

# **Allegheny County Council**

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



## **Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, November 2, 2016**

**6:30 PM**

**Conference Room I**

## **Committee on Health & Human Services**

*John Palmiere, Chair; Thomas Baker, James Ellenbogen, Nick Futules, Cindy Kirk,  
Paul Klein, Ed Kress, Robert Macey, Sue Means*

## I. Call to Order

*The meeting was called to order at 6:30.*

### Invited Guests:

**William D. McKain, CPA, Allegheny County Manager or designee(s)**  
**Dr. Karen Hacker, M.D., M.P.H., Director, Allegheny County Health Department**

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

*Ms. Soroka was present from the Department of Budget & Finance.*

*Mr. Barker was present from the Office of County Council.*

## II. Roll Call

**Members Present:** 5 - John Palmiere, Tom Baker, Paul Klein, Ed Kress and Sue Means

**Members Absent:** 4 - Jim Ellenbogen, Nick Futules, Cindy Kirk and Bob Macey

## III. Approval of Minutes

[9874-16](#)

Motion to approve the minutes of the May 4, 2016 meeting of the Committee on Health & Human Services.

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

## IV. Agenda Items

### Resolutions

[9756-16](#)

A Resolution of the Council of the County of Allegheny pursuant to Section 505-49 C (8) (d) of the Allegheny County Code of Ordinances approving an increase in asbestos abatement permit application fees previously approved by the Allegheny County Health Department's Board of Health.

**Sponsors:** Chief Executive

*At the request of the Chair, the clerk read the title of the bill and Mr. McKain summarized its provisions, noting that the fees at issue have not been adjusted in 20 years and that the fees are deposited in a special account that is used to pay for personnel, supplies and materials for the County's air pollution activities, and the fees generate roughly \$340,000 in a typical year. Mr. McKain noted that the adjustment will garner about \$90,000 in extra revenue per year on average. Mr. McKain indicated that Allegheny County and Philadelphia are the only two counties that permit asbestos abatement activities, but that the fee structures are entirely different, so it is difficult to draw meaningful comparisons between the two.*

*Mr. McKain noted that his preference would be to use the additional fee revenue to hire one more inspector for asbestos inspection activities, because it appears that the County receives complaints about pollution sources during off hours and he perceives*

*value in having the ability to conduct inspection activities in those timeframes. Mr. McKain also noted that newly expanded data collection and reporting technology has allowed the County to expand its ability to conduct targeted inspection activities, for which the extra inspector would be beneficial.*

*In response to a question from Mr. Klein, Mr. McKain noted that the County has four asbestos inspectors including the additional one to be funded by the fee increase, and offered to forward the job description and qualification requirements to the Chair for the Committee's information.*

*Mr. Kress expressed support for the concept, and Mr. McKain noted that the permits are typically sought by and granted to contractors who conduct a study of a given project and then must mitigate asbestos issues that are uncovered by those studies.*

*In response to a question from Mr. Kress, Mr. McKain noted that new construction and construction of improvements tends to yield asbestos abatement permit applications, as asbestos can be an issue during both outright demolition and disturbing existing structures to improve them.*

*In response to a question from Mr. Kress, Ms. Sooka noted that the starting salary for these inspectors is just over \$40,000.*

*In response to a question from Ms. Means, Mr. McKain discussed the relationship between increased enforcement activities and violation detection, and noted that violation fines have jumped from about \$2000 or \$3000 per year to about \$43,000 so far in 2016.*

*In response to a question from Mr. Baker, Mr. McKain described the virtues of unscheduled inspections.*

*In response to a question from Ms. Means, Mr. McKain noted that he was not aware of any significant complaints about the proposed change at this time, although he also indicated that the fees were not yet being charged.*

*Mr. Kress and Mr. McKain discussed how the County reviews its fee structures and evaluates the appropriateness of adjustments.*

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

## **V. Adjournment**

*The meeting was adjourned at 6:52.*