

Allegheny County Council

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



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 27, 2016

4:00 PM

Conference Room 1

Committee on Appointment Review

*Ed Kress, Chair
Committee of the Whole*

I. Call to Order

Invited Guests:

Invited Guests Present: William D. McKain, CPA, County Manager; Austin Davis, Executive Assistant, County Executive's Office

Council Staff Present: Jared Barker; Joe Catanese; Stephanie Buka

II. Roll Call

Councilwoman Means arrived late to the meeting and did not participate in the committee's consideration of Ms. Tonya Johnson and Mr. DeWitt Walton.

Members Present: 9 - Cindy Kirk, Ed Kress, Michael Finnerty, Sue Means, John Palmiere, Bob Macey, DeWitt Walton, John DeFazio and Sam DeMarco

Members Absent: 5 - Nick Futules, Chuck Martoni, Paul Klein, Jim Ellenbogen and Denise Ranalli-Russell

Members Phone: 1 - Tom Baker

III. Approval of Minutes

[9406-16](#)

Motion to approve the minutes of the Appointment Review Committee Meeting of Allegheny County Council held on November 12, 2015.

A motion was made by Macey, seconded by Palmiere, that this matter be Passed. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

IV. Agenda Items

Appointments

[9349-16](#)

Approving the reappointment of Tonya B. Johnson to serve as a member of the Accountability, Conduct and Ethics Commission for a term to expire on December 31, 2020.

Sponsors: Council Member DeFazio

Ms. Johnson described her interest in continuing to serve on the Commission. Ms. Johnson discussed the Commission's current resources and needs. Mr. Walton gave Ms. Johnson his highest recommendation.

A motion was made by Walton, seconded by Palmiere, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

[9350-16](#)

Approving the appointment of DeWitt Walton to serve as a member of the Allegheny County Vacant Property Review Committee for a term to expire on December 31, 2017.

Sponsors: Council Member DeFazio

Mr. Walton explained his interest in economic development and the importance of returning vacant properties and brownfields to productive use.

A motion was made by Finnerty, seconded by Palmiere, that this matter be

Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

[9354-16](#) Approving the reappointment of Derek Uber to serve as a member of the Allegheny County Housing Authority for a term to expire on December 31, 2020.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Mr. Uber described his background as a former employee of Allegheny County. Mr. Uber explained that the Authority manages two programs, including low-income public housing and the housing choice voucher program, also known as Section 8 public housing. Mr. Uber reported that the Authority was the first in the nation to ban smoking in all multi-unit facilities, noting health benefits and cost reductions. He added that the Authority also works to eliminate veteran homelessness. Mr. DeMarco stated he would like to follow-up with Mr. Uber on that subject. Mr. DeMarco asked about the maintenance of properties to which Mr. Uber replied that maintenance for Section 8 homes would be the responsibility of the municipality's code enforcement division. Ms. Kirk inquired about the smoke-free policy, and Mr. Uber explained that a resident would be in violation of their lease agreement if they were found to be smoking in their unit.

A motion was made by Finnerty, seconded by Means, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

[9355-16](#) Approving the reappointment of M. Gayle Moss to serve as a member of the Allegheny County Jail Oversight Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2018.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Held in Committee

[9362-16](#) Approving the reappointment of Thomas Donatelli to serve as a member of the Port Authority of Allegheny County for a term to expire on September 17, 2019.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Mr. Donatelli provided members with a summary of his background and qualifications. Mr. Walton commented on the importance of public transportation and ensuring it reaches all of Allegheny County's communities. Mr. Donatelli and Chairman Kress discussed cost savings realized with bulk purchases of gasoline. Mr. Kress asked about the possibility of using, for example, the Martin Luther King, Jr. busway for FedEx trucks or post office trucks. Mr. Donatelli reported that the Onorato Transportation Action Team, Chaired by David Hickton, conducted a study recommending optimizing the busways, but he wasn't aware of any reconsideration of the matter.

A motion was made by Macey, seconded by Palmiere, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

[9363-16](#) Approving the reappointment of John L. Tague to serve as a member of the Port Authority of Allegheny County for a term to expire on September 17, 2019.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Mr. Kress asked about using the MLK, Jr. busway for FedEx trucks, to which Mr. Tague

responded that he had no knowledge of this suggestion. Mr. Tague reported that Act 89, also known as the Transportation Bill, benefitted the Port Authority to an extent. Mr. Tague and several members discussed transit-oriented development and the consideration of the needs of certain communities. Mr. Tague told members that two upcoming hearings will allow the public to comment on the proposal to place a surcharge on Connect Cards. Mr. DeMarco praised Mr. Tague for his outstanding qualifications, service and passion. In response to a question from Ms. Means, Mr. Tague replied that the Authority has built a positive relationship with the disability community and its paratransit system is one of the few in the nation that provide door to door service. Mr. Tague further explained Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 at the request of Ms. Means. Mr. Baker and Mr. Tague discussed bus routes and snow removal in the park n' ride lots in the North Hills.

A motion was made by DeMarco , seconded by Finnerty, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

[9365-16](#)

Approving the reappointment of Daniel Griffin to serve as a member of the Allegheny Regional Asset District Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2019.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Mr. Griffin told members that he was originally appointed by Commissioner Mike Dawida, followed by the succeeding County Executives. Mr. Griffin reported that RAD has worked to establish "autism-friendly" performances. Mr. Kress asked Mr. Griffin if he would consider using RAD monies to help volunteer firefighters and emergency management services. Mr. Griffin replied that those types of agencies, similar to schools, borders on municipal support, but if they qualified and weren't exempt then he would consider such a request. Ms. Kirk and Mr. Griffin discussed the funding of libraries.

A motion was made by Finnerty, seconded by Means, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

[9366-16](#)

Approving the reappointment of Dusty Kirk, Esq. to serve as a member of the Allegheny Regional Asset District Board for a term to expire on December 31, 2019.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Ms. Kirk furthered the discussion related to funding libraries and explained that the Board has considered merging the administrative functions of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (CLP) with the Allegheny County Library Association (ACLA). Councilwoman Kirk mentioned a concern that the asset district would cause local governments to trim their support of libraries. In response, Ms. Kirk said that hasn't occurred, instead, they are helping to level the playing field.

A motion was made by Finnerty, seconded by DeMarco , that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

[9353-16](#)

Approving the reappointment of Robert J. Lewis to serve as a member of the Allegheny County Airport Authority for a term to expire on December 31, 2020.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Held in Committee

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.