

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, December 16, 2021

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Anderson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

OPTIONAL PRAYER OR INVOCATION

Councilwoman Schauerma led the optional invocation: May God give you more and more grace and peace as you grow in your knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord; Merry Christmas.

ROLL CALL

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

Also Present: Douglas R. Smith, Erika Knight; Thomas Talarico; Nicole Inan; Amy Swartzfager

HEARING OF THE PUBLIC

None to be heard.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

None

REPORTS OF COUNTY OFFICIALS

Reports of Council

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

**Resolution 70, 2021,
"Resolution to Fill the
Vacancy in County Council**

Chairman Anderson explained that under the Erie County Home Rule Charter, Council is charged with filling vacancies. He opened the floor for discussion, and explained that if there were desire for such, a motion would be accepted for

District One"

nomination to the County Council District 1 vacancy.

Councilman Rastetter motioned nomination for former Councilwoman Clear's recommendation of Mr. Terry Scutella of Millcreek. He expressed Mr. Scutella's superior qualifications and experience. This was seconded by Councilwoman Schauerman.

Councilman Horton commented that this was his second time having to replace a colleague in eight years; the first due to death. Horton voiced the importance of undergoing process, and the public trust interest of not having abbreviated considerations. Mr. Horton expressed his fear that a rapid action such as this reeks of back-door patronage. Horton went on to compliment Scutella as a valid nominee, but recommended that for transparency to public, Council forgo vote until day ten.

Councilwoman Rennie noted her appreciation for her colleagues comments and agreed that under different circumstances she would too agree; however, under the recent extraordinary circumstances of staff changes, Covid, etc. the prescribed procedures for filling the vacancy does not give much leeway for Council. In the interest in the current needs of the office, she voiced support of Scutella.

Councilman Rastetter expressed that there have been discussions on the necessity to fill this position since Clear's triumph of the General Election. He voiced that Clear was duly elected to her former seat on Council and knows best who would represent her and her constituents. He remarked that it seems like a stall tactic otherwise.

Councilman Horton rebutted that he was not here for a debate nor to stall, but expressed that a process allows for wide latitude, and deters poor-optics.

Chairman Anderson agreed that appointment is a process that is needed, and offered that although it may not be definitive, Council has the power to appoint officers to County Council and the row officers (sans District Attorney). He reminded that if the decision is not made, the Courts have the power to do so. Anderson stated that public notice was given in accordance to sunshine law requirements, and that Council has a responsibility to take care of Council and Government business. The consensus of Council was that this was an appropriate time and necessity for replacement. Part of leadership is taking criticism, and making difficult decisions necessary. He expressed that this is a young council, other than the eight years that Mr. Horton has served, and they are in need of someone with experience and knowledge. Anderson voiced his support for Mrs. Clear's opinions and visions with this appointment.

Councilman Rastetter motioned to consider Resolution 70, 2021; seconded by Councilwoman Schauerman. Rastetter motioned to amend the Resolution with the name of Terry M. Scutella; seconded by Schauerman and passed 7 to 0. Mr. Smith gave a reading of the Resolution as amended; motioned by Rastetter and

seconded by Schauerman; passed unanimously.

Chairman Anderson welcomed Mr. Terry M. Scutella to Erie County Council.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Horton moved to adjourn; Chairman Anderson adjourned the meeting at 12:31 PM.

A Reorganization Meeting of Erie County Council will be held January 3, 2021 in room 114A, Erie County Courthouse.

The 2022 schedule of the Finance Committee, Personnel Committee, and Regular Meetings will be duly advertised prior to the beginning of the year.

Members of the public wishing to speak at an upcoming Regular Meeting of Council or those requiring specific accommodation are encouraged to call or email the Council Office at (814) 451-6303 or Councilrequests@eriecountypa.gov.