

MINUTES

Erie County Council

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Terry M. Scutella, Chairman
Chris Drexel, Vice Chairman
Charlie Bayle
Rock Copeland
Ellen Schauerman
Jim Wertz
Jim Winarski

Erie County Courthouse
140 West 6th Street, Room 117
Erie, PA 16501

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 13, 2026

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

OPTIONAL PRYEAR OR REFLECTION

Mrs. Schauerman offered a reflection.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Terry Scutella- Chair, Chris Drexel -Vice Chair (via phone), Charlie Bayle (via phone), Rock Copeland, Ellen Schauerman, Jim Wertz, and Jim Winarski

Others Present: Karen Chillcott, Megan Moore, Tom Talarico, Esq., Jay Stranahan, Esq., and Colin Domowicz, Financial Advisor

HEARING OF THE PUBLIC

Jacob Jones

Jacob Jones, City of Erie: Mr. Jones commented on community engagement in governance and support of Pleasant Ridge Manor.

Others

David Mitchell, City of Corry: Mr. Mitchell commented, as a founding member of the Land Bank and former County Council member, on its success and his gratefulness for the privilege to serve.

Anna McCartney, District 5: Ms. McCartney commented on the terms of the settlement of the Keep our Library Public lawsuit and community involvement in decisions, particularly public assets.

Deonte Cooley, City of Erie: Mr. Cooley commented on Council members being more present in the community, more representation for and by black community members, and assistance with the empowerment of the black community to enrich themselves and rely on government funds.

Mimi O'Connor, City of Erie: Ms. O'Connor commented on the death of Marchello Woodard and racism in Erie County.

Scott Rastetter, Washington Township: Mr. Rastetter commented on faith restored by the elections and congratulated the new officials and discussed focusing on the future with transportation and investment in the environment.

Hugh McCartney, North East: Mr. McCartney discussed concerns with an appointment of a Gannon University employee on the Library Board, and possible pressure by Gannon

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

November 20, 2025 - Regular Meeting	A motion to accept the minutes was made by Mrs. Schauerma, seconded by Mr. Winarski, and carried 7-0.
December 8, 2025 - Special Meeting	Yea: All
December 16, 2025 - Special Meeting	Nay: None

REPORTS OF COUNTY OFFICIALS

County Executive and/or Designee	County Executive Christina Vogel discussed her first week in office, open communication between departments and Council liaisons, and thanked Mrs. Schauerma for her involvement with county departments.
Finance Committee - Mr. Drexel	Mr. Winarski reported on the items from the Finance Committee moved to the Council agenda.
Personnel Committee - Mr. Copeland	Mr. Copeland reported on the items from the Personnel Committee moved to the Council agenda.
Other	Mr. Copeland made a motion to move Ordinances 4 through 9 to a second read. Mr. Winarski seconded the motion, and it carried 5-2. Yea: Copeland, Drexel, Scutella, Wertz, and Winarski Nay: Bayle, Schauerma

OLD BUSINESS

Ordinance Number 77, 2025, "2026 Appointed Official Salary Ordinance – Director of Human Resources" (First Read 12/9/25)	A motion to adopt Ordinance 77, 2025 was made by Mr. Winarski and seconded by Mr. Copeland. Mr. Copeland made a motion to amend the ordinance and strike the second paragraph and add "that the Director of Human Resources shall be paid wages in 2026 from January 1, 2026 until and through their last day of employment with the County of Erie." The amendment was seconded by Mrs. Schauerma and
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carried (6-1), (Final 7-0).
Yea: All
Nay: (Bayle-changed vote)

The motion to adopt, as amended, carried (6-1), (Final 7-0).
Yea: All
Nay: (Bayle-changed vote)

**Ordinance Number 78,
2025, "2026 Appointed
Official Salary Ordinance –
Director of Finance" (First
Read 12/9/25)**

A motion to adopt Ordinance 78, 2025 was made by Mr. Copeland and seconded by Mr. Winarski.

Mr. Copeland made a motion to amend the ordinance and strike the second paragraph and add “that the outgoing Director of Finance shall be paid wages in 2026 from January 1, 2026 until and through their last day of employment with the County of Erie.” The amendment was seconded by Mrs. Schauerma and carried 7-0.

Yea: All
Nay: None

The motion to adopt, as amended, carried 7-0.
Yea: All
Nay: None

**Ordinance Number 79,
2025, "2026 Appointed
Official Salary Ordinance –
Director of
Administration" (First
Read 12/9/25)**

A motion was made to adopt Ordinance Number 79, 2025 by Mr. Copeland and seconded by Mrs. Schauerma.

Mr. Copeland made a motion to amend the ordinance and strike the second paragraph and add “that the outgoing Director of Administration shall be paid wages in 2026 from January 1, 2026 until and through their last day of employment with the County of Erie.” The amendment was seconded by Mrs. Schauerma and carried 7-0.

Yea: All
Nay: None

The motion to adopt, as amended, carried 7-0.
Yea: All
Nay: None

**Ordinance Number 80,
2025, "2026 Appointed
Official Salary Ordinance –
Public Defender" (First
Read 12/9/25)**

A motion was made to adopt Ordinance Number 80, 2025 by Mr. Copeland and seconded by Mr. Winarski.

Mr. Copeland made a motion to amend the ordinance and strike the second paragraph and add “that the outgoing Public Defender shall be paid wages in 2026 from January 1, 2026 until and through their last day of employment with the County of Erie.” The amendment was seconded by Mr. Schauerma and carried 7-0.

Yea: All
Nay: None

7-0.
Yea: All
Nay: None

Ordinance Number 81, 2025, "2026 Appointed Official Salary Ordinance – County Solicitor" (First Read 12/9/25) A motion was made by Mrs. Schauerman to adopt Ordinance Number 81, 2025, seconded by Mr. Wertz, and carried 7-0.
Mr. Copeland clarified with the Solicitor that no amendment was needed.
Yea: All
Nay: None

Ordinance Number 82, 2025, "2026 Appointed Official Salary Ordinance – First Assistant County Solicitor" (First Read 12/9/25) A motion was made to adopt Ordinance Number 82, 2025 by Mr. Copeland, seconded by Mr. Winarski, and carried 7-0.
Yea: All
Nay: None

Ordinance Number 83, 2025, "2026 Appointed Official Salary Ordinance – Two Assistant County Solicitors" (First Read 12/9/25) A motion was made to adopt Ordinance Number 83, 2025 by Mrs. Schauerman, seconded by Mr. Copeland, and carried 7-0.
Yea: All
Nay: None

NEW BUSINESS

First Read Ordinance Number 1, 2026, "Approving Harborcreek Township Ordinance 2010-201-8 an Amendment of Real Estate Tax Relief and Effective Date Extension" (Finance Committee) Ordinance Number 1, 2026 received its first read.

First Read Ordinance Number 2, 2026, "First 2026 General Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$50,000 and Creation of Line Items for the Central Booking Fee" (Finance Committee) Ordinance Number 2, 2026 received its first read.

First Read Ordinance Number 3, 2026, "Second 2026 General Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$608,920" Ordinance Number 3, 2026 received its first read.

**and Creation of Line Items
for State Food Purchase
Plan Contract with Second
Harvest Food Bank"
(Finance Committee)**

**First Read Ordinance
Number 4, 2026, "2026
General Fund Budget
Revised Expenditures and
Creation of Temporary
Staff Line Item in the
Finance Bureau" (Finance
Committee)**

A motion to adopt Ordinance Number 4, 2026 was made by Mr. Copeland, seconded by Mr. Wertz, and carried 7-0.
Yea: All
Nay: None

**First Read Ordinance
Number 5, 2026, "2026
General Fund Budget
Revised Expenditures and
Creation of Temporary
Staff Line Item in the
Information Technology
(IT) Bureau" (Finance
Committee)**

A motion to adopt Ordinance Number 5, 2026 was made by Mr. Copeland, seconded by Mrs. Schauerma, and carried 7-0.
Yea: All
Nay: None

**First Read Ordinance
Number 6, 2026, "2026
Appointed Official Salary
Ordinance - Director of
Administration" (Personnel
Committee)**

A motion to adopt Ordinance Number 6, 2026 was made by Mrs. Schauerma, seconded by Mr. Wertz, and carried 5-2.
Yea: Copeland, Drexel, Scutella, Wertz
Nay: Bayle, Schauerma

**First Read Ordinance
Number 7, 2026, "2026
Appointed Official Salary
Ordinance - Public
Defender" (Personnel
Committee)**

A motion to adopt Ordinance Number 7, 2026 was made by Mrs. Schauerma, seconded by Mr. Wertz, and carried 5-2.
Yea: Copeland, Drexel, Scutella, Wertz
Nay: Bayle, Schauerma

**First Read Ordinance
Number 8, 2026, "2026
General Fund Budget
Waiver of Human
Resources Code and
Approval of Starting Rate
Above 6% Maximum
Increase for Position
002000-002, Executive**

A motion to adopt Ordinance Number 8, 2026 was made by Mr. Copeland, seconded by Mr. Wertz, and carried 5-2.
Yea: Copeland, Drexel, Scutella, Wertz
Nay: Bayle, Schauerma

**Assistant, in County
Executive Bureau"
(Personnel Committee)**

**First Read Ordinance
Number 9, 2026, "2026
Planning Fund Budget
Waiver of Human
Resources Code and
Approval of Starting Rate
Above 6% Maximum
Increase for Position
066010-001, Director of
Planning" (Personnel
Committee)**

A motion to adopt Ordinance Number 9, 2026 was made by Mrs. Schauerma, seconded by Mr. Copeland, and carried 5-2.
Yea: Copeland, Drexel, Scutella, Wertz
Nay: Bayle, Schauerma

**First Read Ordinance
Number 10, 2026, "2026
County Council Solicitor
Retainer" (Personnel
Committee)**

A first read of Ordinance Number 10, 2026 was offered by Ms. Chillcott.

**First Read Ordinance
Number 11, 2026, "2026
County Council Deputy
Solicitor Retainer"
(Personnel Committee)**

A first read of Ordinance Number 11, 2026 was offered by Ms. Chillcott.

**Resolution Number 1, 2026,
"Approval of Amendments
to PILOT Agreement
Between the Pennsylvania
State University, the
Harborcreek School
District, the Township of
Harborcreek, and the
County of Erie" (Finance
Committee)**

A motion to adopt Resolution Number 1, 2026 was made by Mrs. Schauerma, seconded by Mr. Wertz, and carried 7-0.
Yea: All
Nay: None

**Resolution Number 2, 2026,
"Approval of Extension
Agreement for Two-Year
Lease Renewal with
Averhealth and County of
Erie for Space Located at
Erie County Community
Corrections Center, 450 E
16th Street, Erie, PA**

A motion to adopt Resolution Number 2, 2026 was made by Mrs. Schauerma, seconded by Mr. Winarski, and carried 7-0.
Yea: All
Nay: None

**16503" (Finance
Committee)**

Resolution Number 3, 2026, A motion to adopt Resolution Number 3, 2026 was made by Mr. Copeland,
"Appointment of Maher seconded by Mrs. Schauerman, and carried 7-0.
Duessel to Perform an Yea: All
Audit of the County of Erie Nay: None
for Calendar Year Ending
December 31, 2025"
(Finance Committee)

Resolution Number 4, 2026, A motion to adopt Resolution Number 4, 2026 was made by Mr. Winarski,
"Appointment of Maher seconded by Mrs. Schauerman, and carried 7-0.
Duessel to Perform an Yea: All
Audit of the Erie County Nay: None
HealthChoices Program for
Calendar Year Ending
December 31, 2025"
(Finance Committee)

Resolution Number 5, 2026, A motion to adopt Resolution Number 5, 2026 was made by Mrs. Schauerman,
"Appointment of Maher seconded by Mr. Wertz, and carried 7-0.
Duessel to Perform an Yea: All
Audit of Pleasant Ridge Nay: None
Manor for Calendar Year
Ending December 31, 2025"
(Finance Committee)

Resolution Number 6, 2026, A motion to adopt Resolution Number 6, 2026 was made by Mr. Winarski,
"Appointment of Maher seconded by Mr. Wertz, and carried 7-0.
Duessel to Perform an Yea: All
Audit of Pleasant Ridge Nay: None
Manor Pension Plan for
Calendar Year Ending
December 31, 2025"
(Finance Committee)

Resolution Number 7, 2026, A motion to adopt Resolution Number 7, 2026 was made by Mrs. Schauerman,
"Appointment of Maher seconded by Mr. Winarski, and carried 7-0.
Duessel to Perform an Yea: All
Audit of Expert Nay: None
Community Care
Management (ECCM) for
Calendar Year Ending
December 31, 2025"
(Finance Committee)

Possible appointment of A motion to appoint Jeffrey Church to the Erie County Land Bank was made by
Jeffrey Church to the Erie Mr. Bayle, seconded by Mrs. Schauerman, and carried 7-0.

County Land Bank. Term to expire December 31, 2030. (Bayle)	Yea: All Nay: None
Possible appointment of Kevin Smith to the Erie Regional Airport Authority. Term to expire December 31, 2030. (Schauerman)	A motion to appoint Kevin Smith to the Regional Airport Authority was made by Mrs. Schauerman, seconded by Mr. Wertz, and carried 7-0. Yea: All Nay: None
Possible reappointment of Ronald Bole to the Erie County Planning Commission. Term to expire December 31, 2029. (Schauerman)	A motion to reappoint Ronald Bole to the Planning Commission was made by Mrs. Schauerman, seconded by Mr. Winarski, and carried 7-0. Yea: All Nay: None
Possible reappointment of James Cardman to the Erie County Land Bank. Term to expire December 31, 2030. (Schauerman)	A motion to reappoint James Cardman to the Land Bank was made by Mrs. Schauerman, seconded by Mr. Winarski, and carried 7-0. Yea: All Nay: None
Possible reappointment of Quyen L. Aoh, Ph.D. to the Erie County Library Advisory Board. Term to expire December 31, 2028. (Schauerman)	A motion to reappoint Quyen L. Aoh, Ph.D. to the Library Advisory Board was made by Mrs. Schauerman, seconded by Mr. Winarski, and carried 7-0. Mr. Copeland commented that the appointee had been an asset on the Board, and their employment at Gannon was not an issue. Mrs. Schauerman thanked Mr. Copeland for his comments and reiterated that the appointee was very engaged and involved and did a good job in their first term. Yea: All Nay: None
Possible reappointment of Mark B. Louis to the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority. Term to expire December 31, 2030. (Schauerman)	A motion to reappoint Mark B. Louis to the Gaming Revenue Authority was made by Mrs. Schauerman, seconded by Mr. Winarski, and carried 7-0. Yea: All Nay: None
Possible reappointment of Peter J. Zapharis to the Erie County Convention Center Authority. Term to expire December 31, 2029. (Schauerman)	A motion to reappoint Peter J. Zapharis to the Convention Center was made by Mrs. Schauerman, seconded by Mr. Winarski, and carried 7-0. Yea: All Nay: None

Possible reappointment of William S. Jeffress to the Erie County Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission. Term to expire December 31, 2029. (Scutella)

A motion to reappoint William S. Jeffress to the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission was made by Mr. Wertz, seconded by Mr. Copeland, and carried 7-0.

Yea: All

Nay: None

ADJOURNMENT

The next Finance/Personnel Committee Meetings are Thursday, January 22, 2026.

Mr. Copeland thanked Mr. Dave Mitchell, an inaugural member of the Erie County Land Bank, for his service and good work.

The meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

The next Regular Meeting of County Council is Tuesday, January 27, 2026.