

April 8, 2014

ERIE COUNTY COUNCIL – Regular Meeting

Dr. Foust, Chairman, called to order a Regular Meeting of the Erie County Council at 7:00 p.m. at the Erie County Council Chambers, Erie County Courthouse, Erie, Pennsylvania. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Mrs. Loll recited the following prayer:

“We know the hush of a snowfall is the whisper of God. The first flowers of spring are God’s reminder of new life. The sun of summer is the light of God’s love. The colors of fall are the beauty that God sends. Easter is a time of remembrance, thanksgiving, and joy. Let this season inspire us to show our gratitude by living a life of hope, love, and joy. Remembering he came to pay a debt he did not owe, because we owed a debt we could not pay. Let us be an example to show others how to live. Amen.”

Roll Call

Mr. Smith called the roll:

Members Present: Dr. Foust, Chairman
Mr. Leone, Vice Chairman
Mr. Breneman
Mr. Fatica
Mr. Horton
Mrs. Loll

Members Absent: Mr. DiMattio

Also Present: Douglas R. Smith, County Clerk
James Sparber, Director of Finance
Sue Ellen Pasquale, Manager of Accounting
Gary Lee, Director of Administration

Hearing of
The Public

Venus Azevedo-Laboda, city of Erie; Ms. Azevedo-Laboda spoke regarding PTSD and the untimely death of her brother, who committed suicide as a result of PTSD. She also spoke about her initiative, “Boots on the Ground”, an initiative working to spread PTSD awareness.

Abigael Trieber, Millcreek; Ms. Trieber is the teenage daughter of a US Navy veteran. She stated her father suffers from PTSD and she suffers from secondary PTSD. She commented that she has had difficulty in school with other kids teasing her, and she stated that it would be nice to have an initiative that went around to the schools and did a presentation regarding military families and PTSD.

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Vinny Stefanelli, Millcreek; Mr. Stefanelli thanked Council for their time and explained that he started Music for Veterans as an outlet for veterans to learn an instrument to help them cope with their readjustment to civilian life. He stated that PTSD does not only affect the veteran, but the family also suffers and PTSD issues have gotten worse through the years. He felt strongly that there needs to be more education for the public on PTSD.

Raquel Juarez, city of Erie; she is the mother of Venus Azevedo-Laboda; she stated that PTSD is a community problem and a tragedy for families. She would like for the nation to get past the stigma of PTSD and support veterans when they return.

Gary Horton, city of Erie; Mr. Horton was asking for support from County Council for a summer youth program to hire 700 kids for summer jobs. He stated that they cannot wait until June to put the program in place. The school district and the city of Erie have no money, but he feels there are County funds for this program. He stated he is looking for \$25,000 for this summer youth program and feels that a lot more can be done to help the inner city.

Randy Barnes, Harborcreek; Mr. Barnes spoke about jobs and job development. He expressed his concern over officials not checking the facts, and wanted to know where the \$375 million smelting plant that was supposed to be built in west Erie County is. He believes that the projects promoted by Develop Erie will not happen, and he wanted to know where the \$4 million went that the County gave Develop Erie to start this west county project.

Cindy Trieber, Millcreek; she is a military wife whose husband has served numerous tours, suffers from PTSD and a severe brain injury. She explained the difficulties of her life and helping her husband deal with PTSD on a daily basis. She would like to see the community and the powers that be try to do more for those suffering with PTSD.

Bishop Dwayne Brock, Erie; Bishop Brock expressed a need for help in the African-American community and that priorities need to be set by officials. He stated there needs to be a summer job program to keep the kids off the street and he would stand behind any legislation that is brought forth.

Sue Jott, city of Erie; she stated she is a family friend of Raquel Juarez and asked that Council do whatever they could for the community and veterans.

Michael X. Anderson, city of Erie; Mr. Anderson works in the prison reform ministry at three state correctional institutions. He commented that it is important to bring everyone to the table so everyone is on the same page about the youth violence going on in the city.

Bill Sinclair, Harborcreek Township; Mr. Sinclair spoke regarding the rail terminal project proposed for Harborcreek Township. He is not against the terminal, but feels that the Harborcreek site is not suited for the terminal. He asked Council to challenge the rail people to review the data as it is incorrect. He asked that Council keep an open mind and review what is being said.

Katie Morton, Millcreek; Ms. Morton was in support of what a summer youth program and feels it is needed to give kids an opportunity to better themselves. She is involved with the Quality of Life Learning Center and stated there are 40 employable students, with one currently employed. She feels there are not equal opportunities in the county for youth to obtain employment.

Steve Simmeljkaer, Erie; Mr. Simmeljkaer pledges his support on a summer job program for the youth in Erie. He stated that violence is a reality and cannot be ignored anymore. He would like to see some opportunity for employment for the youth in the city.

Darrell Craig, Erie; Mr. Craig spoke about an Erie teenager who was in school and ready to quit, but he persuaded the juvenile to stay in school, where he eventually got his diploma. Unfortunately, there was nothing available for him and he ended up being murdered shortly after his graduation. Mr. Craig stated that this job program would help improve the community.

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Veronica Rexford, Millcreek; Ms. Rexford works for MATV and gave an overview of the job fair, where they registered 150 individuals who are ready to work. She is very much in favor of a summer youth job program to help curb violence in the city.

Lou Aliota, Millcreek; Mr. Aliota stated that he has served veterans for over 25 years and knows the effects of PTSD and drugs and is here to offer his services. He commented that education and information are vital in order to gain a better understanding of PTSD and the far reaching effects.

William Jeffers, Millcreek; Mr. Jeffers is the Executive Director of the Booker T. Washington Center and considers himself a role model. He stated that in the past, people were coming to him and the center for help, but now he is coming to Council for help and was asking for any assistance in creating a summer job program for the community.

Antoine Holman, city of Erie; Mr. Holman discussed his life as a teen and how at one point he was caught up in violence; he turned his life around, obtained a bachelor's degree and is a business analyst. He is strongly in favor of some type of training program to give the youth in the County an opportunity for advancement.

Jalan Coleman; city of Erie; Mr. Coleman is a teen from the city and is currently the president of JFK Teen Council, representing teens from the city and county. He read a statement asking for the opportunity to have a chance to work every summer.

Kerry Williams, Millcreek; Pastor of St. James AME Church. Pastor Williams asked Council to consider the fact that if these children are able to get jobs, they will not only get jobs, but also training and learning on how to live and work in a community. He stated that he supports an employment initiative.

Mr. Horton thanked the audience for their attendance, showing democracy in action. He did not feel that the pleas were falling on deaf ears. He hoped that they would continue to attend to see how County government works.

Approval of
Minutes

Mr. Leone moved to approve the minutes from the March 25, 2014, regular meeting. This was seconded by Mr. Fatica, and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

County Executive
and/or her Designee

Mr. Lee stated there was no report for this meeting.

Finance Committee
Report

Mr. Fatica reported that the Finance Committee met on April 3, 2014, and agreed to move the following items onto the agenda: Ordinances 52, 53, Resolutions 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23, and the appointment of various individuals to various boards.

Personnel Committee
Report

Mr. Breneman, in Mr. DiMattio's absence, gave the report of the Personnel Committee meeting that immediately followed the Finance Meeting on April 3, 2014. He stated that the Personnel Committee agreed to add the following items to the agenda: Ordinances 54, 55, and 56.

Reports by Council

Mr. Leone stated that he indicated to Mr. Gary Horton at the last meeting that he would review the ECGRA board and what Council could do or not do in that particular area. Mr. Leone commented that he spoke with Council's solicitor and was told it is not possible to replace anyone on the ECGRA board unless they move out of Erie County, have a conflict of interest, or resign on their own. He further indicated that ECGRA can make decisions on their own, without Council input. Mr. Leone stated he did not like the concept and feels that at some point in time, they could possibly make some changes, but according to the solicitor, that is not possible at this time. He has not been able to review the Court decision by Judge Dunlavy, but he stated he will do that and have a copy to Mr. Horton by the next Council meeting. He gave Mr. Horton a copy of the

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ECGRA by-laws, the Articles of Incorporation, the Administrative Code for ECGRA, as well as the conflict of interest provision.

Mr. Breneman stated that he is the liaison for County with ECGRA and serves as a resource not just for other Council members, but also for the public. He commented that if anyone had any questions or anything they would like him to delve into, don't hesitate to contact him via his website, email, or phone. He also thanked the individuals who came out to speak on PTSD. It is a big subject and there is no firm grasp on what the proper answer is to treating PTSD. The key is to ensure that the community is aware of the humanity behind the issue and not distance ourselves from those who are affected PTSD from any war era. He commented that it is incumbent upon employers, public leaders, and educators to work together to address the matter.

Motion to Amend
The Agenda

Mr. Fatica moved to amend the agenda and move Ordinances 52, 53, and 55 to second readings. This was seconded by Mr. Leone, and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

Second Readings
Ord. 52, 2014

Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 52, 2014, "2014 Children and Youth Services Fund Budget Revised Expenditures of \$11,000 and Creation of Venango County Human Services Court Order Placement Line". This was moved by Mr. Fatica, seconded by Mr. Leone, and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

Ord. 53, 2014
Gen. Fund. SA and
Approval of Six Yr.
Contract with
Pictometry Int'l Corp.

Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 53, 2014, "Ninth 2014 General Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$45,988 and Approval for a Six Year Agreement Between the County of Erie and Pictometry International Corporation". This was moved by Mr. Fatica, seconded by Mr. Leone, and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

First Reading
Ord. 54, 2014
Gen. Fund Change
In Job Title for Dir.
Of Personnel to
Dept. of Human
Resources

Mr. Smith gave first reading of Ordinance Number 54, 2014, "2014 General Fund Budget Change in Job Title for Director of Personnel and Personnel Code Nomenclature to Department of Human Resources".

Second Reading
Ord. 55, 2014
Gen. Fund Change
In Job Title for Dir.
Of Human Services/
MH-MR Admin. To
MH/ID

Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 55, 2014, "2014 General Fund Budget Change in Job Title for Director of Human Services/MHMR Administrator and Department Nomenclature to Mental Health/Intellectual Disability (MH/ID). This was moved by Mr. Leone, seconded by Mr. Breneman, and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

First Reading
Ord. 56, 2014
Amending Admin.
Code previously
Amended by Ord.
35, 2013

Mr. Smith gave a first reading of Ordinance Number 56, 2014, "Amending the Administrative Code of Erie County, Previously Amended by Ordinance Number 35, 2013".

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Resolutions

Mr. Smith gave a reading of Resolution Number 19, 2014, "Absence or Incapacity of the County Executive". This was moved by Mr. Fatica, seconded by Mrs. Loll, and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

Mr. Smith gave a reading of Resolution Number 20, 2014, "In Support of Edinboro University of Pennsylvania and Porreco College Community College Associate Degree and Certificate Program". This was moved by Mrs. Loll, seconded by Mr. Leone. Mr. Leone then moved to postpone until the April 22, 2014, regular Council meeting. This was seconded by Mr. Horton. Mr. Breneman noted that, as an employee of Edinboro University, he would be abstaining from voting. The move to postpone carried in a 5-0-1 vote, with Mr. Breneman abstaining.

Mr. Smith gave a reading of Resolution 21, 2014, in its entirety:

"In Support of Veterans Treatment Court in Erie County

WHEREAS, the first Veterans Treatment Court was created in Buffalo, New York, in 2008 by Judge Robert Russell, in conjunction with the local VA Medical Center and volunteer veterans, to focus exclusively on ensuring veterans who appeared in his Court for nonviolent offenses were connected to their earned VA services and benefits, and with mentors who understood military service and the difficulties some might have adjusting to civilian society; and

WHEREAS, a Veterans Treatment Court judge will better understand the issues that a veteran may be struggling with, such as substance addiction, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, traumatic brain injury, or military sexual trauma, and will be more familiar with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, public and private support agencies, and local Veterans Services Organizations, who are the strength behind the mentorship program; and

WHEREAS, Veterans Treatment Courts are supported by Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, the Marine Corps League, the American Legion and American Veterans, along with other organizations such as, Blue Star Mothers, Military Families United, National Alliance on Mental Illness, the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs, the American Bar Association, the National Sheriffs' Association, the National District Attorneys Association, and the Erie VA Medical Center; and

WHEREAS, over 22,000 Veterans currently reside in Erie County and having a Veteran Treatment Court is a smart, cost effective investment and a proven model that helps put offenders on the road to recovery and community reintegration, effectively reducing recidivism.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the County Council of the County of Erie joins with DA Daneri, Public Defender Kennedy, County Executive Dahlkemper, President Judge Ernest J. DiSantis, and the entire Court of Common Pleas in support for the implementation of a Veterans Treatment Court in Erie County." This was moved by Mr. Breneman and seconded by Mr. Leone.

Mr. Horton commented that it is a great day in Erie County for veterans. As a member of the Veterans Advisory Board at the VA Medical Center, he has worked for this and is pleased to see it come to fruition.

Mr. Breneman further commented that this is an issue that he has worked both in front and behind the scenes on, and Erie County joins over 100 communities across the nation who are putting forth this research based, best practice, and one of the key parts of this is bringing together Veterans who are adjudicated and going through the Court process and giving them further strength that they have support and they are not alone in whatever fight they are fighting.

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Mr. Leone commented that Mr. Breneman is now a member of the Veterans Committee of the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania. Mr. Leone stated that he knows Mr. Breneman will do as much as he can for veterans.

Resolution 21, 2014 carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

Mr. Smith gave a reading of Resolution Number 22, 2014, "Approval of Tentative Lease Agreement for the Lease by the County of Erie as Lessee of Office Space for Magisterial District Judge Carol Southwick with James W. Shreve and Lina M. Shreve for Property Located at 132 North Main Street, Union City, Pennsylvania.". This was moved by Mrs. Loll, seconded by Mr. Horton and carried in a 5-1 vote, with Mr. Leone voting no.

Mr. Smith gave a reading of Resolution Number 23, 2014, "Exonerating Taxes on One Abandoned Trailer/Property #29-016-064.0-003.57 in the Iroquois School District and Township of Lawrence Park. This was moved by Mrs. Loll, seconded by Mr. Horton, and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

Board/Authority
Appointments

Mr. Breneman moved to approve the appointment of Joseph Giles to an unexpired four year term on the Erie County Children and Youth Advisory Board. This was seconded by Mr. Leone and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

Mrs. Loll moved to approve the appointment of Elspeth Koehle to an unexpired three year term on the Erie County Library Board. This was seconded by Mr. Horton and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

Mr. Breneman moved to approve the appointment of George Morgan to a four year term on the Human Relations Commission Board. This was seconded by Mr. Horton and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Deneé M. Breter, Council Secretary
