

MINUTES

Erie County Council

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Fiore Leone, Chairman
André R. Horton, Vice Chairman
Carl Anderson, III
Kathleen Fatica
Dr. Kyle Foust
Carol Loll
Scott R. Rastetter

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, February 5, 2019

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Leone called to order a Regular Meeting of the Erie County Council at 07:04 PM at the Erie County Council Chambers, 140 West 6th Street, Room 117, Erie, PA. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Mrs. Loll read the following prayer:

OPTIONAL PRAYER OR INVOCATION

"Let us pray. We are here together to work and serve as leaders. Help us to be wise and not foolish. Help us to keep our eyes focused and our hands ready to do the task at hand and go the extra mile. Help us to be the light in the darkness and follow us as part of the community. As we stop and look around we need to be still and listen, when we take the time to watch and hear we will be able to know that we have done our best. We ask this in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen."

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mr. Anderson; Mrs. Fatica; Dr. Foust; Mr. Horton; Mrs. Loll; Mr. Rastetter; Chairman Leone.

Also Present: Douglas R. Smith, James Sparber, Tracey Fugagli, Thomas Talarico, Sam Lynch

HEARING OF THE PUBLIC

Randy Barnes

Randy Barnes, Harborcreek Township; Mr. Barnes discussed the ECGRA investment in Bridgeway and wanted to learn a little bit more about Bridgeway. They have a list of 44 investors or grantors, including Bank of America, Bank of New York Mellon, Citizens Bank, Erie Bank, First National Bank, PNC Bank, Key Bank, Marquette Bank, and then some others I found. Heinz Endowments, Henry Hillman, Goldman Sachs, Roy Hunt Foundation, Richard King Mellon Foundation. One county in Pennsylvania is sending tax

dollars to Bridgeway Capital. He feels that the director and this board at ECGRA is out of control. He learned in the paper that about \$6 million worth of loans, but \$4 million were given to three white guys. The first one he looked at was North East Dairy Queen. He then commented that the secretary of the ECGRA board runs a Dairy Queen and this was some coincidence. Mr. Barnes felt this isn't a coincidence or a random thing that happened. He further stated that the other information that Mr. Wood was so generous with was a \$2.5 million loan to Bridgeway at 1% interest. When the county had to take out the radio bond it wasn't at 1%. Mr. Barnes commented that they have gotten tens of millions of dollars investments in those counties without bribing them with their tax dollars. He wanted to know why the County is bribing them with tax dollars and getting them to loan the money they would have loaned anyway. He stated that because the same director who would be sneaky enough to change the wording from a fall tuition reimbursement and 47 days later to a professional development. Mr. Barnes wondered if he would do underhanded, sneaky, white collar crime kind of stuff like that, deceive the public, and enrich your pocket book.

**MINUTES FROM
PREVIOUS MEETING**

Mr. Horton moved to approve the minutes from the January 22, 2019 Regular Meeting. This was seconded by Mrs. Fatica and carried in a 7 - 0 vote.

**January 22, 2019 - Regular
Meeting**

**REPORTS OF COUNTY
OFFICIALS**

**County Executive and/or
her Designee**

None.

**Finance Committee - Mr.
Anderson**

Mr. Anderson stated that the Finance Committee met on January 31, 2019, and agreed to place the Ordinances 3, 4, and Resolutions 4 and 5 on the agenda.

**Personnel Committee -
Mrs. Fatica**

Mrs. Fatica stated that the Personnel Committee met immediately following the Finance Committee and agreed to place Ordinance 174, 2018 on the agenda.

Other

Mrs. Fatica commented that on February 2, 2019, she attended an open house at the Millcreek Branch Library and had the opportunity to meet the branch manager, John Euliano, and get a snapshot of the variety of programs that are being offered. To celebrate "Love Your Library Month", open houses will be held at the Iroquois Branch on February 10th; Edinboro Branch on February 16th; and Lincoln Community Center Branch on February 23rd. Visitors can

tour, meet the staff, and learn about Friends of the Library and the Erie Regional Library Foundation. In addition, the Teen Advisory Board will host an open house at Blasco's new Teen Space on Saturday, February 9th, from 2-4 p.m. The Teen Space is on the first floor of the library overlooking the Bayfront.

Mr. Horton stated that he is asking, requesting, imploring, and pleading with the State Delegation, PA Department of Education, Governor Wolf, both the House and Senate, asking that they give our children and our residents the same opportunity that other children and residents have throughout the Commonwealth and give the County a stand-alone community college. He stated he was going to leave the meeting and watch the President who will talk about a myriad of issues but at the top of the list will be building a wall and with the government shutdown recently how it affects the nation's economy but how it can potentially affect the global economy. He stated that there are those in this Commonwealth that would build a wall and keep our children from the same economic prosperity that others in the Commonwealth share. There is no stand-alone community college north of I-80. It's a wall. He is asking that they consider our children, consider our dislocated workers, our underserved workers, our poor black and brown and white communities. He is asking, imploring, pleading Governor Wolf give your backing and give us a stand-alone community college. Councilman Horton is asking that they tear down the walls that imprison our children in poverty. He thanked the Regional Community College and prays for their success, it shouldn't be at the expense of our residents. Currently, we are paying for 14 community colleges throughout the state and this County gets zero return on its investment. He asked for the opportunity that the rest of the Commonwealth enjoys. Erie County has the poorest zip code in the Commonwealth. Councilman Horton believes that education is the Civil Rights action and issue of our day. This country is going through some transformations and even the city and county and we are back to Brown vs. Board of Education. When you close three schools and combine them into one, and have there are 40 kids in a classroom, and the tax base is given away with an already declining tax base, float bonds to pay for this and that, in 20 or 30 years those bonds are going to come due and someone is going to have to pay for it, and it will be our children. At least give them the opportunity and give them the tools to meet that charge when it comes. Councilman Horton implored the Governor to give Erie County a stand-alone community college and not let Pennsylvania be 47 out of 50 states in job creation. Northwestern PA is a very valuable piece of the Commonwealth community but doesn't always get treated the same economically. We see sojourners come to the community every summer and work in the construction industry and they take their money back and it matriculates through their communities on the other side of I-80, with a trained workforce and a community college. Mr. Horton stated that a brick and mortar building with distant learning will do nothing for the situation currently. This

is an urban community with an urban economy and he wishes that the State Legislators – Rep. Bizzarro, Rep. Harkins, newly named Chair of the Board of Education – Rep. Sonney would approve a stand-alone community college. There are only two ways to obliterate poverty – education or have a job. There's \$1 billion worth of construction going on just blocks from the courthouse but there is no workforce here to support it. Someone should say something about it. The manufacturers have asked for it; the captains of industry have asked for it; the majority of the higher institutions of education have asked for it, even those who opposed it initially. Mr. Horton stated he does not know what is going on with the County Executive and the community college and where the County is at in the process. He knows the Board of Education met on January 9th and 10th and no one has come before Council. The Erie Community Foundation is vested in it; there are a key member of the House who is against it but Mr. Horton is asking him to get off the wall, tear down the wall, don't build a wall, don't leave us in poverty, don't keep opportunities from our children and give us a stand-alone community college.

OLD BUSINESS

Second Reading of Ordinance Number 174, 2018, "2019 County Council Solicitor's Retainer"

Mr. Anderson made a motion to remove Ordinance 174, 2018, from the table. This was seconded by Mrs. Fatica and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

Dr. Foust then moved to make this ordinance a second reading. This was seconded by and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 174, 2018, "2019 County Council Solicitor's Retainer". This was moved by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Mrs. Fatica, and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

NEW BUSINESS

Ord. 3, 2019 – GF SA of \$50,000 for Reimbursement from State Department of Corrections

Mr. Horton moved to amend the agenda and make Ordinances 3 and 4 a second reading, along with adding Ordinance Number 5, 2019, and the appointment of Martha Knuth to the Erie County Library Advisory Board. This was seconded by Mr. Anderson and carried in a unanimous roll call vote.

Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 3, 2019, "Fourth 2019 General Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$50,000 for Reimbursement from State Department of Corrections". This was moved by Mr. Horton, seconded by Dr. Foust and carried in a 7 - 0 vote.

- Ord. 4, 2019 – GF SA of \$10,000 For Creation of Plaque to Honor Erie Countians Who Perished in the Great War** Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 4, 2019, "Fifth 2019 General Fund Budget Supplemental Appropriation of \$10,000 For Creation of Plaque to Honor Erie Countians Who Perished in the Great War". This was moved by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Mrs. Fatica and carried in a 7 - 0 vote.
- Res. 4, 2019 – Appr. of Lease for DJ Carney’s Office** Mr. Smith gave a reading of Resolution Number 4, 2019, "Approval of Tentative Lease Agreement with Moxie Fore Real Estate LLC for Office Space Located at 809 West 12th Street, Erie, Pennsylvania for Magisterial District Judge Thomas Carney ". This was moved by Dr. Foust, seconded by Mrs. Fatica and carried in a 6 - 1 vote, with Mr. Leone voting no.
- Res. 5, 2019 – Appr. Renewal of Sole Vendor Contract Between ES&S and the County of Erie** Mr. Smith gave a reading of Resolution Number 5, 2019, "Approving Renewal of Sole Vendor Contract Between Election Systems & Software, LLC and the County of Erie". This was moved by Dr. Foust, seconded by Mr. Anderson and carried in a 7 - 0 vote.
- Ord. 5, 2019 - 2020-2023 Elected Officials' Salaries Ordinance** Mr. Smith gave a first reading of Ordinance Number 5, 2019, "2020-2023 Elected Officials' Salaries Ordinance".
- Possible appointment of Martha Knuth to the Erie County Library Board to represent District 6 (Addition at Caucus)** This was moved by Mr. Rastetter, seconded by Mr. Anderson and carried in a 7 - 0 vote.
- Chairman Leone explained his reasoning for voting No on Resolution Number 4, 2019. He stated many times that he feels that there should be some type of consolidation of all of the District Judges’ offices. This is over \$3,000 per month for a six year lease, which is almost \$200,000 for each of these offices. He commented that it is nice to have that type of property to lease it out but that at some point in time, he feels the Court is going to have took at this and try to consolidate in some of these areas.
- ADJOURNMENT** Dr. Foust moved to adjourn at 7:28 p.m.