Griser was present from the Office of the Controller.

Lori Sicard, Walter Szymanski, Jared Barker and Erin Graney were present from the staff of Council.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: 3 - Finnerty, Barbara Danko and Sue Means

Members Absent: 3 - Bob Macey, John Palmiere and Jan Rea

Members Phone: 3 - Amanda Green Hawkins, Heather Heidelbaugh and Nick Futules

III. Approval of Minutes

[8507-14](#)

Motion to approve the minutes of the Budget and Finance Committee meeting of Allegheny County Council held on September 24, 2014
Passed

IV. Agenda Items

Resolutions

[8501-14](#)

A Resolution of the County of Allegheny amending the Grants and Special Accounts Budget for 2014 (Submission #13-14).

Sponsors: Chief Executive

The Clerk read the title into the record and Mr. Szymanski summarized the grant blocks. The Chair referred committee members to the briefing report circulated by Mr. Szymanski.

The Chair opened the floor to questions regarding the grant for the Jail. Ms. Danko inquired if this was a new grant. Ms. Celestino and Mr. Schepis stated that it was new money, a new grant coming from the U.S. Department of Justice. No County match was required.

The Chair opened the floor to questions regarding the grant for the Court of Common Pleas for a conference. Michele Poulos was asked to come to the table to answer a question regarding if employees had to pay a fee for the conference. Ms. Poulos stated that no fee would be required.

Ms. Means inquired about the agenda for the conference. Ms. Poulos stated that she did not yet have an agenda. Mr. Schepis clarified that this is a cross training between the courts and social services as a coordination effort.

Ms. Poulos offered to send the agenda to Council upon receipt.

Affirmatively Recommended

Discussion Topic: State and Function of Parks Department

The Chair invited Mr. Baechle to the table to present an overview of the Parks Department. Mr. Baechle stated that there is about 25 full-time employees and many more seasonal. The Department works with many non-profits and organizations in partnership.

Mr. Baechle read the mission statement of the Parks Department into the record. He reviewed all of the facilities within the county parks which are managed by the Department as well as the festivals and events that are held annually. Mr. McKain expanded on the basketball camp held this past summer within the parks for which they provided a free lunch and professional instruction for the children in the community. "Hometown Hoops"

Mr. Baechle highlighted the new partnership with Facilities Management to complete projects such as shelter repair, the wave pool, the fair grounds, new picnic tables, grills and bathroom upgrades.

Deck Hockey rinks are in progress and reconstruction of the Oval is also underway.

The Chair opened the floor to questions. Ms. Means asked about the deferred maintenance in the parks and if there was a plan for a period of years. Mr. McKain stated that there was a five year plan for capital projects listed in the Budget Book each year. Mr. Baechle and Mr. McKain reviewed the money that the County Parks receive from RAD annually.

Ms. Means inquired about the retaining wall around the Oval in South Park. Ms. Means inquired about the demolition project. Mr. McKain stated that 3 out of the 5 buildings have been demolished.

Ms. Danko inquired about registering ahead for races with the Parks. Mr. Baechle stated that the Ball Fields are generally reserved ahead of time but other rentals and reservations can be done as soon as a day ahead.

Ms. Danko inquired if the Hometown Hoops could be extended in time within different municipalities such as Homestead. Ms. Danko further inquired about gender diversity within this program. Mr. Baechle and Mr. McKain stated that there were female instructors as well as female attendees in the program.

Ms. Danko inquired about remediation measures for "oak wilt" a tree disease. Mr. Baechle stated that there were professionals monitoring and trenching for removal of diseased trees. There is also a 50,000 federal grant to assist in dealing with the oak wilt.

Ms. Means inquired about the wave pool in South Park and if it leaks. Mr. Baechle

stated he is unaware of a leak currently. As well as other facilities in South Park. Mr. Baechle said he would get back to Council regarding a cabin in South Park and its ability to be rented.

Ms. Means inquired about the duties of the full-time Park staff. Mr. McKain clarified that the park maintenance was conducted mostly by Public Works and Facilities Management.

Ms. Danko inquired about the in-active Friends groups and who can facilitate involvement within the County Government. Mr. Baechle stated that he is invited to the active group meetings and attends. Mr. McKain stated that it was in Council's purview to initiate the process with the Friends groups.

The Chair inquired about the end-date for the deck hockey facilities. Mr. McKain stated that possibly by November or December.

Mr. Futules made comment that the deferred maintenance never seemed to be rectified because there were only about 3 million dedicated to capital projects within the parks each year and the original estimate was 120 million in deferred maintenance.

Ms. Means inquired about the cell tower in South Park controversy. Mr. McKain stated it was before the municipal zoning board currently.

A conversation was had regarding manufacturing snow in Boyce park and the costs and returns.

The Chair lauded the public-private partnerships that have occurred within the parks.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 PM.