

March 8, 2011

Minutes of Feb. 15, 2011 Reg. Mtg. apprvd. Agenda Amended. Library SA for Sunday Hrs at Blasco adopted; Gen. Fund SA for Transfer to Lib. Fund for Sunday Hrs adopted; Additional Upgrades to PLC Systems adopted; PS Revis. Expend & Creation of Line Item for Act 78 Prof. Fees adopted; PH Revis. Expend. & New Line Item to Cover Upaid Med. Leave adopted; Apptd Off. Salary First Asst PD adopted; Apptd Off Salary Asst PD adopted; Exon. Taxes on Trailer/Prop in Union City adopted; Exon. Taxes on Trailers/Props in Corry SD, Elgin Boro, Concord Twp and Wayne Twp adopted. William K. Grove & John J. Mehler appt'd to Drug & Alc. Adv. Brd. Tom Elliott appt'd to Hospital Authority. Stephen M. Danch & Richard Ollinger reappt'd to Hospital Authority. Paul Manzi appt'd to ECCM Brd. Labor Agrmt btwn Erie Cnty & AFSCME Local 2666 (Clerical/Tech. Unit) adopted.

ERIE COUNTY COUNCL – Regular Meeting

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

Roll Call

The County Clerk called the roll:

Members Present: Mr. Leone, Chairman
Mr. Fatica, Vice Chairman
Mr. Beeman
Mr. Cleaver
Dr. Foust
Mr. Giles (via telephone)
Mrs. Loll

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Douglas R. Smith, County Clerk
Joseph P. Maloney, Council CPA
Thomas Talarico, Council Solicitor
Jim Sparber, Director of Finance
Sue Ellen Pasquale, Manager of Accounting

Hearing of
The Public

Patti Sitter, 2623 Southern Circle, Erie, PA, is a social worker/case manager at Hamot. She assists people in transition to nursing homes. She believes that Pleasant Ridge Manor has a special niche in this community. There are six nursing homes in the area that she contacts, and the first question she hears is whether the patient is short term or long term and about their insurance. If the patient needs long term care and has medical assistance, she states these homes will not have an available bed. Insurance reimbursement is a major issue for nursing homes. Pleasant Ridge Manor always provides care no matter the insurance issue. Their beds are not assigned as private insurance or medical assistance. Ms. Sitter believes that without Pleasant Ridge Manor, many people would fall through the cracks and not receive the care they need or are entitled to receive.

Arlene Davis, 2305 Lakeside Drive, Erie, stated that Pleasant Ridge Manor stayed open even during the depression when there were no food stamps or welfare. She believes this facility should stay open and that Pleasant Ridge Manor has always paid their bonds. If Pleasant Ridge Manor could stay open during the depression, it can be done today.

Julia Calipo, 235 East 32nd Street, Erie, stated that four police officers and two OCY caseworkers came to her house at 9:30 p.m. looking for Jeremy Wodarski. She would not let them upstairs since she had a sleeping child and she demanded they leave. In retaliation, a ticket was left on her car. Ms.

Calipo compared OCY to the Nazis, adding this organization has destroyed her character, family and credibility. She has spoken to several elected officials, but nothing has been done.

Mike Rensel, East Springfield, is a nurse's aide at Pleasant Ridge Manor. This facility takes care of residents that others turn away. Some of these residents are homeless. He noted that baby boomers are aging and there will be more of a demand for these services in the future. There are single mothers working at Pleasant Ridge Manor who need their jobs.

Minutes

Dr. Foust moved to approve the minutes of the February 15, 2011 meeting. Mr. Fatica seconded, and it carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

Mr. Leone's
Comments

Mr. Leone stated that he agreed with Ms. Sitter's comments. Time and time again, he sees the problem with nursing homes and long term care. These facilities are willing to take short term patients because they are receiving the Medicare payments. After the 20 days are up, these homes don't want the patients anymore. This is where people are going to fall through the cracks. Mr. Leone does not believe a business can be operated where the expenditures are greater than the revenue. Obviously, the need for and the services offered by Pleasant Ridge Manor are important to provide for the constituents of this community.

Dr. Foust's
Comments

Dr. Foust advised Ms. Sitter that a public hearing on this issue is going to be held and he encouraged her to attend this hearing to present the perspective she brought in her presentation today. He believes it would be very enlightening.

Mr. Fatica's
Comments

Mr. Fatica also recommended that Ms. Sitter provide those comments at the public hearing. He noted that in her presentation Ms. Sitter stated that not every nursing home will take a patient and people may not be aware of this. This Council is aware of the fact that some nursing homes will not take long term care patients. Mr. Fatica, as well as Mr. Cleaver, Mr. Giles, and Mrs. Loll, have had some nursing home experience and some basis upon which to formulate opinions. He agrees with Dr. Foust's suggestion that Ms. Sitter attend a public hearing and present what she knows from first hand working knowledge.

Finance
Committee

Dr. Foust reported that Council met as the Finance Committee on March 3, 2011 and agreed to place Ordinances 19 and 20 on the agenda for second readings. Also on the agenda for first readings are Ordinances 21, 22, and 23. Discussion was held to move those ordinances to second readings to facilitate the action they would take. On the agenda as well is the possible adoption of Resolutions 7 and 8 regarding exoneration of taxes on abandoned trailers/properties and the possible appointments of William K. Grove, John J. Mehler, Tom Elliott, Stephen M. Danch, and Richard P. Ollinger to various boards and authorities in the county.

Personnel
Committee

Mr. Cleaver reported the Personnel Committee met on March 3rd following the Finance Committee and agreed to place Ordinances 24 and 25 regarding salaries in the Public Defender's Office on the agenda along with a possible motion to approve the labor agreement between Erie County Government and AFSCME Local 2666 (Clerical/Technical Unit).

Mr. Fatica's
Report

Mr. Fatica reported that the cable negotiations that many have been reading about are starting. The City has had some public input and Millcreek will be holding public hearings soon. The requirement to publish has been met. Information will be gathered at this hearing as to what people want out of these negotiations going forward.

Mr. Fatica further reported that he was privileged to attend a nice gathering of people from the Courthouse in memory of Bill Duska. This gentleman passed away very unexpectedly and

rapidly. Through the efforts of some Courthouse employees, a wonderful event was held in honor of this man's memory, and various departments donated baskets for a Chinese auction.

A couple weeks ago, Mr. Fatica and Mr. Cleaver were scheduled to have lunch. Mr. Fatica received a phone call from Mr. Cleaver stating that he would be unable to make lunch as he had just been involved in a car accident and was pretty well banged up. Mr. Fatica asked who else would call after having been involved in a serious accident causing both air bags to be activated, suffering a broken nose, hand and bleeding with a car that was only seven days old. He stated that Mr. Cleaver is a selfless gentleman and much appreciated.

Mr. Giles'
Report

Mr. Giles reported that he is currently in Washington, DC attending the NACo Regular Legislative Conference. Due the Governor's conference, also in attendance is the Executive Director, Deputy Director and two of the lobbyists for CCAP along with a variety of commissioners. Mr. Hill from CCAP had one laptop scrolling down the pages with details of the budget, another laptop was set up with a video of the Governor as he was speaking. Two other laptops had copies of his text and were ahead of what was being articulated.

Mr. Giles stated that a lengthy discussion was held when the Governor was finished speaking. The issue of the potential hit for libraries regarding state support was discussed. This number was not as big as anticipated and Mr. Giles encouraged Council to support and move forward with the ordinances regarding Sunday hours at Blasco. He noted there is a \$4 billion shortfall of which \$2 billion is being eliminated by a 50% cut to the top four universities in Pennsylvania. However, if this 50% projected cut is not retained, other line items will be cut to produce a balanced budget. Mr. Giles anticipates much debate will occur and he is not as confident at this point that the reduction to those universities will stay in place. He again encouraged Council to move ahead with the Sunday hours ordinances but cautioned that this is a work in progress.

Mr. Giles explained that there has been a push to have mandates reduced if the state cannot provide the resources. One of the issues added to the CCAP agenda is the formula for state money by way of books and subscriptions for libraries across the Commonwealth. If the state is going to reduce their share of the operating pledge, counties will ask that the mandates be reduced and be given the flexibility for a balanced budget for operating the library without the old fashioned straight jacket formula that the state has in place for the library systems.

Mr. Giles submitted the following report for inclusion in the minutes:

“Report on Proposed State Budget for Fiscal 2010-2011”

County officials, reacting to today's budget address by Governor Tom Corbett, expressed their belief that the proposal takes an overall balanced approach that recognizes the importance of core services counties provide on behalf of their constituents. While the counties are disappointed with the proposed elimination of the Human Services Development Fund, flexible funding which helps individuals and families who otherwise would fall through the cracks between other programs, most human services, corrections, environmental, community development, transportation and judicial programs operated by counties were spared the drastic cuts that had been anticipated.

“While there are many details we need to review until we can make a final determination on the proposal's impact on county services, at least from the numbers we have seen today and the remarks made by the Governor, we believe they have taken a considered approach to pros and cons of funding alternatives in each program area” according to CCAP Board Chair and County Councilman Joe Giles. “Across-the-board solutions are rarely effective, and we are pleased the Governor did not take this approach.”

The proposal also include creation of a Task Force on Privatization, whose study is likely to encompass many core county services. “The Association is looking forward to offering its input into the study,” according to Giles, who noted that most counties already contract significant parts of their services out to the private sector. “We think the decision to study the issue, rather that make immediate privatization proposals as a part of the budget, is a positive approach.”

Counties acknowledge the Governor's interest in dealing with more efficient service delivery and reduction of unneeded or outdated mandates. They expressed willingness to share their experiences and suggestions for dealing with regulatory overhead, including both opportunities and impediments.

Overall, county lines reflect recent appropriations trends, with many lines, like children and youth behavioral health, reduced to about 2008-2009 levels while other lines, like some probation and transportation lines, show modest increases. Still, counties express significant disappointment with the elimination of the Human Services Development Fund. The fund, which has been cut by 37% in the last three years, is an important bridge that gets around the strict categorical funding in many human services programs. Giles noted, "We believe the HSDF has a strong track record that represents the Governor's intent to remove barriers to more efficient delivery of services, and we are committed to its restoration in the budget." Giles commented, "We know that we continue to face a difficult economy and an equally difficult budget process. While in this environment the Governor's proposal is, overall, a positive start, we need to assure that as it proceeds to deliberation in the General Assembly that counties' ability to meet citizens' needs is preserved." He concluded "We are now in the fifth year of stagnant and reduced funding for the services that we and the Commonwealth both consider important, and we are committed to working with the Administration and the General Assembly to assure that the safety net so important to so many in these times is maintained."

Lib. SA for
Sunday Hrs at
Blasco

Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 19, 2011 "Third 2011 Library Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation For The Continuation Of Sunday Hours At Blasco Library From April Through December." Mrs. Loll moved to adopt; Dr. Foust seconded, and it carried in a roll call vote of 5-2, Mr. Cleaver and Mr. Beeman voting no.

Gen Fund SA
Trans to Lib.
For Sunday Hrs.

Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 20, 2011, "Fourth 2011 General Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation For Transfer To Library Fund For Continuation Of Sunday Hours." Dr. Foust moved to adopt; Mrs. Loll seconded.

Dr. Foust stated that he agreed with Mr. Giles that the county will have to continually monitor all line items as far as reimbursements from the State. This particular ordinance commits \$62,000 and when, or if, that runs out, the issue of Sunday hours will have to be addressed at that time.

Mr. Leone called for a vote on the ordinance and it carried in a roll call vote of 5-2, Mr. Beeman and Mr. Cleaver voting no.

Agenda
Amended

Dr. Foust moved to amend the agenda to include Ordinances 21 through 25 as second readings. Mr. Giles seconded and it carried in a unanimous roll vote.

Mr. Fatica then moved to amend the agenda to add the possible appointment of Paul Manzi to the Erie County Care Management Board. Mr. Grossman has agreed to this appointment. Dr. Foust seconded, and it carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

Additional Upgrades
to Access PLC
System

Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 21, 2011, "2011 Capital Projects Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation For Additional Upgrades To Access PLC System." Mrs. Loll moved to adopt; Dr. Foust seconded, and it carried in a roll call vote of 6-1, Mr. Beeman voting no.

PS New Line Item
For Act 78 Prof. Fees

Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 22, 2011, "2011 Public Safety Fund Budget Revised Expenditures And Creation Of New Line Item For Act 78 Professional Fees." Mr. Fatica moved to adopt; Mrs. Loll seconded, and it carried in a roll call vote of 6-1, Mr. Beeman voting no.

PH New Line Item
To Cover Unpaid
Medical Leave

Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 23, 2011, "2011 Public Health Fund Budget Revised Expenditures And Creation Of New Line Item To Cover Unpaid Medical Leave." Mrs. Loll moved to adopt; Mr. Cleaver seconded, and it carried in a roll call vote of 6-1, Mr. Beeman voting no.

Appt'd Off. Salary
First Asst PD

Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 24, 2011, "2011 Appointed Official's Salary Ordinance First Assistant Public Defender." Mrs. Loll moved to adopt; Mr. Giles seconded and it carried in a roll call vote of 6-1, Mr. Beeman voting no.

Appt'd Off. Salary
Pt Time Asst PD

Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 25, 2011, "2011 Appointed Official's Salary Ordinance Part Time Assistant Public Defender." Mr. Giles moved to adopt; Mrs. Loll seconded and it carried in a roll call vote of 6-1, Mr. Beeman voting no.

Exon. Taxes on
Abandoned
Trailer/Prop in
Union City Area

Mr. Smith gave a reading of Resolution Number 7, 2011, "Exonerating Taxes On One Abandoned Trailer/Property In The Union City Area School District And Union Township." Mrs. Loll moved to adopt; Dr. Foust seconded, and it carried in a roll call vote of 6-1, Mr. Cleaver voting no.

Exon. Taxes on
in Corry SD,
Elgin, Concord
& Wayne Twps

Mr. Smith gave a reading of Resolution Number 8, 2011, "Exonerating Taxes On Four Abandoned Trailers/Properties In The Corry Area School District, Elgin Borough, Concord Township, And Wayne Township." Mrs. Loll moved to adopt; Dr. Foust seconded, and it carried in a roll call vote of 6-1, Mr. Cleaver voting no.

Appointments
Approved

Dr. Foust moved to approve the following appointments:

Appointment of William K. Grove and John J. Mehler to the Erie County Drug and Alcohol Advisory Board

Appointment of Tom Elliott to the Erie County Hospital Authority

Reappointment of Stephen M. Danch and Richard P. Ollinger to the Erie County Hospital Authority

Appointment of Paul Manzi to the Erie County Care Management Board

Mr. Giles seconded, and it carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

Labor Agrmt
Btwn Erie Cnty
Govt & AFSCME
Local 2666
(Clerical/Tech Unit)

Mr. Fatica moved to approve the Labor Agreement between Erie County Government and Local 2666 (Clerical/Technical Unit) of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) beginning January 1, 2011, and ending December 31, 2014. Mr. Cleaver seconded, and it carried in a roll call vote of 6-1, Mr. Beeman voting no.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Ann M. Bruno, Council Secretary
