

Allegheny County Council

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Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 19, 2020

4:15 PM

Conference Room I

Committee on Parks

*John Palmiere, Chair; Tom Baker, Tom Duerr, Nick Futules, Cindy Kirk, Anita Prizio
and Paul Zavarella, Members*

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:17.

Invited Guests:

William D. McKain, CPA, Allegheny County Manager or designee(s)
Andy Baechle, Director, Allegheny County Parks Department

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

Mr. Hopson was present from the Parks Department.

Mr. Evanto was present from the Department of Administrative Services.

II. Roll Call

Members Present: 5 - Tom Duerr, Nick Futules, Anita Prizio, Paul Zavarella and John Palmiere

Members Absent: 0

Members Phone: 2 - Tom Baker and Cindy Kirk

Members 3 - Olivia Bennett, Robert Palmosina and Bethany Hallam
Non-Members:

III. Approval of Minutes

IV. Agenda Items

Ordinances

[11373-20](#) An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing the use of a structure in the County's Boyce Park by Family Links, Inc.

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 rental rate breaks down to \$15,000 per year and is a two year continuation of the existing services provided by Family Links in conjunction with the Department of Human Services.

In response to a question from Mr. Palmosina, Mr. McKain and Mr. Hopson offered to provide additional information.

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

[11374-20](#) An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing continued use of property in the County's Deer Lakes Park by the Amateur Astronomers Association of Pittsburgh for operation of an astronomy observatory known as the Wagman Observatory.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Mr. McKain showed a brief video highlighting the activities at Wagman Observatory.

At the request of the Chair, the clerk read the title of the bill and Mr. McKain summarized the history of the Wagman Observatory, noting that the Amateur Astronomers have operated the observatory and provided programming for youth and adults since 1986.

The Chair recalled a prior visit to the Observatory, noting that it is an asset to the County parks.

Mr. Futules and Mr. Zavarella discussed the topography of the County parks.

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

[11375-20](#)

An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing use of property in the County's North Park for operation of a platform tennis organization by North Park Paddle Tennis.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Mr. McKain showed a brief video showing the North Park paddle tennis facilities.

At the request of the Chair, the clerk read the title of the bill and Mr. McKain summarized its provisions, noting that the agreement term would be ten years rent free, because North Park Paddle Tennis contributed \$250,000 to the construction of the facility. Mr. McKain also noted that the public would be able to use the courts, as well, and that NPPT also contributes day to day maintenance and fuel for the heaters.

Mr. Zavarella and Mr. McKain discussed the use term.

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

[11398-20](#)

An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing Nate's Reptile Rescue to use a structure on Brownsville Road in the County's South Park.

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 principle is similar to a dog or cat shelter, but for reptiles, insofar as the goal is to find permanent homes for animals that are temporarily sheltered. Mr. McKain noted that the building to be used is Building #10, with a two year agreement encompassing \$200 per month in rental fees.

In response to a question from Mr. Macey, Mr. McKain noted that the County would remain responsible for the structure, but that adequate insurance would be carried by the user.

In response to a question from Ms. Kirk, Mr. Hopson noted that the reptiles involved would for the most part be unwanted pets for which new homes would be found, whether in a different zoo or other similar setting. Mr. McKain noted by way of example that Living Treasures Animal Parks have a partnership with the organization.

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

[11399-20](#)

An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing use of property for construction of three (3) livestock shelter structures in the County's Round Hill Park in conjunction with the Allegheny County Parks Foundation.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Mr. McKain showed a brief video depicting the nature of the proposed structure.

At the request of the Chair, the clerk read the title of the bill and Mr. McKain summarized its provisions, noting that the shelters would be for sheep, cows and horses during inclement weather, and indicating that the total project cost was approximately \$25,000, with \$11,000 or so in in-kind contributions from a private individual who wishes to remain anonymous.

In response to a question from Mr. Macey, Mr. McKain noted that construction would be undertaken by a unionized third party contractor. Mr. McKain, Mr. Hopson and Mr. Evanto summarized some additional work that had been done recently in Round Hill Park.

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

[11400-20](#)

An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing the continued use of a portion of Allegheny County-owned land in North Park as a leaf composting area by the North Hills Council of Governments.

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 extension is for two years and describing the location of the composting area and the communities served by the North Hills COG.

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

[11401-20](#)

An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing Tristar Productions Inc. to use certain County-owned real and personal property in connection with filming a motion picture.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

At the request of the Chair, the clerk read the title of the bill. Mr. McKain discussed the factors that render working with production companies desirable for the region in his opinion, and Mr. Evanto summarized its provisions, describing the production generally and noting that the film is actually set in Pittsburgh. Mr. Evanto indicated that the production would film for one day in Boyce Park and will involve some intermittent traffic control by the County Police, with the filming fee, police costs, and additional fees paid by the production company. Mr. Evanto summarized the overall economic impact of the production on the region.

Mr. Duerr noted that he has many acquaintances who work in the film industry and that the increasing prevalence of filming in the area has greatly aided those individuals in advancing their educations and careers, and Mr. Baker expressed agreement, as did Ms.

Hallam.

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

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50.