

## MINUTES

### Erie County Council

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Carl Anderson, III, Chairman  
Kim Clear, Vice Chairwoman  
André R. Horton  
Scott Rastetter  
Mary Rennie  
Ellen Schauerma  
Brian Shank

## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

**Tuesday, April 20, 2021**

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Anderson called to order a Regular Meeting of the Erie County Council at 04:10 PM; he was unable to conduct the meeting as he was traveling, and asked Vice-Chairwoman Clear to Chair - passing the gavel. Chairwoman Clear called the meeting to order at 4:11pm.

All arose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

### OPTIONAL PRAYER OR INVOCATION

Councilman Shank led the optional invocation with words from George Washington: "Real men despise battle, but will never run from it."

### ROLL CALL

Members Present: Chairman Anderson; Vice Chairwoman Clear; Mr. Horton; Mr. Rastetter; Mrs. Rennie; Mrs. Schauerma; Mr. Shank

Also Present: Douglas R. Smith; James Sparber; Thomas Talarico; Nicole Inan; Amy Swartzfager

### HEARING OF THE PUBLIC

#### **David Gonzalez, CEO St. Martins Center**

Mr. Gonzalez stated that St. Martins Center is a Catholic Charities Organization serving the Erie Community for over 50 years. Mr. Gonzalez shared concerns on the distribution and implementation of the recent \$17 million Erie County received for rental assistance and upcoming rescue act funding coming to the region. On March 29th the Erie County Department of Human Services announced the receipt of the money. The organization agrees that this is good news for the tenants and other individuals in crisis. He voiced that the concern is not with the funds themselves, but with clarity and transparency of how they are

received and distributed. This program was first mentioned to other organizations around March 11th before being rolled out to the community on the 29th. Secondly, the two non-profits in the area with a combined more than 100 years of experience in rental assistance and this precise service to the Erie Community - St. Martins Center and GECAC - were not involved or consulted in this process in any way. Instead, funds were to be managed through the Erie County Care Management (ECCM). New staff were hired and a brand new process for individuals to access these funds was created. Mr. Gonzalez expressed the difficulty that the pandemic has had on individuals, the non-profit landscape, and those working in social services to maintain a balance of assistance. Non-profits are often asked to innovate, collaborate, and not re-invent the wheel, meanwhile those same systems don't want to pay for staffing or operations. Mr. Gonzalez voiced concern that the way these funds are being handled may not be in the best interest of those clients who need the funds, and want to ensure this is addressed moving forward. St. Martins and GECAC provide services together in a way that is holistic and cover food, transportation, and utility assistance because the needs of a family in crisis does not exist in a vacuum. He asked that in upcoming decisions, these two organizations be consulted. Secondly he expressed the need for more clarity between Erie County Government, the Department of Human Services, and Erie County Care Management; he believes the current situation is a conflict of interest. Lastly, the creation a stakeholder control group. Vice-Chairwoman Clear thanked Mr. Gonzalez, as his allotted time elapsed.

**Tiffany Oliver**

Not present.

**Other**

No additional public to be heard.

### **MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

**April 6, 2021 - Regular  
Meeting**

Mary Rennie moved to approve the minutes from the April 6, 2021 Regular Meeting. This was seconded by Ellen Schauerman and carried in a 7- 0 vote.

### **REPORTS OF COUNTY OFFICIALS**

**County Executive and/or  
her Designee**

No report at this time.

**Finance Committee -Mrs.  
Clear**

Finance Chairwoman Clear reported that the Finance Committee met April 15, 2021 and submit to the agenda New items: A through G and M through O.

**Personnel Committee -  
Mrs. Rennie**

Personnel Chairwoman Rennie reported that the Personnel Committee met April 15, 2021 and submit to the agenda New items: H through L.

**Other**

Election Board Chairwoman Rennie reported that the Primary Ballot had been going through some legal issues; however, she reported that as previously certified, the Primary Ballot has been sent to the printer. She reported that ballots should be received in 10 days to 2 weeks.

Vice Chairwoman thanked all of the Election Board Members for all of the diligence.

Mrs. Clear asked Mr. Smith to present the citation for Mr. Art Arkelian, brought forth by Chairman Anderson:

Mr. Art Arkelian (1926-2021)

WHEREAS, Art “Artie” Arkelian passed from this world on April 2, 2021 at the age of 94 years; born in Erie, Pennsylvania on November 19, 1926 to the late Nishan and Nora Arkelian; and

WHEREAS, Art Arkelian first made his presence felt on the local sports scene while starting for his High School football team at Strong Vincent High School; served as a Merchant Marine following the end of World War II; was later drafted in the U.S. Army during the Korean War; his love of football stoked again by playing on the Army Football Team; and

WHEREAS, after serving in the military Art went on to attend Duquesne University; later transferred to Gannon where he played a vital role on their two undefeated football teams in the early 1950’s; named team Captain by Head Coach Lou Tullio, who loved his leadership skills as well as his ability on the field; was named to the Associated Press Little All-American team twice and maintained several longstanding records; accomplishments that earned induction into the Gannon University Athletic Hall of Fame as well as the Metro Erie Sports Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, Art graduated from Gannon University; commenced his Masters at Fordham University, where he developed a passion for broadcasting; a successful businessman and broadcaster, Art developed and owned radio stations in Saegertown and Corry; served as General Manager of stations in Erie, Florida, and South Carolina; served as General Manager of Fox 66, Sales Manager of WQLN, and most recently as a Sales Representative for Connoisseur Media; all affected by Art’s vision for stations to be more local minded, including the broadcasting of high school sports; and

WHEREAS, Art was best-known for organizing and running the Charity Sports Banquet for 52 years, which was an unparalleled success nationwide; brought sports legends to Erie like Jim Brown, Johnny Unitas, Bart Starr, George Blanda,

Roberto Clemente, Jesse Owens, Willie Mays, and Bob Prince; honored local athletes, and provided the community with lasting memories, all while supporting local charities; establishing the Sports Banquet as a local institution where sons, dads and whole families were able to learn valuable lessons from just about every big sports name in the business; and

WHEREAS, Art was honored with the George Mead Distinguished Service Award, the Louis J. Tullio Community Service Award, and many others; was a member of St. Julia's Roman Catholic Church and the Armenian General Benevolent Union; was just "that guy" who seemed to connect with everyone – the guy in the elevator or the stranger on the airplane next to him; above all, loving his family and friends; and

WHEREAS, Art will be sorely missed by his loving wife of 39 years, Linda (Cherry), three daughters: Robin Calabrese and husband, Nora Arkelian, and Adrienne Yeomans and husband; His two sons: Jon and Mark; grandchildren: Anthony (Mara) and Lena Agnello, Sean and Kimberly Stevenson, Violet Arkelian, and Isla and Kayden Yeomans; his great-grandson Anthony Agnello and a great-granddaughter expected in May; also survived by his nephews, Lee, Christopher, and Matthew Cherry, and Daniel Herman, niece Kelly Herman, as well as his brothers and sisters-in-law, Bill and Nancy Cherry and Lyla and John Herman; preceded in death by his parents, brother John, his first wife Vivian (Bollinger) and daughters Kimberly and Jaimie.

NOW THEREFORE WE THE UNDERSIGNED Members of Erie County Council, in celebration of a life well lived, declare April 23, 2021 as Art Arkelian Day in Erie County, for Art's commitment to sports, family, and the profound impact he had on our community throughout his life.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have set our hands and the Seal of Erie County this 20th day of April, 2021.

Chairman Anderson expressed his sympathies for the loss of Art, naming him as a giant legendary figure of Erie. He was a pioneer in television and radio, as well as the sports world. Chairman Anderson explained that he knew Art through his wife, Linda; Chairman Anderson worked with her at Meca, Inc. where he was the Board President for a number of years. Linda helped get the contract for the state and found the special kids network. Their love of family shone through.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Vice Chairwoman Clear stated that Ordinances 26 & 27 were not placed on the Agenda due to the need for further study. They both received First Readings on April 6, 2021.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Councilwoman Rennie motioned to amend the Agenda by moving items A, B, E, & F to Second Readings; Adding Item P: Possible appointment of Ms. Ann

Rosenthal to the Erie County Library Board. This term to expire July 1, 2022. Replacing Mr. Felix Lohitai; Adding Item Q: Resolution 15, 2021 In Support of RACP Grant for Millcreek Township Presque Isle Gateway Improvement Project; Grouping Items H, I, J, & L to 1 vote; & Grouping Items M, N, & O to one vote. This was Seconded by Councilman Horton, and approved 7 to 0.

Chairman Anderson asked to clarify that Ordinances 26 & 27 that were not included on the agenda did not need a motion to table. Mr. Smith clarified that they did receive a First Reading April 6, 2021; and they were decided at Finance Committee to not be put forth for a Second Reading. Vice-Chair Clear's statement was sufficient. Vice Chair Clear clarified that this was discussed in caucus.

**First Reading of Ordinance Number 28, 2021, "Sixth 2021 Library Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$500 for the Donation from the Erie Community Regional Library Foundation for a Climate Change Materials" (Finance Committee)** Mr. Smith gave a Second Reading of Ordinance Number 28, 2021, "Sixth 2021 Library Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$500 for the Donation from the Erie Community Regional Library Foundation for a Climate Change Materials" This was moved by André Horton, seconded by Ellen Schauerma and carried in a 7 - 0 vote.

**First Reading of Ordinance Number 29, 2021, "Seventh 2021 Library Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$13,932 Donation from Esher Klugiewicz Library Fund of the Erie Community Regional Library Foundation for Novelist Database" (Finance Committee)** Mr. Smith gave a Second Reading of Ordinance Number 29, 2021, "Seventh 2021 Library Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$13,932 Donation from Esher Klugiewicz Library Fund of the Erie Community Regional Library Foundation for Novelist Database" This was moved by André Horton, seconded by Scott Rastetter and carried in a 7 - 0 vote.

**First Reading of Ordinance Number 30, 2021, "Eighth 2021 Library Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$50,000 for Keystone** Mr. Smith gave a First Reading of Ordinance Number 30, 2021, "Eighth 2021 Library Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$50,000 for Keystone

**2021 Library Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$50,000 for Keystone Recreation, Park, and Conservation Fund Grant for the Millcreek Branch Feasibility Study" (Finance Committee)** Recreation, Park, and Conservation Fund Grant for the Millcreek Branch Feasibility Study"

**First Reading of Ordinance Number 31, 2021, "Tenth 2021 General Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$25,000 Match for Keystone Recreation, Park, and Conservation Fund Grant for the Millcreek Branch Feasibility Study" (Finance Committee)** Mr. Smith gave a First Reading of Ordinance Number 31, 2021, "Tenth 2021 General Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$25,000 Match for Keystone Recreation, Park, and Conservation Fund Grant for the Millcreek Branch Feasibility Study"

**First Reading of Ordinance Number 32, 2021, "Fifth 2021 Public Health Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$5,000 and Creation of New Line Item for Donation from Erie Community Foundation for the Biobot Project" (Finance Committee)** Mr. Smith gave a Second Reading of Ordinance Number 32, 2021, "Fifth 2021 Public Health Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$5,000 and Creation of New Line Item for Donation from Erie Community Foundation for the Biobot Project" This was moved by Ellen Schauerma, seconded by Mary Rennie and carried in a 7 - 0 vote.

**First Reading of Ordinance Number 33, 2021, "Sixth 2021 Public Health Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$1,010,558** Mr. Smith gave a Second Reading of Ordinance Number 33, 2021, "Sixth 2021 Public Health Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$1,010,558

**2021 Public Health Fund  
Budget Supplemental  
Appropriation of  
\$1,010,558 for Carryover of  
Prior Years ELC  
Enhancing Detection Grant  
Funds" (Finance  
Committee)**

for Carryover of Prior Years ELC Enhancing Detection Grant Funds" This was moved by Mary Rennie, seconded by André Horton and carried in a 7 - 0 vote.

**Resolution Number 14,  
2021 "In Support of  
Increased Staffing  
Requirements and  
Protections for Nursing  
Home Caregivers"  
(Finance Committee)**

Mr. Smith gave a Reading of Resolution Number 14, 2021 "In Support of Increased Staffing Requirements and Protections for Nursing Home Caregivers" This was moved by Carl Anderson, seconded by Ellen Schauerman.

Chairman Anderson stated that this Resolution emphasizes that Council recognizes the increased need we have, particularly in the area of safety, for both professional workers in the health care field and the patients that they serve. This Resolution asks the State Legislature, not under any particular Bill, to recognize these safety needs and the incidents of burnout the happen with healthcare workers in such situations. It has been taken out of consideration for some time. This supports the health care worker, the patients, and the SEIU Union and the workers they represent.

Councilwoman Rennie commended Mr. Anderson for bringing this forward, and for noting that there have been groups advocating for solutions to address the weaknesses inherent in our nursing home systems, which she feels have been made more evident by the pandemic. The fact that this is not tied to any particular legislation, had put her on the fence in support. She wishes that the Resolution went a little farther. She pointed out that the Resolution discussed increased reimbursement rates for Medicaid on the Federal and State levels, minimum staffing requirements, but the issue is much more complex. She stated the needs that need addressed are the Medicaid expansion in Pennsylvania, which is key in that there is no way to add staffing without it. The question of Medicaid and Medicare solvency is a huge question; there are some estimates that it may be insolvent within the next ten years. There is a question on the potential burden on Pennsylvania taxpayers - that is no small issue. There are also the question of existing regulations and requirements and their enforcement or lack thereof. Also, the carious nature of the nursing homes across the US, which by the American Healthcare Association it is to lose more than \$94M by the end of 2021 and 1600 nursing homes could stand to close their doors within the next year. So, requiring additional staffing, without some balanced approach, it is an ongoing concern with no simple answers. She feels that acknowledging these problems is a big plus and is important to have these public discussions; for that reason she will have a qualified yes vote.

Councilman Shank thanked Mrs. Rennie for her eloquence in laying out her points. He stated the pandemic has brought to light a lot of shortcomings in a lot of areas - First Responders, Police, Fire, EMS, Paramedics, First Aid, and EMR. They are a list of individuals who have stepped up during these times, Nervous that setting too much in motion too quick. Would like to see where the money is coming from. Classic big government. Agrees with intent but burden of hiring and paying comes back to council and the taxpayer.

Councilman Rastetter thanked Mrs. Rennie for investigating the problem. He stated that Erie needs its Community College, there is a need for more tax payers, and this is where the balance will come from.

Councilwoman Schauerma thanked Mrs. Rennie for stating everything so well. She will supported in principle, because it is generic and asks the State to take a look at the problem.

Vice-Chairwoman Clear stated that she will be supporting the Resolution. It is important for the State to recognize the problem and to do their due diligence. She stated that one-fifth of PA population will be retired or in nursing homes in the next 10 years. In our lifetime it will be putting a strain on the economic situations of our government.

The Resolution carried in a 7 - 0 vote.

**Possible Reappointment of Mary Ellen Lieb to a Four-Year Term on the Children & Youth Advisory Board. This will be Ms. Lieb's first full term. Term expires June 30, 2025. (County Executive)**

Vice Chairwoman Clear asked Mr. Smith to read appointment items H, I, J, &L in title only. Mr. Smith read each appointment: Mary Ellen Lieb to a 4-year term to the Children and Youth Advisory Board; Cynthia Viveralli to a 4-year term to the Children and Youth Advisory Board; Rachel Artise to the Erie County Industrial Development Authority; Kenneth Brasington to a 4-year term on the Human Relations Commission Advisory Board. This was moved by Mary Rennie, seconded by André Horton and carried in a 7 - 0 vote.

**Possible Reappointment of Cynthia Viveralli to a Four-Year Term on the Children & Youth Advisory Board. This will be Ms. Viveralli's first full term. Term expires June 30, 2025. (County Executive)**

**Possible Appointment of Kenneth Brasington to a Four-Year Term on the Human Relation Commission Advisory Board term ending December 31, 2024. (District 3 - Councilwoman Rennie)(Personnel Committee)**

**Possible Appointment of Caitlyn Strohmeier to fill an unexpired vacancy on the Human Relation Commission Enforcement Commission. She will be replacing Shawnta' Pulliam Brown, who resigned April 12, 2021. This term expiring July 24, 2022. (District 2 - Councilman Horton)(Personnel Committee)**

Mr. Smith gave a Reading of the Possible Appointment of Caitlyn Strohmeier to fill an unexpired vacancy on the Human Relation Commission Enforcement Commission. She will be replacing Shawnta' Pulliam Brown, who resigned April 12, 2021. This term expiring July 24, 2022.

Mr. Horton stated that she would be replacing Shawnta Pulliam Brown on the HRC Commission. Mr. Smith verifying. Chairman Anderson suggesting possible amendment to the agenda as such. Mr. Smith verifying a vote as presented would be suffice. This was moved by Mary Rennie, seconded by Ellen Schauerma.

Mr. Horton reiterated that Ms. Strohmeier is currently on her second term of five of the HRC Advisory Board. He stated she has been faithful to the Commission and carries out her duties admirably. He gets reports from her without difficulty. She has her Associates Degree in Sociology. Ms. Strohmeier does outreach work in the LTGBQ community and Erie United, and is a Committee Woman for the Erie Democratic Party.

To the unexpired term on the Human Relations Commission, vote carried in a 7 - 0 vote.

**Possible appointment of Rachel Artise to a partial term to the Erie County Industrial Development Authority. She will be replacing Mr. John Laird whose term expired December 31, 2019. This partial term will expire December 31, 2024 (County Executive)(Personnel Committee)**

**Committee)**

**Possible Sale of a Parcel  
from the Repository for  
Unsold Property at Index  
Number: 07-025-052.0-  
005.00**

Mr. Smith summarized the three items M, N, & O in one motion. This was moved by Ellen Schauerman, seconded by André Horton and carried in a 7 - 0 vote.

**Possible Sale of a Parcel  
from the Repository for  
Unsold Property at Index  
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006.00**

**Possible Sale of a Parcel  
from the Repository for  
Unsold Property at Index  
Number: 07-025-052.0-  
002.01**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Item P:** Possible appointment of Ms. Ann Rosenthal to the Erie County Library Board. This term to expire July 1, 2022. Replacing Mr. Felix Lohitai. This was moved by André Horton, seconded by Mary Rennie.

Councilman Horton thanked Mr. Lohitai for his service to the Board admirably and is excited about all of the work being done at the Library under Mr. Dessy's leadership. Unfortunately, Mr. Lohitai had to resign for emergent needs of his family. With all of the appointees, either because their term is complete or because they need to move on, always appreciative of being able to give individuals the opportunity to serve in quasi-official capacity and empower people in that manner. He stated that Ms. Pulliam-Brown and Mr. Lohitai did not take that empowerment lightly; they each served well and brought back information to the second legislative district. He went on to state that Ms. Rosenthal was one of the applicants who applied to be a Member of the Board of Trustees for the Erie County Community College. He named her as a researchers dream. She currently works at the Mother House at the Benedictines. She has a Social worker by trade. She is excited to serve, and he feels we will be blessed to have her serve in this capacity.

Motion carried in a 7 - 0 vote.

**Item Q:** Resolution 15, 2021 In Support of RACP Grant for Millcreek Township

Presque Isle Gateway Improvement Project. This was moved by Brian Shank and Seconded by Carl Anderson.

Councilman Horton requested that the Resolution be screen shared and clarification on the Resolution be offered. Ms. Inan shared the Resolution on the screen for all. Vice-Chairwoman Clear offered that Millcreek Township emailed a few hours ago asking for support in an RACP Grant that they applied for through the State on March 30th. They are asking that government officials and local persons of interest write letters in support of their project. The plan was created by Robyn Crago and Chip Reihl, business owners on 8th Street. They would like to work in conjunction with District 2 with the Gateway Grant that has been received in that area to create a gateway to Presque Isle front the Bayfront. It would later expand into Fairview and Harborcreek. The general goal is to streetscape 8th Street to attract more individuals to taking that route of travel. The 8th Street corridor would have banners and signs, be pedestrian friendly, be more aesthetically pleasing, and offer greater accessibility to businesses in the area.

#### **RESOLUTION NUMBER 15, 2021**

In Support of RACP Grant for Millcreek Township Presque Isle Gateway Improvement Project

WHEREAS, Erie County Council urges Governor Wolf's Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program Administration to support the Millcreek Township Presque Isle Gateway Improvement project grant application for 6.2 million dollars; and

WHEREAS, Presque Isle State Park is a 3,200-acre sandy peninsula that arches into Lake Erie; the jewel of Pennsylvania's state park system, attracting over 4 million visitors annually, is a driver for Erie County's economy as well as Millcreek Township; and

WHEREAS, the Presque Isle Gateway District was a focus of the 2018 Millcreek Township Comprehensive Plan, which cited its potential as a valuable environmental, recreational, and economic resource for the community and the entire region; and

WHEREAS, the small business culture corridor adjacent to Peninsula Drive has a vast locally-owned business domain; Millcreek's comprehensive plan calls for significant public investment along West 8th Street; enhancing pedestrian access, providing a more traditional business district for local merchants, and providing a more viable attractive atmosphere for visitors; and

WHEREAS, the \$6.2M Grant Application will fund improvements to the streetscape of West 8th Street from its intersection with Peninsula Drive eastwardly to Pittsburgh Avenue; underground conduit will replace existing overhead utility service, removing 55 wooden utility poles from the corridor; Curbs, sidewalks, and accessible ramps installed along both sides of the

roadway; a 4' green strip adorned with street trees and decorative lighting will enhance beauty, safety and security; and

WHEREAS, project measurable will include an attractive, safe, pedestrian friendly corridor that will allow the plethora of existing locally owned businesses to thrive and grow as well as spur additional private investment and resulting employment while creating a main street aesthetic in the Presque Isle Gateway District.

RESOLVED, ERIE COUNTY COUNCIL stands unified with Millcreek Township in support of this its Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program Application, for a transformational project that will deliver immeasurable economic impact to the entire region, in the form of job creation, increased tourism, and related business activity.

Councilman Horton responded that his District did receive a grant, but he does not believe it was RACP. He emphasizes his hesitance because there are multiple other RACP projects being put forth in the county. While he does like to see progress, he doesn't know that this would offer a hand-up over any other project. Mr. Horton stated his concern in supporting this Resolution at this time. He felt the need to qualify his response by explaining that the Penn Dot plan is underway; however, there are multiple lawsuits regarding the lack of pedestrian linkage to the City of Erie or the Public Dock. They are now proposing to put an additional 14-20,000 cars on that stretch of highway, calling it a parkway and putting traffic under State Street. RACP is up there in importance with Tax Abatement; He states a Community Benefit Agreement or other tangible option is necessary. Mr. Horton discussed disinvestment and redlining. He pointed out that Council previously voted on a Resolution which insisted there be community benefit agreement language in RACP items. He suggested that anyone coming forth with an RACP Resolution to this body, be provided a copy of said Resolution explaining the need for such. If they provide that, he would support.

Councilwoman Rennie yielded back stating she also has some similar concerns, but hopes someone can explain the competitive process.

Councilman Rastetter stated Millcreek wasn't very supportive of his District when they asked about money, so he is not inclined to support them. He agrees it would be nice for the community, but agrees with Councilman Horton. He stated he hasn't seen anything regarding their plan. He stated he would be concerned about the Community Benefits Agreement, but is more concerned about the plan. Do unto others.

Chairman Anderson clarified that Council is open to supporting all projects that promote economic development in Erie County. Moving forward, we want

economic development to include everyone. While he appreciates the comments that were made, he feels the comments have been above and beyond what they have been tasked to do. He stated that the Resolution passed did not stipulate that Council would not sign a letter of support to a project that wouldn't include Community Benefit Agreement. It said that Council encouraged the State and the RACP Office to enter into a Community Benefit Agreements to people they give money to. He stated no problem sending the other said Resolution aside this one when submitted to the State to reinforce that's what being supported. A letter of support was requested, but it was felt that a stronger support would be from all of Council as a Resolution rather than a letter. Mr. Anderson explained that this is a typical action by Council when other bodies request support. He agrees, he has been in meetings where the municipality may not reciprocate the same kind of support that County government shows to them, but County Government has the bigger vision of what happens in the community. It is this body's responsibility to move things forward for the community, whether others do or do not recognize their responsibilities. Mr. Anderson named this a major economic corridor for the community. This Resolution only states that Council supports the project, if the State is going to give the money. He voiced that this is not pinning one project over another. Projects that are economic drivers in the community are the types of projects that Council has discussed numerous occasions. The hope is that the State will recognize the benefits to the community and the need to hold accountable the developers and municipalities in following through.

Councilman Horton clarified that he did not say it would "prohibit" Council from doing it. Letters put forward in support for applications for RACP as well those issuing RACP to put forward community benefit agreement, are secondary. Firstly, this was received hours before the meeting - he has not seen their plan. Sometimes these things have unintended consequences. He stated the plan in his District resulted in commerce being diverted to other parts of town. It looks more like the "parkway" will be more so "interstate 90 north." He feels that not all of the residents have been apprised of the plan and he would like to see more about the plan and have more discussion. He continued by saying that letters of support should not simply be rubberstamped. Over the past 50-60 years these types of actions have resulted in leaving people behind, they haven't been equitable, haven't encouraged in disinvestment - while encouraging in others. He feels this is a pivotal time when everything needs scrutinized, because when that money comes back there needs to be clarity on what was supported. RACP is a grant, it is not matching funds. RACP is designating funds from the State/Harrisburg. It is a tax abatement; he offer an example of the hotel project on the Northside of the Bayfront parkway was a \$20M project, the developer received \$5M in RACP funds; there were some hotel jobs created and some revenue, but the residents get nothing. He stated the top-down approach has failed, and that is why we have 5-6,000 blighted homes. He restated every RACP

request for letter of support should be scrutinized.

Councilman Rastetter thanked Mr. Anderson and Mr. Horton for their comments. He agrees, that more education needs to be provided on this plan before Council signs names to it. He stated he has not received their plan, an invitation to view it, or a proposal to come to Council with a plan; they asked only for an endorsement, and it is overstepping.

Chairman Anderson stated that the RACP program is a matching program; dollar for dollar. He does not disagree with Mr. Horton when it comes to developers, but this difference is developer vs. municipality. Whether a developer gets a quarter of their project paid for or not, they have 100% match to that quarter. Municipality would have to come up with the matching money to be able to do the project. He suggests that if there is discomfort with Council in passing the Resolution, the option of tabling.

Councilman Horton reiterated his request that for anyone considering submitting or letters of support for RACP or support in any other way, that Council send out a copy of Council's Resolution for their perusal.

Vice-Chair Clear stated that she was under the impression that most people knew about this project; it has been in the news, especially in the past few weeks and part of the comprehensive plan of Millcreek since 2018. She apologized for the assumption that everyone knew of the plan. In the wake of the pandemic, there are many businesses on West 8th Street in Millcreek that have been barely surviving; she stated this Resolution was her way of trying to help her District. She expressed her disappointment, but withdrew the Resolution at this time so that Council can get more information. She stated the project would fix the two-lane road and put poles up with directional flags and signage to Presque Isle. She understands everyone's perspective and where questions may come into play. She also agreed that more notice should have been given. She noted that Millcreek does not reciprocate in helping other municipalities, but she does not want the residents and businesses in her District to suffer because of the decisions of a few.

Mr. Smith advised that, as Vice-Chair Clear put the Resolution forward, she can simply withdraw the Resolution and it would not need tabled.

Councilwoman Rennie inquired as to the time frame for the grant request. Councilwoman Clear informed Council that it was submitted on March 31, 2021 and that they will be making the decision by the end of April.

Chairman Anderson congratulated and thanked Mrs. Clear in conducting her first (of many) meetings as Chairwoman. She in turn thanked Chairman

Anderson and Former Chairman Horton for being great examples.

Jim Sparber inquired whether the First Readings of Ordinances 30 & 31 were read, Mrs. Clear confirmed.

Mr. Shank moved to adjourn at 05:39 PM, Seconded by Mr. Rastetter.

**The next Finance & Personnel Committee Meetings will occur April 29, 2021 at 4:00pm via zoom conference.**

Meeting Recording:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/FxJFLFWLaqI8-YHHcF1HEkuQFnpDnra2nDhtkTw58yd8-dIeNUTHQV9Lma3-nAce.f42RCzN1i1jD5JB3>

**The next Regular Meeting of Council will occur May 4, 2021 at 4:00pm. Caucus will begin at 3:30pm.**

Nicole Inan

Erie County Council & Elections Administrator

**For social-distancing measures and consistency with CDC Guidelines, meetings will be held via zoom conferencing (zoom.us).**

**At which time Council reconvenes in-person meetings, the public will be duly notified.**

**Agendas and zoom information available at [www.eriecountypa.gov](http://www.eriecountypa.gov). Call the Council office at 451-6303 for specific inquiries.**