

ALLEGHENY COUNTY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

- - -

BEFORE:

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Patrick Catena | - | President District 4 |
| Bethany Hallam | - | Council-At-Large |
| Samuel DeMarco, III | - | Council-At-Large |
| Jack Betkowski | - | District 1 |
| Suzanne Filiaggi | - | District 2 |
| Anita Prizio | - | District 3 |
| Tom Duerr | - | District 5 |
| John F. Palmiere | - | District 6 |
| Nicholas Futules | - | District 7 |
| Michelle Naccarati-Chapkis- | - | District 8 |
| Robert J. Macey | - | District 9 |
| DeWitt Walton | - | District 10 |
| Paul Klein | - | District 11 |
| Robert Palmosina | - | District 12 |
| Olivia Bennett | - | District 13 |

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

January 10, 2023 5:01 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, Legislative Services

PRESIDENT CATENA: Good evening, everyone. It's 5:01, we're going to get started. I'd like to call this 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 silent reflection.

(Moment of Silence.)

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Please be seated. Jared, please take roll.

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| MR. BARKER: | Ms. Bennett? |
| | Mr. Betkowski? |
| MR. BETKOWSKI: | Here. |
| MR. BARKER: | Mr. DeMarco? |
| MR. DEMARCO: | Here. |
| MR. BARKER: | Mr. Duerr? |
| MR. DUERR: | Here. |
| MR. BARKER: | Ms. Filiaggi. |
| MS. FILIAGGI: | Here. |
| MR. BARKER: | Mr. Futules? |
| MR. FUTULES: | Here. |
| MR. BARKER: | Ms. Hallam? |
| MS. HALLAM: | Here. |
| MR. BARKER: | Mr. Klein? |
| MR. KLEIN: | Here. |
| MR. BARKER: | Mr. Macey? |
| MR. MACEY: | Here. |
| MR. BARKER: | Ms. Naccarati-Chapkis? |
| MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS: | Here. |
| MR. BARKER: | Mr. Palmiere? |
| MR. PALMIERE: | Here. |
| MR. BARKER: | Mr. Palmosina? |
| MR. PALMOSINA: | Here. |
| MR. BARKER: | Ms. Prizio? |
| MS. PRIZIO: | Here. |
| MR. BARKER: | Mr. Walton? |
| MR. WALTON: | Here. |
| MR. BARKER: | President Catena? |
| PRESIDENT CATENA: | Here. |
| MR. BARKER: | We have 14 members |

present.

PRESIDENT CATENA: We'll begin with proclamations and certificates. All of this evening's proclamations will be read into the record.

12545-23.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation recognizing and congratulating Camden Barton McClelland on achieving the rank of Eagle Scout, sponsored by Council Member Catena.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12546-23.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation recognizing and congratulating Joshua David Kiss on achieving the rank of Eagle Scout sponsored by Council Member Catena.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12547-23.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation recognizing and congratulating Kieran Stoker on achieving the rank of Eagle Scout, sponsored by Council Member Catena.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12548-23.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation recognizing and congratulating Timothy M. Karvelis on achieving the rank of Eagle Scout, sponsored by Council Member Catena.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12549-23.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation recognizing and congratulating Cody Chill on achieving the rank of Eagle Scout, sponsored by Council Member Naccarati-Chapkis.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12550-23.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation recognizing and congratulating Timothy Rogers on his retirement as Municipal Manager of Shaler Township, sponsored by Council Member Prizio.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Are there any comments on public agenda items?

MR. BARKER: We have one. Erica Brusselars.

MS. BRUSSELARS: Hi, I'm Erica Brusselars. I'm a Northside resident and a long-time property owner. I'm concerned about the inequity in the fees and discounts related to our real estate county tax collection. Tonight I'm speaking specifically on the topic of the two-percent discount period that exists for our county real estate tax.

I believe its name and the brief period between the end of the discount period, which is March 31st, you get two percent off if you pay by March 31st, and the start of the late charge period, you can pay the full amount by April 30th or you get a late fee if you pay by May 1st, obscures that two percent in one month is actually a pretty high rate, it's about a 24 percent a year rate.

So -.

PRESIDENT CATENA: I'm sorry to interrupt you.

MS. BRUSSELARS: Yes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: But how - explain to me how this is an agenda topic.

MS. BRUSSELARS: I thought it was a new item. I thought it would go at the end of the meeting. I didn't think it was an agenda topic.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. This is a non-agenda item, then?

MS. BRUSSELARS: I guess it is.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. So we'll get to you at the end of the meeting.

MS. BRUSSELARS: I apologize for miscommunicating it.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. Thank you. We'll now have approval of minutes.

12551-23.

MR. BARKER: Motion to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2022 regular meeting of Council.

MR. MACEY: Motion to approve.

MR. FUTULES: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Is there any discussion? All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed? The motion carries. 12552-23.

MR. BARKER: Just briefly before proceeding, please let the record reflect that Ms. Bennett is now present.

12552-23 is a motion to approve the minutes of the November 9th, 2022 regular meeting of Council.

MR. MACEY: Motion to approve.

MR. DUERR: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Is there any discussion? Hearing no discussion, all those in favor, signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed? The motion carries.

Presentation of appointments. All of this evening's appointments are referred to the Committee on Appointment Review. I'd like to have the clerk read them all at this point in time.

12541-23.

MR. BARKER: Approving the reappointment of Arthur R. Pang to the Human Relations Commission of

Allegheny County for a term to expire on December 31st, 2026, sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: You can go on. I'm sorry.

MR. BARKER: 12542-23, approving the reappointment of Reverend Dr. William H. Curtis to the Allegheny County Airport Authority Board for a term to expire on December 31st, 2027, sponsored by the Chief Executive.

12543-23, approving the reappointment of Thomas W. Weaver to the Agricultural Land Preservation Board for a term to expire on December 31st, 2025, sponsored by the Chief Executive.

12544-23, approving the reappointment of Thomas W. Headley to the Agricultural Land Preservation Board for a term to expire on December 31st, 2025, also sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Is there any unfinished business?

MR. BARKER: We have none.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Liaison reports, any liaison reports this evening?

MR. DUERR: President Catena?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead.

MR. DUERR: My mic isn't working, so -. You - there's an e-mail that Ken printed out. As the council's member on the Board, I just wanted to make sure everyone knew about the legislative reception happening on Thursday, January 19th, the grand concourse. I'm very, very excited to, you know, bring this event back to the Board again. Hopefully some of my council colleagues can make it. It should be a great time. I just wanted to let everyone know.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Councilwoman Prizio?

MS. PRIZIO: Thank you. On behalf of the North Hills Antiracism Coalition, I'd like to invite all council members to the Dr. Martin Luther King Unity Breakfast. It'll be held on January 16th. Registration is at eight clock, and the breakfast is 8:30. It's at LaRoche University at the Zappala Center. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you.

We'll now move on to new business, ordinances and resolutions.

12553-23.

MR. BARKER: An ordinance of the Council of the County of Allegheny ratifying an amendment adding Section 2105.87 entitled Control of VOC Emissions from Unconventional and Conventional Oil and Natural Gas Sources, to the Allegheny County Health Department Rules and Regulations, Article XXI, Air Pollution Control, sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: That's going to Health and Human Services.

New business, motions.

12554-23.

MR. BARKER: A motion of the Council of Allegheny County authorizing the publication of a request for proposals for professional insurance and for employer insurance, sponsored by Council Member Catena.

PRESIDENT CATENA: I don't want to make that motion, so would somebody make that motion on my behalf, please?

MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS: I'll make it.

MR. PALMIERE: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. The motion has been made and seconded.

MR. DEMARCO: Mr. President?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead.

MR. DEMARCO: I'd like to make a motion to amend the agenda.

PRESIDENT CATENA: We still haven't voted on this one.

MR. DEMARCO: Oh, okay.

PRESIDENT CATENA: So at this point in time is there any discussion? If there's no discussion, all those in favor, signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed? The motion carries.

Councilman DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: Yes, Mr. President. I'd like to make a motion to amend the agenda, to add a motion to the agenda.

PRESIDENT CATENA: And why would you like to do that?

MR. DEMARCO: I'd like to introduce a censor motion, to censor Councilwoman Bethany Hallam for her behavior at the Jail Oversight Board meeting last Thursday night, where she called the sitting Judge, in his official

capacity, as the Chairman of that committee, a vulgar and foul name and despite multiple opportunities refused to apologize.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay.

At this point in time, then, we'll move to a vote to amend the agenda. Is there a second?

MR. MACEY: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Go ahead and take -.

MR. BETKOWSKI: Is there a discussion?

PRESIDENT CATENA: It's to amend the agenda.

MR. FUTULES: It's to put this on the agenda or not.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead.

MR. BARKER: On the motion to amend the agenda, Ms. Bennett?

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| MS. BENNETT: | No. |
| MR. BARKER: | Mr. Betkowski? |
| MR. BETKOWSKI: | No. |
| MR. BARKER: | Mr. DeMarco? |
| MR. DEMARCO: | Yes. |
| MR. BARKER: | Mr. Duerr? |
| MR. DUERR: | Yes. |
| MR. BARKER: | Ms. Filiaggi. |
| MS. FILIAGGI: | Yes. |
| MR. BARKER: | Mr. Futules? |
| MR. FUTULES: | Yes. |
| MR. BARKER: | Ms. Hallam? |
| MS. HALLAM: | No. |
| MR. BARKER: | Mr. Klein? |
| MR. KLEIN: | No. |
| MR. BARKER: | Mr. Macey? |
| MR. MACEY: | Yes. |
| MR. BARKER: | Ms. Naccarati-Chapkis? |
| MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS: | No. |
| MR. BARKER: | Mr. Palmiere? |
| MR. PALMIERE: | No. |
| MR. BARKER: | Mr. Palmosina? |
| MR. PALMOSINA: | No. |
| MR. BARKER: | Ms. Prizio? |
| MS. PRIZIO: | No. |
| MR. BARKER: | Mr. Walton? |
| MR. WALTON: | Yes. |
| MR. BARKER: | President Catena? |
| PRESIDENT CATENA: | No. |

MR. BARKER: Ayes 6, noes 9, the motion fails.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. We'll move on to notification of contracts.

12555-23.

MR. BARKER: A communication summarizing approved executive actions for the month of December 2022.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Is there a motion to receive and file?

MR. MACEY: Receive and file.

MR. DUERR: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Hearing no discussion, all those in favor, signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed? Motion carries.

We'll now go into public comment on general items.

MR. BARKER: We have Erica Brusselars, part two.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Sorry about that. You'll get your chance.

MS. BRUSSELARS: I have a comment on general items, now I've learned that phrasing. I'm Erica Brusselars, and I'm a resident and property owner on the Northside, and I have a comment about the two percent discount period for the county real estate taxes.

Currently there's a one month period between when you can pay the two percent off and when you pay the last day for the full price. And two percent a month comes out to 24 percent a year. It's like a high credit card rate. If you pay your taxes on the regular due date.

So the question I have is, you know, why are we charging folks who either don't understand the value of that or maybe need just a little bit more time, since it's a high rate?

And I would propose that County Council examines the feasibility of extending the period between the two percent discount rate date and the full tax date. So that means maybe moving the regular tax date until the end of May or the end of June, while leaving the discount rate to March.

And so we're made - you know, two months, that would be more like a 12 percent annual rate. If it's extended to three months, that would be more like an 8

percent interest, and that's what I'm asking you to take a look at.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you.

MR. BARKER: Next up is - and I lost my list.
Nabin Sharma.

MR. SHARMA: Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, Council Members. I'd like to - there's only one thing that I found in this like public health sector, they're supposed to provide some type of help or ongoing treatment, they suddenly stop because of the lack of what is called intrusion in ADA residency - I'm sorry, I cannot pronounce. There is no inclusion for people who have cognitive issues, needs long-term speech therapy, that therapy has stopped because of the insurance quota or something, and I went for longer term care, that is not included in the constitution or legislation or something. And I was trying to alert on the best level, like council member.

They only consider people who are physically handicapped, visible disability. There is an invisible disability called cognitive side, that leads to long-term care. Doctor cannot determine how soon he can recover or in good faith. I was asking for a little more help, basic level, I get it, but a little bit more, so that people will not suffer down the road when they need to communicate, when they need to execute their task, reading, writing, that kind of -. And I just want to learn and besides that invisible disability accommodation is still not there, but it's still progressing a little bit, they're not saying no, but they're telling me go here and there, but somehow I'm getting it.

More treatment side, health-wise, not only me, my children, all members here, all children, friends, family - I'm sorry. They need a little bit more time. The cognitive side doesn't heal like a broken bone. It takes some time to heal. And for that one you need to keep on going medical side. And people who are low income who doesn't have a lot of finances, they are suffering. That is the reason I was just alert this situation in best level. And I need to go ahead and I'm doing it, hopefully I can get some help. Thank you for that.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you.

MR. BARKER: Next up is Mike Suley.

PRESIDENT CATENA: He's not here.

MR. BARKER: He's not here. And next up would be Paul Hebblethwaite.

MR. HEBBLETHWAITE: Afternoon, Council Members. My name is Paul Hebblethwaite. I'm a resident, I'm a homeowner and voter in the City of Pittsburgh in Allegheny County District 11. My family relocated to the area in 2020 and purchased our home in Regent Square. The home was built in 1899 by the Architect Harry Baehr. It was the first home Harry Baehr built in Pittsburgh.

A few years later he built another home right next door. Both houses have a similar layout, but Harry Baehr decided to add 18 inches on all sides to the new house next door to ours. In the last 120 years, both houses are being maintained and updated and would command a similar value in the real estate market. However, because we moved to Pittsburgh in 2020 the school district decided to appeal the value of our house.

As a result we pay 200 percent more taxes than our neighbor. This scenario is playing out across the county every year with new homeowners shouldering an ever-increasing tax burden. For the last ten years, because of the County's inaction, school districts, cities, boroughs and townships have sought windfall, real estate tax revenue increases through the appeal process.

All of this, despite the county's responsibility to protect taxpayers outlined in the county charter. The Allegheny County Home Rule Charter states that we're a home rule government, as embodied in this charter, who will protect the taxpayers of Allegheny County by limiting tax powers, preventing the use of the reassessment process to gain windfall real estate tax revenue increases.

That for ten years the county has failed in their duty to protect new homeowners. The question is, why? Why has it been ten years since the countywide tax assessment? And why have our political leaders not taken action? And how long is this situation going to continue? And finally, how do you, as council members, forge a path to a more equitable distribution of tax contributions for the well-being of everyone in Allegheny County? I think the time is now, ten years since the last assessment, not for Band-Aid solutions, because I know Council is having discussions in developing different proposals, but not for a Band-Aid solution, but for long-term solutions that work.

Thank you all. I appreciate it.

PRESIDENT CATENA: At this point in time we have two speakers that didn't sign up before the deadline. Does anyone object to letting them speak?

MR. MACEY: Let them speak.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead.

MR. BARKER: Next up then would be Bernadette Mosey.

MS. MOSEY: Thank you. I'm sorry this is very intimidating.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Can you help her with the mic?

MS. MOSEY: I'm sorry. First I have to thank you. After five years of being bedridden, I was able to get to the Senior Center in Beechview, which changed my life.

I fought diligently with Dan Deasy, Anthony Coghill, Rick Fitzgerald, Domi - I hope I didn't forget anybody - to get the sidewalk fixed. You couldn't even access the place in a walker, on foot, with a cane and a wheelchair. And I am so grateful that they fixed that.

At that time I also pointed out that the ADA doors are not operative. If you have rotator's cuff - if any of you have ever had it, try pulling those doors open, and they're double. And the inside paired doors never were ADA-accessible. This opened in 2017. I do understand, I put my old paralegal hat on, I did some research. ADA does not force anyone to have a push button automated door, however, ADA requirements for automatic doors, door hardware must not require more than five pounds. Try opening up one of those doors, the second set, it's more than five pounds. I've injured myself, the director has filed a report. We keep getting told that they're on their way, they're going to come and do it. We had one excuse where the previous director didn't turn in her key fob.

I have told the Mayor, I have told Anthony Coghill. I have told everybody, please - why have a Senior Center if you don't have doors that we can get in and out of? I have not gone down there and enjoyed the other people or the activities, because I'm not going to stand there or sit there in my chair and get poured on in the rain trying to get into this building.

I go to Bethel Park, I grew up in Mt. Lebanon, in Upper St. Clair, I go to the Bethel Park place up there when I can go out on the trolley. I'm sorry.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead.

MS. MOSEY: And they have - you push one button and both sets of doors open. You go to other Senior - I have been to other ones in the city, you push a button, I understand that it's the city and the county that are both involved in these senior healthy activity living centers. There's no excuse. I've also been pushing for the yellow - they did them all on East Carson Street, they're beautiful, where you push them to cross, they blink and stop the traffic.

At the top of Boustead we've been getting semis stuck, their dollies underneath get stuck at the crest. There is no reason for a semi to come up and down in Beechview, only if it's up and down Pauline -. I have an old CDL driver's license. I used to drive for the state and federal prisons.

We need some help. I need some help. But that Senior Center, that's the main thing. And Boustead and the top - because we need - I recorded it. I have it on YouTube, it is dangerous. You can get out of debt with the city government and the county government by people not stopping at the lines. I can be in the middle of Broadway and people will stare me down and zoom right past me, and I recorded it.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Thank you for this evening.

MR. FUTULES: Mr. President?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Yes?

MR. FUTULES: Young lady, if you could give us the address and name of this facility, I kind of missed it, send it to our staff. It would be very good for us to have that information as to what exactly.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Beechview.

MR. FUTULES: Yeah, but I didn't hear that part. Thank you.

MS. MOSEY: Oh, I'm sorry.

MR. FUTULES: I just want to make sure we know the exact address.

MR. PALMOSINA: Ma'am, can I have your name and number? I'll call you tomorrow. That's my area, I can handle it. I didn't catch her name and number. You'll get it? Okay. I'll call her tomorrow. I'll take care of it.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead.

MR. BARKER: Last up is Joe Klepic.

MR. KLEPIC: Good evening, everybody. And I'm Joe Klepic. I live at 819 Broadway in East McKeesport. Normally I don't speak in Council, but I wanted to talk tonight because of the comments that I heard last night about the Jail Oversight Board.

I was very discouraged and disappointed, because I work for this county. I'm very disappointed in what was said. And I didn't appreciate what Ms. Hallam said to Judge Howsie. Judge Howsie is a well-respected Judge in this county. He was the chief public - the first African American chief Public Defender and you turn around and insult him like that?

I respect each and every one of you, and I would hope that Ms. Hallam reconsiders and apologizes, and if she does not, I would ask for her resignation. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Anyone else?

MR. BARKER: That's it.

MR. DEMARCO: And there you go.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. Is there a motion to adjourn?

MR. MACEY: So moved.

MR. DEMARCO: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed?

MR. BARKER: I apologize, Mr. President. The Solicitor is cautioning me that there is an executive session after the meeting.

PRESIDENT CATENA: There is an executive session after the meeting to deal with litigation. Thank you.

MEETING CONCLUDED AT 5:23 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 27 day of January, 2023.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Marissa Mantia", is written over a horizontal line.

Marissa Mantia,

Court Reporter