

ALLEGHENY COUNTY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

- - -

BEFORE:

John P. DeFazio	-	President
Nicholas Futules	-	Vice President, District 7
Samuel DeMarco III	-	Council-At-Large
Tom Baker	-	District 1
Cindy Kirk	-	District 2
Anita Prizio	-	District 3
Patrick Catena	-	District 4
Sue Means	-	District 5
John F. Palmiere	-	District 6
Dr. Charles J. Martoni	-	District 8
Robert J. Macey	-	District 9
DeWitt Walton	-	District 10
Paul Klein	-	District 11
Robert Palmosina	-	District 12
Denise Ranalli-Russell	-	District 13

Allegheny County Courthouse
Fourth Floor, Gold Room
436 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219

Tuesday, March 6, 2018 - 5:00 p.m.

SARGENT'S COURT REPORTING SERVICE, INC.
429 Forbes Avenue, Suite 1300
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
(412) 232-3882 FAX (412) 471-8733

IN ATTENDANCE:

Jared Barker - Director of Legislative Services
Jack Cambest - Allegheny County Council Solicitor
Ken Varhola - Chief of Staff
Sarah Roka - Budget Manager

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Meeting will come to order.
All rise for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and
remain standing for the silent prayer or reflection.

After me ---.

(Pledge of Allegiance.)

(Silent prayer or reflection.)

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Thank you. Roll call?

MR. BARKER: Mr. Baker?

MR. BAKER: Here.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Catena?

MR. CATENA: Here.

MR. BARKER: Mr. DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: Here.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Futules?

MR. FUTULES: Here.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Kirk?

MS. KIRK: Here.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Klein?

MR. KLEIN: Here.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Macey?

MR. MACEY: Present.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Martoni?

(No response.)

MR. BARKER: Ms. Means?

MS. MEANS: Here.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Palmiere?

MR. PALMIERE: Here.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Pالموسينا?

MR. PALMOSINA: Here.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Prizio?

MS. PRIZIO: Here.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Ranalli-Russell?

(No response.)

MR. BARKER: Mr. Walton?

MR. WALTON: Present.

MR. BARKER: President DeFazio?

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Here.

MR. BARKER: As of now, we have 13 members
present.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: 10545-18.

MR. BARKER: Proclamation recognizing the
dedication of Pittsburgh's 2018 St. Patrick's Day Parade
to Daniel, Dan M. Rooney. Sponsored by Council Members
Catena and all members of council.

MR. CATENA: Good evening, everyone. My name is County Council Member Patrick Catena, and I'm honored to be here this evening to celebrate, obviously, Saint Patrick's Day.

On Saturday, March 17th, 2018, hundreds of thousands of people are anticipated to gather in downtown Pittsburgh to honor Ireland's patron saint and celebrate Pittsburgh's strong Irish heritage.

This year, the Pittsburgh Saint Patrick's Day parade will not only be flooded with green and gold, but will also be flooded with black and gold. For this entire 2018 Saint Patrick's Day Parade is dedicated to the late US Ambassador to Ireland and Pittsburgh Steelers Chairman, Daniel Rooney.

It is an extreme rarity that an entire parade be dedicated to one person, but after his death in April 2017, the Pittsburgh Saint Patrick's Day Parade Committee received immediate and unanimous support from everyone to have the parade dedicated to Mr. Rooney. With this year's parade, members of the Rooney family and representatives from the Pittsburgh Steelers organization will participate in the parade as honored guests.

Mr. Rooney's legacy will be celebrated and honored in several ways, from recognition on an official t-shirts to acknowledgement at the parade and several related pre-parade activities and events.

The Irish American Pittsburgh native was a simple and straightforward man. He was dedicated to family, faith, Steelers football, and of course, his beloved Ireland, a place he frequently visited even well before becoming ambassador in 2009. Mr. Rooney is well known in Ireland as one of the founders of the American Ireland fund which is dedicated to building bridges of peace, culture and charity in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

As we gather here today in this room to celebrate, one of the oldest and largest Saint Patrick's Day Parade in the nations, less --- lest us not forget the great Dan Rooney, for he was an Irish American Pittsburgh native icon who was respected and beloved by not only this Pittsburgh region, but entirely across the entire Steeler nation. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

MR. CATENA: Again, I'm honored to be here tonight to celebrate the Irish Society for Education and

Charity, which is named this year's parade grand marshal to be Magret --- Margaret ---?

MS. CLOONAN: Maggie.

MR. CATENA: Maggie ---

MS. CLOONAN: Uh-huh (yes).

MR. CATENA: --- Cloonan.

MS. CLOONAN: Yes.

MR. CATENA: Very good.

Ms. Cloonan was born in --- how do you?

MS. CLOONAN: Listowel, County Kerry, Ireland.

MR. CATENA: It sounds much better coming from you.

And has been an extensive and impressive history of involvement in the Pittsburgh Irish community and beyond. As an original fundraising Chair for the Irish Society for Education and Charity, Ms. Cloonan has been involved in several Saint Patrick's Day Parade activities and committees since the early 1990s. Ms. Cloonan has been a member of Ms. Smiling Irish Eyes Committee, a member of the national caucus and a supporter of the Holy Cross School in Belfast, Ireland.

In the 1990s, she founded Saint Brigid's Court Foundation where the Pittsburgh Saint Patrick's Day Parade honors a woman who has suffered extreme illness or hardship and exemplifies courage in the face of adversity.

Ms. Cloonan served as the President of the Ladies Ancient Order --- and this is where Mr. Kress always had difficulty --- the Ancient Order of ---

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Hibernians.

MR. CATENA: --- Hibernians ---

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Hibernians.

MR. CATENA: --- division. And I --- I --- I have Mr. Finnerty in the background there. I hear Mr. Finnerty's laugh --- was awarded life membership in the LAOH in 2016 and presented with the Anna C. Malia ---

MS. CLOONAN: Malia (corrects pronunciation).

MR. CATENA: --- Malia (changes pronunciation) Ruddy Award in the 2017 LAOH State Convention, the highest award given to a state member.

Ms. Cloonan's passion and dedication to the Pittsburgh's Irish community, and its Saint Patrick's Day Parade is one to be admired and praised, and so today we gather to congratulate Ms. Maggie Cloonan being named 2018 Saint Patrick's Day Grand Marshal.

(Applause.)

MS. CLOONAN: Thank you. I've just got two lines.

Council members, thank you for acknowledging me as representative of the Irish community, and of course, the people of Ireland. I am truly honored to be Grand Marshal of the Pittsburgh Saint Patrick's Day Parade.

Go raibh maith agaibh (speaks Gaelic Irish).

(Applause.)

MR. CATENA: Present this one to you ---

MS. CLOONAN: Thank you.

MR. CATENA: --- and then we'll do the rest ---.

You can stay right there and we'll do a picture.

Again, the Pittsburgh Saint Patrick's Day Parade Committee announced Madeline Evans as Miss Smiling Irish Eyes Queen. The title of Miss Smiling Irish Eyes Queen is among the most honored participants in the Pittsburgh Saint Patrick's Day Parade.

Ms. Evans is a 2017 graduate of North Hills High School and is currently enrolled at Villanova University --- wow --- where she is majoring in chemical engineering and received Dean's List honors during her first semester in college. At Villanova University and earlier in high school career, she has volunteered for numerous campus projects and activities, serving the needs of a broad range of nonprofits and community constituents in need. She is also a member of the Villanova Irish dance team.

Over the years, Ms. Evans became an active student and representative at the Bell School of Irish Dance. Ms. Evans exhibits distinguished Irish qualities and displays her pride --- her Irish heritage by participating in Pittsburgh's vibrant community.

So today, this evening, we come together to congratulate Ms. Madeline Evans on being named 2018 Ms. Smiling Irish Eyes Queen. Congratulations.

(Applause.)

Say something (indicating)?

MS. EVANS: Hello.

Thank you again for having me and for also recognizing the Smiling Irish Eyes for 2018 --- myself. And I also would like to thank the --- the committee for Miss Smiling Irish Eyes of Pittsburgh.

The Saint Patrick's Day Parade and all things Irish were a large part of my growing up as my childhood. I don't even know the first time that I went to the Saint Patrick's Day Parade because I know that I would go from a

young age, and I would participate with Bell School of Irish Dance until high school whenever I had to stop doing that as a result of an injury, so that was not my favorite. But now I'm trying to get back into it with Villanova Irish Dance Team.

So I would like to just thank you for recognizing me and the Irish community --- such a strong heritage in Pittsburgh. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

MR. CATENA: I have a number of other proclamations to present --- and certificates of recognition.

Erin Sheedy, please come forward.

She is part of the 2018 Miss Smiling Irish Eyes Court Maiden. Congratulations.

MS. SHEEDY: Thank you.

Thank you so much. I'm really appreciative of this honor. I love this city and I love being a part of the Irish community here.

I'd love to thank the Miss Irish Smiling Eyes community and all the Allegheny County Council Members for having me here tonight.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. CATENA: Also a part of the Miss Smiling Irish Eyes court maiden, Róisín Sabol --- Sabol (changes pronunciation) --- I'm sorry ---.

MS. EVANS: Róisín (corrects pronunciation).

MS. CLOONAN: Róisín (corrects pronunciation) Sabol.

MR. CATENA: Róisín Sabol (changes pronunciation).

MS. CLOONAN: Sabol (corrects pronunciation).

MR. CATENA: Sabol (changes pronunciation).

Is she --- she here this evening?

MS. CLOONAN: She's not here.

MR. CATENA: Okay.

So I will give this to you.

And then we have the certificate of recognition awarded to the 2018 Pittsburgh Saint Patrick's Day Parade Committee.

This is for the Parade Committee.

MR. CONBOY: Okay.

I'll accept that. I'm on the Parade Committee.

Thanks, on behalf of the Parade Committee.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Thank you.

MR. CATENA: And we also have a certificate of recognition awarded to the Irish Society for Education and Charity Incorporated. Okay.

MS. CLOONAN: Thank you.

MR. CATENA: Congratulations.

And we have the certificate of recognition awarded ---

MR. CONBOY: This one is me.

MR. CATENA: --- this one is you. 2018 Allegheny County AOH Hibernian of the Year. Congratulations.

MR. CONBOY: Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. CATENA: Now you get to ---.

MR. CONBOY: Well, this will be my 55th straight year in the parade. I've never missed it since I could walk, and it is so exciting to be here and be recognized by County Council and all of Allegheny County.

This year will be the best parade ever, not just because of who's on the court and who's the grand marshal, but we've worked very, very hard to make this parade the best ever. So please don't miss it. There's a lot of surprises in this year's parade that we've never had before, so all please come.

And our AOH has done a lot of work at the old Saint Patrick's church in the Strip District. If you haven't had a chance, get down and see it. We're also bringing in a brand new Saint Patrick's statue. It's a marble statue. It's cost us about \$10,000. It weighs over 3,000 pounds and it was made over in Rome and it's on its way over, so it should be here in May. So please get down there and see it.

But we've redone all the doors and the sidewalks and everything down at the old Saint Patrick's. It was the first Catholic church in Western Pennsylvania.

So on behalf of this award, thank you so much.

(Applause.)

MR. CATENA: Thank you. Congratulations for all of you. We're going to step up front (indicating) for a picture.

(Pictures taken.)

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Okay. 10546-18.

MR. BARKER: Actually, Mr. Catena just presented 10546. I believe 10547 would be next up.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Okay.

MR. BARKER: Before proceeding, please let the record reflect that Mr. Martoni and Ms. Ranalli-Russell are present.

10547-18. Proclamation honoring Telecommunicator of Allegheny County's Department of Emergency Services, Holly Usher, for her professionalism and dedication displayed during an incident on February 15th, 2018. Sponsored by Council Members Palmosina, Walton, and all other members of council.

MR. PALMOSINA: Good evening. Thank you very much. I want to first thank Maggie, Madeline and Megan and the Irish contingency. Believe it or not, I am Irish. My mom was a Finnerty, so I was raised all Irish.

So that being said, congratulations.

Can I have Donnie up here and Matt and Holly please, and anybody else with them like to join us?

MR. WALTON: Congratulations.

MR. PALMOSINA: Congratulations.

As a devoted telecommunicator for Allegheny County Department of Emergency Services, Holly Usher and all the telecommunicators at the Department of Emergency Services sacrifice their precious time from their loved ones, working long and hard to provide emergency services to people they have never met before.

On February 15th of 2018, Holly Usher received an urgent call from a man in Bethel Park whose truck was stuck on a railroad track while the train was quickly approaching. Due to Ms. Usher's quick action, she was able to direct the man to get out of his truck which was struck merely moments later.

Her competence and professionalism displayed during this incident greatly contributed to saving that man's life. On that day, telecommunicator of Allegheny County Department of Emergency Services, Holly Usher, acted with utter professionalism and dedication. And so today, Council Member DeWitt Walton and myself, along with the rest of the Allegheny County members, honor her.

Congratulations.

MS. USHER: Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. PALMOSINA: Holly, I want to personally congratulate you. I worked 32 years in the City of Pittsburgh in Public Works. I'm now the Director of Collier Township Public Works, so I deal with what you do

every day. And it is --- EMS, the fire, the police, as important as they are, you're right there with them because without you reacting as fast as you --- you did, this man may not be alive. So with that being said, congratulations.

MS. USHER: Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. PALMOSINA: You can say a few words.

MS. USHER: Okay. Hi, everybody. Thank you so much for having me here.

I'm not a big talking kind of person. I'm super nervous. But when the chief called me and told me about this, I said that I wanted to talk about what we do because it's not something that gets said a lot, so ---.

So I want to take this opportunity to make everybody aware that there are people out there who are taking care of all of us 24 hours a day. I mean, you go shopping, a family member collapses, there are systems in place to save your family member, and these are my coworkers, the first responders and the dispatchers, first responders just as much as dispatch.

Recently as a country, we watched the Olympics and the Oscars. And art is so important, sports are important. There's no awards show for emergency responders, even though this is quite literally life or death. Dispatchers and responders, we're not at an awards show dressed up for our 16 hours of tedium or the two hour sprints through structure fires, cardiac arrests, anything else that comes up. And yet, you know, we ensure the safety of every one of us.

It's a thankless job. It takes a toll. Mental health, family life suffer. We've lost two dispatchers to mental health related deaths since I started.

And during this train call, I didn't have a chance to process it. There were a dozen pending calls after the storms that --- I don't know if you remember, that was the day that we had tornadoes in Fayette County and all kinds of crazy stuff. So we had a dozen calls in pending. I had to pick up the next one.

In that same shift, I comforted a woman while she was victim to the worst verbal abuse I have ever heard, trying to put a strong face on with her eight year old who was sitting next to her, and she was calm. I received the screams and even haphazard blame of a family that found their son dead by accidental gunshot. I talked

a mother through the cardiac arrest of her terminally ill teenage daughter. She was remarkable. I told her so at the end of the call. I can't imagine being that strong.

And in between these, I had a call from someone who wanted to file a harassment report against her bank for calling her about the money that she owed them, and a woman who called to ask what day it was.

In the middle of this, this man called in and said he was stuck on the railroad tracks. We are the difference between life and death. Never has it been so vividly illustrated to me as now with this man who could have died if I had not said that one sentence, I need you to get out of the car. I didn't hear the train sounding until I'd said it once or twice. For a moment, I thought I heard the sound of his death upon the impact of the train into his vehicle. It wouldn't be the first time I or most any dispatcher would hear someone's last words.

But every once in a while, we get to have a happy ending in all this death and destruction and ugliness that we witness, this man got to go home to his family as though it were any other day.

So thank you to him and to you for trusting me with your life. It's an honor.

(Applause.)

CHIEF FIRE MARSHAL BROWN: Real quickly --- Holly could not say that any better, and I could not be more proud of the professionalism and the compassion that our employees have and show every day in the challenging environment that they work in. And ironically, again, as I called Holly to make sure she was okay with coming tonight, that was her first worry, was to make sure that this was about everybody she works with and not about her. So again, it just shows the pride, the professionalism and the passion that they have for it and I'm very appreciative.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

(Pictures taken.)

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: 10548-18.

MR. BARKER: Proclamation declaring Thursday, March 8th, 2018, as International Women's Day in Allegheny County. Sponsored by Council Members Prizio, Kirk, Means and Ranalli-Russell.

MS. PRIZIO: Over 43 years ago, the United Nations began celebrating International Women's Day. And

in 1975, the United Nations General Assembly invited member states to proclaim March 8th as the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and World Peace.

As this day is observed around the world, we are given the opportunity to reflect upon the progress made to advance women's equality, celebrate the gains made by women in our society and recommit ourselves to achieving a world in which women enjoy the rights and freedoms given to her at birth.

International Women's Day has a theme each year, and the 2018 theme is time is now, rural and urban activists transforming women's lives. With this year, all individuals are given an opportunity to transform their ambitions into actions to empower women in all settings, rural and urban, and celebrate the activists who are working relentlessly to claim women's rights and realize their full potential.

Over 50 years ago, a group of local Pittsburgh women founded a wives coffee program with the vision and drive to support other women who were new to Pittsburgh and made them feel at home away from home. On September 9th, 1993, the group officially became known as the International Women's Association of Pittsburgh. With approximately 150 members from 35 different counties, the organization is rooted in the mission of offering friendship, support, assistance to international women who find Pittsburgh as their new home.

On this day, Council Members Kirk, Means, Ranalli-Russell and myself come together to declare Thursday, March 8th, 2018 as International Women's Day in Allegheny County and commend the efforts of the International Women's Association of Pittsburgh for all --- for their essential role in drawing attention to the rights of women all over the Pittsburgh region.

And I believe Ms. Trimmino will speak on this, and here is ---.

MS. TRIMMINO: Good evening. My name is Veronica Trimmino. I came four and a half years ago to Pittsburgh from Colombia. And it was hard leaving my family, my friends, my job, the food. That's important.

And I wanted to go back at first, but everything change a Thursday morning of September of 2013 when I found IWAP. And it change not only because I found the place where I felt that I belonged, where I felt welcome, supported, where I felt loved, but also because I found a

place to call home, and I found a group of intelligent, strong, brave women that I can call my family.

So that's what's amazing about IWAP. We work to develop an understanding among women of different cultures, different backgrounds, different languages that have come to Pittsburgh and make it their new home. We have more than 145 members from 40 countries from as far as Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Sweden, Ireland, Belgium, Spain, to as close as Canada, Mexico, Latin America, Colombia, Ecuador.

We provide many different activities. We meet every Thursday mornings. First is a social gathering, followed by an activity, a nationality day, a talk. We also have conversational English classes, cooking classes, field trips. We have a very successful book club. We provide volunteer opportunities, and we're also a support group and a community.

We've been doing this for 25 years. This coming October is going to be our 25th anniversary, and 20 years before that, with the Women's Coffee Club. And we hope to keep working for another 50 years in bringing international women and American women together to support each other, to empower each other and to learn from our differences, because that's what makes each one of us unique.

Thank you very much. We're very honored.
(Applause.)

MS. TRIMMINO: We have one of our founding members, if you want to say something, Alicia? Well, she's one of our founding members. She's been working with us for 50 years and ---.

(Applause.)

MS. DEDIOT: It's like family. This group is like a family to me. It has made Pittsburgh visit very good.

Thank you. It's 50 years that we have been together. Thank you.

(Pictures taken.)

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: 10549-18, and the rest will be read into the record.

MR. BARKER: 10549-18. Certificate of Achievement awarded to Geneo John Simeone of Boy Scout Troop Four in recognition of having met all necessary requirements to advance to the rank of Eagle Scout. Sponsored by Council Member Means.

10550-18. Certificate of Achievement awarded to Jordyn Hronec for being named a finalist in the 2018 National Merit Scholarship Program. Sponsored by Council Member Baker.

10551-18. Proclamations recognizing National Commander Denise Rohan and Department Commander Paul M. Kennedy for being honored by the Springdale American Legion, Post 764. Sponsored by Council Member Futules.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Public comment on agenda items, we ---.

MR. BARKER: We have none.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: We have none. Approval of minutes, 10534-18.

MR. PALMIERE: So moved.

MR. MACEY: Second.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: That's 10534-18.

MR. BARKER: Motion to approve the minutes of the February 6th, 2018 regular meeting of Council.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Okay.

Who --- who made the motion?

MR. PALMIERE: I did.

MR. MACEY: Second.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Okay. Under remarks?

Seeing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Opposed? The ayes have it. 10539-18.

MR. BARKER: Approving the reappointment of Dennis Simon to serve as a member of the Authority for Improvements in Municipalities for a term to expire on December 31st, 2022. Sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: That'll be referred to the Committee on Appointment Review. 10540-18.

MR. BARKER: Approving the reappointment of Ann Ostergaard to serve as a member of the Authority for Improvements in Municipalities for a term to expire on December 31st, 2021. Sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: That'll be referred to the Committee on Appointment Review. 10541-18.

MR. BARKER: I believe that's being withdrawn at the request of the sponsor. Correct? Okay.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: All right. Let's go over to the next page, and we have 10542-18.

MR. BARKER: Approving the appointment of Richard K. Schwartz to serve as a member of the Air Pollution Control Advisory Committee for a term to expire on December 31st, 2020. Sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: That'll be referred to the Committee on Appointment Review. 10543-18.

MR. BARKER: Approving the appointment of Andréa Stanford to serve as a member of the MBE Advisory Board for a term to expire on December 31st, 2020. Sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: That'll be referred to Committee on Appointment Review. 10544-18.

MR. BARKER: Approving the reappointment of Abass Kamara to serve as a member of the Jail Oversight Board for a term to expire on December 31st, 2020. Sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: That'll be referred to the Committee on Appointment Review. 10507-18.

MR. BARKER: Approving the appointment of William T. Ondek to serve as a member of the Board of Property Assessment Appeals and Review for a term to expire on December 31st, 2019. Sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Representative DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: President DeFazio, the Committee on Appointment Review met on February 28th and recommended the appointment of William T. Ondek to serve as a member of the Board of Property Assessment Appeals and Review.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Somebody make a motion?

MR. CATENA: Second.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Second? All those --- any remarks? Seeing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Opposed? The ayes have it. 10509-18.

MR. BARKER: Approving the appointment of Julie Derence to serve as a member of the Community College of Allegheny County Board of Trustees for a term to expire on December 31st, 2018. Sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Representative DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: President DeFazio, the Committee on Appointment Review met on February 28th and recommended the appointment of Julie Derence to serve as a member of

the Community College of Allegheny County Board of Trustees. I recommend --- or would like to make a motion.

MR. MACEY: Second.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: All those --- under remarks? Seeing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Opposed? The ayes have it.
10511-18.

MR. BARKER: Approving the reappointment of Charles M. Powell to serve as a member of the Community College of Allegheny County Board of Trustees for a term to expire on December 31st, 2023. Sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Representative DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: President DeFazio, the Committee on Appointment Review met on February 28th and recommended the reappointment of Charles M. Powell to serve as a member of the Community College of Allegheny County Board of Trustees. I'd like to make a motion that we approve.

MR. MACEY: Second.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Under remarks? Seeing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Opposed? The ayes have it.
10512-18.

MR. BARKER: Approving the appointment of Dr. William H. Curtis to serve as a member of the Allegheny County Airport Authority Board for a term to expire on December 31st, 2022. Sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Representative DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: President DeFazio, the Committee on Appointment Review met on February 28th and recommended the appointment of Dr. William H. Curtis to serve as a member of the Allegheny County Airport Authority Board. I'd like to make a motion that we approve.

MR. MACEY: Second.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Under remarks? Seeing none, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Opposed? The ayes have it.
Okay. 10498-18.

MR. BARKER: A Resolution of the County Council of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, authorizing participation in the 2017-2018 Nursing Home Intergovernmental Transfer Program proposed by the

Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, authorizing the transfer of funds as required by the said program and further granting authorization for any and all lawful actions necessary to effectuate Allegheny County's participation in said program. Sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Representative Klein ---?

MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. President. At the meeting of the Committee on Budget and Finance on February 28th, the committee affirmatively recommended authorization of participation in the 2017-2018 Nursing Home Intergovernmental Transfer Program. At this time, I'd like to offer a motion for approval by the council.

MR. MACEY: Second.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Under remarks? Seeing none, we'll have a roll call vote.

MR. BARKER:	Mr. Baker?
MR. BAKER:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Catena?
MR. CATENA:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. DeMarco?
MR. DEMARCO:	Aye.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Futules?
MR. FUTULES:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Kirk?
MS. KIRK:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Klein?
MR. KLEIN:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Macey?
MR. MACEY:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Martoni?
DR. MARTONI:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Means?
MS. MEANS:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Palmiere?
MR. PALMIERE:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Palmosina?
MR. PALMOSINA:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Prizio?
MS. PRIZIO:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Ranalli-Russell?
MS. RANALLI-RUSSELL:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Walton?
MR. WALTON:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	President DeFazio?

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ayes 15, nos zero. The bill passes.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Under liaison reports, anybody have ---? Yeah, Representative Catena?

MR. CATENA: Thank you, Mr. President. I have two items this evening. I'm sad to report that Jan Lauer, who was the head of the Allegheny County Conservation District, passed away over the weekend. So my thoughts and prayers are with the family through this difficult time.

Secondly, Mr. President, my hometown of Carnegie this past weekend had a devastating fire. There was a fatality. It's unfortunate that --- any time that I have to report on a loss of life. It was the PaPa J's Restaurant and the apartment's 12 units above the --- above the restaurant.

But if there's a bright spot in all of this, it's that it could've been much, much, much worse. When you have 12 units and as fast as the building went up, and with all the responding companies that were there in a matter of minutes, I mean, they did a phenomenal job. I mean Scott Township, Presto, Collier, I can't even begin --- Crafton, I can't even begin to name them all, there were so many companies on the scene that were there in a matter of minutes.

And because of the heroics of the fire department, the police department and the EMS, they were able to save the families in all of the additional units. So my thoughts and prayers go out to the family of Mike Wells, who was the individual that was actually lost in the fire.

So thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Okay. Representative Means?

MS. MEANS: Yes. I wanted to give the Council's condolences to William Knaus' family. Mr. Knaus recently passed away, and he was instrumental in building the war memorial in the Bethel Park Municipal Building. He had served under General George Patton in World War II and also in the Korean War, and he will be greatly missed. He was a very valuable member of the Bethel Park community, and so we extend our deepest condolences to the family.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Any other --- Representative Baker, and then ---.

MR. BARKER: Thanks, Mr. President. We had a really nice bipartisan event on Saturday, the meet your elected officials event. It was in Coraopolis at Anchor and Anvil, which is a great coffee shop. And our mutual friend, Representative Antia Kulik, planned it. Mayor Shawn Reed from Coraopolis was there as well. Nice chance to get to know a lot of --- just a lot more people in Coraopolis. It was a really --- really good event, just a chance for everyone to get to know us and --- and get --- honestly, get us to donate to a lot of the youth baseball and youth football. So they kind of reverse sold us. But it was --- it was very good, very nice event.

I just want to remind my council colleagues that Visit Pittsburgh's board meeting is on --- our annual meeting is on Thursday. I know some of you have been there in the past. I'm in my third year on the board of Visit Pittsburgh and definitely enjoy being involved with that event.

And this one is for you, Sam DeMarco, but for everyone, the Clydesdales are coming to North Fayette next Friday night. So everyone is invited to that who likes the Clydesdales and want to see them. They are coming up to --- to North Fayette from 4:00 to 7:00. Everyone is invited Friday, March 16th, if anybody wants to meet the Clydesdales.

MR. CATENA: Where?

MR. BAKER: In North Fayette Community Center, Donaldson Park, yeah. It should be good, yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER: Should we bring beer?

MR. BAKER: It's a family event. I don't ---.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Representative DeMarco?

MR. BAKER: Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. DEMARCO: President DeFazio, the Carnegie Libraries of Pittsburgh is going to hold their annual Board of Trustees annual public meeting this coming Monday. It'll be located at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh in East Liberty at 130 South Whitfield Street. It'll take place from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Doors open at 6:00. The public is welcome.

I'd also like to mention a couple events that are taking place at Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall and Museum. In two days on Thursday night, there's an event called the Spotlight on the Female Soldier --- Elaine H. Berkowitz, DMD. That takes place on March 8th from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

And then next week on Thursday, March 15th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., they're having a veteran career fair at Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall and Museum. If anyone is interested in either of these events, please go to their website. It's SoldiersAndSailorsHall.org --- and just select events. You can find out more information about them.

Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Seeing no more, we will move on to 10535-18.

MR. BARKER: An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing the County's acceptance of one drone for use by the Allegheny County Fire Marshal's Office in fire and explosion investigations and by the Allegheny County Emergency Management Agency in emergency and disaster response, when necessary. Sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: That'll be referred to the Committee on Public Safety. 10535-18.

MR. BARKER: An Ordinance authorizing the County of Allegheny ---

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Oh, 36 --- I'm sorry.

MR. BARKER: --- to acquire by condemnation certain right-of-way and temporary construction easement areas from a parcel required to reconstruct Jacks Run Bridge Number Four carrying Jacks Run Road over Jacks Run in Ross Township, and to take such further action as may be necessary under applicable law, including the Eminent Domain Code. Sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: That'll be referred to the Committee on Public Works. 10537-18.

MR. BARKER: A Resolution approving a Project for the benefit of Carlow University to be financed by the Authority for Improvements in Municipalities by the issuance of the Authority's tax-exempt or taxable bonds and/or notes, to be issued in one or more series, in the aggregate principal amount not in excess of \$36,000,000, but expected to be approximately \$31,000,000, provided that the taxing power of the County of Allegheny, Pennsylvania, shall not be obligated in any way with respect to the Bonds and determining that the purpose of the financing will be to benefit the health and welfare of the citizens of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. Sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: That'll be referred to the Committee on Economic Development and Housing. 10538-18.

MR. BARKER: A Resolution of the County of Allegheny amending the Grants and Special Accounts Budget for 2018, Submission #01-18. Sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: That'll be referred to the Committee on Budget and Finance. New business motions, we have none. Notification of contracts, none.

MR. BARKER: None.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Public comment on general items.

MR. BARKER: We have many. First up is Eric Stoltenberg, who does --- who does not appear to be here.

Next up, Nickole Nesby.

MS. NESBY: Good evening. My name is Nickole Nesby and I am the newly elected mayor in the City of Duquesne, Pennsylvania.

The purpose of me coming here today is to oppose the current plan of the bus rapid transit system. Currently, the City of Duquesne, my residents, or approximately 80 percent of my residency is 110 percent below the federal poverty line which means that we depend heavily on public transportation. Under the current plan, it will reduce my transportation through my area an additional 45 percent. That will negatively impact my community. In fact, it will cripple it.

We currently have three neighboring communities using our statistics for job and education programs that my constituencies cannot reach on public transportation. Lack of medical facilities in the area resembles that the same. In fact, we don't have a medical facility within city limits to address the medical needs of our children, which over 500 of them showed up at our last Halloween parade, but yet we don't have a pediatrician site there.

We're looking for public transportation. It takes two buses for us to get to a Latterman Clinic over in McKeesport.

Oftentimes when you think that you're making the right decision for a community, you need to consult with the community. You need to come visit. You need to talk to the people before you take tax paying dollars and do what you want to do with them.

I spoke last year while I was running before the Board of Directors of Port Authority of Allegheny County.

At that particular point in time, Allegheny County Port Authority had had 19 meetings and not one of them had been in the Mon Valley which were negatively impacted by their decisions.

Again, my community, 80 percent is 110 percent below the federal poverty line. That means no matter how many cuts that happen in there, we're still federally funded. We're entitled, and I'd like to see, when you make these decisions, that you consider that and consider our area. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. BARKER: Next up is Linda Warman.

MS. WARMAN: Okay. My name is Linda. I live in the Parkview Hilltop Apartment Complex off of Commonwealth Avenue in Duquesne.

I am against the BRT. And what --- what it is right now, okay, it's a proposed system and it's supposed to help people cut down on their transportation time. Unfortunately, that does not do it for the Mon Valley.

We are just not --- we --- I've heard there's no funding for this, and the proposed funding trying to get it in an inner --- in a funding idea from higher up is not good. Good luck with trying to get that out of his pocket.

What it is, is that --- try it this way. If you do cut down --- if you do put the BRT, the 61C gets cut down. Okay? Our service right now currently for the 61C in the Mon Valley runs every 20 minutes on peak hours and every 30 minutes on non-peak hours and on weekends, every 30 minutes. If it was --- if the BRT is put into effect, our buses will be running every 45 minutes.

And currently, at that proposal, I can see more 61 --- 61Cs running few and far in between, and a lot of people from McKeesport on up the --- on up the line, will be plugged into those buses like sardines. That is unacceptable because it's a safety issue. What --- if a bus like that is packed, gets into an accident, there's going to be a whole lot of problems.

But this BRT, what it does for the Mon Valley is nothing. It cuts. It hurts. It kills. Don't let the BRT kill the Mon Valley. We don't need another coffin in the Mon --- in --- the Mon Valley is trying to get back on its feet. We need more business, not more service cuts. We need those buses. We don't want them cut.

And if you want to put --- and if you --- funding go the BRT, I'd say a better --- a better place for it. Put it on the 59 route to reestablish it back to the original route it was, going up --- going up Commonwealth, going into the thing. And I do thank you very much.

(Applause.)

MR. FUTULES: Next up, Mel Packer. Is that correct?

MR. BARKER: Mel Packer would be next, correct.

MR. FUTULES: Are we going in concession next?

MR. BARKER: Yes.

MR. FUTULES: Okay.

MR. PACKER: Hi. Mel Packer, 623 Kirtland Street, 15208. I'm here today like many others to talk to you about buses. I'm one of the hundreds of people who work with Pittsburghers for Public Transit buses. I rode one down here today, and I will ride one home as I frequently do, especially with traveling downtown. It's easy, faster than my car, cheaper. I get to meet people with whom I would not otherwise interact, reduces air pollution and I'm being driven by a person who has a good union job with family supporting wages.

But last night I got to thinking, what exactly is a bus? The dictionary defines a bus as a large motor vehicle carrying passengers by road, especially ones serving the public on a fixed route and for a fare. That works pretty well, but what is a bus to you?

Do you ever ride a bus? Are you dependent on a bus? Could you live without a bus, or is a bus just that large vehicle that gets in your way when you're in a car and in a hurry?

One of the things that I've come to realize working with PPT is that a bus, for huge numbers of your constituents, the folks who vote you into office hoping you'll look out for their best interests, is much more than that big lumbering machine taking up space. A bus, my bus, their bus, is often, if not always for some people, a lifeline that allows them to be part of the world, to work, to play, keep medical appointments, visit a sick grandparent, go to McGee to see the newborn member of the family, attend worship services and even volunteer to help others.

And increasingly, as the city of Pittsburgh continues a massive development of luxury housing and the

inevitable displacement of low income residents, we find people who used to live in the city with short bus rides now forced into many of the Mon Valley communities where rent is more affordable. They still have to get to work just like the long-term Mon Valley residents who've called Braddock, Duquesne, McKeesport home for so long.

But now their buses are threatened not by lack of vehicles, but by politicians' need to spend \$200,000,000 on a boondoggle called BRT --- bus rapid transit, allegedly in order to shave all of three to five minutes off a ride from Oakland to downtown. But the truth is it's really about developing the uptown corridor along Forbes and 5th and making Mon Valley residents pay for it. This proposal, the BRT, threatens to dramatically reduce service to the Mon Valley and even make their riders change buses in mid-Oakland. BRT may even make Mon Valley residents pay more for their ride, as transfer fees have not been ruled out.

I want you to picture something, every one of you. Imagine you're a single parent. It's January. It's cold, it's raining, it's snowing. You've got two young children in a stroller with you and you're on your way downtown. Can you see making this family who used to take the single bus from McKeesport to downtown get off in Oakland, wait for another bus and pay an extra fare to get downtown? That's not what we call equity. It's not even fair. You wouldn't want to do it.

We're simply asking that all of you as County Council step up to the plate, defend the rights of your constituents, tell Rich Fitzgerald and the Port Authority you're opposed to these proposals and want no reduction in service to the Mon Valley, period. It's that simple. Mon Valley residents should not have to pay for politicians' and developers' dreams.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. FUTULES: Next up, Nica Ross. Next up, Nica Ross. I got that right?

I'll remind everyone, please state your name and address for the record when you come to the podium.

MS. ROSS: My name is Nica Ross, and I live at ---.

MR. FUTULES: I had a 50 percent chance there.

MS. ROSS: You know, there's a lot of pronunciations.

And I live at 642 Corey Avenue in Braddock, and I'll just read.

My name is Nica Ross and I'm a resident of Braddock and a bus rider. I ride every single day to my work at Carnegie Mellon University. It allows me to live in Braddock.

I am here today because my neighborhood has been left out of the BRT plan. The proposed increase in service along the east busway will not serve my community. The Braddock, North Braddock area is in some ways landlocked like many neighborhoods in the region. We have a huge hill, a river, bridges and lack of sidewalks up those hills. So we are a community that relies on the 61A, B and 59 bus to tie us into the Pittsburgh area's economy.

More than 30 percent of the people in Braddock and North Braddock live below the poverty line as of the 2010 census. I'm sure those numbers have changed. Many of my neighbors are disabled, are elderly, and many more are working multiple jobs at all times --- all times of the day, and only earning \$7.25 an hour, the lowest minimum wage in this region of America.

The bus service is what keeps this community economically and socially connected to the Pittsburgh metropolitan area, and cutting that service by 45 percent while increasing transfer costs will greatly disadvantage an area that has chronically been left out of the plan in the most livable city.

All of these reasons are why I believe the plan to cut service is actually illegal. It's illegal according to the Federal Transit Authority's Title VI Civil Rights Act. If any federal funds are spent on this, it is illegal. Title VI is meant to ensure that the Federal Transit Administration does not fund discriminatory transportation. The FTA states their mission is to, quote, enhance the social and economic quality of life for all Americans, end quote.

Cutting service to majority African-American areas such as Braddock and Duquesne defies this federal protection, and I suspect that is one of the reasons federal money is no longer available for the BRT. The Port Authority knows its roles in --- role in Pittsburgh and states on their website, quote, Port Authority plays an increasingly significant role in the economic development efforts and community vitality within

Pittsburgh and throughout Allegheny County's communities, end quote.

Don't leave the Mon Valley out of the future of Pittsburgh. Hold the Port Authority to their mission statement, quote, to deliver outstanding transportation services that connect people to life, end quote. Bus lines are lifelines. Don't cut ours.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. BARKER: Next up is Dennis Donahoe.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Say it again.

MR. BARKER: Dennis Donahoe.

MR. DONAHOE: Good evening. Thanks for having me. My name is Dennis Donahoe. I live in North Baldwin, part of Allegheny County.

I'm changing the tone here a little bit. I feel a little somber. I came here 30 days after surgery. I have some pain issues going on. I had major surgery to my ankle. I felt this was very important to come and say what I needed to say. I think I represent the view of a lot of people and the things I'm going to say need to be said.

First thing I want to say is we all remember the federal building that was bombed with the fertilizer. You can go into a feed store and buy fertilizer and be put on the --- on to the list for the federal government. They probably would get a subpoena and --- and take everything out of your house and go through it.

But currently, if you go to a sporting store or a gun dealer, you can order three assault rifles. If you pass the NICS check, you can request that you have bump stocks on each one. You can request three 100 round magazines, and you won't --- you'll be considered a sportsman. In what crazy world are you a sportsman when you buy three assault rifles with bump stocks and you can buy as much ammunition as you want?

And I want to close this comment of this --- this section with, why are you not considered a person buying a weapon of mass destruction? You can climb up into a building and get 300 rounds off before there'd be any police response. If a person closes off where they came in, it'd be very difficult for any police officer to stop this from happening.

Okay. One fact that's being portrayed incorrectly by different groups in the country --- and I

won't mention names or parties, there's been a number of mass shootings in the United States in the last couple years. One fact that's not being portrayed or put out there is there were armed resource officers at many of these sites, and they were unable to prevent these mass shootings. So the good --- the good guy with a gun theory falls flat when the facts come in.

In fact, I think Columbine was the first one. There were some armed --- they weren't in the right location to prevent the disaster, unfortunately.

I want to state this, and this is very important. The NRA is not a branch of the US government, period, and they should not be treated as such.

Currently, there's legislation that restricts our ATF from doing proper research and transparency of information to the US public concerning guns, types of guns, murders across the country. This is completely unacceptable. No one should tolerate it in a country that's supposed to be democratic. They can't do their job. There's legislation was passed with the support of the NRA to restrict them from actually giving the information we need.

Okay. A little history lesson here for people, just so you know. In Australia --- in Australia in 1996 ---.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Try to finish it off with a sentence.

MR. DONAHOE: Pardon me?

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Try to finish it off ---.

MR. DONAHOE: Okay. Well, there was a shooting and 35 people were killed with an assault rifle, 25 were injured. Twelve (12) days after the shooting, the National Firearms Agreement passed legislation restricting the purchase of assault weapons and heavy shotguns with multiple shells. They did it 12 days after the shooting and it was very successful at reducing mass casualties from guns.

I want --- I'm done. I just want to pass this out.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Yeah. Give it to our clerk.

MR. DONAHOE: Here, this is for the people in the gallery. Take a look at that. Give the members a copy of that. And I'll read it out to the people in the audience.

This is from Bushmaster, a major arms dealer.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Yeah. You're going to have to ---.

MR. DONAHOE: This shows --- it says on it ---

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Yeah, sir?

MR. DONAHOE: --- be issued. Thank you.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Sir, thank you.

Okay. Yeah. Just go ahead.

MR. BARKER: Next up is Paul O'Hanlon followed by Cindy Paulding.

MR. O'HANLON: Good evening. My name is Paul O'Hanlon. I live at 5942 Phillips Avenue in Squirrel Hill and I'd also like to speak about the bus rapid transit proposal and the choices we have as a community.

Let me begin by saying that a bus rapid transit system between Oakland and downtown seems a bit illogical to me. To begin with, Oakland to downtown bus trip is already just ten minutes long. That stretch between Oakland and downtown already has the heaviest service, the most buses and the most bus options of any other stretch in the whole system. Only --- and one of the dirty secrets of the BRT proposal is that there will be fewer buses per hour between Oakland and downtown.

To make matters worse, thousands of riders will need to transfer in Oakland to get downtown and then transfer to get back home. These transfers are made necessary by a gimmick in the BRT plan to use electric buses in the uptown and downtown parts of the route. You may notice that we don't have any electric buses now. We don't have any experience with electric buses. There are dozens of bus routes that go through downtown besides the BRT, and none of them are projected to be electric buses. So a few of them will be electric. But for this, thousands will have to pay transfers daily?

If you look at the application for federal funds for this project, you'll see that BRT is projected to add no new riders. The only added revenue projected is from the cost of transfers from the riders who currently don't pay a transfer fee to get downtown. And many of the feeder routes to get on to the BRT are slated for substantial service reductions. Should this be the major investment in our transit system?

The Post-Gazette last week gave a curious editorial in support of the BRT. It gave the example of the new UPMC immunotherapy drug and treatment research facility planned for the North Oakland Bloomfield area.

And the editorial used this example to make its case for the BRT, saying that this area needs good service to downtown.

The problem is that health facility will be located far from the closest BRT route. The bus service that it does have is slated to be cut by nearly 50 percent.

So for me, the most troubling fact about the BRT plan is that nobody owns it. The city says it's planning an echo innovation district for the uptown, which is collaborative with the BRT plan. But the BRT is essentially a transit plan.

So I'm asking you to own this project, to really start asking the hard questions.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. BARKER: Cindy Paulding to be followed by Rashad Colvin.

MS. PAULDING: Good evening. I'm Cindy Paulding from 7136 Michigan Avenue in Swissvale, Pennsylvania.

(Brief interruption.)

MS. PAULDING: Apparently I'm not the only one who has a comment.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my opinion about the proposed changes and cutbacks to the 61A, B and C services.

I'm a regular rider of the 61A, B and C, and the frequency of that bus was one of the major determining factors in my buying a house in Swissvale. Because I'm legally blind, I used public transportation for all of my needs.

Noki, down. Sorry.

I use them for shopping for food and other items, for getting to the doctor, for social engagements, for spiritual and service opportunities, for getting to work. My office is 2.4 miles from my home. And as the service is now, I have to leave one hour ahead of a scheduled client to be sure that I can be there on time.

I wonder if those who plan our routes and the proposed changes understand what's involved for people who use the service, or if they care that the cutbacks in the service and additional transfers will make using the buses more challenging for people.

The mandatory transfers in Oakland could increase the cost for busing for everyone except senior

citizens. And those who live on fixed incomes and low incomes already have to budget very carefully just to use public transportation at all. And in many cases that's all they have to use to get to work and to meet their other needs. Those transfers will also add more time and effort to the passenger experience.

Financial stress is only one of the costs of using the buses for those who live with disabilities. It takes a lot of physical, mental, and in some cases emotional energy to go out into the community and do what we need and want to do --- wow, that went fast --- to have a healthy and balanced life.

MR. FUTULES: You have one more minute left.

MS. PAULDING: Oh. Decreasing services by 45 percent is likely to mean that I will need to build in at least an hour and a half, possibly two hours to get to my clients on time. If I need to do more than one thing while I'm out, the energy and time investment goes up and I already am very careful about what I schedule to do on days when I have to use the buses, because of what is required.

The bottom line, as I see it, is that decreasing service and requiring additional transfers to get from home to downtown will make using the buses harder and less convenient. That trip already takes me 45 minutes and that doesn't include the time it takes me to get from my house to the bus stop or to wait for the bus.

If the proposed changes will make things harder for riders, I fail to see how they can be considered to be improvements. It is my sincere hope that the plans to institute cutbacks and mandatory transfers be discarded.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. BARKER: Rashad Colvin, to be followed by Kate Grannemann Coluccio.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Say it again. I don't know if ---.

MR. BARKER: Rashad Colvin, not here? Kate Grannemann Coluccio.

MS. GRANNEMANN COLUCCIO: Good evening. My name is Kate Coluccio and I'm the director of the Carnegie Free Library of Swissvale.

The Swissvale Library is located on the 61B bus line. My intention here is to bring attention to how deep

cutbacks in local bus service will impact persons who count on the bus as their only source of transportation.

Cindy has addressed this, and I will tell you about more people impacted.

These people use the bus for getting to work and school, for shopping, for accessing medical care, for getting to the library, for socializing. You might say, what about the busway? Swissvale's busway entrance is, in fact, located several blocks from the Swissvale business district and from the residential area, and it's not so easy to walk to. It's not an equivalent service. It's not a swap.

A while back, a concerned community member came into the library asking that we collect opinion cards from our patrons whereby they can say how they use the buses and how these proposed bus cuts would affect their lives. More than 100 people filled out these cards in the --- in a matter of a few weeks. Here's what people said about potential decreased bus service in Swissvale. Let me add that while I speak for the people of Swissvale, people throughout the Mon Valley have these same stories and these same concerns. People who count on the buses as their only source of transportation will be badly impacted by these cuts in local service.

Here's what Joyce says. I work at the library. I walk with a cane. I need to take the bus. I can't walk to work. Without the bus, I can't get to work.

Robert says, I don't have a car. No bus, no work.

Lisa says, my daughter already catches the bus at 6:30 a.m. to get to Woodland Hills High School at 7:45. How would she get there without the bus and how long would it take?

Elaine says, I rely on the bus to take care of people who are dependent on my services. Without the bus, they won't have me to take care of them.

Betty, I take the bus into Squirrel Hill to exercise. I need the exercise and I need the bus.

And Edna, I take the bus to visit my friends. People need friends.

These people and many, many, many more people in Swissvale and the Mon Valley count on bus service for their quality of life. The BRT may improve bus service to a small slice of Allegheny County users, and if --- but if this improved service is necessary, then I urge you to

find a way to implement the BRT in a way that it does not cut bus service to people who most need it. Don't build BRT on the backs of the people of the Mon Valley.

(Applause.)

MR. BARKER: Kelsey Moran, followed by Debra Green.

MS. MORAN: Hi, there. My name is Kelsey Moran and I work for Metro Community Health Center at 1789 South Braddock Avenue in Swissvale.

We serve Swissvale, Wilkinsburg, Edgewood and the surrounding communities there. I am here tonight representing the roughly 4,200 community health patients in our service area, many of whom fall at or below the federal poverty level and rely heavily on public transportation to get to their appointments. Metro Community Health Center is proud to provide comprehensive primary care and mental health services to our patients regardless of their ability to pay.

In the interest of removing barriers to care for our disadvantaged patients, last summer, we applied for --- for grant funding to launch a transportation program that would allow any patient with a chronic health condition or a mental health diagnosis to receive a round trip ConnectCard to the --- to get them to their appointments at our health center.

During the research for this grant, we learned that between the years of 2007 to 2017, the bus routes in our service area had been reduced by 50 percent. That means that patients who relied heavily on public transportation to get to their appointments now only have half of the options available to them to get to the same place.

With chronic health conditions on the rise, it's imperative that patients have quick and easy access to their healthcare providers. Metro supports the idea that public transportation should benefit every member of the public and should support those who need it most. The residents in the areas of bus route 61A, B and C are relying on public officials to represent their needs and to --- and further reducing their access to public transportation would impact their ability to live fulfilled lives.

We ask that the Council consider the people who will be negatively impacted by the current changes laid out in the BRT plan, including increased financial burdens

and less accessibility to primary healthcare and mental healthcare providers. We are confident that an agreement can be reached that will benefit all communities involved, and not just some.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. BARKER: Debra Green, followed by Sandra Jenkins.

MS. GREEN: Hi, my name is Debra Green, and I am one of the residents of Duquesne Place Drive. And I am here just to speak on myself and my community, me being one of the persons with the chronic pain.

I was in a horrific car accident which entitled me to have seven vertebrae fused and a total hip replacement. And where I live, and to get to a bus stop, the closest one to my house would be the one on Hoffman Boulevard, I want to say. And it's a pretty far distance for me to walk to get from point A to point B. I can't do it anymore.

When I used to work so frequently, I used the bus all the time because that was my only source of transportation. And I'm one of the ones who also petitioned for a bus to be at the Rivers Casino. I was a supervisor in the gift shop. And we were one of the ones to petition to get the 16D to come in front of the Rivers Casino before we had the bus thing, and we got it.

So I do believe in my heart that we can keep our 61A, B and C, which I use the C all the time to get shopping --- to do my shopping, to get to doctor's appointments, and which I can't do it. But I believe in my heart, and I trust that everybody up here will make the right decision and do the right thing because my bus line is my lifeline, and also for my community. And we appreciate your time and for you listening to our cries, complaints, whatever you want to call it.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. BARKER: Sandra Jenkins, followed by Horace Turner. Then Horace Turner, followed by Pearl Hughley (sic).

MR. TURNER: Hello, Council members. My name is Horace Turner. I stay at 2206 in Swissvale.

I come to you all today not with no statistics of what buses run with this and not that. I come to you all today with a heavy heart. I remember when I was a

veteran --- I'm a veteran of this country. And I remember I swore a oath to protect these borders and to protect our Constitution and our way of life.

So I ask you who have also sworn a oath, to protect us common people. Mr. Tom Baker, Mr. Samuel Derec (sic), Ms. Cindy Kirk, I can't see his --- the president, President John, I ask you all like, just when --- like I swore my oath --- not on my watch will Americans be hurt. Not on my watch will our Constitution be denied. I also challenge you all on you all oath you all swore to us common people that you all will look out for us. So my heavy heart, I'm just sending it all to you to look into your hearts to tell the BRT not on my watch.

(Applause.)

MR. BARKER: Pearl Hughley, to be followed by Mary Beth Flewellen.

MS. HUGHEY: My name is Pearl Hughey, no L.

MR. BARKER: No L, I apologize.

MS. HUGHEY: H-U-G-H-E-Y. I live at 310 Kenmawr Avenue, Rankin, Pennsylvania and I am here to speak about my concerns regarding BRT.

The BRT plan proposes some severe service reductions and a quasi-tax for riders of 61 to 71 communities which are largely poor, elderly, and people of color, disenfranchising people who rely heavily on bus service and proposing to take service levels back in time reflecting '60s and '70s scheduling. The reduction in frequency and elimination of early late scheduling will have a negative impact on those currently working in the city in areas such as healthcare.

While these changes are proposed for 61 to 71 corridors, curiously, there is one 61 bus, the 61D, that will not be included in these changes. This bus services Squirrel Hill, Greenfield and the waterfront. I have to ask, who put this plan together? Were there any people on the committee who looked like me? Anyone familiar with the makeup of Allegheny County and these communities in particular? Were any residents or elected officials from these communities asked for their feedback or input on this plan?

As our elected representatives, we know that you are aware of the demographics and the economic conditions and --- and status of constituents in these areas. I just want to know, are you comfortable with a proposal that further marginalizes and financially burdens those who are

still trying to find their way out of the steel collapse? A proposal that is indifferent, biased, and gives the appearance of being a little slanted, service for certain communities and barely service for others.

Public officials and our government agencies can't keep paying lip service by saying we are an inclusive city and county and that Pittsburgh is the most livable city. This proposal does not feel inclusive in any way, but feels a little hostile towards people who are not 9:00 to 5:00 workers. People say a lot of things, but action and deeds are the proof of how you really feel about the people you serve.

Riders in 61 to 71 corridors need to continue to have direct access into the City of Pittsburgh, just like riders from Point Breeze, Highland Park, Squirrel Hill, Greenfield, Shadyside and Oakland. We're no different than these people. We are --- we all expect reliable transit service at the same flat rate that the Port Authority implemented earlier this year.

During Black History Month, my grandchildren and I watched a program regarding Rosa Parks. During the movie, they had a lot of questions. The one thing I found myself explaining to them is that the --- that --- the way things that they saw in that movie was how things were then. You can now get on the bus, ride where you want, sit where you want. I ask you, was I wrong or was I right?

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. BARKER: Mary Beth Flewellen, followed by Alandia Heard.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Neither of them are here.

MR. BARKER: Neither are here? Michael Hogan, followed by Amber Howard.

MR. HOGAN: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I'm Michael Hogan. I live in 606 Swissvale Avenue, Wilkinsburg, Pennsylvania.

I use the 61A bus every day. In fact, that's how I got here this evening. I'm very dependent upon it to get where I want to go, but particularly for my mental health services. I use it to get to my mental health provider, which is Milestone in Wilkinsburg, and also the Howard Levin Clubhouse in Squirrel Hill. Without the 61A, I could not get to the --- to the Howard Levin Clubhouse because I have to take two buses to get there now.

And I think that the service cuts are very shortsighted. The needs in --- in the Mon Valley are, as the other speakers have said, great. And they're loyal riders of the Port Authority's system.

Therefore, I ask you to oppose the service cuts and reconsider the bus rapid transit system. There --- that would negatively impact people in the Mon Valley and people such as me, a retiree --- I just turned 65 --- who depends upon public transit for his livelihood and mobility.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. BARKER: Amber Howard, followed by Tim Manka. Neither appears to be here. Next up would be Robert Rogers, followed by Rich Holt --- also neither here. Cheyenne Watson, followed by Alisa Grishman.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Alisa is not here.

MR. BARKER: Next up would be Malena Bouman, followed by Carolyn Burgh? Fran Brashear, followed by Stephanie Armstrong?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Fran Brashear is not here.

MR. BARKER: Laura Wiens, followed by Chandana -- -- and I'm going to butcher this. I --- I apologize in advance, Cherukupalli.

MR. FUTULES: Laura?

MS. WIENS: Laura, yeah.

Hi, my name is Laura Wiens. I'm the director of Pittsburghers for Public Transit. I live at 7731 Edgerton Avenue.

So we at PPT have recently received a copy of the Pittsburgh BRT federal small starts grant application submitted by the URA, but there's an MOU, a partnership with the county council, the City of Pittsburgh and the Port Authority. And I would just like to highlight a few alarming elements of the grant application. And I should just remind you that the county has committed a great deal of funding for this project, and likely more if the federal funding doesn't come through.

So the application claims the BRT project service will increase efficiency by providing higher quality service at a lower annual operating cost than the cost of providing existing service. But let's be very clear, the Port Authority operating cost savings in this plan will come entirely as a result of the frequency cuts to the 61A, B and C and 71A, C and D and increased fare

revenue from their mandatory transfers for the --- for those riders.

The proposed 71 bus cuts of around 30 percent on the A and C lines will be problematic, as those are heavily used east end routes that already suffer from terrible overcrowding. The proposed 50 percent cuts to the 71D bus will have serious consequences to Homewood and Wilkinsburg residents traveling to Oakland. But the 61A, B and C 45 percent proposed frequency cuts will be devastating to --- to communities across the Mon Valley.

They are lifelines, the only direct all-day access to Oakland and downtown for many of these boroughs. And we are reminded constantly that Oakland and downtown are the job centers for this side of Pennsylvania. So why are we cutting access to them? To half their frequencies would create a major obstacle for residents to economic opportunities, social services, food access and more. Should Port Authority operating cost savings be garnered at their expense?

In addition, the only projected fare revenue gains are not from any increased ridership to Port Authority, but rather from the seven percent of mandatory new bus transfers that these bus riders will have to make in Oakland and potentially pay for to continue their ride downtown. It is abhorrent that in the Port Authority Mon Valley meetings, it was implied that these BRT operational cost savings would be used to expand transit service, when in fact, all of those savings were coming from transit cuts to those same --- those very same residents.

And I just want to mention that the grant alleges that the BRT will serve the communities of the Hill District and Larimer along with other more affluent communities like Oakland and Squirrel Hill, because parts of the Hill District and Larimer are within a quarter mile walk --- shed of a BRT station. And that allows the application to claim that this project will provide better transit for a low income and minority population.

In reality, however, folks are not walking down from the hill from where they're living in order to access the BRT station because of barriers in geography and street infrastructure, and the much greater walking distance to the dense residential housing. It is hard not to view this as a project that will almost exclusively serve wealthier residents and development interests on the backs of some of our most marginalized communities.

Look at the census populations for Braddock, Rankin, Duquesne, McKeesport. They're all low income, predominantly black, transit dependent.

We're asking you to call a hearing and evaluate the impacts of these transit cuts on some of your most vulnerable constituents and ask hard questions about how your money is being used.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. BARKER: Chandana Cherukupalli, followed by Helen Gerhardt.

MS. CHERUKUPALLI: My name is Chandana. I live at 7708 Brashear Street, 15221.

My name is Chandana and I work with Pittsburghers for Public Transit. I am not here to repeat the messages of hundreds of riders in the Mon Valley and their supporters. You've heard from some of them already today. I'm here to say that I, and many other organizations and individuals, stand in support of them and their fight to make sure that all communities are benefited from any projects that happen in this county.

I have a letter here that lists the concerns around the proposal, the demands of the riders fighting for equity and a list of organizations and people that have signed on.

We demand, one, that there are no --- there be no cuts to frequency on the 61A, B, C --- and C lines, nor any changes to early morning or late --- late night and evening service. There must be direct, all-day service to downtown from all impacted communities. Any newly created transfers from the 61 or 71 routes to the BRT lines must be free. Additional ConnectCard vendors and kiosks should be added in --- in the Mon Valley to address gaps in access, and that capital money should be allocated towards expansion of the MLK Easy Busway into Braddock, into Monroeville or McKeesport.

Those who have signed on include Mayor Nickole Nesby of Duquesne who spoke earlier, NAMI Keystone Pennsylvania, Swissvale Economic Development Corporation, Swissvale Borough Council, Swissvale Community Action Committee, Ms. Fawn Walker-Montgomery, a McKeesport councilwoman, Pittsburgh Human Rights City Alliance, Pitt Human Rights Initiative, Howard Levin Clubhouse, Marita Garrett, mayor of Wilkinsburg, the Wilkinsburg Borough Council, Pittsburghers for Public Transit, Just Harvest,

Braddock Carnegie Library Board of Trustees, Mayor Betty Esper of Homestead, Director Kate Grannemann Coluccio of the Swissvale Library who also spoke earlier, Mayor Thomas Whyel of North Braddock, Access Mon, Aunt Cheryl's Café in Braddock, Pennsylvania, Carl's Café in Rankin, the Rankin Borough Council and the East Pittsburgh Borough Council as well as two separate letters by the Borough of Braddock and the Borough of Homestead.

And many more are continuing to express their disapproval of this proposal. We at PPT applaud transit improvements and investments in public transit, but not ones that occur on the backs of the most marginalized communities. There are aspects of the proposal which we think can occur without cutting access to thousands of riders that use public transit every day, including bus only lanes, transit signal priority and better amenities for riders. Why is the focus not on those?

The plan as it is, is a cheap ploy to present what is mainly an almost \$200,000,000 development project in uptown that requires massive cuts to communities that are already underinvested in, to present that as a transit improvement. We support transit improvements that are improvements for all, but cannot and will not --- like the hundreds of people throughout the county that oppose this plan, get behind a plan that will see Mon Valley riders losing service.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. BARKER: Helen Gerhardt, followed by David Tessitor.

MS. GERHARDT: Helen Gerhardt, I live at 1341 Shady Avenue in Squirrel Hill. I'm a regular rider of the 61 buses. My disabled brother will also be dependent on these buses very soon, as he is being displaced from the city into Homestead.

All the organizations that were listed on that letter, so many of the organizations and individuals here, the advocates, the healthcare providers, those who provide public services like our libraries, they agree. Economic opportunity is afforded when everyone's basic needs are met sustainably, including access to nutritious food, stable housing, healthcare, reliable and affordable public transit and full employment with living wages.

We agree that making progress toward such equitable access must be founded on the ability to

participate and wield political power in community --- in transparent community planning and decision making, especially for historically marginalized and underprivileged communities.

Mon Valley communities like Rankin, Braddock, Duquesne and McKeesport have been hit hardest by deindustrialization. They have struggled for a generation to revitalize. Public transit is essential for stimulating business development, workforce development and stable housing. It is critical to both job training, education, as well as the jobs that so many of the people who ride these buses use to commute to work.

There's a lot of study done by the county itself, by the Department of Human Services, that show how important transit is to basic economic health, both of communities and of individuals. The University of Pittsburgh's program in urban and regional analysis did a series of economic profiles of Mon Valley communities which show this region to be far more economically dependent on public transit than many other regions in the county. Braddock, for just one example, is --- has an astonishing 40 percent of its workers dependent on public transit to commute to work.

So the process by which this plan was developed was concerning the lack of equitable and inclusive democratic process and the lack of transparency of the data that --- that the Port Authority used to make these decisions, is very concerning. The community engagement and meetings in the lead up to the federal BRT grant did not include so many of these people and so many others. We ask you to have a public hearing so that they are truly heard by you, their representatives.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. BARKER: Last up is David Tessitor.

MR. TESSITOR: Good evening. David Tessitor, 240 Chesterfield.

BRT, let's make it clear. It stands for bogus rapid transit. It is the instrument that is of the Port Authority which was created by the Allegheny Conference, just as the Allegheny Conference dictated the form of government that we have that has you seated here. The Allegheny Conference is based on subsidizing real estate speculation, and it has done so since it was formed using various means including the Port Authority. The most

notable would've been the airport busway, which the same money could have connected rapid rail of the city and the airport, effectively moving the airport into the city instead of the city out to the airport.

Right now, with Amazon considering Pittsburgh or maybe no longer, one of the issues was the connection with the airport. That same \$200,000,000 that they're talking about for the BRT could be used to put toward that, but not with the Port Authority. We need to start thinking more basically. We need to use this as a --- view this as a symptom of a much larger problem, and that is the structure of the Port Authority.

We need to start looking at ways, as Dr. Martoni and I did a number of years ago, when we proposed to County Council a reorganization of the Port Authority which would establish regional rail on a multi-county basis, but keep that separate from the buses and split the buses up at a bus garage by bus garage basis. That was never considered. It never even was brought up in committee by the president of council, who was then the head of that committee of transportation.

We need to start rethinking what we're doing in a very fundamental approach and look at what this Council can do. When this Council was originally formed, the initial Council stood up to the administration on an air quality issue. That was astounding. Everybody expected it really to just be a rubber stamp. I understand more recently it has become more of that, and I really hope that you don't do that on this particular issue because it is of major importance to this region.

If we could connect rapid rail to the city and extend it down to the Mon Valley, it would breathe a lot of economic investment into that area that you hear them crying for. That's the best thing that we can start doing. We need to start looking at what are we doing with this Port Authority which is a large problem in its structure and needs to be totally reorganized.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. BARKER: We did have one last individual, Karen Ann Warman, who had mentioned that she had attempted to sign up, but was unsuccessful through the website.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Let her speak unless there's an objection up front here. Go ahead.

MS. WARMAN: Karen Warman, Third Avenue, Carnegie, PA.

After spending time learning about this proposed plan, I --- I think the most reasonable thing is for all people to look at how this can potentially help our region and all of the people in it. Change is sometimes hard to accept. However, sometimes it is what is needed to move forward.

If the BRT can decrease travel time from Oakland to downtown as well as improve the infrastructure of our city and will include access for access vehicles, this be a big positive for Pittsburgh. I know many people are worried that the routes around the 61A, B and C may be eliminated, but in researching this, it looks like they are trying to make the best decision for all the riders all over Allegheny County.

If there were fewer riders on buses, it is not cost effective to run those buses. Maybe it is good idea to consolidate some of these routes to keep costs down for all riders throughout Allegheny County. Implementing the BRT may even create more jobs for our region and that is always a great thing.

As far as having to pay a transfer fee in Oakland to get downtown from some of the existing Mon Valley routes, no one has stated that will even occur. I think it will be good to continue to discuss if this will be a transfer fee associated with a change in routes. I just think it is a good idea for everyone to keep an open mind while the plan continue to --- to develop. It may not make everyone happy, but if it benefits our area overall, maybe it is time for a change. I love my city and I just want it to be the best for as many people as possible.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. WARMANL: And I've got copies for each one of you ---.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Yeah. Give it to the clerk. Someone want to make a motion to adjourn?

MR. FUTULES: Make a motion to adjourn.

MR. DEMARCO: Second.

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: All those in favor signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

PRESIDENT DEFAZIO: Opposed? The ayes have it.
Meeting adjourned.

MEETING CONCLUDED AT 6:50 P.M.

CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify, as the stenographic reporter, that the foregoing proceedings were taken stenographically by me, and thereafter reduced to typewriting by me or under my direction; and that this transcript is a true and accurate record to the best of my ability.


Court Reporter

Barbara J. Jones