

Allegheny County Council

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



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 6, 2016

6:00 PM

Conference Room 1

Executive Committee

Nick Futules, Chair

Members: John DeFazio; Mike Finnerty; Cindy Kirk; Ed Kress; Bob Macey; John Palmiere

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01.

Invited Guests:

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

II. Roll Call

Members Present: 6 - Nick Futules, John DeFazio, Michael Finnerty, Cindy Kirk, Bob Macey and John Palmiere

Members Absent: 0

Members Phone: 1 - Ed Kress

Members 3 - Sam DeMarco, Sue Means and Paul Klein

Non-Members:

Members Present: 6 - Nick Futules, John DeFazio, Michael Finnerty, Cindy Kirk, Bob Macey and John Palmiere

Members Absent: 0

Members Phone: 1 - Ed Kress

Members 3 - Sam DeMarco, Sue Means and Paul Klein

Non-Members:

III. Approval of Minutes

[9719-16](#)

Motion to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2016 meeting of the Executive Committee.

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

IV. Agenda Items**Motions**

[9683-16](#)

Motion of the Council of Allegheny County authorizing a cooperative partnership between Allegheny County Council and the Career Development Center to identify candidates who have suffered from long term unemployment for employment with the Office of County Council.

Sponsors: Council Member Kress

At the request of the Chair, the clerk read the title of the bill and Mr. Kress explained his intent and provided a brief recap of how he arrived at the concept. Mr. Kress noted that the Career Development Center has an existing program aimed at assisting individuals who have experienced long-term unemployment, and that he regards the concept of offering internships or other positions to those individuals as potentially invaluable in their efforts to re-enter the job market at little or not cost.

In response to questions from Mr. Macey, Mr. Kress indicated that the Career Development Center's budget only allows them to enroll about 20 individuals in the P2P program, and that his motion only applies to identifying candidates for positions within the Office of County Council.

The Chair suggested that the fairest way of proceeding would be to allow the Career Development Center's candidates to apply on the same footing as other individuals. The Chair and Mr. Kress noted that the motion does not require that any particular individual(s) be hired.

The Chair and Mr. Kress discussed the relative merits of enacting an authorization via motion as opposed to simply adopting a practice relating to candidate identification.

Ms. Means suggested that hiring interns may or may not be wise, depending upon staff's ability to assist them. The Chair and Mr. Szymanski indicated that Council internships have been for 20 hours per week in the past. Mr. Kress indicated that his understanding is that the Career Development Center's program is geared towards 40 hour weeks. The Chair, Mr. Szymanski and Mr. Barker discussed potential health care issues if and when individuals are employed beyond a certain number of hours per week.

Mr. Finnerty expressed agreement with the notion that individuals who wish to be employed within the Office of County Council are already entitled to do so under the Council's existing process.

In response to a question from Ms. Kirk, Mr. Kress suggested that the Council itself would be able to regulate how many candidates are identified and for what positions.

Mr. DeMarco expressed agreement with Ms. Means' concerns about using full time staff members' time to train new temporary employees on an ongoing basis, and also expressed concerns about logistical issues such as computer access, building access, etc. Mr. DeMarco indicated that he agrees with the intent behind the motion is laudable, but that the logistical issues may make it unwise to pursue the concept.

Mr. DeFazio suggested that there may be wisdom in having even basic clerical functions performed by the equivalent of temporary employees.

Mr. Macey indicated that he views the concept as involving people who have relevant professional experience rather than completely inexperienced individuals who would ordinarily be hired for internship programs, and if those individuals can be employed to perform basic tasks at little or no cost to the County, that could be a beneficial outcome.

Mr. Palmiere asked about the ages of potential employees, and Ms. Kirk suggested that the criterion is duration of unemployment, rather than candidate age.

The Chair and Ms. Means discussed the duration of the P2P funding as it would potentially impact the duration for which individuals are employed.

Mr. Finnerty stressed his feeling that the existing hiring process allows for these same individuals to apply for positions.

A motion was made by DeFazio, seconded by Kirk, that this matter be Returned Without Recommendation. The motion carried by the following vote:

Members Yes: 5 - Futules, DeFazio, Kirk, Macey and Palmiere

Members No: 1 - Finnerty

Members Absent: 0

Members Yes Phone: 1 - Kress

Members 3 - DeMarco , Means and Klein

Non-Member:

Members Yes: 5 - Futules, DeFazio, Kirk, Macey and Palmiere

Members No: 1 - Finnerty

Members Absent: 0

Members Yes Phone: 1 - Kress

Members 3 - DeMarco , Means and Klein

Non-Member:

Discussion Topics

- Office of County Council Personnel

- Committee Meeting Records

Meeting Records

Ms. Means indicated that the Council does have digital recording equipment in place to record committee meetings. Ms. Means noted that she had been on vacation and missed a committee session, and that when she had requested the audio recording of the meeting, she was informed that the committee sessions are no longer being recorded. Ms. Means indicated that she would like to have recordings of the meetings available for her reference and to double check accuracy and to have the nuance of the remarks made available.

The Chair summarized his communications with the Council Solicitor regarding recording, and noted that the Solicitor indicated that recordings are optional, but once made, they must be retained and are public records.

Mr. Finnerty suggested that there is no reason to record meetings due to the cataloguing requirement.

The clerk expanded upon Mr. Finnerty's remarks regarding cataloguing and the other concerns that relate to audio recordings.

Mr. Macey indicated that all of the members of the various committees have the ability to undertake background research with or without the assistance of staff in order to inform their decisions, and expressed concerns relating to the use of sound bites culled from recordings.

The Chair suggested that individual meetings of significance could still be recorded if necessary.

Ms. Kirk suggested that the signs regarding recording should be covered or removed if the meetings are not recorded.

Mr. Klein questioned what the impacts of recording might be in practice.

Mr. DeMarco suggested that the practice of recording might have wisdom in order to inform decisions regarding bills that are released from committee prior to final votes on those bills, and indicated that he is prepared to bear the consequences if he says something on an audio recording.

Mr. Finnerty re-emphasized that, once the tape is made, it must be catalogued and preserved, and that sooner or later that administrative burden would become prohibitive.

Ms. Means suggested that Council Members whose work schedules interfere with committee meeting attendance could benefit from recordings, and that a full recording of a given meeting could lend context to remarks that are made.

The Chair and Ms. Means discussed the potential consequences of individuals' refusal to be recorded.

Mr. Macey and the clerk discussed the evolving nature of the Right to Know Law and the Sunshine Act.

The Chair and Mr. Macey suggested that the part time nature of serving on Council will inevitably impact the members' ability to attend meetings, but that committing to serve necessarily imparts an obligation to participate.

Mr. Finnerty moved that committee sessions not be recorded, and Mr. DeFazio seconded the motion passed with the Chair, Mr. DeFazio, Mr. Finnerty, Ms. Kirk, Mr. Macey and Mr. Palmiere voting affirmatively and Mr. Kress voting negatively.

The Committee entered an executive session in order to discuss staffing issues.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48.