

MINUTES

Erie County Council

View More At
www.eriecountypa.gov



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

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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, June 2, 2026

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M. by Chairman Scutella who then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

OPTIONAL PRAYER OR REFLECTION

A reflection was offered by Mrs. Schauerma.

ROLL CALL

Present were Chairman Scutella, Members Bayle, Copeland, Drexel, Schauerma, Wertz and Winarski.
Also present were County Clerk Karen Chillcott, Attorney Jay Stranahan and Financial Advisor Colin Domowicz.

HEARING OF THE PUBLIC

Others

Unnamed gentleman-Asked Mr. Copeland several questions pertaining to social media posts, proceeded to do a push-up prior to leaving the podium.

Caleb Landis-Albion, Spoke out asking Council to be aware of the website recently released by Washington, D.C. concerning illegals, especially those living in Erie County. He stated that this site also shows involvement in potential crimes.

Deonte Cooley-City of Erie, Speaker requested a change in the current cell phone procedure. He also commented that some departments are receiving larger amounts of money, and he would like to see community centers get some of that money.

Cindy Trieber-Edinboro, Spoke out in support of ECRSSA, offering Council multiple letters written in support of the program.

Allan Brown- Stated that he was the senior case manager of the reentry program- (ECRSSA). Spoke out in support of this program and the very large number of

lives that the closing has affected.

Arin Mizner-City of Erie, Spoke out in support of ECRSSA.

Jen Paulson-Millcreek, Spoke out in favor of the ECRSSA, stating that there was no open bid process or no possibility of public interaction.

Katie Kretz-Fairview Township, Speaking on behalf of herself, in support of ECRSSA and the need in the community.

Martha Nwachukwu-City of Erie, Spoke in support of ECRSSA.

Margaret Watts-Washington Township, Spoke in support of ECRSSA

Theresa Imler-City of Erie, Spoke in support of ECRSSA. Read an e-mail from Kat Dolan into the record.

Michael Keys-City of Erie, Spoke on his disappointment that the ECRSSA vote was moved to a second read so quietly. Spoke on BIPOC (Black Indigenous People of Color) and expressed his concern that the reentry is now held under a conflict of issue.

Will Swick-Millcreek, Spoke in support of ECRSSA. He went on to request a town hall meeting for people to obtain more clarification. He also stated that he thinks that public officials should not be running for the office of committeemen. He stated that it should be open to lay people that currently hold no political office.

Mimi O'Connor-City of Erie, Spoke in support of ECRSSA.

Abdullah Washington-Erie County, Supports ECRSSA and stated that transparency should begin in Council chambers.

Jason Reynolds-Erie County, Spoke on his involvement with the reentry program on behalf of himself but from an employer's side. He felt that the program was successful and very much needed. He also believes that this program is currently being held by a conflict of interest.

Paul Gambill-City of Erie, Speaker asked council to rescind their decision on the ECRSSA . He stated that he felt that they made a bad decision and they need to consider correcting it.

Casey Walker-Spoke in favor of Senate Bill 120, (Adult Use Marijuana Legalization in PA) Speaker challenged all Council members to take a cannabis course.

Julia Jacobs-City of Erie, Spoke in support of ECRSSA. Noted the lack of accountability and transparency within Council.

REPORTS OF COUNTY OFFICIALS

County Executive and/or Designee	Director of Administration, Chris Groner spoke on behalf of the County Executive. He listed some of the work that is being done by Mrs. Vogel's various teams and possible dates that these things would reach Council.
Finance Committee - Chris Drexel	Mr. Drexel reported on items from the Finance Committee that were moved to the Council agenda as noted.
Personnel Committee - Rock Copeland	Mr. Copeland reported on items from the Personnel Committee that were moved to the Council agenda as noted.

Other

OLD BUSINESS

Ordinance Number 41, 2026, "2026 Children and Youth Services Fund Budget Revised Expenditures of \$345,000 for Creation of Expense Line Items for Court Ordered Placements" (First Read 5/5/26)	A motion to adopt Ordinance Number 41, 2026 was made by Mrs. Schauerman, seconded by Mr. Winarski. No discussion noted. Motion carried, 7-0. Yea: All Nay: None
Ordinance Number 42, 2026, "First 2026 Mental Health/Intellectual Disabilities Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$346,454 for Additional Revenue in Calendar Year 2026" (First Read 5/5/26)	A motion to adopt Ordinance Number 42, 2026 was made by Mrs. Schauerman, seconded by Mr. Winarski. No discussion noted. Motion carried, 7-0. Yea: All Nay: None

NEW BUSINESS

First Reading of Ordinance Number 44, 2026, "Amending Article III, Section 1, D (4) and Article III, Section 2 E(1) and E(2) A first read of Ordinance Number 44, 2026 was offered by Ms. Chillcott.

**of the Administrative Code
to approve the use of an
electronic bidding process
for all competitive bids and
Requests for Proposal
(RFP) for the County of
Erie and repealing all
inconsistent ordinances"
(Finance Committee)**

**First Reading of Ordinance Number 45, 2026, "Second
2026 Drug and Alcohol
Fund Budget Supplemental
Appropriation of \$614,508
for Additional Revenue
Received from the PA
Department of Drug and
Alcohol" (Finance
Committee)** A first read of Ordinance Number 45, 2026 was offered by Ms. Chillcott.

**First Reading of Ordinance Number 46, 2026, "First
2026 Capital Projects Fund
Budget Supplemental
Appropriation of \$491,158
for Additional Revenue
Received from the Erie
Regional Library
Foundation for
Renovations" (Finance
Committee)** A first read of Ordinance Number 46, 2026 was offered by Ms. Chillcott.

**First Reading of Ordinance Number 47, 2026, "Sixth
2026 General Fund Budget
Supplemental
Appropriation of \$74,082
for Creation of Data
Governance Administrator
Position in the Information
Technology Department"
(Personnel Committee)** A first read of Ordinance Number 47, 2026 was offered by Ms. Chillcott.

**First Reading of Ordinance Number 48, 2026, "2026
Planning Fund Budget
Revised Revenue and** A first read of Ordinance Number 48, 2026 was offered by Ms. Chillcott.

**Expenditures of \$74,082 for
Elimination of GIS
Administrator Position"
(Personnel Committee)**

First Reading of Ordinance Number 49, 2026, "2026 Appointed Official Salary - Full-Time Assistant Public Defender" (Personnel Committee) A first read of Ordinance Number 49, 2026 was offered by Ms. Chillcott. A motion was made by Mrs. Schauerman to move this Ordinance to a second read, seconded by Mr. Winarski. Mr. Copeland spoke on the reasoning behind moving some things forward. Mr. Wertz stated that he agreed with Mr. Copeland and while it is not always ideal, it does sometimes need to happen due to deadlines. Mr. Drexel stated that while he does support the Defender's Office and respects how backed up they are, he would be voting against the move to a second read. Mrs. Schauerman stated that due to the extreme amount of backlog in this office, it is important to get someone into this position sooner rather than later. No further discussion noted. Motion carried, 5-2.
Aye: Bayle, Scutella, Schauerman, Wertz, Winarski
Nay: Copeland, Drexel

Second Reading of Ordinance Number 49, 2026, "2026 Appointed Official Salary - Full-Time Assistant Public Defender" (Personnel Committee) Mrs. Schauerman made a motion to adopt Ordinance Number 49, seconded by Mr. Winarski. Prior to the vote, Mr. Drexel stated that the solicitor had confirmed with the Public Defender that there was no violation for anyone not receiving a speedy trial. Mr. Bayle interjected to say that he said he didn't believe it was going to happen, but he couldn't predict the future. Mrs. Schauerman said that she understood him to say that he wasn't sure if that would happen. Motion carried, 6-1.
Aye: Bayle, Copeland, Scutella, Schauerman, Wertz, Winarski
Nay: Drexel

First Reading of Ordinance Number 50, 2026, "2026 Appointed Official Salary - Part-Time Assistant Public Defender" (Personnel Committee) Mr. Wertz asked that Ordinance Number 50, 2026 be amended from part time to a full time position, seconded by Mr. Copeland. No further discussion was noted. A first read of the Ordinance was offered. Motion carried to accept the amendment, 7-0.
Aye: All
Nay: None

Resolution Number 22, 2026 "Directing the County Executive to Convene Relevant Parties to Develop Reasonable Accommodations for the Use of Mobile Devices at Public Meetings Held Within the Courthouse" (Finance Committee) A motion to adopt Resolution 22, 2026 was made by Mr. Wertz, seconded by Mr. Copeland. Mr. Bayle stated that he has no problem with the discussion on this topic but is not in favor of telling the County Executive what to do. Mr. Wertz said that this is a small action to correct the issue and that plans are being made. Mr. Copeland wanted to extend his appreciation to Mr. Wertz for working on a solution to this concern. Mrs. Schauerman said that she agrees with some of her colleagues and that a resolution is not necessary. Mr. Winarski stated that conversations are in progress to make some changes. Mr. Scutella is in agreement that a resolution is not necessary. Motion failed, 3-4.
Yea: Copeland, Drexel, Wertz,
Nay: Bayle, Schauerman, Winarski, Scutella

Possible appointment of Joel Natalie to the Erie County Community College Board of Trustees. Term to expire August 31, 2026. (Winarski) (Personnel Committee)

A motion was made for the possible appointment of Joel Natalie to the Erie County Community College Board of Trustees by Mr. Winarski, seconded by Mr. Copeland. No discussion noted. Motion carried, 7-0.

Aye: All
Nay: None

Possible appointment of Sherri Heasley to the Erie County Housing Authority. Term to expire March 31, 2031. (County Executive) (Personnel Committee)

A motion was made for the possible appointment of Sherri Heasley to the Erie County Housing Authority by Mrs. Schauerman, seconded by Mr. Copeland. No discussion noted. Motion carried, 7-0.

Aye: All
Nay: None

ADJOURNMENT

**The next Finance/Personnel Meeting adjourned at 7:25 P.M.
Committee Meetings are
Thursday, June 18, 2026.**