



Allegheny County Council

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Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: 9347-16 **Version:** 1 **Name:**

Type: Motion **Status:** Held

File created: 12/30/2015 **In control:** Chief Clerk

On agenda: 1/4/2016 **Final action:** 1/4/2016

Title: Motion of the Council of Allegheny County amending Article I, section E of the Rules of Council for Allegheny County Council, to provide for a Committee on Committees for the purpose of establishing committee assignments and chairs of committees based on considerations of political party affiliation, racial, geographic, age and gender diversity of the members as well as considerations of personal experience, personal interest in the subject matter, and past committee meeting attendance for returning members.

Sponsors: Sue Means

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Code sections:

Attachments:

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
1/4/2016	1	County Council		

Motion of the Council of Allegheny County amending Article I, section E of the Rules of Council for Allegheny County Council, to provide for a Committee on Committees for the purpose of establishing committee assignments and chairs of committees based on considerations of political party affiliation, racial, geographic, age and gender diversity of the members as well as considerations of personal experience, personal interest in the subject matter, and past committee meeting attendance for returning members.

Whereas, Article I, section E of the Rules of Council currently places the selection of committee chairs and assignments solely in the hands of the President of Council; and

Whereas, the Rules of Council are presently silent as to important considerations of diversity, attendance, and experience for the selection process for the committees; and

Whereas, the committees of Council are vital elements to the democratic process in their duty to thoroughly vet legislative items prior to a vote by the full body and as such should be comprised of a diverse selection of members who are dedicated, interested and who represent the diversity of the County in the composition of the committee; and

Whereas, the model of a Committee on Committees is utilized by many governmental bodies and is proven to be a recognized and democratic methodology in committee selection; and

Whereas, it is the opinion of Council that a Committee on Committees organized to select committee membership and leadership with the mandate to consider political party affiliation, racial, geographic, age and gender diversity of the members as well as considerations of personal experience, personal interest in the subject matter and past committee meeting attendance for returning members will ensure a more democratic and transparent process in the formation of Committees of Council;

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS MOVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY,

That this Council hereby amends the Rules of Council as follows:

Article I. Organization of Council

* * *

E. Committees of Council

Committees are established to consider, investigate, or take action in regard to matters or subjects brought before Council and shall be organized and led by a Chair who shall be named by ~~the President~~ Committee on Committees. The Committee Chair may convene a public forum to elicit public comment or input on issues under consideration by the committee. Committees shall present their findings to Council in either a formal or informal manner. The President is an ex officio member of each committee. Each committee established under the successive ~~President~~ Committee on Committees, ~~they~~ shall cease to exist upon the expiration of the former term. Nothing shall prevent the ~~President~~ Committee on Committees from dissolving a committee prior to the end of ~~his or her~~ the term. No committee shall meet or be staffed unless called by the Chair of the committee according to these Rules.

- 1. Standing Committees-** ~~The President, upon election,~~ County Council shall organize a committee of the whole upon the commencement of each new term to establish the standing committees of Council and appoint the members and the chair of each committee. This committee shall be known as the Committee on Committees. The political party affiliation, racial, geographic, age and gender diversity of the members shall be considered by the Committee on Committees in the appointment process for the chair and committee assignments. Additionally, considerations of personal experience or personal interest in the subject matter of the committee shall be considered as well as past committee meeting attendance for returning members.
- 2.** Standing committees shall meet Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays beginning no earlier than 4:00 p.m. When unable to attend a scheduled committee meeting, the chair of each committee may appoint a member of the committee to act as presiding officer. The number and scope of each committee shall be at the discretion of the ~~President~~ Committee on Committees, except that the following shall always be established as standing committees:
 - i. Executive Committee -** The Executive Committee shall be a committee of the whole and shall make recommendations designed to improve and expedite the business and procedures of Council and its committees and to propose any amendments to the Rules deemed necessary. The Executive Committee shall also be charged with making recommendations and approving actions regarding personnel matters.
 - ii. Budget & Finance Committee -** The Budget & Finance Committee shall have the responsibility of reviewing and making recommendations regarding taxation, appropriations, and the pursuit of other revenues used for County operations, specifically those pertaining to the County's Capital Budget, Operating Budget, and Grants and

Special Accounts Budget.