

ALLEGHENY COUNTY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

- - -

BEFORE:

Patrick Catena	-	President, District 4
John F. Palmiere	-	Vice President District 6
Samuel DeMarco, III	-	Council-at-Large
Bethany Hallam	-	Council-at-Large
Jack Betkowski		District 1
Suzanne Filiaggi	-	District 2
Anita Prizio	-	District 3
Tom Duerr	-	District 5
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 "Liv" Bennett	-	District 13

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

May 23, 2023, 5:04 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:

Sarah Roka - Budget Manager

PRESIDENT CATENA: I'd like to call Allegheny County Council to order. Please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Pledge of Allegiance Recited)

PRESIDENT CATENA: Please remain standing for a moment of silent prayer or reflection.

(Moment of Silence)

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

MS. ROKA:	Ms. Bennett?
MS. BENNETT:	Here.
MS. ROKA:	Mr. Betkowski?
MR. BETKOWSKI:	Here.
MS. ROKA:	Mr. DeMarco?
MR. DEMARCO:	Here.
MS. ROKA:	Mr. Duerr?
MR. DUERR:	Here.
MS. ROKA:	Ms. Filiaggi?
MS. ROKA:	Mr. Futules?
MR. FUTULES:	Here.
MS. ROKA:	Ms. Hallam?
MS. HALLAM:	Here.
MS. ROKA:	Mr. Klein?
MR. KLEIN:	Here.
MS. ROKA:	Mr. Macey?
MR. MACEY:	Present.
MS. ROKA:	Ms. Naccarati-Chapkis?
MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS:	Here.
MS. ROKA:	Mr. Palmiere?
MR. PALMIERE:	Here.
MS. ROKA:	Mr. Palmosina?
MR. PALMOSINA:	Here.
MS. ROKA:	Ms. Prizio?
MS. PRIZIO:	Here.
MS. ROKA:	Mr. Walton?
MR. WALTON:	Here.
MS. ROKA:	President Catena?
PRESIDENT CATENA:	Here.
MS. ROKA:	There are currently 14 members

present.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12685-23.

MS. ROKA: A proclamation declaring May 23rd, 2023 as Teen Mental Health Awareness Day in Allegheny County, sponsored by Councilmember Bennett.

MS. BENNETT: So today we have Sarah Pesi. Sarah --- hi, Sarah. Okay. Who is the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, and you requested the proclamation, so thank you for reaching out. The youth attending are Mohammed Shahid. Is it Bryn? Okay. Bryn McSorley, Menji Kim. Hi, Menji. And Brooklyn Williams. Okay. And then is Robert Ferguson and Deborah Murdoch here. Hi, nice to meet you. Thank you so much for being here.

Mental health is such an important thing to talk about. I'm so honored to give this proclamation. Mental health is especially touching to me personally. I just graduated from that DBT recently, so spent the year in DBT doing the work right. And so that's what this is about, is asking folks to do the work to be healthy, both physically and mentally.

So a proclamation declaring Teen Mental Health Awareness day. Whereas, according to the Mental Health America's State of Mental Health Report, more than ten percent of youth in the United States are experiencing depression to a degree that severely impairs their ability to function at school, work and home with family or in their social life. And 59.8 percent of the youth with major depression do not receive any mental health treatment. And in 2022, the majority of Safe to Say Something hotline tips in the Pittsburgh and Allegheny County region involve bullying, threats to school, substance use, and suicidal ideation, all of which have a mental health component or can worsen one's mental health.

And adolescence is a formative time for one's intellectual and emotional development. But youth today are easily exposed to harmful stigmas surrounding mental health through the daily consumption of derogatory language and misleading media representation. And whereas Teen Mental Health Awareness Day is designed to raise awareness about mental health in teens, that includes mental health, being recognized as a part of a teen's health address the stigma of mental health, and increase awareness of mental health resources that are available.

And being diagnosed with a mental health condition is not a weakness or something to be ashamed. And it is important to recognize that anyone can experience poor mental wellbeing and deserves to be shown care and compassion to ensure comfort in reaching out for help and to combat stigma and encourage teens to seek help, it is important to provide support and promote

available mental health resources for youth of all identities and cultures. And a key tool in reducing the stigma surrounding mental health and the significance of the mental health crisis in America is implementing mental health education in schools. And there is currently no legislation that protects teens in Pennsylvania by enabling them to take school excused mental health days, which would offer more avenues for rest and recovery.

And teens today face mounting societal pressures in school, the workplace and transition to college with limited supportive resources and guidance, thus resulting in increased anxiety and poor mental health. And teens deserve to be heard, respected and elevated in decision making processes when discussions occur that impact them. And we must strive to create more accommodating learning environments for youth who may be battling with mental health issues, as well as acknowledge the intersectionality between mental health and race and ethnicity, and how teens in marginalized communities experience larger disparities in mental health services and higher rates of mental health disorders.

Now, therefore, it be resolved that I, Allegheny County Councilmember Olivia Bennett, do hereby declare May 23rd, 2023, as Teen Mental Health Awareness Day in Allegheny County, and recognize the importance of Teen Mental Health dialogue and policy. In witness hereof. I here unto cause the seal of the County of Allegheny to be affixed this 23rd day of May 2023. Thank you all for this, recognizing this, doing the work, and making sure that we're connecting teens to mental health resources.

Thank you.

MS. MCSORLEY: Good evening and happy Teen Mental Health Awareness Day. My name is Bryn McSorley. I'm an 11th grader who attends high school in Shadyside, and I, along with Mohammed, Mingi and our wonderful adult Sarah, am a proud part of the PA Youth Advocacy Teen Working Group. Awareness is important because knowledge truly is power. Many of us with lived mental health experience remember the first time we learned we could put a name to our condition, that weren't alone and that help existed. I know I sure do.

It is our sincerest hope that this proclamation will shed light and spread awareness so that others can

experience the same revelation and eventually relief. And with that, I'm going to pass it over to Mohammed.

MR. SHADID: Hello and good afternoon, everyone. My name is Mohammed Shadid. I'm a senior at South Fayette High School. Thank you for this opportunity, recognizing the proclamation and allowing young people such as ourselves to have a voice that is heard and respected. So of course, as you all are aware, the mental health epidemic amongst adolescents in the United States has grown to concerning levels. One of the issues that strengthens the taboo and stigma around mental health and many other issues, as I'm sure you're all aware, as policymakers and advocates, is ignorance and a lack of awareness.

Many people do not know what they are experiencing when going through bouts of anxiety and depression, as is often the case with young people, so they don't address it initially, seeking out support or resources, thus exacerbating their issue. Something I've personally observed in my years of high school is that it's the same case for many first and second generation immigrants, as their country of origin generally does not advocate for or support the notion of struggling with and taking care of your mental health.

So my family is from Egypt, and as is the case with many other Middle Eastern countries, there is the fear of admitting to mental health struggles and breaking the status quo of being strong, especially for men. However, I was very fortunate to be educated in the United States, and I had a class my sophomore year of high school called Applied Positive Psychology. And I had to analyze a book called The Happiness Advantage by Sean Acre. And one of the quotes that was groundbreaking for me and would change my perception is that happiness is not the result of success, but success is the result of happiness. So these words were a little bit confusing to me at first. I try to ignore them, but I was always wondering if it would be possible to have both a successful and happy life, because oftentimes here we see in the United States that people sacrifice one or the other.

As I write on and learn more about the phenomenon of mental health, I realized that was always a prevalent issue in my life. There are many aspects of who I am that taught me the importance of mental health. Specifically, in Egypt, I have cousins who have to

secretly take antidepressants behind their parents and family's back because they're afraid of them knowing. And I've seen, like through my grandparents, uncles, older people, they've struggled with mental health. And that proved to me that mental health isn't specifically created by gen Z, as many people often think. And then I'm a Muslim. So the Quran, which is our holy book, also talks about mental health and taking care of your health overall. So what I did is I went to my local mosque and shared this information, and I saw the effect it had with many people coming up to me and saying that they learn more and we're going to look for resources to take care of mental health.

And this proved to me the notion that education and providing information and spreading awareness can cause many people to overcome the stigma and eradicate the stigma in this country, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania and beyond. So thank you again for allowing us this opportunity to continue to spread awareness and education about this. Thank you.

MS. BENNETT: Are doing pictures after?

PRESIDENT CATENA: We'll take pictures after.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12686-23.

MS. ROKA: A proclamation recognizing Dr. Timothy Wagner for being named 2023 Pennsylvania's Principal of the Year, sponsored by Councilmember Duerr.

MR. DUERR: All right. So I have the very unique honor to be here honoring Dr. Wagner, who was named Pennsylvania's 2020 year Principal of the Year. Dr. Wagner is the principal at Upper St. Clair High School. This is very interesting for me because as a proud born and raised Bethel Park Blackhawk, I do not normally highlight and honor those in Upper St. Clair, given our wonderful rivalry over the past - over my time at Bethel Park High School. But Dr. Wagner's commitment to education, improving the students' lives in Upper St. Clair and everyone in the South Hills is a true testament to what makes District Five in the South Hills such a wonderful place to live.

So Dr. Wagner, I'm going to read the proclamation, but congratulations from me and from all of my colleagues who want to say thank you very much for all the work you do making Allegheny County Upper St. Clair and our school districts such a robust and wonderful place

to grow up in and to provide such wonderful service for the students of this county.

So whereas Pennsylvania Principals Association is the only professional organization in Pennsylvania dedicated to the support and wellbeing of school administrators, with a special emphasis on elementary, middle and high school principals. Each year, PPA awards a middle level or high school principal, both public and private school, who provides outstanding leadership for their students, staff, community and peers. And whereas Upper St. Clair High School Principal Dr. Timothy Wagner has been named Pennsylvania's 2023 Principal of the Year by the PA Principals Association.

As a state winner, Dr. Wagner is now a candidate for the 2023/'24 National Secondary Principal of the Year, a program of the National Association of Secondary School Principals. And whereas Dr. Wagner was nominated but for the award by Dr. Dan Beck, UC - Upper St. Clair High School assistant principal with letters of support from students, teachers, parents and district administrators. According to Dr. Beck, it's Dr. Wagner's humility and philosophical beliefs around collective decision making that help make Upper St. Clair High School a special place to teach and learn. And whereas Dr. Wagner has spent his entire professional career in Upper St. Clair School District, gaining experience at the elementary, middle school and high school levels.

In 2007, he began his teaching career at Streams Elementary School. Throughout his tenure with the district, he has also taught middle level English Social Studies and served as a gifted education coordinator for students in grades 7 through 12. In 2013 to 2015, Dr. Reiner served as the middle school English teacher, language arts curriculum leader. He then joined the Upper St. Clair High School administration in 2015 as an associate principal for program planning and innovation and in 2019 was named the school's principal.

And whereas, Dr. Wagner has implemented several initiatives that promote students emotional well-being, such as mental health awareness programs, which include speakers and activities, counseling services that are available to every student around the clock, and stress reducing activities, such as philanthropic sports competitions. And whereas, Dr. Reiner has also worked to help support programming and promote equity and inclusion

by working with the activities office and students to develop new clubs to provide an opportunity for each student to feel seen in their school culture. The influence and impact Dr. Weiner's leadership extends beyond students and teachers, as families recognize the difference he makes academically as well as socially and emotionally.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that I, Allegheny County Councilmember Tom Duerr, do hereby recognize and congratulate Dr. Timothy Wagner for being named Pennsylvania's 2023 Principal of the Year by the PA Principals Association. And I thank Dr. Wagner for his unwavering commitment, leadership, service to the children, families and staff of Upper St. Clair. In witness hereof I here unto cause the seal of County of Allegheny to be affixed this 23rd day of May 2023. Dr. Wagner, congratulations.

DR. WAGNER: Thank you. Thank you so much. Councilmember Duerr. And to the entire Council, thank you for this proclamation. It means so much to me. Dr. Dan Beck, my colleague, who's here this evening for the nomination. Thank you. Thank you as well. It's really an honor to serve the children and the families and the staff in Upper St. Clair, but it's also a privilege to work in the South Hills and to work in Allegheny County. We have wonderful schools. And to be a part of that on behalf of beyond the boundaries of our school district is something that I take seriously and have a lot of respect for.

When the work of being the Principal of the Year begins shortly and I get opportunities like traveling to Washington, D.C. in the fall to represent our state, I will certainly be keeping the people and the priorities, the health, the mental health, and the well-being of Pittsburgh in mind as I do that work. So thank you for this proclamation, this honor. It's wonderful to live in our city. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12687-23.

MS. ROKA: Before proceeding, please let the record reflect that Ms. Filiaggi is now present.

A proclamation recognizing Shaler Hampton EMS for being awarded the 2023 Pennsylvania EMS Agency of the Year, sponsored by Councilmember Prizio.

MS. PRIZIO: I am so thrilled that all of you could come, especially from Shaler and Hampton. And most

importantly, the chief is actually my neighbor, and we actually grew up in the houses where we live, so -. And let me read this proclamation.

Whereas every year, Shaler Hampton EMS holds a joint board of directors and staff meetings during which they go over the state of organization and encourage interaction between staff and directors. And whereas at the annual meeting on May 10, 2023, Shaler Hampton EMS was awarded the 2023 Pennsylvania EMS Agency of the Year Award. And whereas Shaler Hampton EMS enhances the quality of life by providing the highest level of pre-hospital care possible, thereby improving the outcomes of catastrophic illness and significant injury. And whereas Shaler Hampton EMS operates five advanced life support ALS ambulances, they are equipped with ALS and Basic Life support BLS equipment that exceeds the Pennsylvania Department of Health requirements. And whereas beyond this service, Shaler Hampton EMS offers car seat safety checks, CPR classes, athletic and public events, EMS coverage, and many trainings such as First Aid and Stop the Bleed.

And whereas Shaler Hampton EMS consists of a combination of dedicated and volunteer staff that provide services to Shaler Township, Hampton Township, and Aetna Borough. Now, therefore, be it resolved that I, Allegheny County Councilmember Anita Prizio, do hereby honor and congratulate Shaler Hampton EMS upon the occasion of being awarded the 2023 Pennsylvania EMS Agency of the Year Award. And I extend sincere gratitude to its staff, past and present, for their commitment and dedication to serving the residents of Allegheny County. In witness, whereof I have here unto cause the seal of the county of Allegheny to be affixed this 23rd day of June, May --- 23rd day of May 2023. Sorry.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Thank you so much. Thank you. Thank you so much, Council Prizio. And we have indeed grown up in the same neighborhood. I don't know how she's so much younger than me since we grew up together, but thank you so much for having us. I did want to make a few comments. Coincidentally, this happens to be National EMS Week, and we celebrated that today. We had an Allegheny County EMS Council meeting at the Hampton Community Center. We had a great showing of a lot of the emergency equipment available throughout Allegheny County to support us in disaster situations and so forth. With me today, to

my right are two very important people to me, Bill Cross, who's the president of our board, and Vice President of Council for Shaler Township, and Bethany Blackburn, who is the Vice President of our board and the Vice President of Council in Hampton Township. So they are 2 of 12 people that serve on our board and are a critical part of the success of Shaler Hampton EMS.

As a service we answer a little over 5,000 calls a year to the three communities we support. As already mentioned, Aetna, Hampton and Shaler. We are very fortunate. One of the differentiations for us is the amount of support that we get from our communities, and by that I mean in the form of funding. EMS, as you probably have heard through your endeavors here as Councilmembers, is in crisis, as is public safety in general. Police and firefighters across the region are having problems with staffing. We are not experiencing those problems simply because of the support that we get. We are 1 of 34 agencies in Allegheny County, 34 EMS agencies. We answer over 200,000 calls a year, emergency calls for those agencies.

And just as a quick comparison, I'm going to leave you this detail behind and ask you just to please, among your 15 districts, to get to know the EMS agencies in your district and find out what their challenges are. Because I assure you, they exist in one form or another, some to greater degrees than others. So in the Allegheny County, the total public safety spend minus the City of Pittsburgh is \$251 million. That breaks down to \$217 million to the 140 police agencies, \$30 million to the 296 fire agencies, and \$3.6 million to the 34 EMS agencies. I say that not to diminish the importance of my public safety colleagues in police and fire, but to say that there's a common misperception with EMS that because we bill for insurance that there's not a need for additional support. Today there most certainly is in many EMS agencies.

So I gratefully acknowledge the recognition from Councilperson Prizio, and I ask your indulgence to please get to know your local EMS agencies and find out what their challenges might be. Thank you very much.

(Photographs taken)

PRESIDENT CATENA: The remaining proclamations that we read into the record.

12688-23.

MS. ROKA: A proclamation congratulating Harley Hartley for being named a South Hills Area School Districts Association award recipient, sponsored by Councilmembers Catena and Palmosina.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12689-23.

MS. ROKA: A proclamation congratulating Point Pleasant upon the occasion of being awarded the US News and World Report 2023 to 2024 best Independent Living Award, sponsored by Councilmember Naccarati-Chapkis.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12690-23.

MS. ROKA: A proclamation recognizing and congratulating Patrick Bennett on achieving the rank of Eagle Scout, sponsored by Councilmember Macey.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12691-23.

MS. ROKA: A proclamation recognizing and congratulating Daniel Snyder on achieving the rank of Eagle Scout, sponsored by Councilmember Macey.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12692-23.

MS. ROKA: A proclamation recognizing and congratulating Brandon Graham on achieving the rank of Eagle Scout, sponsored by Councilmember Macey.

PRESIDENT CATENA: We'll now have public comment on the agenda items. In the sake of transparency, Bill Number 12345-22 is being held tonight. That's the minimum wage bill. So go ahead, Sarah.

MS. ROKA: First up is Dan Grzybek.

MR. GRZYBEK: Good evening, Council. My name is Dan Grzybek. G-R-Z-Y-B-E-K. I'm a resident of Bethel Park. I came primarily to speak on 12345 TAC 22, but thankfully, I also came to speak on behalf of Ordinances 12607 TAC 23, as well as 12609 TAC 23, which would set campaign donation limits within the county and create more regular filings.

I think the past election cycle has made it more clear than ever how badly reform is needed within our county campaign finance. As campaign finance laws in Allegheny County currently stand, individuals and political action committees are able to donate unlimited amounts of money and have incredibly outsized influence in our elections. This is often leading politicians to follow where the money is and not necessarily where the will of the voters is. Additionally, by having no required campaign finance deadlines between the beginning of the year and the second Friday before the primary, it's

very difficult for voters to know who campaigns are being funded by before they vote.

Creating donation limits and adding required filing dates would alleviate both of these issues. While I believe that it would be preferable for this legislation to be conducted on the state level, and I do still acknowledge that independent expenditures still create an incredible problem for campaign finance, I think that voting against this item would be letting perfect kind of get in the way of good. So for this reason, I'm asking you to support both ordinance 12607 TAC 23 and 12609 TAC 23 and to vote to override any future veto of these items. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Next?

MS. ROKA: Jack Joseph.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Next?

MS. ROKA: Lauren Hargart.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Next?

MS. ROKA: Marie Norman.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Next?

MS. ROKA: Marianne Raymer?

MS. RAYMER: Good evening, everyone. My name is Marianne Raymer Raymer and I'm a resident of Bethel Park. And I'm speaking to you today to urge you to support Bills 12607-23, 12608-23 and 12609-23, all of which would greatly improve our current campaign finance laws in Allegheny County. Because of the last primary election, I'm more aware than ever that large amounts of money from PACs and third parties influenced the outcome in the primary. Almost \$5 million was spent on the county executive campaigns. It's hypocritical to call it a local election when a large portion of the financial support came from outside the county. If the FEC rules dictate the maximum amount for federal elections and have been adopted for the City of Pittsburgh elections, why would we not want the same oversight for county elections? Under FEC regulations, an individual can donate \$3,300 to a campaign and a PAC can donate \$5,000.

In the county executive campaign, individual donations were reported by some candidates to be as high as \$100,000 and PAC contributions to be as high as \$112,000. If individuals and PACs make a large donation, do you not suspect that the candidates they donate to will support their policies and reward them with contracts? I

can't understand why anyone would not want to limit that power or control over candidates.

Super PACs and non-major parties such as the Working Family Party will still flood the airways with ads and send out expensive mailers. But we would at least limit the amount of money directly donated into a campaign by adopting these guidelines. This will somewhat level the playing field for candidates. Changing the reporting dates to provide for more frequent reporting prior to the election, educates the public as to who is financing the campaign. This all makes sense if we were to say we want elections to be better understood by the average voter.

These changes in the county finance laws will only make the election process more open, transparent and limiting to outside lobbying and influence. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Next.

MS. ROKA: Erica Brusselers.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Not here.

MS. ROKA: Matt Singer?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Not here. Oh, sorry.

MR. SINGER: Good evening, members of Council. My name is Matt Singer and I work as Chief of Staff Allegheny County Controller Corey O'Connor. I'm here on Controller O'Connor's behalf to express his support for the package of campaign finance reform legislation that this body is currently considering. The stricter reporting requirements enhanced public disclosures and clarification on appropriate use of campaign funds contained therein will be a boom to transparency and serve the residents of Allegheny County well. Furthermore, aligning contribution limits with FCC regulations will help set clear standards for candidates and voters. Campaign finance laws serve as a public interest accountability mechanism, and these reforms will strengthen it and the tools of transparency that are afforded to our public. I'd also like to applaud the amendments, chapter 220 that would explicitly permit the use of campaign funds for childcare expenses for candidates.

Controller O'Connor was a prime sponsor of a comparable bill when he previously served on Pittsburgh City Council. Legislation of this sort supports parents caregivers and families, helps break down barriers for running for office. As an example of clearly stating the importance of childcare and understanding the intense

financial demands that it can cause, this legislation in particular, will advance equity in our county. On behalf of Controller O'Connor, I'd like to applaud Councilmember Duerr for introducing these bills, Councilmember Macey for his co-sponsorship, and any other members who support this suite of legislation and humbly request it's a swift passage and adoption. Thank you.

MS. ROKA: Michelle Feingold.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Not here. Okay. Moving on. Approval of minutes. 12693-23.

MS. ROKA: Motion to approve the minutes of the March 21st, 2023 regular meeting of Council.

MR. MACEY: Motion to move.

MR. KLEIN: 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? Motion carries.

12694-23.

MS. ROKA: Motion to approve the minutes of the April 4th, 2023 regular meeting of Council.

MR. MACEY: Motion to approve.

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? Motion carries. Presentation of Appointments any appointments tonight? No? Unfinished Business - Committee on Appointment Review for the second reading.

12649-23.

MS. ROKA: Approving the appointment of Phyllis J. Anderson to the Allegheny County Conservation District Board for a term to expire on December 31st, 2026, sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Councilmember, Naccarati-Chapkis?

MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS: Yes. President Catena, the Committee on Appointment Review met on May 18th, 2023 and affirmatively recommends this appointment. I'd like to make that motion, please.

MR. MACEY: Second.

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

(Chorus of Ayes)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed?

MS. PRIZIO: Opposed.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Motion carries. 12666-23?

MS. ROKA: Approving the appointment of Lilas Soukop to the Friends of the Park for South Park for a term to expire on May 9, 2026.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Councilmember Naccarati-Chapkis?

MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS: President Catena, the Committee on Appointment Review met on May the 18th, 2023, and affirmatively recommends this appointment. I'd like to make that motion, please.

MR. MACEY: 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?

Motion carries.

Committee on Government Reform for the Second Reading. 12345-22, at the request of the primary sponsor,

MS. PRIZIO: Opposed.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Second. 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? Motion carries. Committee on Government Reform for the second reading. At the request of the primary sponsor. That bill is going to be held until she can be present in person.

12607-23?

MS. ROKA: An ordinance of the county of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, repealing all existing provisions of the Allegheny County Code of Ordinances Chapter 220, entitled Campaign Finance Reports and Statements, replacing them with new provisions in order to establish updated campaign finance regulations

for all candidates for county elected office and making related amendments to Article 1013 of the Administrative Code of Allegheny County, sponsored by Councilmembers Duerr and Macey.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Do you want to make your -?

MR. DUERR: Yes. Thank you, President Catena. So I passed along an amendment to this bill, and I've reached out to a number of members about that amendment. It was brought to my attention by my illustrious colleague, Councilmember DeMarco, that another one of the bills that we're considering tonight was amended in Committee and does not match the language currently in the bill. This is the downside of talking about three bills simultaneously, all on the same subject. So the amendment I put forward on this would align all three legislations tonight, 607, 6869, so that the language matches in all three in case all three of them pass.

So it doesn't change anything substantively about the bill, it just make sure that the language in all three is consistent with one another. And I have reached out to a number of colleagues explaining that, and I want to thank Councilman DeMarco for bringing that to my attention. So thank you, Sam. But one of the things we will need to do is to waive the 48-hour rule because that amendment was put forward past the 48-hour rule for that.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion to waive?

MR. MACEY: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Is there any discussion on waiving the 48-hour rule? None? All those in favor signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of Ayes)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed? Motion carries.

MR. DUERR: Okay. And same explanation, yes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: So is there a motion?

MR. DUERR: I would like to make a motion to adopt Duerr-1 into 12607-23.

MS. PRIZIO: Second.

MR. KLEIN: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Discussion?

MR. BETKOWSKI: President Catena?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead. Go ahead, Councilman.

MR. BETKOWSKI: Thank you, President Catena.
My comments on this is, in my opinion, the role of local government is public safety, public health, and all of the activities associated with supporting that mission.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Councilman Betkowski, I believe you're on the wrong bill. We haven't had the discussion of the bill yet. This is just the amendment

MR. BETKOWSKI: Apologies, President Catena.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Is there any discussion on the amendment? Has everyone had a chance to read the amendment? Does anyone need more time? If no one needs more time, then let's take a roll call vote. Sarah?

MS. ROKA: On the motion to amend 12607-23.

MS. ROKA: Ms. Bennett?

MS. BENNETT: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Mr. Betkowski?

MR. BETKOWSKI: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Mr. DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Mr. Duerr?

MR. DUERR: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Ms. Filiaggi.

MS. FILIAGGI: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Mr. Futules?

MR. FUTULES: Yes..

MS. ROKA: Ms. Hallam?

MS. HALLAM: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Mr. Klein?

MR. KLEIN: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Mr. Macey?

MR. MACEY: Yes..

MS. ROKA: Ms. Naccarati-Chapkis?

MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Mr. Palmiere?

MR. PALMIERE: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Mr. Palmosina?

MR. PALMOSINA: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Ms. Prizio?

MS. PRIZIO: Yes..

MS. ROKA: Mr. Walton?

MR. WALTON: Yes.

MS. ROKA: And President Catena?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Ayes 15, motion to amend passes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay.

Now we're on the main bill. So at this point in time, is there a motion on the main bill?

MR. DUERR: Motion to approve the 12607-23.

MR. KLEIN: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Is there any discussion? Now, Councilman Betkowski is your opportunity.

MR. BETKOWSKI: Thank you so much, and I appreciate your indulgence for me going out of order. So my comments, I won't repeat all of what I said, but the gist of it is each level of government, local, county, state, federal, has different roles and responsibilities. At the local level, in my opinion, our responsibilities center around public safety, public health, and all of those activities that support that mission. So, in my opinion, although I completely and enthusiastically support the intent of the three bills that will be coming up, I do believe that they really are outside of our jurisdiction. So I thank you for your time.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Councilman Klein?

MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. President. The matter that is the subject of this particular ordinance is one that is, or at least should be, of interest and concern to people across party lines. I think that this is clearly a bipartisan issue, and it gives me a chance to reference someone whose name you might not recognize, but the organization that he created is one that many people recognize. So John W. Gardner was the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare back in the day, before it became Health and Human Services under Lyndon Johnson. He was also a Republican, and he started an organization called Common Cause. And he is often referred to or regarded as the father of campaign finance reform.

In his 1964 book entitled Self Renewal, The Individual in the Innovative Society, Gardner said this. He said, failure to face the realities of change brings heavy penalties. Individuals become imprisoned in their own rigidities. Great institutions deteriorate. Civilizations fall. Yet decay is not inevitable. There is also renewal, but we need to reform before we can renew. And as Gardner also observed, the citizen can bring our political and governmental institutions back to life, make them responsive and accountable, and keep them honest. No one else can. With these measures that we are

considering this evening, and I'm speaking of the first one at this point, we are attempting to, in our own small way in our county, to make real, the promise of campaign finance reform. This is an opportunity for those who may give lip service to the need for campaign finance reform to now act on it. A hard pill for many to swallow, to be sure, but it's time to decide that candidates for public office can no longer be bought, and our government, at least here, is not for sale. So thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Anyone else this evening? Councilman DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: Thank you very much, Mr. President. There are three campaign finance bills on the agenda for this evening, and I can support number two in regards to child care number three in regards to reporting, but I do have issues with this particular bill here. I am in agreement with everyone here that finance and reform is required and needed. Okay? The issue is that this doesn't address the elephant in the room, so to speak. Number one, we haven't seen the finance reports from the 30-day post primary of this recent election to find out exactly what was given by all these candidates. This doesn't address, you know, the fact that we had a pack in the District Attorney's race with at least \$734,000 in in-kind contributions. This doesn't affect that we had a pack out of New York, working families party come in and put a tremendous amount of money into one of the county executive's race.

So my concern is what we're doing is we're just cutting off avenues in one direction but we're not addressing in totality the problem to try to create a level playing field for everyone. The second concern I have is it allows self-funded candidates to donate up to \$100,000 of their own money before and then all it does is before, then all it does is allows the FEC limits to be doubled so you can go from 3000 to 6000. Okay? You're still at a significant disadvantage here, and my concern is that by passing this bill, what we're doing is we're actually promoting self-funded wealthy candidates to either run for these offices or third-party independent expenditure PACs to basically come in and buy elections here in Allegheny County.

Another issue that I have has to do with the penalties. When I look at the penalties, it says for every \$2,000 above the limit, it's fining the person

\$1,000. Okay? But it doesn't say like, for example, today in campaign law if you're late returning a campaign finance report you can get penalized up to \$20 or \$10 a day for county for a candidate committee report or \$20 for a committee report. And it says that can't be paid for with money from your campaign fund. Well, here it doesn't say anything about that. Okay? Then it also levies the fine for failure to file late \$50 a day on top of it.

So I applaud my colleague's desire to try to step in where he sees a need for reform. I just think that this particular bill at this particular time is a little bit premature. And I think we need to look again when we have the opportunity to review the campaign finance reports from this past election, to look at those, see what the impact has been and where some other adjustments may be made to be able to put forth a holistic bill that addresses the whole independent expenditures, committee PACs and individual contributions. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Anyone else this evening? Hearing none -.

MR. DUERR: I will - I was going to wait 'til (sic) everyone's comments were done. Michelle, do you have - I wasn't sure if you wanted to say -?

MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS: No.

MR. DUERR: Okay.

Well, first off, I have called you all a lot over the past couple days and I've had the chance to speak with all of you around this topic. And while some of you I know are going to be supportive of tonight, some of you have not. I truly appreciate the robust discussion about a topic that I know very few people care about besides me in the same way that I was shoehorning and really driving the ship on redistricting reform, and I continue to do that. And as we redraw our map, I was the one who was bothering everyone about communities of interest.

There's a reason why I focus in on these issues. You know, before, as Councilman Betkowski said, we get to public safety before we get to the public health safety and the well-being of our communities, we have to elect them. How we elect our candidates, how campaigns and candidates are being funded, is the foundation of the decisions we make in this room.

It's how the people in this room are chosen, is everything. It's how we decide on what we're going to

talk about up here. It's how the entire agenda for not just county government, but state and federal governments, as well is decided, is how we select our candidates. And it's why I am so avid, and such an avid believer that we need to take a holistic approach to reforming our government to make it more holistic and exemplary of what the average voter thinks. And a part of that, a large part of that is campaign finance reform.

Right now, in jurisdictions across the country, we have seen these type of limits be instituted to a bettering effect. And the question we're faced with right now, that this body is faced with right now is do we want to send a message to the residents of this county that our elections are for sale, that our candidates are for sale to the highest bidder, to the sums of \$100,000, even more than that, \$800,000, \$900,000, which did occur this past election, there were candidates receiving single - or direct contributions from PACs sums north of \$800,000.

I can't criticize those candidates for taking that money because right now they are playing by the rules in which we set out for them, in which there are none. And that, my friends, my colleagues, is the issue that faces us today. Do we want to take a stand and say that our elections and our candidates are not for sale and that government needs to work in the best interest of the people, not the ultra-wealthy, not the dark money group shoveling money into this county from outside the state, but from the people of this county itself?

In response to two of the criticisms that I heard of the bill, first off, I will say, County Council has such a narrow avenue of authority on such a small number of issues. It's been the hardest part of being here. I think everyone on this body would agree. A lot of us have so many different policy points that we're passionate about, but so few can actually be accomplished on this body. It's what makes serving here really hard and what makes running for this body really hard, but we very clearly have the authority to pass this. And I think because we have the authority, we have the obligation to, because this type of change, while I agree, would be fantastic from a state level, we also know how Harrisburg functions. And it's even more dysfunctional than this 15-member body is at times.

So while I would very strongly urge our leaders in Harrisburg on both parties to adopt this statewide, we

have the authority, clearly, to pass something like this tonight. And the second criticism I heard is this isn't holistic enough to tackle the issues of dark money and independent expenditures. So I firmly believe we need robust campaign finance reform at every level of government. And of course, the elephant in the room really is Citizens United and the federal government not being able to really tackle this on a national level. But one of the things we can do for these outside groups who are looking to spend once again sums of 800, \$900,000 into our elections is stop them from being able to coordinate with those campaigns directly. And until we have limits in place, there's nothing stopping any type of PAC, whether it be Working Families Party, whether it be SCIU, whether it be any of the building trades, or any of the PACs that supported any of the district magistrate candidates this past election cycle. There's nothing to stopping them from coordinating directly to the sums of over a million dollars with these campaigns directly. And I can tell you, as someone who has worked on campaigns for a living, putting up that barrier and that hurdle in front of a candidate in an independent expenditure, there is something lost there. It makes it harder, absolutely. But at the end of the day, that is what these types of laws are meant to do. It's meant to uplift the candidates who are more indicative of the voters that they are looking to represent, and cast a light on the candidates who are being funded primarily by a few small sources.

So you all have heard me preach this gospel enough. To those of you who are going to support this tonight, thank you from the bottom of my heart. This is something I am incredibly passionate about. This is one of the hills I have chosen to die on. And we will see what this Bill's fate is in a few minutes and hopefully after. But regardless of how it turns out, I appreciate at least all of my colleagues attention and diligence they have brought to this topic, which means so much to me. So thank you, President Catena.

PRESIDENT CATENA: You're welcome. Anyone else this evening?

MR. FUTULES: Yeah.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead, Councilman.

MR. FUTULES: I have maybe a bit of a suggestion. Sam brought up some points where there has been some mistakes in this bill. If, by chance, one of

two things, send it back to Committee and fix it or pass it tonight and maybe come back in two weeks with an amendment to correct the problems that you brought up, Sam, so that you would be more apt to voting for it this evening just for that purpose, just to correct some of the mistakes that you found.

I don't know which way the direction you want to go, but just a suggestion. I'd like to see 15 members of council all agree unanimously for something like this. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Councilman DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: Thank you, Mr. President. And again, I think we heard our colleague express very well and very particularly what he viewed as the problem. But he talked about --- touched on three things. He talked about we shouldn't have outside interests being able to come in and buy elections here in Allegheny County. I wholeheartedly agree. And that's why I object to not having something in here to address those large outside group PACs, that dark money that we're talking about.

Secondly, he talked about the people that run for Allegheny County Council. You talked about frustration on this body because folks weren't able to accomplish some of the things that they had hoped to do. I'm not frustrated at what I perceive as the purview of council because before I ran, I read the charter and the administrative code, and it clearly outlined that our role is to pass an operating and capital budget. It's to pass legislation initiated by the county executive, members of council, or citizens of referendum. It's to levy all taxes and fees, and it's to oversee real estate.

So when I ran for this body, I understood what my limitations were and what the expectations were. And just, I would just say to - and this is not a shot at my colleague, this is more to folks that are looking at prospectively running for any type of elected office. I think it's incredibly important that you look into what the role of that position is so that you don't go into it thinking you want to do one thing and then find yourself frustrated because you're unable to do it.

So that's it. Mr. President, thank you very much for the time.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Anyone else this evening? Hearing no one else, Sarah, Roll Call?

MS. ROKA: On the motion to approve 12607-23,

Ms. Bennett?
 MS. BENNETT: Yes.
 MS. ROKA: Mr. Betkowski?
 MR. BETKOWSKI: No.
 MS. ROKA: Mr. DeMarco?
 MR. DEMARCO: No.
 MS. ROKA: Mr. Duerr?
 MR. DUERR: Yes.
 MS. ROKA: Ms. Filiaggi.
 MS. FILIAGGI: Yes.
 MS. ROKA: Mr. Futules?
 MR. FUTULES: Yes.
 MS. ROKA: Ms. Hallam?
 MS. HALLAM: Yes.
 MS. ROKA: Mr. Klein?
 MR. KLEIN: Yes..
 MS. ROKA: Mr. Macey?
 MR. MACEY: Yes.
 MS. ROKA: Ms. Naccarati-Chapkis?
 MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS: Yes.
 MS. ROKA: Mr. Palmiere?
 MR. PALMIERE: Yes.
 MS. ROKA: Mr. Palmosina?
 MR. PALMOSINA: Yes.
 MS. ROKA: Ms. Prizio?
 MS. PRIZIO: Yes.
 MS. ROKA: Mr. Walton?
 MR. WALTON: Yes.
 MS. ROKA: President Catena?
 PRESIDENT CATENA: Yes.
 MS. ROKA: Ayes 13, no's 2. Motion passes.
 PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. 12608-23.

MS. ROKA: An ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, amending and supplementing the Allegheny County Code of Ordinances Chapter 220 entitled Campaign Finance Regulations in order to clarify the permissible uses of campaign funds, by candidates for county-elected office, sponsored by Councilmembers Duerr and Macey.

MR. DUERR: Mr. President, I have an amendment on this as well, and this was a recommendation from my colleagues on the Committee of Government Reform. So while we were discussing this bill in Government Reform, it was suggested, I believe, by Councilmember Klein, that we expand the definition in this bill from child care to

family care, make it more holistic of the - you know, if that's the intent of the bill. I thought it was a great idea by my colleagues and all of us, all the members of Government Reform who were available at the last meeting last Wednesday, all agreed that was a good change to make, and I promised I would set forth, put forward an amendment that would do just that.

So the amendment that would change this ordinance, it would change the ordinance from allowing money raised from PAC funds during campaign cycles to be used from childcare it would change that from childcare over to family care as well. So a more holistic approach and all encompassing, which I think, given the intent of the bill, is a good way to go. So - and this one was sent out well ahead of the 48 hours. So this does not need a waiver of the second reading or the 48-hour rule.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Is there a motion to amend?

MR. MACEY: So moved.

MS. BENNETT: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. This is on the - or I'm sorry, hold off on the vote. I was thinking a 48-hours rule, but no. Everyone's getting a chance to read this. Does anyone have any concerns or questions or discussion?

MR. DUERR: Yeah, this is the only amendment correct.

MS. ROKA: On the motion to amend 12608-23.

MS. ROKA: Ms. Bennett?

MS. BENNETT: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Mr. Betkowski?

MR. BETKOWSKI: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Mr. DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Mr. Duerr?

MR. DUERR: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Ms. Filiaggi.

MS. FILIAGGI: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Mr. Futules?

MR. FUTULES: Yes..

MS. ROKA: Ms. Hallam?

MS. HALLAM: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Mr. Klein?

MR. KLEIN: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Mr. Macey?

MR. MACEY: Yes.

MS. ROKA: Ms. Naccarati-Chapkis?
MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Mr. Palmiere?
MR. PALMIERE: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Mr. Palmosina?
MR. PALMOSINA: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Ms. Prizio?
MS. PRIZIO: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Mr. Walton?
MR. WALTON: Yes.
MS. ROKA: President Catena?
PRESIDENT CATENA: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Ayes 15, motion to amend passes.
PRESIDENT CATENA: Would someone like to make
the motion as amended?
MR. WALTON: Motion to approve.
MR. MACEY: Second.
PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and
seconded. Any discussion? Hearing no discussion, Roll
Call?
MS. ROKA: Ms. Bennett?
MS. BENNETT: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Mr. Betkowski?
MR. BETKOWSKI: No.
MS. ROKA: Mr. DeMarco?
MR. DEMARCO: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Mr. Duerr?
MR. DUERR: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Ms. Filiaggi.
MS. FILIAGGI: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Mr. Futules?
MR. FUTULES: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Ms. Hallam?
MS. HALLAM: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Mr. Klein?
MR. KLEIN: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Mr. Macey?
MR. MACEY: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Ms. Naccarati-Chapkis?
MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Mr. Palmiere?
MR. PALMIERE: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Mr. Palmosina?
MR. PALMOSINA: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Ms. Prizio?

MS. PRIZIO: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Mr. Walton?
MR. WALTON: Yes.
MS. ROKA: President Catena?
PRESIDENT CATENA: Yes.
MS. ROKA: Ayes 14, no's 1. Motion to approve

passes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12609-23 is going to be held.

MR. DUERR: Mr. President, can I give an explanation on that real quick?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Yeah.

MR. DUERR: So language of 12609-23 already appears in the ordinance that we passed tonight, 12607-23. I introduced both separately because there is a chance that the 12607-23 does not get signed into law. In the case that would be vetoed, I wanted to make sure we had another bill to put forward, just the reporting deadline. So passing it again would be redundant at this point. So I would like to hold it and wait to see what the administration decides to do in regards to 12607-23. So, thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Any other discussion? Hearing none -. Go ahead.

MS. ROKA: Mr. President, it was held.

PRESIDENT CATENA: No vote, sorry. I'm expecting a vote.

Okay. So we'll move on to 12681-23.

MS. ROKA: Motion of the Council of Allegheny County urging the General Assembly to enact with all deliberate speed, the provisions of SB-400, introduced on April 26, 2023, and providing for the institution of a semi-open primary election voting process in the Commonwealth sponsored by Councilmember Duerr.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Councilmember Hallam?

MS. HALLAM: Thank you so much, President Catena. The Committee on Government Reform met and affirmatively recommended this bill to the full Council. I would like to make a motion to approve.

MS. BENNETT: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion?

MR. DUERR: Mr. President, in the same breath of my speech a little bit ago, this is something that's been discussed, and I'm glad were able to have a discussion about it in Government Reform. This is something that's

being discussed at the state level right now. And as I mentioned, how we elect our candidates, who gets to elect them, is such a big talking point for me and such a passionate policy point for me. And one of those changes that's being discussed at the state level right now is the prospect of opening up our primary elections to our registered voters who are not registered with the Democratic or Republican party, but voting up to independents. And I think, as Councilman DeMarco said during the committee process, this has been something that's been thrown around for a little bit now in Harrisburg. And there's a bipartisan bill put forward to potentially accomplish this being considered right now in the State Senate.

I am a big supporter of this initiative. I believe that if we are to have a true democracy, opening up our elections to as many people as possible is a good thing, not a bad thing. And I think that I'm hoping that this motion passing, while I know something small, will help continue that ongoing discussion in Harrisburg as they consider this bill going forward. So thank you very much.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Any other discussion? Councilman DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: Thank you, Mr. President. This bill, SB-400 in Harrisburg, is flawed, but the concept behind it, I agree with. Okay? We want everybody, every registered voter in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, to be able to vote in our elections. We want them to participate. And as both parties struggle with the increasing polarization that we deal with here in our elections and what seems to be a nomination of candidates on both sides which are further to either the left or the right, who are able to win a primary, but don't really appeal necessarily to the general electorate at-large, this could provide a potential solution to that.

So just recognizing that the bill itself and when I say it's flawed, it's because they don't write into the statute how the bill is supposed to be administered. It just says they want to do the open primary and then they leave everything open to the Secretary of State to sort of write the rules. And I think everybody should be taking and looking at this, they should be writing into this how they expect the elections divisions in the counties to carry this out.

For example, we vote by mail. So when you request a ballot, and you're an independent, are you requesting a Democrat, Republican? There's nothing in there that spells out the process. There's nothing that spells out the process of how many ballots do we have to keep at the poll ready if independents can switch, go left and right. So it would just be more helpful if Harrisburg would take this, tinker around with it just a little bit more. But I'll be voting yes on this motion here because I support the concept and the idea this evening. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Any other discussion?

MR. BETKOWSKI: President Catena?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead.

MR. BETKOWSKI: I just wanted to comment that I also support the idea of encouraging as much participation in our democracy as possible. I also agree with Councilman DeMarco that it's flawed, but in a perhaps different way. And rather than a semi open primary election, I would be much more in favor of a fully-open primary election. However, in the interests of continuing the discussion in Harrisburg, I will be supporting this measure.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Any other discussion? Hearing no other discussion, all those in favor, signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of Ayes)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed?
Motion carries.

Are there any Liaison Reports this evening?

MR. DUERR: Mr. President? I'm sorry, you're going to hear a lot of me tonight. So primary election day was last week. I'd like to thank Director Voyer and all of our election workers for what was an overwhelmingly quiet Election Day I would say. We had a few issues with some voting machines going down, but it was sparse. And the moment they were brought to Director Voyer's attention, the Elections Office attention, that it was solved almost immediately. So I wanted to thank Director Voyer and his entire team and all of the poll workers across the county for what was, once again, a good Election Day. It's a very quiet Election Day.

Additionally, I wanted to give everyone an update on the write-ins. So I was passed information from

Amy Downes before the meeting tonight about the write-in totals for the county-wide races. So those are now available and the return board is continuing on counting provisionals and the more local write-ins over the next couple of days. So just wanted to give everyone an update on that. So thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you, Councilmember Hallam?

MS. HALLAM: Thank you, President Catena. I just wanted to let the members of Council and the public be made aware that once again, for the second month in a row, the Jail Oversight Board meeting is being rescheduled instead of June 1st, the first Thursday when it is supposed to be taking place, it will be happening the following Thursday, same time, same place, June 8th, 4:00 p.m. in the Gold Room. Again, this is the second month in a row where the meetings have been rescheduled. So I'm just trying to make sure everyone is as aware of possible there have been a lot of deaths in the county lately, both in the Allegheny County Jail and in Renewal Center. And so I just hope that my colleagues and member of the public will start watching the Jail Oversight Board Meetings and maybe show up in person on June 8th.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Is there any other Liaison - or Councilman Palmiere?

MR. PALMIERE: Thank you, Mr. President. I have a comment, too, on the previous bills that we passed with Mr. Duerr and Mr. Macey sponsored. I understand, as a matter of clarification, that these affect the row offices, and this will go into effect in 2025.

MR. DUERR: Correct. It would not affect anything -.

MR. PALMIERE: Anything else other than the -?

MR. DUERR: County offices, John, so County Council is included, too. County offices, row offices and council, but it would not take effect in this election cycle.

MR. PALMIERE: Until 2025.

MR. DUERR: Yes.

MR. PALMIERE: Okay.

MR. DUERR: The next county election cycle.

MR. PALMIERE: Thank you. Thank you very much. And also Mr. President, members of Council, I attended the graduation ceremonies over at Acrisure Stadium last

Thursday for CCAC. We were blessed with a beautiful evening again. And it's so interesting, you know, it's one of the rewards, but - and that's why I attend these excuse me, these exercises, these commencement exercises. We spend a lot of time going over issues and so on and so forth over there at the county - or over at the CCAC. So one of the things for me, the greatest thrill and the best pay that I could possibly get for doing all that work and being at all these meetings is the fact I see these students and all these people coming up, and there was a huge crowd of mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles and everyone over there. It was wonderful. It was just a wonderful evening, and I'm so glad and so proud to be a part of it. Mr. President, thank you very much.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Anyone else this evening? Councilman DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. President. I forgot, last week's Carnegie Library Board Meeting, the board voted to permit the Carnegie Libraries of Pittsburgh to work with Allegheny County to assume management and oversight of the law library here for Allegheny County. For at least the last 25 years, it has been managed by Duquesne University, and the County is looking at making a change here. And so the Board of the Carnegie Library approved the ability for those folks to work together with the county to try to negotiate a long-term contract. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Anyone else this evening? Seeing no one else, moving on to New Business. Ordinances and Resolutions 12695-23.

MS. ROKA: An ordinance of the county of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, providing for the development of a climate action plan by the Allegheny County Department of Sustainability no later than July 1st, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember Prizio.

PRESIDENT CATENA: That will go to the Committee on Sustainability and Green Initiatives. 12696-23?

MS. ROKA: An ordinance approving the sale of the County's interest in a parcel of property located at 83 Union Avenue North Versailles, Pennsylvania, 15137 and identified as block and lot 0458-H-2, for the sale price of \$3,300 to Royal Penn Realty Group, LLC, sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: That will go to Economic Development. 12697-23?

MS. ROKA: A resolution providing for a program of temporary exemption from county real property taxes for improvements including repairs, construction, or reconstruction made to an industrial, commercial or business property in a deteriorated area in the City of Pittsburgh. County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, pursuant to the Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Act sponsored by the chief executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: That will go to Economic Development as well. 12698-23?

MS. ROKA: A resolution providing for a program of temporary exemption from county real property taxes for improvements including repairs, construction or reconstruction made on industrial, commercial or business property in a deteriorated area in the City of Clairton, County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, pursuant to the Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Act sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: That will go to Economic Development as well. Any New Business?

MS. ROKA: There is none.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. Notification of Contracts?

MS. ROKA: No.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Public comment on general items?

MS. ROKA: First up is Eric Miskovich.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Not here.

MS. ROKA: Alex Pagrowski?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Not here.

MS. ROKA: Tanisha long?

PRESIDENT CATENA: She's.

MS. LONG: Hello. Thank you for having me. Thank you for hearing. Real quick, before I begin, I just wanted to ask of the County Councilmembers sitting here today, just by show of hands, how many were aware that they were planning to close the Smithfield Shelter in June? One. Were you aware of this before the news was leaked yesterday? No. That's a problem.

This is Schumann all over again. Rich Fitzgerald plans to unhouse over 140 of our Allegheny County residents. They are closing the Smithfield Shelter

by June. There is no immediate plans on what we do with these people who do not have housing. The Smithfield Shelter is a temporary housing solution for people who don't have anywhere else to go. As you may be aware, the Second Avenue Commons has been at-capacity since it opened.

This is problematic because there is no urgency behind closing this. There's no reason to do it. And I think it's embarrassing that the County Executive is making these decisions without even informing County Council that he plans to do something that makes our county look absolutely horrendous. I've talked to people at this shelter and they're all afraid about where they're going to be able to go. Similar to the Schumann situation, he's making moves for our most vulnerable populations without getting the consent, or the ask or the insight of the people we've elected to help make sure our county runs correctly.

What I urge council to do is to present a motion asking them not to close this center. There's literally no reason for us to close this shelter. The church that runs the shelter was not even informed that this shelter would be closing and they were already modifying the building to make sure that it was not only safer, but provided cooling. Rich Fitzgerald is acting in the interest of business owners. He's acting in the interest of people who live downtown, who have business interests, who've decided that we are going to unhouse people because it doesn't make it look nice. I think the one thing we all can agree on, and I think the one thing that I know, even those I don't agree with, is that we can agree that these are people, these are our friends, these are our family members, these are our neighbors. And when we talk about the needs of Allegheny County residents, those include the needs of unhoused people. And it's nonsensical to believe that displacing over 140 people will somehow lead to public safety when they have nowhere to go.

So the place they're going to go is the street. This will lead to county resources and police being used and weaponized against the unhoused people, but it will also lead to a higher cost of taxpayers. So if we don't care about that, we should at least be bothered by that. And we shouldn't let Rich Fitzgerald keep embarrassing us by making these moves without us knowing. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Next.

MS. ROKA: Jacob Poole?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Good evening. I'm Jacob Poole, formerly Jacob of Central Eastern Europe. I was brought to America as a minor child in 1996 after some chaos and civil wars in Europe. So I'm one of those people that walks around alone, isolated, in Pittsburgh. Confused, disoriented, unwanted. People laugh at me. I'm a nuisance. I walk the streets alone. I don't have any family, no friends. I don't even know my real name, except I know my dysfunction because I was in European police's custody when I was ten-years old, who told me that I was made by people abducting Jewish women and other women in central and eastern Europe with a family history of Nobel Prize in science and they were held captive in basements and force impregnated them to make Einstein babies to sell for money. And then they printed fake records because the governments were destabilized and they were trying to adopt me and ship me to America. So at that point, European police intervened and stamped my birth certificate with River Market so that it will be branded forever for a person made via eugenics to be sold for money on the market and using church networks to bring me to America as a charity effect.

So I'm here walking the streets, alone, isolated, and I see hundreds of people like me all over Allegheny County, walking the streets. Except I know why I'm walking the streets like that because European police told me when I was ten-years old, they don't know why they don't have confusing records. They have no family, alone, isolated. They aren't going home for Christmas or Hanukkah or Thanksgiving. They don't know those things. I know because European police told me when I was ten-years old when I was in their custody. We're putting on your birth certificate, River Market, because you were made in a basement where Jewish women were held captive and money was paid to manufacture you, to ship you to America for exploitation.

I worked at PNC Bank. I have a Ph.D. from University of Pittsburgh. I worked at the National Energy Lab in Allegheny County. Then I was a cashier at Giant Eagle, and then I was a bank teller at PNC Bank after having a Ph.D. in Discoveries and Scientific Inventions for the Department of Energy. I don't know how things

work, but I exist in a very intense network of human trafficking and labor exploitation in Allegheny County.

I was brought to Ligonier, Pennsylvania through church networks, and I went through the entire high school child trafficked. I don't have no single friend from that high school. Same thing with University of Pittsburgh. How do I exist like this in Allegheny County? How do I walk to streets, your least favorite Eastern European, people laugh at me and point at me and post pictures of me online to send back to Europe?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Next?

MS. ROKA: Elizabeth Schanger?

PRESIDENT CATENA: There she is.

MS. SCHANGER: Hello, I'm Elizabeth Schanger. Like Tanisha, I'm here to ask you to make a motion objecting to the closing of the Smithfield Shelter. A public source John Colburn, the church parish's Administrator said, this shelter is filling a need. If people are here by choice, it's got to be pretty bleak for their other options. These are my neighbors. They walk my neighborhood, often in pairs, keeping each other safe, chatting with me, and making the streets safer for all of us with an extra pair of eyes. I live in the North Side near Allegheny Park, and often walked near the encampment that was disbanded. I visited the encampment the day before the Back Coast came in and wiped it out. Like now, there were still people there with no place to go. People used to move into tent encampments and sleep under bridges during the summer. However, these camps have been disbanded, and policing of homeless people downtown is increasing.

So where do they go if Smithfield Shelter closes? Where else can they find a low-barrier shelter that gives anyone a place to sleep? Waiting lists for affordable housing are one to three years long. Second Avenue Commons has opened up and is full, and even in overflow. The church and the operator are willing to continue as long as Smithfield Shelter is needed. Individual air conditioning units are being installed for the summer. So why is central air conditioning essential? Since that was mentioned in the Health Department statement of why it had to be closed. Do you think the businesses in downtown will be happier when people sleep on their doorstep, or will businesses just call the police and move people into the jail?

As my friend Lorenzo Roley (phonetic) says, the people that depend on this shelter don't even know it's closing. There are no plans worked out for each person being displaced. As Lorenzo also said. So, no, I won't accept displacement without a plan on paper and in the works, short answers and reassurance is no longer accepted. Thank you for listening.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Next?

MS. ROKA: Lorenzo Roley?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Not here.

MS. ROKA: Sean Green?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Not here. We had one person sign up after the fact. Does anyone object? I don't know if they're here or not.

MS. ROKA: Nassir Mohammed?

PRESIDENT CATENA: No, that's it. All right, then. Is there a motion to adjourn?

MR. DUERR: So moved.

MR. DEMARCO: Second.

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

(Chorus of Ayes)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed?

motion. Thank you. Have a nice night.

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 17 day of July, 2023

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Danielle Ohm". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Court Reporter

Danielle Ohm