

April 21, 2015

ERIE COUNTY COUNCIL – Regular Meeting

Fiore Leone, Chairman, called to order a Regular Meeting of the Erie County Council at 7:00 p.m. at the Erie County Courthouse, County Council Chambers, Erie, PA. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Mr. Smith took the roll:

**ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Mr. Breneman  
Mr. DiMattio  
Mr. Fatica  
Dr. Foust  
Mr. Horton  
Mr. Leone  
Mrs. Loll

Members Absent: None.

Also Present: Joseph Maloney, CPA  
Sue Ellen Pasquale, General Accounting Manager  
James Sparber, Finance Director

**HEARING OF  
THE PUBLIC**

Roberta McCall, 715 East 37<sup>th</sup> Street; Master Gardener Coordinator at the Erie County Extension Office. There are currently 75 Master Gardeners. She wanted to advise Council on how Master Gardeners benefit the community. They provide numerous lectures, workshops, and talks at garden clubs, schools, and organizations. There will be a garden sale coming up soon, and they also have a “Hort Hotline” where questions are answered all summer. Ms. McCall handed out brochures answering the most popular gardening questions during the summer. She stated that approximately 211 residents have had questions answered with research based information. They also do bee monitoring, which is research done with 25 other counties in Pennsylvania. \$2,000 in scholarship money has been given out and they also do a pumpkin walk. Community gardens were set up at John Horan apartments, Erie Heights, and Brevelier Village, and they also provide weekly classes at these locations. They have also provided landscaping advice to Because You Care, the Achievement Center, Veterans Memorial Garden, Safenet, and Gannon University.

Suzanne Boone, Tandem House, 3188 Vineyard Court, Fairview, Pennsylvania. She has been involved with the community garden that the Master Gardeners have

helped Tandem House with since its inception. There is not a lot of access to gardening at Tandem House, but the community gardens there have encouraged self reliance. She spoke of a family that at one time only shopped from the Schwanns truck because the mom had gotten ill and couldn't drive. The son in this family began to work in the community garden and was proud to bring fresh foods into his home that he helped cultivate and it really transformed his life. She commented that families that live there have stated that they have learned many things working in the garden and feel confident they could start their own garden. The community garden increases sense of community, ownership, and stewardship where children learn about the environment and how they affect it.

Nathan Koble, Government Affairs Representative for National Fuel in Erie. He wanted to introduce himself to County Council and stated that anytime anyone on Council or one of their constituents had a question about the service, the company, or the natural gas industry, he would be the contact person. He stated he is originally from Girard, has worked for the Department of Justice, a Peace Corps volunteer, and also worked in Taiwan. He stated that Erie is a great place to call home. He thanked Council and offered his business cards to each.

Laurie Baker, North East, PA. Ms. Baker wanted to raise awareness about time banking in Erie County. There is a large portion of the population who find themselves in need of assistance. The time banking system provides a solution to such problems by organizing the community to work together and take action. A time bank is an organization where members work for each other for time credit instead of money. It's a pay it forward system based on the work of Edgar Kahn that began in the 1980s. There are over 300 time banks across the United States and 30 different countries around the world. In North East, the Grapevine TimeXchange began in 2012 and the Four-Nine Thrift Store is the home base. It is based on five core values: Assets, Reciprocity, Redefining Work, Respect, and Social Networks. Ms. Baker gave examples of various of members and their participation in the Grapevine TimeXchange. There are currently 116 members and have exchanged almost 3,000 hours of service.

Tracy Burnside, 912 West 36<sup>th</sup> Street; Ms. Burnside spoke regarding the Erie Time Bank. She stated that the time bank is based on the notion that everyone's time is equal. It's a system that honors everyone's contribution, no matter what it is. It is not based on the normal market of demand and scarcity of supply. It promotes the exchange of services for the mutual benefits of the members. Every month, a potluck dinner is held where each member brings a dish to pass and get acquainted with each other. They have a website where requests and offers are posted and exchanges are reported. The Erie Time Bank had its first potluck in November of 2012, after receiving help from the Grapevine TimeXchange. Since then, they have grown to 90 members with over 460 hours exchanged. Erie Together has helped with reimbursement with some printing costs and other expenses. The benefit to each member is making new friends, saving money, building relationships, and creating a community of caring. She invited everyone to learn more about the Erie Time Bank at their orientation meeting every second Wednesday of the month at the Blasco Library Theatre at 6 p.m.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Fatica moved to approve the minutes from the April 7, 2015 Regular Meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Horton.

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Dr. Foust asked that the minutes be amended to include the “Luddite statement”, which was seconded by Mr. Breneman. A unanimous roll call vote on the amendment carried.

The minutes from April 7, 2015, as amended, carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

**REPORTS BY  
COUNTY OFFICIALS**

None.

**FINANCE  
COMMITTEE  
REPORT**

Mr. Breneman reported that the Finance Committee met on April 16, 2015, and agreed to place the following on the agenda: Ordinance 44, 2015, for a second reading, Ordinances 46, 47, 2015, Resolutions 26 through 28, 2015, and 15 Board appointments to the Public Safety Advisory Board.

**PERSONNEL  
COMMITTEE  
REPORT**

Mr. Horton stated that the Personnel Committee met immediately following the Finance Meeting and agreed to add Ordinance Numbers 48 and 49, 2015, to the agenda.

**OTHER REPORTS**

Mrs. Loll read the following prayer: “Let us pray. Lord, helps us to be people that others can depend on. Help us to see clearly the problems of our office and move forward to take care of them. We pray that others looking for a place of peace will find shelter. We pray that the turmoil will cease and the children who are struggling to make better futures for themselves find their path. We also pray for the families who are working hard for the necessities in life and seeking to have a good home for their children. We work through us to help others for a great unity. Give us strength each day to do our best for others. Amen.”.

Mrs. Loll then commented that Dr. Foust, Mr. Fatica, and Mrs. Loll attended the Erie County Firefighters Association Public Safety banquet last Friday and they gave out several awards, including Citizen of the Year, which was given to John Grappy, Erie County Public Safety Director. Mrs. Loll wanted to congratulate Mr. Grappy on the receipt of this honor.

Mr. DiMattio wanted to thank members of the community in attendance and who spoke this evening from the Co-Op. He stated it shows that we’re going in the right direction with what is being done in Erie County. It’s about people helping people and unfortunately we don’t see enough of that in the world and it’s nice to know there are a lot of these grass roots efforts that are blossoming into bigger and better projects.

Mr. Breneman stated that he had the opportunity to work at the very beginning of the Time Bank as an intern and learned a lot then. He stated he has been blown away by the growth that has taken place. He highly recommended that everyone take an opportunity to learn more about the time exchanges in their communities and hopefully find a way to help create one in your own community.

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Mr. Horton commented that it is always great to see people get involved in democracy. He wanted to also acknowledge and congratulate Erie Insurance on their 90 year anniversary.

**MOTION TO AMEND  
AGENDA**

Dr. Foust made a motion to amend the agenda and move Ordinances 46 and 47, 2015, to second readings, as well as add Resolution 29, 2015, to the agenda. This was seconded by Mrs. Loll and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 44, 2015, "Third 2015 Capital Project Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$10,000 for Analysis of Building Re-Use of Pleasant Ridge Manor-East". This was moved by Dr. Foust and seconded by Mr. Fatica.

Dr. Foust commented that he hoped that this ordinance passes tonight. He stated that the County Executive has stated publicly that she is not going to certify the funds or sign the ordinance and that is her prerogative to do so. He is disappointed in the way this particular ordinance has come about. The County Executive has availed herself to Council to communicate on many issues up to this point and she sought our cooperation, but for some reason that has been void in this particular issue. She has been pressed by the media, she has been pressed by the members of Council both publicly, and by himself privately expressing concerns to her, and to this date, we still to this date have no idea even in any kind of general way of what she would like to do with Pleasant Ridge or what she has done up to this point. There is an implication that somehow this is a waste of taxpayer money because Council wants to go forward with this particular appropriation. As Dr. Foust has stated in a couple of previous meetings, it is pretty apparent that Council does not want to sell that building, even if the County Executive wants to, until there is a good analysis of what that building could be re-used for, for the betterment of the taxpayers and hopefully saving money. He further commented that this step will have to be taken sooner or later, whether she states she wants to sell it or refurbish it, we would be foolish not to have an architect walk through the building and find out how that footprint could be changed or what may need to be added to the current structure to be able to properly use that building. Dr. Foust stated this is the fourth County Executive he has worked with and there has been a constancy in the fiscal responsibility of this County and that has been this Council and the finance staff so both administrations who have survived through many county executives and County Council, and the notion that somehow all of the sudden Council is losing their minds, Dr. Foust's words, to want to appropriate this money which he feels is a reasonable first step, it's disappointing that this type of implication is out there. Dr. Foust stated he stands by the fact that this is a good move and realizes the hazards of moving forward tonight, but he feels that those that support the issue of re-using Pleasant Ridge for a lot of different reasons, would support this particular ordinance tonight.

Mr. Breneman stated he does agree with some of the sentiments that Dr. Foust has shared, he does not have a problem with waiting a few more weeks to hear what the County Executive's plan is and whether this gets voted up or down, he does believe it needs to be done.

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Mr. DiMattio stated he agreed with Dr. Foust and the fact that something is going to have to be done whether it's voted on now or two weeks or now is really irrelevant. Mr. DiMattio's point is that voting for it now does not harm us and wished that the County Executive would have given Council some sort of idea as to what has been taking place and why more time is needed. There are other entities on that property that need to be considered as well, including Edmund L. Thomas, the Co-Op, and other pieces to this puzzle. This study will need to be done at some point and 14.2 acres is an asset to the County.

Ordinance Number 44, 2015, carried in a 4-2-1 roll call vote, with Mr. Breneman and Mr. Horton voting no, and Chairman Leone abstaining.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Ord. 46, 2015 – Gen. Fund SA of \$82,220 & Creation of Line Item for Stonegarden Grant**

Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 46, 2015, "Eighteenth 2015 General Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$82,220 and Creation of Line Items for Stonegarden Grant FY 2014-2016". This was moved by Mrs. Loll, seconded by Mr. DiMattio, and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

#### **Ord. 47, 2015 – Gen. Fund SA of \$23,557 & Creation of Line Item For AOPC Grant**

Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 47, 2015, "Nineteenth 2015 General Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$23,557 and Creation of Line Item for AOPC Grant for MDJ Safety Equipment". This was moved by Mrs. Loll, seconded by Dr. Foust, and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

Chairman Leone clarified for the audience that some items are listed as first readings and some have been moved to second readings, which are then voted on.

#### **Ord. 48, 2015 – Gen. Fund SA of \$65,251 for Elimination of Ec. Dev. Position & Creation of Line Item**

Mr. Smith gave a first reading of Ordinance Number 48, 2015, "Twentieth 2015 General Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$65,251 for Elimination of Economic Development Position #002010-001 and Creation of Line Item".

#### **Ord. 49, 2015 – Gen. Fund SA of \$42,052 For Creation of Dir. Of Veterans Affairs**

Mr. Smith gave a first reading of Ordinance Number 49, 2015, "Twenty-First 2015 General Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$42,052 to Remove the Restriction from Funding for Creation of Director of Veterans Affairs Position".

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**RESOLUTIONS**

**Res. 26, 2015 –  
Amending Res. 13,  
2012**

Mr. Smith gave a reading of Resolution Number 26, 2015, “Amending Resolution Number 13, 2012, ‘Ratifying the GASB 54 Fund Balance Policy in the County of Erie’”. This was moved by Mrs. Loll, seconded by Dr. Foust, and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

**Res. 27, 2015 –  
Exonerating Taxes**

Mr. Smith gave a reading of Resolution Number 27, 2015, “Exonerating Taxes on One Abandoned Trailer/Property #39-003-001.0-007.75 in Springfield Township”. This was moved by Mrs. Loll, seconded by Dr. Foust, and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

**Res. 28, 2015 – In  
Support of County of  
Erie joining LEEDCo**

Mr. Smith gave a reading of Resolution Number 28, 2015, “In Support of the County of Erie Joining the Board of Lake Erie Energy Development Corporation (LEEDCo) as a Political Subdivision Member”. This was moved by Mrs. Loll nad seconded by Mr. Fatica. Mr. Fatica clarified for the audience that this has to do with wind power and that the County is investigating. This resolution does not commit the County financially to anything, it is a review of the potential to move forward.

Resolution 28, 2015, then carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

**BOARD/AUTHORITY  
APPOINTMENTS**

Dr. Foust moved to approve the appointments of the following to the Public Safety Advisory Committee:

Richard Shopene	James Carstatter	William Hagerty
Richard Warner	Karen Molitor	William Heald
Richard Stebell	Cathy Hornick	Anthony Pol
Randy Bowers	James Rosenbaum	Michael Tesore
Angela Vincent	Jeffrey Hawryliw	Sue Sutto

This was seconded by Mrs. Loll.

Dr. Foust commented on discussions earlier in Caucus and that some members of Council were afforded the opportunity to give some sort of advice and consent as to who would be the makeup of this committee. He stated he was glad that was the case. He wished that opportunity would have been afforded to all members of Council because there were first responders from Dr. Foust’s district who had expressed strong interest in serving on this committee and he could have at least advanced their names forward. Based on what has occurred with the Pleasant Ridge ordinance that is on the agenda tonight, in addition to the reality surrounding this Public Safety Advisory Committee, this is a trend that he would define as counterproductive to the relationship with Council. Dr. Foust strongly stated that he felt that all members selected will do a good job in serving on the community.

The appointments were then approved.

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**Res. 29, 2015 –  
Approval to seek  
Proposals from  
Bond Underwriters  
For Radio Project**

Mr. Smith gave a reading of Resolution 29, 2015, “Approval to Seek Proposals from Bond Underwriters for Next Generation Radio Project”. This was moved by Mrs. Loll and seconded by Dr. Foust.

Mr. Fatica commented that this puts the wheels in motion in dealing with the money at the bond level. The parameters have been set regarding the bond and this radio project will benefit all residents of Erie County.

Resolution Number 29, 2015, carried in a 6-1 roll call vote, with Mr. Horton voting no.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Deneé M. Breter, Council Secretary

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