

ALLEGHENY COUNTY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

- - -

BEFORE:

Patrick Catena	-	President, District 4
Robert J. Macey	-	Vice President, District 9
Samuel DeMarco, III	-	Council-At-Large
Bethany Hallam	-	Council-At-Large
Thomas Baker	-	District 1
Cindy Kirk	-	District 2
Anita Prizio	-	District 3
Tom Duerr	-	District 5
John F. Palmiere	-	District 6
Nicholas Futules	-	District 7
Paul Zavarella	-	District 8
Dewitt Walton	-	District 10
Robert Palmosina	-	District 12
Olivia "Liv" Bennett	-	District 13

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

Tuesday, August 25, 2020 - 5:00 p.m.

SARGENT'S COURT REPORTING SERVICE, INC.
429 Forbes Avenue, Suite 1300
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
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IN ATTENDANCE:

Jared Barker - Director, Legislative Services

PRESIDENT CATENA: Good evening, everyone. It's 5:00 p.m. We're going to call the meeting of Allegheny County Council to order. Please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Pledge of Allegiance.)

PRESIDENT CATENA: Please remain standing for a moment of reflection. Thank you, please be seated. Jared, please take roll.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Baker?

MR. BAKER: Here.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Bennett?

MS. BENNETT: Here.

MR. BARKER: Mr. DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: Here.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Duerr?

MR. DUERR: Here.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Futules?

MR. FUTULES: Here.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Hallam?

MS. HALLAM: Here.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Kirk?

MS. KIRK: Here.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Klein? Mr. Klein? Mr. Macey?

MR. MACEY: Here.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Palmiere?

MR. PALMIERE: Here.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Palmosina?

MR. PALMOSINA: Here.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Prizio? Mr. Walton?

MR. WALTON: Here.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Zavarella?

MR. ZAVARELLA: Here.

MR. BARKER: President Catena?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Here.

MR. BARKER: We have 13 members present for the moment.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. We'll now have proclamations and certificates. These proclamations and certificates will be read into the record. 11588-20.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation recognizing the mayor of the Borough of Heidelberg, Kenneth LaSota, for being awarded the 2020 Pennsylvania Mayor of the Year award, sponsored by President Catena.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 11589-20.

MR. BARKER: Certificates of Achievement presented to the 2020 Circle of Courage Awardees, sponsored by Council Member Baker.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 11590-20.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation recognizing the 35th Anniversary of the Steel Valley Authority, sponsored by Council Member Walton.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 11591-20.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation recognizing the 50th Anniversary of Remnant City, sponsored by Council Members Macey and Palmiere.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 11592-20.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation honoring the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment, sponsored by all members of Council.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Is there any public comment on agenda items?

MR. BARKER: No. We have two on non-agenda items.

PRESIDENT CATENA: The approval of minutes?

MR. BARKER: We have none.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. Presentation of appointments, 11587-20.

MR. BARKER: Approving the appointment of LeSans Heard Montgomery to the Board of Property Assessment Appeals and Review for a term ending on September 8th, 2023, sponsored by President Catena.

PRESIDENT CATENA: That will go to appointment review. Unfinished business, committee on public safety, second reading, 11409-20.

MR. BARKER: An Ordinance amending and supplementing the Allegheny County Code of Ordinances, Division 7, entitled "Land Use" through the creation of a new Chapter 775, entitled "Offenses Against Property", in order to protect the property rights, health, safety and well-being of individuals within the County, sponsored by President Catena.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Ms. Bennett.

MS. BENNETT: Thank you, President Catena. The Committee of Public Safety met on August 20th, and we affirmatively recommended that this be sent up before Council.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Make a motion to approve.

MS. BENNETT: May I have a motion?

MR. MACEY: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has --- motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Hearing no discussion, Jared, would you please take a rollcall?

MR. BARKER: On the motion to approve, Mr. Baker? Mr. Baker?

MR. BAKER: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Thank you. Ms. Bennett?

MS. BENNETT: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Duerr?

MR. DUERR: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Futules?

MR. FUTULES: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Hallam?

MS. HALLAM: No.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Kirk?

MS. KIRK: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Kirk votes yes, I believe?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Yes.

MR. BARKER: I heard that as a yes? Thank you.

MS. KIRK: Yes. It's a yes.

MR. BARKER: Thank you. Mr. Klein? Mr. Macey?

MR. MACEY: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Palmiere?

MR. PALMIERE: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Palmosina?

MR. PALMOSINA: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Prizio?

MS. PRIZIO: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Walton? Mr. Walton? Mr. Zavarella?

MR. ZAVARELLA: Yes.

MR. WALTON: Yes.

MR. BARKER: I believe that's Mr. Walton saying yes at this point; correct?

MR. ZAVARELLA: Mr. Zavarella, yes.

MR. WALTON: Mr. Walton, yes. And Mr. Walton would be yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Walton and Mr. Zavarella are both yes's, understood. And President Catena?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ayes 13, no's 1. The bill passes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you, everyone. We'll now have liaison reports. Is there anyone wishing to make a liaison report? Hearing none, we'll move on to new business, ordinances and resolutions. New business, 11594-20.

MR. BARKER: A motion of the Council of Allegheny County expressing the sense of Council that the United States Postal Service should remain a strong and universal service for the people of the United States, and should receive appropriations necessary to offset revenues lost due to the COVID-19 emergency and ensure the continuation of its current service levels, sponsored by Council Members Hallam, Catena, Bennett, Futules, and Prizio.

MR. MACEY: I'd like to be added, sir.

MR. BARKER: And Macey.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Is there anyone else who would like to be added before we discuss?

MR. PALMOSINA: Yes, I would. Councilman Palmosina.

MR. DUERR: Sure, sure. President Catena, Tom Duerr as well.

MR. ZAVARELLA: Mr. Catena, Zavarella as well.

MR. PALMIERE: And Mr. Palmiere, please, thank you.

MR. FUTULES: Futules, yes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: And I think Walton was on there as well.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Walton, did you request to be added as a co-sponsor as well?

MR. WALTON: Yes, sir.

MR. BARKER: Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Ms. Hallam, did you want to make a comment?

MS. HALLAM: Yeah. I think the motion speaks for itself. I think that now more than ever, we have to make sure that we're protecting one of the pillars of society, something that's been in place since long before any of us were around. And I just think it's important that we are protecting the residents of Allegheny County and across the country who get their Social Security checks and their medication and birthday cards through the mail. So that's all.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. Do you want to make the motion --- the motion to approve?

MR. DEMARCO: Should we discuss?

MS. HALLAM: Sure.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Yes. We --- go ahead, Councilman DeMarco.

MR. DEMARCO: Sure. Thank you very much, President Catena. Looking at the motion here under Council of the County of Allegheny therefore hereby move, it says under number two, that the Congress of the United States should appropriate funds to offset lost revenues of the United States Postal Service during the COVID-19 emergency and should take all appropriate measures to ensure the United State Postal Service continues and maintains its services, and remains an accessible, independent establishment of the federal government. That all sounds nice, but it doesn't appear that anybody's actually done the research. Because last quarter, the post office reported total revenue of \$17.6 billion for the third quarter of fiscal 2020. That's an increase of \$547 million, or 3.2 percent, compared to the same period of last year. So I don't know what kind of revenue they lost due to the COVID-19 emergency when it actually gained \$547 million.

And in addition to providing appropriate measures to ensure that they have or are going to continue to maintain services, they were given a \$10 billion line of credit in the CARES Act. So you know, I actually put the time to look this stuff up, and this motion doesn't make any sense with the reality of what we're dealing with so I'll be a no on it. Thank you, President Catena.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Is there anyone else wishing to make a comment? If not, Ms. Hallam, do you make the motion to move forward?

MS. HALLAM: So moved.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Is there a second?

MS. BENNETT: Second. I second, Ms. Bennett.

PRESIDENT CATENA: The motion has been made and --- the motion has been made and seconded. Jared, please take roll call.

MR. BARKER: On the motion to approve, Mr. Baker?

MR. BAKER: Abstain. I don't think it's our role, such to be sharing our opinions on this.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Baker is an abstention. Ms. Bennett?

MS. BENNETT: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: No.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Duerr?

MR. DUERR: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Futules?

MR. FUTULES: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Hallam?

MS. HALLAM: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Kirk?

MS. KIRK: No.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Klein? Mr. Macey?

MR. MACEY: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Palmiere?

MR. PALMIERE: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Pamosina?

MR. PALMOSINA: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Prizio?

MS. PRIZIO: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Walton?

MR. WALTON: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Zavarella?

MR. ZAVARELLA: Yes.

MR. BARKER: President Catena?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ayes 11, no's zero (sic) with one abstention. The bill passes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 11595-20.

MR. BARKER: Before proceeding, I'd just like to note rapidly, we actually neglected to list Ms. Prizio as a primary sponsor on Bill 11590-20. That's the proclamation recognizing the 35th anniversary of the Steel Valley Authority.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay.

MR. BARKER: 11595-20, motion of the Council of Allegheny County expressing the sense of Council urging the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission to carefully and deliberately evaluate the rate increase proposed by Pennsylvania American Water Company, and for both the Commission, the Company, and all external stakeholders to work cooperatively in order to strike an appropriate balance between the time sensitivity relating to the Company's most important infrastructure needs and the

health, safety and well-being of the residents of the Commonwealth, sponsored by Council Members Futules, Prizio, and Macey.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Councilman Futules, did you want to say something?

MR. FUTULES: Yeah. This motion speaks for itself. They're looking for a rate increase and the argument is this is not a very good time for raising rates for people that are having hard times as it is. I would make a motion to approve.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay.

MR. MACEY: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: The motion has been made and seconded. Is there anyone wishing to make a comment? Hearing none, roll call vote, please, Jared.

MR. BARKER: On the motion to approve, Mr. Baker?

MR. BAKER:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Bennett?
MS. BENNETT:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. DeMarco?
MR. DEMARCO:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Duerr?
MR. DUERR:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Futules?
MR. FUTULES:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Hallam?
MS. HALLAM:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Kirk?
MS. KIRK:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Klein? Mr. Macey?
MR. MACEY:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Palmiere?
MR. PALMIERE:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Palmosina?
MR. PALMOSINA:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Prizio?
MS. PRIZIO:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Walton?
MR. WALTON:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Zavarella?
MR. ZAVARELLA:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	President Catena?
PRESIDENT CATENA:	Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ayes 14, no's zero. The bill passes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Notification of contracts.

MR. BARKER: We have none.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Public comment on general items.

MR. BARKER: We actually have a pair. I have one that sent in written comments, and another individual who is actually with us in person.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. Does the person that's in person want to go first?

MR. BARKER: Fair enough. First up then will be Greg Erosenko.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go right ahead.

MR. EROSENKO: Thank you, President Catena and members of County Council for allowing me to talk. My name's Greg Erosenko, and I'm part of the Allegheny County East Mayors Council Association. I'm here on two different issues. The first one that you're considering is a civilian police review board. And my question for all of you is please consider how many checks and balances do our police departments need? If an officer steps out of line, you have the Chief of Police there to address it. You have your mayor and council. You have your District Attorney's Office. You have your State Attorney General's Office. You have the Pennsylvania court system, and as you've seen in, many times, the federal government can also step in.

There are 1.2 million residents in Allegheny County, and the overwhelming majority are law abiding citizens. My understanding, if you do pass this civilian police review board, the cost will be between \$700,000 and \$900,000. Where's that money coming from? Wouldn't that need --- wouldn't that money be better spent to spend it on the smaller communities that are having a hard time even training their police? This issue would also weaken our police department. It would demoralize officers, and even, as you notice, if you checked around with the various police departments, less men and women are applying to get into law enforcement. This, in my opinion, is a socialist agenda. The majority of the residents do not want radical or special interest groups to control our police departments. Please consider what I say.

The last one I'm going to address is the chokehold ban that already exists in the police policy manual. It is my understanding you're considering that as well. At our meeting last night, we had a young lady get up and speak about how dangerous it would be for us to do this formally. There was a young man that had his child in his hand, close to him, ready --- threatening to kill him. They couldn't use --- they couldn't tase him, they couldn't use tear gas. They had an officer sneak up behind him and choke him until he dropped the child. Both survived. Would you want them to tase and maybe kill the kid? Or even worse, injure the child? Please consider just leaving it in the police manual. It is there. I don't believe any officer wakes up every day, says I'm going to choke somebody out or injure anybody, let alone kill anybody. Thank you for your time.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Go ahead.

MR. BARKER: Next up is Debra Dunham of Coraopolis. I'm a 24 year resident of Coraopolis, PA who wishes to put my voice and concerns in writing. I cannot attend the meeting of August 25th on this matter, and I'm writing to object to Ordinance 11370-20, Division 9, section on conduct, and the new Chapter 905 independent police review board that attempts to be added to the county code. In early June 2020, I believe it was a Saturday morning, there were organized protesters on the street of 5th Avenue in Coraopolis that lasted one day due to the organized response and control of the situation by Coraopolis police and other police forces brought in. A peaceful protest remained a peaceful protest due to the professional skills executed by our police forces who did a great job towards protecting citizens, such as myself, who live right on that same street of protest. I have confidence in the skills and conduct of Allegheny County's various police departments, and I know that police departments around the state and country cite our police programs as a shining example of professional training and continuing education credits for police. I object to the intrusion and cost of non-professional special interest groups who are not qualified to evaluate and judge police conduct. Sincerely, Debra Dunham.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. No other public comment?

MR. BARKER: That's it.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. Motion to adjourn?

MR. MACEY: Motion to adjourn.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Second?

MR. WALTON: Motion to adjourn. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion is made and seconded.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed? Motion carries. Thank you, everyone. Have a great evening.

MEETING CONCLUDED AT 5:19 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.

Dated the 16th day of September, 2020

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Jeremy Harris,

Court Reporter