

Allegheny County Council

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



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 6, 2016

4:00 PM

Conference Room 1

Committee on Budget and Finance

Mike Finnerty, Chair

Members; Sam DeMarco, Nick Futules, Paul Klein, Ed Kress, Bob Macey, Chuck Martoni, Sue Means, John Palmiere

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:00.

Invited Guests:

William D. McKain, CPA - County Manager or Designee

Mary C. Soroka - Director, Office of Budget and Finance or Designee

Marc Cherna - Director, Department of Human Services

Reginald Young - Deputy Director, Department of Human Services - Office of Community Services

John Litz - Planner, Office of Community Services

Mr. McKain was present from the Office of the County Manager.

Mr. Hurley, Mr. Earley and Mr. Exler were present from the Department of Economic Development.

Mr. Cherna, Mr. Young and Mr. Litz were present from the Department of Human Services.

Mr. Barker and Mr. Szymanski were present from the Office of County Council.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: 5 - Finnerty, Sam DeMarco, Paul Klein, Bob Macey and Sue Means

Members Absent: 3 - Nick Futules, Chuck Martoni and John Palmiere

Members Phone: 1 - Ed Kress

Members 1 - Cindy Kirk

Non-Members:

III. Approval of Minutes

[9550-16](#)

Motion to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2016 meeting of the Committee on Budget and Finance.

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

IV. Agenda Items**Discussion Topic****Community Services Advisory Council****CDBG Grants**

CDBG Program

At the request of the Chair, Mr. Hurley, Mr. Earley and Mr. Exler gave a brief overview of the CDBG program, highlighting its history, goals and objectives, funding trends, the municipalities' option to opt in or out of the County's program, national program objectives, applications received, planning process, timetable, and project progression. Mr. Hurley noted that 70% of the funding must be spent in a fashion that benefits low or moderate income populations, and that this precludes the use of too much of the funding

for demolition projects. Mr. Hurley indicated that the amount of funding continues to decrease, discussed the methodology employed to determine whether funding benefits low or moderate income populations, the types of projects that typically are funded, entities that are eligible for funding through the program, the planning process, and the timetable for program years 2016 and 2017. Mr. Hurley went on to describe the process that projects typically follow from approval to completion, including contracting, labor compliance, payments, and monitoring and audits.

In response to a question from Mr. Klein, Mr. Hurley discussed the means through which the County receives CDBG funding.

In response to a question from Ms. Kirk, Mr. Hurley and Mr. Exler noted that the reduction in funding over time is the result of policy decisions at the federal level.

Ms. Means, the Chair, Mr. Hurley and Mr. Exler discussed the procedure that is employed for appropriating CDBG funds.

Community Services Advisory Council

At the request of the Chair, Mr. Cherna, Mr. Young and Mr. Litz provided a brief overview of the Community Services Advisory Council. Mr. Young discussed the organization of the Office of Community Services, and Mr. Litz described the Community Services Block Grant program, noting that the program receives about \$700 million nationally, and that funding is distributed via formula. Mr. Litz indicated that the Council is set up as the administering board for the programs that are funded through the block grant program. Mr. Litz described the Board's composition, and noted that the Commonwealth has established regulations and policy for administering the program. Mr. Cherna noted that the County receives about \$1.1 million through the block grant program, and that this revenue is used to fund things that might fall through the cracks with larger funding programs.

In response to a request from the Chair, Mr. Cherna offered to provide a listing of the types of projects that are funded through the program.

In response to questions from Ms. Kirk and Mr. Macey, Mr. Litz and Mr. Cherna discussed attempts that have been made to gather data regarding wages and retention for individuals who are placed in jobs through programs funded by the block grant program.

In response to a question from Ms. Means, Mr. Litz provided his contact information and offered to provide referrals to relevant programs if and when the occasion arises.

In response to a question from Mr. Macey, Mr. Cherna noted that well over 90% of the revenue goes to services, rather than to administration.

Mr. DeMarco and Mr. Cherna discussed the nature of the programs funded through the program, and Mr. Cherna noted that accountability and effectiveness are fundamentally important.

In response to a question from Ms. Means, Mr. Cherna discussed additional measures that have been developed to incentivize children to attend the summer lunch program, and Mr. Young discussed the requirements that exist to ensure that healthy meals are served.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:57.