

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

Thursday, August 5, 2021

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilman Anderson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

OPTIONAL PRAYER OR INVOCATION

Mrs. Schauerma led the optional invocation with the words of Nelson Mandela: "It always seems impossible until its done."

ROLL CALL

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

Also Present: Douglas R. Smith, James Sparber, Tracey Fugagli, Thomas Talarico, Nicole Inan, Amy Swartzfager; County Executive Dahlkemper

HEARING OF THE PUBLIC

No one signed up ahead of the meeting for five minutes.

Members of the public receive 3 minutes: none to be heard.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

NONE

REPORTS OF COUNTY OFFICIALS

County Executive and/or her Designee

County Executive Dahlkemper: She informed Council that she was recently notified that Erie County Covid numbers have reached the "substantial rate" per the CDC. She encouraged all Erie County citizens to protect themselves, family members, and children - especially those under twelve who cannot receive vaccination. She reminded that the CDC does recommend that at "substantial," everyone indoors should be masked whether vaccinated or not.

The County Executive also addressed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds at hand at the meeting. She named it a historic moment in Erie County and the nation's history; an opportunity to invest cautiously, innovatively and strategically in the community. The process has been one of the most collaborative processes with County Council, the Administrative Staff, County Authorities, Directors, and many other outside entities. She feels that they are presenting an impactful plan. She stated that Erie is being looked at in the commonwealth and across the nation as forward thinking and pro-active in getting the funds out to the community. Thanked all of Council for help, Administrative staff, and the affiliations of government - ECGRA and ECRDA. She believes that this will be looked back upon with knowledge that it made a significant positive difference to the citizens of Erie County.

Lastly, the County Executive thanked Tracey Fugagli and offered a debt of gratitude for her 31 years of service. Tracey will be retiring this month. She named her knowledge as extensive, and stated she will truly be missed.

Finance Committee -Mrs. Clear

Finance Chairwoman Clear reported that the Finance Committee met immediately preceding this Special Meeting, August 5th at 3pm and put forth Ordinances 65 & 66, 2021.

Chairwoman Clear acknowledged all the work that has been done over the 6+ months. She complimented Chairman Anderson's foresight in starting the Covid Impact Committee, and his ability to plan for money as being instrumental. She thanked the County Executive for bringing members from all over the County - business leaders, non-profits, churches, municipalities, social groups, to craft various ideas. The Covid Impact Committee was able to reach diverse populations, talking and listening to the needs and concerns of the entire county. The breadth and scope of the work done in the report was shown. Every line item was brought forward with intentionality and there were no stones left unturned. She feels that these funds will change the trajectory of the county, and leverage the funding for the future.

Personnel Committee - Mrs. Rennie

No report from the Personnel Committee.

Other

Councilman Scott Rastetter reported on the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) Conference held in Hershey, PA this week. He attended seminars on public safety, mental health, and fire safety. Mr. Rastetter encouraged his colleagues to attend and engage with individuals who are knowledgeable about our democracy.

Chairman Anderson also reported on CCAP - stating he won a \$1000 scholarship to a local nonprofit of his choice from a local vendor in West County. He chose Erie County Community College or secondly, the Erie County Historical Society as the recipient.

Chairman Anderson also commented on the historic moment of the ARPA fund

to Erie County. We are moving forward from a pandemic that has changed our lives. United together as a people, we have a strength and resilience beyond anything. To the people of Erie County, we owe the dedication and work being put forward. He feels honored to work with his Council colleagues, the Administration, and the people that work every day for Erie County. He noted they may not always see eye-to-eye, but ultimately work together, compromise, and collaborate and put forth what is believed to be the best for Erie County. Mr. Anderson thanked the County Executive and the rest of Council for their work. He expressed great appreciation for the work Councilwoman Clear put forth. He stated she worked tirelessly to put forward the things she believes in and is dedicated to, and items she knows will transform the community and help move it forward. They came together on CARES funds, knowing that change is needed to be made in the community. Born from that was the Covid Economic Impact and Recovery Committee. He thanked Perry Wood, along with the Gaming Revenue staff and Board, for believing in what was attempting to be accomplished and stepping up to play a major role. He emphasized that there is absolutely no question about what Erie county is doing; what leadership Erie County is providing; what do you mean you're creating a diversity and inclusion position; what do you mean, a fire authority, etc. First and foremost, Council has put forward responsibilities to this county, to the departments and institutions that Erie County is responsible for and make them stable again to flourish and lead the community forward. There are a number of initiatives to be addressed, i.e.: full tuition waiver for Erie County Community College; seed work of a fire authority; recommitment to lead assets of the community; to the municipal partners filling in gaps from other silos of money. not trying to solve every issue but making sure that municipalities can work; and the creation of a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Commission to move this community forward in unity. We will change the way we empower the citizens of this community. He is proud of the work that has been done, and the input from others. He stated what Council is moving towards tonight is unity - unity of cause, unity of purpose, unity of resilience.

OLD BUSINESS

Second Reading of Ordinance Number 65, 2021, "2021 American Rescue Plan Fund Supplemental Appropriation of \$26,315,751 for Establishment of ARPA Fund to Administer and Disburse Grant Funding" (First read 7-20-21) (as amended) (Finance

Mr. Smith gave a Second Reading of Ordinance Number 65, 2021, "2021 American Rescue Plan Act Fund Supplemental Appropriation of \$26,315,751 for Creation of American Rescue Plan Act Fund Budget to Administer and Disburse ARPA Grant Funding, as amended"

Motioned by Councilwoman Clear, Seconded by Councilwoman Rennie.

Councilwoman Clear moved to amend the face sheet to strike out: "BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that the final distribution of funds by Erie County must be approved by County Council, and that weekly reports on ARPA expenditures shall be provided to Council by the Administration through December 31, 2021," and include: "BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that monthly reports on ARPA

Committee)

expenditures shall be provided to Council by the Administration through December 31, 2021. Thereafter, the Administration shall provide Council with quarterly reports on ARPA expenditures, starting with the quarter ending March 31, 2022 and continuing thereafter until December 31, 2026. The final audit and distribution of funds by the Administration, including funds returned by third-party recipients, shall be submitted to and approved by County Council," and "BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that ARPA grant funds shall be used to cover the costs obligated by the recipient before December 31, 2024. ARPA grant funds not obligated by December 31, 2024, or used to cover the costs of obligated funds by December 31, 2026, must be returned to Erie County." Seconded by Councilwoman Rennie, and carried 7 to 0.

Mr. Smith read the Revenue line items as reflected on the exhibits:
 American Rescue Plan Grant (a)
 Checking Interest (b)
 Grant (c)

Councilwoman Clear motioned to vote on a,b, & c in one vote. Seconded by Councilwoman Rennie, and carried 7 to 0.

Councilwoman Clear motioned to vote on the motion as amended. Seconded by Councilwoman Rennie, and carried 7 to 0.

Mr. Smith read the Expenditure line items as reflected on the exhibits:
ARPA Administration (35,000) - Motioned by Councilwoman Clear, Seconded by Councilwoman Rennie, and carried 7 to 0.

<u>Community Futures Center (280,000)</u>	
Travel Work Required	9,500
Data Processing	2,000
Telephone	1,500
Postage	1,000
Duplicating and Printing	1,000
Professional Fees	250,000
Other Office Supplies	5,000
Computer Supplies	10,000
Total Community Futures Center	280,000

Motioned by Councilwoman Clear and Seconded by Councilwoman Rennie.
 Mrs. Clear motioned to amend moving all line items under a restricted account (068-025-112003700). Seconded by Mrs. Rennie and carried 7-0. Mr. Anderson called for a role call vote on Community Futures Center as amended, carried 7 to 0.

Revenue Replacement

Transfer to General Fund (7,092,000)

Motioned by Councilwoman Clear and Seconded by Councilwoman Rennie.
 Chairman Anderson clarified that this money is being transferred to the General

Fund and will be allocated in the following Ordinance, 66.
Carried 7 to 0.

County Assessed Needs

Maintenance and Repair (60,000)
Professional Fees (10,000)
Computer Supplies (240,000)
Other Office Supplies (34,760)
Capital Outlay (42,000)
Total County Assessed Needs (386,760)

Motioned by Councilwoman Clear and Seconded by Councilwoman Rennie.
Mrs. Clear motioned to amend the vote on items, a,b,c,d, & e to one vote;
seconded by Mrs. Rennie. Carried 7 to 0. On County Assessed Needs, as
amended, carried 7 to 0.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission Grant

*The money for this grant will be placed in a restricted account until the
commission is formed and a board is seated by County Council & the
Administration.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Fund (3,500,000)

Motioned by Councilwoman Clear and Seconded by Councilwoman Rennie.
Mrs. Clear motioned to amend the accounting number to 068-025-115003700.
Seconded by Mrs. Rennie, carried 7 to 0. On the item, as amended, carried 7 to 0.
Mr. Anderson congratulations to the people of Erie County in changing the
trajectory of Erie County.

Municipal Assistance

Municipal Infrastructure GAP Funding Grants (a) (2,500,000)
Public Safety Grants (b) (1,000,000)
Total Municipal Assistance 3,500,000

Motioned by Councilwoman Clear to vote for Municipal Infrastructure GAP
Funding Grants, and Seconded by Councilwoman Rennie. Councilwoman Clear
moved to amend the exhibit of municipal infrastructure to read "\$2,500,000" as
there was a clerical error; seconded by Mrs. Rennie, carried 7 to 0. Municipal
Infrastructure GAP, as amended - carried 7 to 0.

Item (b) Public Safety was motioned by Mrs. Clear and Seconded by Mrs.
Rennie. Councilman Shank emphasized his appreciation and enthusiasm for the
work that Council and the Administration has put forth in an effort to help the
volunteer fire and emergency crews.

Chairman Anderson offered that this is new ground in Erie County. He stated
comments that have been made to Erie County are that "we've got it." In the year
2000 there were roughly 331,00 volunteer firefighters, to the current 34,000
volunteers. The mechanism that is used to support, promote, retain, and train
volunteer firefighters and EMS bodies needs changed. These funds will be seed
money toward a fire authority as we wait for enabling legislation from state
government. He offered special thanks to Jessica Horan-Kunco at the EACOG,

local fire agencies, and Erie County Public Safety Department. Carried 7 to 0.

County Economic Development

*Administered by the Redevelopment Authority

Urban Renewal & Community Development (2,779,500)

Entrepreneurship (737,500)

*Includes E for All, Women in Minority Business, the Diversity Loan Program, Start Grant for the Arts

*All entities must apply for any other possible matching or available grant funding.

*Grant received by SBA matching original

Workforce Development (150,000)

*Minority Grant Program through the Erie Chamber and Growth Partnership

Total County Economic Development 3,667,000

Urban Renewal & Community Development was motioned by Councilwoman Clear and Seconded by Councilwoman Rennie; Carried 6 to 1, Mr. Rastetter voting no.

Entrepreneurship was motioned by Councilwoman Clear and Seconded by Mrs. Rennie. The vote carried 6 to 1, Mr. Rastetter voting no.

Workforce Development was motioned by Mrs. Clear and Seconded by Mrs. Rennie. The vote carried 5 to 2, Councilmen Rastetter and Horton voting no.

Public Health

Overtime (45,025)

FICA (3,432)

Workers Compensation (1,307)

Pension (5,236)

Pass Thru (50,000)

Neighborhood Resource (10,000)

Police Athletic League (10,000)

Blue Zones (745,000)

Employee Vaccine Incentive (360,000)

Total Public Health 1,230,000

Motioned by Councilwoman Clear and Seconded by Councilwoman Rennie. Mrs. Clear motioned to amend the vote for items A through G in one vote; seconded by Mrs. Rennie and carried 7 to 0. Mrs. Clear moved to vote of A through G, Seconded by Mrs. Rennie, and carried 7 to 0.

Councilwoman Clear motioned to vote on Blue Zones, and seconded by Mrs. Rennie and carried 7 to 0.

Councilwoman Clear motioned to vote on the Employee Vaccination Incentive, seconded by Mrs. Rennie.

Councilwoman Schauerma emphasized that she is all for vaccinations. She explained, however, that these funds are for the people in the community, not

only for those fortunate to work for Erie County. She offered that if an incentive was offered to everyone in Erie County to be vaccinated, it would be different.

Mr. Rastetter agreed with Mrs. Schauerma's remarks.

Mr. Shank reiterated his disapproval. He expressed that bribing county employees to get a shot is offensive. He went on to state that if passed he would not accept the money and the \$300 per person he would be "entitled to" would be donated to a Veteran's cause.

Mr. Horton voiced his support for vaccinations. He agreed with Mr. Shank in that there should not be an incentive to do the right thing, but that he is supportive of the concept. Mr. Horton also agreed to donate his portion.

Motion carried 4 to 3.

Business Grants

Shuttered Venues Grants	(1,474,991)
New Small Business Grants	(150,000)
LEAD Assets Grants	(1,000,000)
Total Business Grants	2,624,991

Councilwoman Clear motioned to vote on Shuttered Venues, seconded by Mrs. Rennie. Mr. Anderson commented that these will be administered by the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority. These funds will promote roller rinks, baseball fields, and cultural and recreational activities in Erie County. Carried 7 to 0.

Councilwoman Clear motioned to vote on the New Small Business Grants, seconded by Mrs. Rennie.

Councilman Rastetter expressed that Council should not define what qualifies as a "small business" and that there are plenty of "other" businesses that are struggling who haven't qualified for any assistance. Chairman Anderson stated that this area would be overseen by ECRDA. The Chairman explained that the focus is on small businesses who have taken the risk of opening during the past 12 months of the pandemic.

Motion carried 6 to 1; Mr. Rastetter voting no.

Councilwoman Clear motioned to vote on LEAD Assets Grants, Seconded by Mrs. Rennie.

Chairman Anderson emphasized that to qualify, they must have applied for Federal Shuttered Facilities Grant and/or PPP.

Councilwoman Clear motioned to amend the exhibit to read \$1 million; seconded by Councilwoman Rennie. Carried 7 to 0.

The item, as amended, carried 7 to 0.

Transformative Grants

Transformative Grants	(4,000,000)
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Administered by the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority.

Councilwoman Clear motioned to vote on Transformative Grants, Seconded by Mrs. Rennie.

Chairman Anderson commented that this is an area where non-profits and small

businesses have transformed themselves or come up with ideas to transform the community can continue to help the community move forward.
Motion carried 7 to 0.

Councilwoman Clear motioned to vote on Ordinance 65, 2021, as amended.
Seconded by Councilwoman Rennie. Carried 7 to 0.

Second Reading of Ordinance Number 66, 2021, "Twenty-Eighth 2021 General Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$7,092,000 and Creation of New Items for Transfer from American Rescue Plan Act Fund for Revenue Replacement" (First Reading 7-20-21) (Finance Committee)

Mr. Smith gave a Second Reading of Ordinance Number 66, 2021, "Twenty-Eighth 2021 General Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$7,092,000 and Creation of New Items for Transfer from American Rescue Plan Act Fund for Revenue Replacement" in its entirety, sans exhibits. Motioned by Councilwoman Clear, seconded by Councilwoman Rennie.

Councilwoman Clear move to vote on the revenue line of \$7,092,000 from the ARP Fund; seconded by Councilwoman Rennie. Carried 7 to 0.

Expenditures

Maintenance & Repair (142,000)

Councilwoman Clear motioned, seconded by Mrs. Rennie, and carried 7 to 0.

Capital Outlay (150,000)

Councilwoman Clear motioned, seconded by Mrs. Rennie, and carried 7 to 0.

Firefighters Grant (300,000)

Councilwoman Clear motioned, seconded by Mrs. Rennie.

Chairman Anderson pointed out that there are volunteer fire companies in Erie County that fall under the category of 501c4 and are not eligible under the CARES or the ARPA. Council recognizes how vital these workers are to the community.

Vote carried 7 to 0.

EC Convention Center Authority (2,000,000)

*The Convention enter Authority must apply for Shuttered Facilities Grant, PPP, and/or Federal Grants.

Councilwoman Clear motioned, seconded by Mrs. Rennie.

Councilman Rastetter inquired as it there would be any change in the allocation if they receive other grant monies. Chairman Anderson clarified that the purpose of the special language is to ensure they do try to get those monies, as even with the ARPA allocation they will be approximately \$2 Million in revenue loss. There is no restriction, and it is hoped that they will leverage this money.

Vote carried 7 to 0.

Erie Area Council of Governments (50,000)

Councilwoman Clear motioned, seconded by Mrs. Rennie.

Chairman Anderson thanked EACOG and Jessica Horan-Kunco for the tireless work she does on behalf of all municipal governments associated with Erie County. These funds allow her to team up with other departments and entities throughout Erie County.

Vote carried 7 to 0.

Erie County Community College Empowerment Grant (1,500,000)

*To be eligible, the student must have been a 12 month continuous resident of Erie County and continue residence throughout enrollment.

Councilwoman Clear motioned, seconded by Mrs. Rennie.

Councilwoman Clear expressed her enthusiasm because those students who apply this fall are not eligible for Pell or PHEA grants, nor the Stafford Loan. She says this is access to education, and believes that education can be the great stabilizer and is much needed here in Erie County. Many businesses and industries have not been investing in Erie County because there has not been a Community College and there is not a workforce to be taught; this is a true opportunity for students all over the county. She commended the County Executive and Chairman Anderson on their work.

Councilman Rastetter commented food for thought, something he once heard from an Admiral: "Education is a national security issue."

Chairman Anderson echoed Councilwoman Clear's comments. This is a promise and step-up for generations to come and stepping forward to move the county forward in education and with a trained workforce comes better citizens and business wanting to come to this community and thus more revenue.

Vote carried 7 to 0.

Erie County Community College Barrier Reduction Grant (250,000)

Councilwoman Clear motioned, seconded by Mrs. Rennie.

Councilwoman Rennie commented that she is a huge supporter of life long education that community colleges and libraries speak to that need. Community Colleges have been around a long time, offering affordable access to education; however, there are known gaps that often don't produce results to those in the lowest sector of our economy and communities. She believes in progressive programs that will provide support services (student, academic, etc.) that will address and meet needs of students. This grant is the beginning of an innovative program.

Councilwoman Clear thanked Councilwoman Rennie for the work on barriers that she has worked on.

Chairman Anderson echoed the sentiments, and thanked Mrs. Rennie for her thoughtfulness, insight and endurance as she continues to fight for this critical component of a successful community college.

Vote carried 7 to 0.

Transfer to Pleasant Ridge Manor (2,700,000)

*Pleasant Ridge Manor must apply for any available revenue replacement grants through the state and federal governments.

Councilwoman Clear motioned, seconded by Mrs. Rennie.

Councilman Horton commented that he will be supporting this item, however noted that for several years Council has had to fill the deficit for Pleasant Ridge. He suggested that discussion needs to be had on how to problem solve its needs - downsizing, selling beds, or other.

Chairman Anderson echoed Mr. Horton's comments. As with Mr. Horton, voiced

the need for the next Council to look into this concern. He expressed the value of Pleasant Ridge to the community: It is a long term investment that is suffering in the wake of pandemic. This is a service that the county can offer to its citizens who pay their taxes and have never asked for anything from this community, but find themselves in a position after raising their families of not being able to afford a place of care in their time of need that provides affordable care. The pandemic does not excuse the severity of concerns, but it does help the framework.

Councilman Horton commented how great the employees of Pleasant Ridge Manor are. His previous comments and the deficit do not reflect the phenomenal work being done, but the fact is, it does need to be addressed.

Vote carried 7 to 0.

Councilwoman Clear motioned to vote on Ordinance 66, 2021, as amended. Seconded by Councilwoman Rennie. Carried 7 to 0.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Anderson thanked the public. He applauded the staff of Erie County and the work of his colleagues.

Councilwoman Clear moved to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Rennie. Meeting adjourned at 6:54pm.

****Nicole Inan, Council and Elections Coordinator****