

ALLEGHENY COUNTY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

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BEFORE:

Patrick Catena	-	President, District 4
Robert J. Macey	-	Vice-President, District 9
Samuel DeMarco, III	-	Council-at-Large
Bethany Hallam	-	Council-at-Large
Thomas Baker	-	District 1
Cindy Kirk	-	District 2
Anita Prizio	-	District 3
Tom Duerr	-	District 5
John F. Palmiere	-	District 6
Nicholas Futules	-	District 7
Paul Zavarella	-	District 8
DeWitt Walton	-	District 10
Paul Klein	-	District 11
Robert Palmosina	-	District 12
Olivia "Liv" Bennett	-	District 13

Allegheny County Courthouse  
Fourth Floor, Gold Room  
436 Grant Street  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219

October 12, 2021, 5:01 p.m.

SARGENT'S COURT REPORTING SERVICE, INC.  
429 Forbes Avenue, Suite 1300  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219  
(412) 232-3882 FAX (412) 471-8733

IN ATTENDANCE:

Jared Barker --- Director, Legislative Services  
Jack Cambest --- Solicitor

PRESIDENT CATENA: I'd like to call this meeting of Allegheny County Council to order. Please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Pledge of Allegiance Recited.)

PRESIDENT CATENA: Please remain standing for a moment of silent prayer or reflection.

(Moment of Silence.)

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Please be seated. Jared, please take roll.

MR. BARKER:	Mr. Baker?
MR. BAKER:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Bennett?
MS. BENNETT:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. DeMarco?
MR. DEMARCO:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Duerr?
MR. DUERR:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Futules?
MR. FUTULES:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Hallam?
MS. HALLAM:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Kirk?
MS. KIRK:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Klein?
MR. KLEIN:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Macey?
MR. MACEY:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Palmiere?
MR. PALMIERE:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Palmosina?
MR. PALMOSINA:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Prizio?
MS. PRIZIO:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Walton?
MR. WALTON:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Zavarella?
MR. ZAVARELLA:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	President Catena?
President Catena:	Here.

MR. BARKER: Fifteen (15) members present.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. We'll begin with the 2022 comprehensive plan and budget address by the Chief Executive. Mr. Executive.

MR. FITZGERALD: Thank you, Mr. President and members of Council. I'll be giving this to the clerk when

I'm finished, asking it to be placed on the agenda, but let me start off, with --- beginning with, for the 20th time in the last 21 years, I'll be presenting a budget, which has no millage increase. We won't be asking for even an inflation adjustment on the millage. And I think that's a --- again, keeping stable budgets, I think, is very helpful.

So I almost like to say that this is a two-year budget, because the last time we presented a budget pre-COVID, two years ago, in early October, we obviously, a few months later, suffered something very much different.

And so last year the budget that we brought to you was actually a reduction, a 1.9 percent reduction. We're going to get back to kind of normal budgeting this year. So over two years, the increase is going to be 3.2 percent, basically 1.6 percent per year. We're proud of the fact, that during those two years, we haven't had to have any layoffs, which is not the case in other governments.

And I really want to thank --- we got to thank the American Rescue Plan for the dollars that are coming in to allow us to replace the lost revenues that this government, as well as many other governments, brought forth. I'm going to thank the Administration. I want to thank Senator Casey, Congressman Doyle and Congressman Lamb for bringing that money, because I will be honest with you, I thought before all of this happened we might have to come to you with a millage increase. And I know that wasn't something that certainly I wanted to do, and I'm sure it would have been a very difficult vote for members of Council. Or without a millage increase we probably would have had to make some significant cuts to areas that we probably wouldn't want to do that.

I also want to bring into --- a little bit of history for those of you that might be newer. When I took office ten years ago and we went before the bond-rating agencies, to get our bond rating, I was told that we were going to be downgraded. And the reason for that was because our fund balance had reached a low level of about 5.9 million and the previous budgets had been using what they call one time revenue sources to balance the budget. I made a commitment to the --- to the rating agencies that we were going to present, during my tenure, responsible budgets that had real revenues, not one time revenue

sources. And that we would methodically increase the fund balance to get it up to that five percent number that the rating agencies wants you to have on your --- on your operating budget. And we've done both of those.

And tonight I'm presenting another budget that will also have no one-time revenue sources and we're not going to really affect the fund balance in a negative way. We're also going to continue to make sure the investments that we make in things that affect the quality of life of folks in this community, our parks, our bridges, the children's initiative, we're going to be bringing something to you tonight, to be taking a look at that we consider cradle to career.

So we --- we asked you last year to fund a children's initiative that would help with pre-K for some of the children, so that they would be ready for school once they started school, an after-school program. And then tonight we're going to be bringing a presentation, asking for an endowment for community college, so that people --- the older adults, older folks, also have opportunities to enhance their skills, enhance the career opportunities that they will have.

We've seen an awful lot of good things happen on a macro level in this county and in this region over the last few years, but there are still some folks who are left behind. And I think if we're going to deal with equity and some of the issues that --- that I think do plague certain areas of our, of our county, funding pre-K, funding children's initiatives after school and community college is something that I think could --- could be beneficial.

We're still going to do over 40 years, we're going to --- excuse me, 40 miles of county roads. I think when I talked a number of years ago when we were at 20 miles of road or 25 miles of road --- we own 400 miles of road. So the Civil Engineering Society says we should be doing about ten percent a year, which is 40 miles. And we --- we are going to be, putting in for the capital budget to do 40 miles of roads.

We're also going to be asking that we do the last bridge, the three sister bridges. We did the Warhol and the Rachel Carson bridge. And next year, we're going to be asking to do the Clemente bridge. Also going to continue to make investments in our parks, and combining with the Parks Foundation, which has done a great job of

helping to raise some private money, and we've put matching money into it. We're going to be opening three --- three major initiatives in our parks.

One is the cascades in South Park, which is a tremendous initiative. I know you folks who represented that, Councilman Palmiere, Councilman Duerr, probably hear about that a lot, something that happened many, many years ago, we're going to be bringing back. The work at the fairgrounds around the park, the green parking lot in the promenade, the walkway that's going to be an improvement.

And then out in the North Hills, the Hartwood Acres, the sculpture garden. Councilwoman Prizio represents that area. Going to make some major improvements there. In addition to the --- to the tennis courts, the pickleball courts, the ballfields, the shelters, the ice-skating rinks, the trails, turning two of our parks into net zero. Some of the things that we're going to be able to do using some of that art money, that will allow us --- allow us to do that.

We're also going to be making, a request for an enhancement of our IT services. Information technology, as we have learned is so critical. And we've certainly learned this over the last year and a half. And I think it's an investment we can really, initiate in many of our departments, and particularly health, human services and some of our other departments. So we want to --- it'll be a capital expenditure that we improve on the IT.

We also --- our county lab, which could use some enhancement, we're going to be bringing a capital request along those lines, to not only improve the county lab for --- for the Allegheny County residents, but we think we could be able to do some help to some of our regional partners in some of the rural communities that surround us that that might not have had the timeliness, in sending things to Harrisburg at the State lab that --- that might be able to do that. So we think we could see some improvements there.

We know what COVID has done. We know what COVID has done, to --- to all of our lives, to all of the initiatives that we deal with. It has certainly affected our budget. But again, thanks to our friends with the --- the ARP, it has really helped us --- prevent us from either making layoffs, making significant cuts, or, again, asking for a millage increase.

I also wanted to move into something I think that we should all be celebrating over the last number of years, and that is the census numbers. So for the first time in 60 years, this county is growing again when it comes to population, and it's something I think we could all be very, very proud of. But not only is it --- are we proud that we've --- we've gone up a couple of percent, 27,000 more people living in Allegheny County, but where it's coming from. We still have a death rate that exceeds our birth rate and has every year for the last ten years.

But what we're doing is we're bringing people in. We are bringing people in from all over the country and all over the world. Actually, our 25 to 34 year old age group grew at more than twice the national average over these last ten years. It's also grown in diversity. Ten years ago at the last census, 18 percent of our population was people of color. Ten years later, the census that came out last --- a month or so ago shows that about 25 percent of our population is now people of color. And we've seen about an 80 percent increase in our Latin X, Asian-American, African-American and mixed race populations over that period of time. We're becoming more diverse and a more open, community, for --- for what I think the economics --- the affordability, the quality of life, and the welcome-ability that we've seen here in Allegheny County.

Also proud of the fact that the work we've all been able to do together when it comes to COVID-19. We're almost at 800,000 people that are full --- that are vaccinated. 726,000 people fully vaccinated. And about 73,000 who have had at least one shot. And then another 40,000 who have had the booster shot.

You saw that we made an announcement back in August that new hires were required to be vaccinated before we would hire them in Allegheny County. And then we said any existing employees that were unvaccinated had to wear a mask at work all day and be tested constantly. You saw that recently in the last couple of weeks we upgraded that to say by December 1st we want all county employees --- a requirement of all county employees to be vaccinated.

And let me an --- and I've said this publicly, but I'll say it here tonight. We want to protect not only the coworkers who come to work every day and serve the public, but we want to protect the public that we serve.

When people come into our buildings, when people come into our --- when people come to the jail, wherever it might be, we want to make sure that those people know that those County employees that they come in contact with are vaccinated.

We know that's the way out of this pandemic. I also would note --- and it doesn't get talked about a lot --- but the cost of testing, the unvaccinated is prohibitive. And when you have to do it constantly, once, twice a week, getting people to where the testing, facilities are is --- is a real --- is a real burden on the taxpayers to pay for that.

We've also seen an awful lot of our private investor --- or excuse me, our private companies have also put these requirements in place. I'm also proud of the fact that all four row offices have also followed suit with their policies to have vaccine requirements with what they're doing as well. And really what it comes down to is --- is I think because of the ecosystem that has been built up here around the medical EDS and meds, as we like to call them, UPMC, Pitt Med, AHN, our Health Department, people are paying attention and making sure that they're protecting themselves and their families.

The cases, we believe, at this point have plateaued and are actually starting to go down a little bit, but we are seeing hospitalizations and fatalities, which tend to be lagging indicators of those numbers. You know, they're not high, but, but they're not coming down to way. We want to see them see them improve. I also want to single out some folks, who did a lot of great work early on in this pandemic. And the County manager wanted to give an exemplary employee award and we actually gave it to three different departments, the Law Department, the Health Department and DHS, for finding a way to help our most vulnerable people find a location, a hotel, actually, where they could --- they could be located.

And I want to --- I want to single out the --- these folks who did this, employees who don't get the kind of notoriety, because they just work in anonymity, but Brian Dunbar, Laurie Horowitz, Jessica McGowan, Stephanie Meyer, Cynthia Shields and Brian Wolford. They deserve a lot of --- a lot of our praise and a lot of our thanks for the work that they continue to do. I want to go into economic development, which continues to go in a very good --- a very good way. We see a lot of investment that

continues to happen. We recently cut a ribbon on the Kauffman's building, the phase two, the kickoff of the 51st Street Bridge development in Etna, the Carrie furnace site, going on to the RIDC, the hundred demolitions.

And I want to thank the Council and --- and I know it's an initiative of Councilman Macey, the Act 152 funding that we've been able to do these demolitions on blighted properties across many of the areas in the county. We did the groundbreaking for the new FNB tower and the 28-acre site in the lower hill. We also did a --- the Light of Life, a donation center on Ridge Avenue. We got one valley to move here from Silicon Valley over in Hazelwood Green. Wabtec is doing a lot of initiatives with CMU around electrification of the rail industry. And then just last week the 800 jobs announced in McKeesport at the RIDC site is something that can certainly help that community.

I also want to thank Council. The last time we were here --- or before the last time I was here, you passed the paid sick leave. I want to thank you for the work that you did. It was a good collaborative working together, the Health Department and the Board of Health move things forward on there. They also passed the inversion rules, which, again, this Council passed and then increasing the fines to what the DEP and the State level was able to do when it comes to air quality, we appreciate --- we appreciate that work.

We also had a very robust year when it came to the parks. And I mentioned it in the budget, you're going to see money that we put into our parks, our swimming pools, that, you know, early in the year, we weren't sure we were going to actually open, had almost the same kind of population, attendance that we had in 2019. The golf, actually, was --- it was also way more than we had in 2019. The last two years have been great years for golf, and we've seen our revenues continue to increase with the programs that we've been able to have. And we want to make sure that that --- that that continues.

The last couple things I want to touch on are a couple of our authorities. The airport's going to --- going to be holding a groundbreaking later this week for the new modernization program, the 1.39 system that's up and running --- is going to be up and running over the next couple of years. But in the meantime, the airport continues to move forward in their --- their work on

cargo, to get Amazon, Cutter, Finnair, Spice Express in addition to the continued growth with FedEx and UPS has really increased the amount of jobs around cargo and warehouse distribution at the airport. But in the meantime we've added two new airlines, Contour, which is flying to Milwaukee and Indianapolis, and Breeze, which is going to Hartwood, Providence, Norfolk and Charleston, South Carolina.

The micro grid is up and running, providing the power, using the natural gas and the solar initiative that are out there. And that's providing all the power for the airport, the Hyatt, the Sunoco and a few other buildings out there. And lastly, the Port Authority, you're starting to see some of the work on the utilities for the BRT, the bus rapid transit.

If you're going down 5th or Forbes, I'm sure you've seen some of the utility work that's getting ready as that project is underway. It's --- more than 90 percent of design has already been done. So that's going to continue to move forward. And that will really improve transit and transportation throughout that area. The Port Authority has also done a great job with UPASS Agreements with some of our nonprofits, our universities and some of the corporate communities that they're working on. And we also see --- they're going to be replacing 43 shelters, as well as a number of station improvements, Carnegie, Dormont, South Hills Junction, Negley Avenue. The ride expansion of the park and ride at Ross is going to continue, the McKeesport Transit Center, and the McCandless Park and Ride is also going to continue.

With that, Mr. President, let me open up the questions you may have on the budget or any other items I may have addressed or not addressed this evening.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you, Mr. Executive. Are there any questions concerning the budget or the quarterly address the Executive gave? We'll just begin --- Councilman Duerr.

MR. DUERR: County Executive Fitzgerald, as always thank you for coming and addressing us as well. I just had a quick question. I was wondering, I didn't hear anything specific about it, about any changes to elections budget, heading into '22, with a very competitive gubernatorial race and Senate race coming up. I just wanted to make sure that we are as prepared as we possibly

can be to address the --- what is sure to be a very high turnout election next year.

MR. FITZGERALD: Yeah, the budget with respect to elections has certainly changed over the last couple of years. I go back to two years ago, we spent in 2019 for the 2020 budget, approximately \$5 million out of our budget for elections. Last year it was \$13 million. So the fact is mail-in --- mail-in balloting, has added a big cost, because we're still using the 1,300 polling places that are staffed fully for people to go vote in person, but processing a couple of hundred thousand, 300,000, 400,000, depending on how many ballots are going to be processed is very expensive. So the county manager and his team continue to evaluate that. We know there also may be some legislative changes that come out of Harrisburg that will --- will change how we do things. But we feel confident that we're going to have enough in the budget and that people will be able to vote more robustly now than they ever have --- more options to vote now than they ever have.

MR. DUERR: Okay. Excellent. Thank you very much. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Councilwoman Hallam?

MS. HALLAM: Thank you. So one of the things that I didn't hear you touch on much was the Allegheny County Jail. So in a September 21st press release Warden Harper specified that the ACJ requested \$7.6 million to comply with the terms of the May 2021 referendum. So first I want to know --- I haven't seen this number for \$7.6 million for the jail come across our agendas for a special grant budget, something like that. So is that money in the 2022 budget? And if not, where is that \$7.6 million coming from and what will they do with it?

MR. FITZGERALD: Yes, you're going to see, when the budget gets distributed tonight, that there's a significant increase in dealing with the referendum. The referendum has become a very costly item for the jail administration to deal with. Taking certain tools away means you're going to be requiring more staff. So I don't have the exact number, but I think --- County Manager, do you recall that number, the increase? \$12 million increase.

MS. HALLAM: Okay. So \$12 million specifically for overall increase in the jail budget. Okay. And 7.6

million of that is specifically to comply with the referendum?

MR. FITZGERALD: I don't know what the exact number is to apply --- to deal with the referendum. But what's --- what's interesting is that the actual jail population has gone down over the last couple of years, but because of some of the requirements that the referendum is placing on, again, the operation of the jail, it's going to require more personnel to deal with less people.

MS. HALLAM: Okay. Yeah. I have the press release right here from the Warden, if you wanted to see that, about the 7.6 million. But thank you.

Okay. The next question is about --- so Pennsylvania is, I'm sure, you know, the only state in the nation that does not provide funding for Public Defender's Office. So we --- you know, speaking to former clients, current clients of the Public Defender's Office, former staff, current staff of the Public Defender's Office, they are simply just overwhelmed, massive caseloads and the inability to give the time and care to each person that comes through their door.

So my question is, what is in this new budget to increase the funding to the Public Defender's Office to ensure that they are adequately paid, supported, and that there are enough folks in that office for them to properly serve their clients?

MR. FITZGERALD: Well, one of the departments I'm certainly proud of is the PD's Office and the work that they've done over the last couple of years, things like Project Reset that have really gone out and helped people expunge their --- the records when they should have them expunged, which is a very difficult process. And we've been able to fund that. I don't have the exact --- I know it's an increase, I guess I could ask the --- okay. It was the increase. It was the --- requested by the Public Defender by Matt.

MS. HALLAM: Okay. And were they capped at how much they could request or did they have an unlimited amount that they could request?

MR. FITZGERALD: The Budget Department and the --- and the County manager meet with each department and meets the director to see what their needs are. One of the things I also know is --- my understanding is that there's going to be an increase in space. It's a very ---

it was a more crowded situation, so they're going to be getting more physical space for meeting the clients and going through there.

And is that how many --- seven new positions? Seven new positions. The other thing that our Public Defender's Office does that very few other ones do is we have a social worker --- social workers that actually help people, regardless, not just the lawyers, which obviously are critical, but also some other services we're able to provide through the PD's Office.

MS. HALLAM: Okay. And then last question actually ---.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Hold on, hold on. I'm going to --- I'm going to open it up to someone else, because you had two questions. So ---.

MS. HALLAM: Is that the limit?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Yeah, two questions.

MS. HALLAM: Two questions.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Like we typically do in committees. So is there anyone else that has any other questions this evening? Nope. Councilman DeMarco and then we'll go back to you.

MR. DEMARCO: County Executive Fitzgerald, you and I have had the opportunity to have this conversation, but I would like to go on record tonight, that I am opposed to the vaccine mandate for the employees of the county. I am pro-vaccine. I believe everybody should go and get it, but I am anti mandate. I've been contacted by a number of people, employees in the county who are concerned that because of their resistance to it, that they may lose their jobs, people that have given years of service to the county and to its residents, but may not have qualified or be vested for pension yet and now that they're at risk of losing it.

And I know this debate or argument, isn't going to be settled by us. It will be settled by the courts.

MR. FITZGERALD: That's correct.

MR. DEMARCO: But I think that, you know, I --- for the record, I want to go on the record here in my opposition to it. Someone needs to be able to stand up for these folks and let them know that we do recognize that people that used to be America, where they had the freedom of choice and want to get back to that some day soon.

So thank you very much, sir.

MR. FITZGERALD: I appreciate that. I mean, you know, we can certainly have that disagreement. And that's unfortunate that somehow this disease has become politicized. We've --- you know, I'll go back to schools and school requirements for polio and smallpox and measles, mumps, et cetera. I fully believe that probably by next year, the year after there will be a requirement for school, once the school kids are approved.

These are not easy decisions to make. And I understand that they're there --- not everybody's in agreement. I think we're close to 80 percent, 75 to 80 percent of our county employees are vaccinated. I'm proud of that. I'm vaccinated myself and I was actually was in it's still in the trial, actually.

But you know, we can disagree and I think you're probably right. I think the courts will ultimately decide not just locally, but probably on a --- on a statewide or national basis. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: I have two questions and then I'll go back to Councilman Hallam. Are you expecting any disruptions in service, County Executive Fitzgerald, due to the vaccine?

MR. FITZGERALD: I don't. I think certainly there are going to be people that aren't happy with it. Look, we've been disrupted by COVID. The pandemic has disrupted all of our lives, including our county operations and our county employees. Until we get to the other side of this pandemic, we are going to continue to be affected in an --- probably in an --- in a negative way.

There are probably going to be other variants. You've talked to the medical experts. I'm not one of them, but I rely on the other medical experts who give us advice that this virus may mutate, and you may require more vaccines, more boosters over time. So I don't know --- we don't know where this ultimately will go, but we also know that we want to get back to some sort of normalcy.

So I think, initially, there's going to be some resistance. What we have seen nationally is that while people may say they're going to give up their job, that they're going to move on, I fully believe that as so many other places, including the federal government, many of our private employers are going to continue to require vaccines to go to a show. The cultural district has

indicated that a number of NFL franchises require vaccine cards to get into their games. Again, I think schools eventually, our colleges and universities have gone in that direction. I think --- I hate to say it, Councilman, but I think those folks that --- that aren't vaccinated are going to continue to find themselves isolated and shut out of certain activities, whether it be employment, whether it be entertainment, restaurants, et cetera.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. My other question is going back to the budget momentarily. And this is the question I asked, actually, you and your staff downstairs. The budget shortfall that we're expecting to plug through the ARP funds, it was --- I forget that I was 30s, 38 million, I believe.

MR. FITZGERALD: I'd go between 35 and 40 million. That's correct.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. I just wanted that number on record, because that --- obviously that's a large number that we're --- obviously is a revenue shortfall that we're obviously going to be plugging with the ARP funds.

MR. FITZGERALD: And some of it, Councilman, is unpredictable because we talked about the reassessment appeals that, that some of the large commercials, the hotels, the shopping malls are going to have, who have really been affected by this. That often takes a couple of years to go to work its way through the system.

We don't think on the residential side we're going to to. A significant number of appeals on that regard, but we know that the drink tax, the hotel tax, the car rental tax, the rad tax, the gaming, all those have been affected by the pandemic. So that \$35 to \$40 million shortfall that was there, thank goodness that the ARP was there. It put us in a good stead to go and, fill that --- fill that hole.

PRESIDENT CATENA: And that's one of the reasons, obviously, we're being judicious in the ARP funding, because of the possible shortfalls still pending out there that are working their way through the system. That's correct, yes. Thank you.

Councilman Hallam?

MS. HALLAM: Yeah. Thank you. Just one quick question, going off, Councilman Duerr's question. I know that in the last Board of Elections' meeting, you discussed that the reason that we are not having drop

boxes and satellite voting locations for the election in November is because of funding. So you spoke to increase funding for next year's elections budget. Is there a specific funding in there for drop boxes and satellite voting locations for elections next year?

MR. FITZGERALD: Well, I guess we can take things on a case-by-case basis. In my mind, we do have drop boxes, they're called mailboxes. And everybody can go and put in that red and blue box that's on many street corners throughout the region, with just a stamp, they can, they can mail it in. The problem with the drop boxes are numerous.

And let me talk about some of them. Number one, they've got to be monitored 24/7. You can't just have a box and leave it unattended because then there could be potential for fraud. And then you have other litigation that comes about. So whether you put cameras or whether you staff them with a chain of custody, to make sure that those drop boxes are monitored, that becomes an issue.

We did some of it last year, it was before there was a vaccine and people felt uncomfortable going to --- not necessarily going to the --- to the polling places. And I think there was also a little bit of a question last year around mail that I think has been answered in many ways. So we do have a drop box that will be open for a week, over at the County Office Building where if people want to come down, they can certainly do that, including weekend and evening hours.

But we'll certainly take a look at that. But as I indicated, our budget went from \$5 million in one year to \$13 million the next year. And that was not funded by the State. It was literally an unfunded mandate that counties --- all 67 counties in the Commonwealth got from the legislature. So we, as county taxpayers, have to deal with that.

That's our property tax owners who are paying for that. So we've got to be responsible. I will also say that you've never had more opportunity to vote than you do right now. You didn't have all these opportunities a couple of years ago with all the polling places open and mail-in ballots and the ability to get --- get through that process.

MS. HALLAM: No, I appreciate that. I totally understand the logistics and the cost and the need for staffing and security that takes place with drop boxes and

satellite voting locations. But with all due respect, last year we did have more options for how to vote because we had satellite voting locations and drop boxes. So is the answer no? Is that just --- was a long way of getting to no, we will not have those in next year's budget?

MR. FITZGERALD: I would not be in favor of that. That's correct.

MS. HALLAM: Okay. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay.

Is there anyone else this evening? Hearing no one else, thank you, Mr. Executive.

MR. FITZGERALD: Let me give this to the clerk.

And before, before I leave, I'd be remiss if I did not thank the Budget Department, who has really, over these number of years, including this year, put things together. And that's obviously Mary Soroka, the director, along with Adam, Tim, Stacy, Mike, Melissa, Elliot and Gene. I would ask them to stand and give them a round of applause for the work that they have done.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Jared, at this point in time, did you want to assign them Bill numbers so we can amend the agenda?

MR. BARKER: That actually will take place downstairs. I should, however, read the titles, ---

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay.

MR. BARKER: --- so they can be referred to committee.

First up is an ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania establishing the tax levy upon all real property subject to taxation within the limits of Allegheny County. Next up is a resolution of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania adopting a capital budget pursuant to Article IV, Section 2 and Article VII, Section 4 of the home rule charter by setting forth appropriations to pay the expenses for capital expenditures during the fiscal year, beginning January 1st, 2022 and ending December 31st, 2022.

Next up is a resolution to the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, adopting the grants and special --- grants budget, special accounts budget, and agency fund budget by setting forth appropriations to pay said expenses during the fiscal year beginning, January 1st, 2022 and then December 31st, 2022.

And last up is a resolution of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania adopting an operating budget pursuant to Article IV, Section 2 and Article VII, Section 4 of the home rule charter by setting forth appropriations to pay the expenses of conducting the public business of Allegheny County and for meeting debt charges for the fiscal year beginning January 1st, 2022 and then December 31st, 2022, all sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Is there a motion to amend our agenda to include all four of those Articles?

MR. MACEY: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: A motion has been made and seconded. Is there any discussion? Hearing no discussion, all those in favor signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed? The motion carries. They'll go to Budget and Finance.

We'll now have proclamation certificates.

12043-21

MR. BARKER: A proclamation declaring October 2021 as Breast Cancer Awareness Month and commending the efforts of A Glimmer of Hope Foundation and NSABP Foundation, Incorporated. And we encourage all citizens to join in activities that will increase awareness of what Americans can do to prevent and control breast cancer, sponsored by Councilmember Kirk.

MS. KIRK: So we actually brought the women caucus down for this proclamation. We're here joined by Diane Knapper and her daughter, Alexis.

Okay. So as we all know, it's Breast Cancer Awareness Month and all of us are impacted at some point in time in our lives. And it's been so tragic and here we have someone local who has worked tirelessly, as we'll speak to in more details in a minute.

And the beauty of this is, this money she raises stays here now in Allegheny County to help our residents basically Southwestern PA. It helps all of it. And that's what makes this group a tireless group, very unique, and we're so proud of them to come from our county and do our county pride, for sure. So that said, I'd like to just read it real quick.

A proclamation declaring Breast Cancer Awareness Month, whereas organizations across Allegheny County in the United States come together every October to spread

the important message of breast cancer awareness. And whereas the Pittsburgh based nonprofit A Glimmer of Hope Foundation was established in 1994 by Diana Napper, to one of the wishes of her best friend, the late Carol Jo Weiss Friedman, who lost her battle with breast cancer in 1990.

And whereas the Glimmer of Hope Foundation's mission is to fund innovative programs, treatment technology, and research in order to prevent breast cancer from advancing. And I think she'd even say she's working for a cure in a nutshell, whereas A Glimmer of Hope is a nonprofit grassroots effort with a staff of 50 volunteers, committed to fight against breast cancer through cancer research and programs and studies and premenopausal, breast cancer, as breast cancer in younger women tend to be much more aggressive.

And whereas A Glimmer of Hope Foundation offers nonpregnant women ages 18 to 39 genetic testing as a preventative against breast cancer. And whereas A Glimmer of Hope Foundation is committing to providing patients with holistic medicine services and access to revolutionary machines and studies that can detect breast cancer during the early stages.

And whereas, through fundraising events and generous donations, A Glimmer of Hope Foundation has been able to donate millions of dollars from a couple of ladies. For breast cancer projects at Allegheny Health Network, UPMC McGee Women's Research Institute and UPMC Hillman Cancer Center. And whereas most recently A Glimmer of Hope Foundation has purchased and update all the equipment at UPMC McGee Women's Hospital and update equipment for the Donnenberg Lab at UPMC Hillman Cancer Center.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that Allegheny Council does hereby proclaim the month of October 2021 is Breast Cancer Awareness Month in Allegheny County. We commend the efforts of A Glimmer of Hope Foundation, and renew our commitment to fighting this disease, raising awareness and supporting those affected by breast cancer.

And we do this not only on behalf of the women of the Council, but all our colleagues. I'm sure you're right behind us there also. And it does affect males, but not nearly in the percentages of women.

So Diana, would you like to come?

MS. NAPPER: I just want to say thank you very much for the honor. We appreciate it. Just one thing

that I wanted to add, we just started a new program this year.

We will screen any woman under 40. We will pay for it. I don't care how old you are, what your income is, we will pay for it.

MS. KIRK: I noticed in a tremendous increase in younger women with very aggressive cancer we didn't see 20 years ago.

MS. NAPPER: No.

MS. KIRK: And so that is so timely, so critical. Would you like to come up? Come on.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: And I just want to thank everyone, because we just had a 14 year old diagnosed with breast cancer. So it's really a time that we need to step it up in Pittsburgh for funding, for research, technology and screening.

That's why we implemented that under --- screening for 40 and under, because usually it is typically for 40 and above. So I want to thank all of you for helping us.

MS. KIRK: It's so nice to have such compassionate and hard-working people, giving back to the community like that. That's so honorable and we're just so appreciative. So one more big round of clap ---.

Okay. Let's go get a photo.

(Photographs were taken)

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12046-21.

MR. BARKER: Certificates of achievement presented to the 2021 Pittsburgh's 50 Finest sponsored by Councilmember Baker.

Mr. BAKER: All right. Thanks, Mr. President. If Justin Davis and the whole team from CF could come on up? All the members of 50 Finest, we're glad to have all of you here tonight. Let's talk about the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and all of our terrific honorees.

I will say, my journey with --- with CF and being a friend of the organization, goes back a decade. A dear friend of ours, RJ Thompson, first introduced us to the group. He has CF, has gone through so many trials and so many tests, and thankfully, RJ is healthy. He's living. He's doing good. He's in his late 30s now.

You know, when he was born, it was --- it was not any of a given that he would be still living at this point. So RJ has always been my inspiration to be involved with the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. And now my

wife and I were in the older, more boring version of 50  
Finest couples for cure years ago. 50 Finest really is a  
great group of young professionals and leaders that make a  
huge difference here in the community. Justin, I will  
say, is a great group of young professionals and leaders  
that make a huge difference in the community. Justin, I  
will say, you know, is a long time Board member and alumni  
of this program, it's been great to see your trajectory  
and all the good that you do through the chapter as well,  
too.

So that we'll get to the proclamation, whereas  
the mission of the Western Pennsylvania Pittsburgh chapter  
of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation is to cure cystic  
fibrosis and to provide all people with the disease the  
opportunity to lead full productive lives by funding,  
research and drug development, promoting individualized  
treatment and ensuring access to high quality specialized  
care.

And whereas Pittsburgh 50 Finest is an elite  
group of the area's most accomplished men and women who  
were honored each year for their success in their careers  
and their involvement in the Pittsburgh community. And  
whereas the honorees commit to raising much needed funds  
and awareness for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and their  
efforts are celebrated at a special gala at Riverview ---  
Riverfront Park and Aspinwall. That just happened pretty  
recently; right? Or this Friday --- oh, it's coming up  
this Friday. Okay. Are you ready for it? Almost ready.  
Okay. All right. Sounds good. I always have --- it's  
like one of the best events of the year, other than Dawn  
Keefer's events, of course, but it's a very, very good  
event. We have competing nonprofits I care about very  
much here tonight.

And now, therefore, be it resolved that I,  
County Councilmember, Tom Baker, do you hereby recognize  
the Western Pennsylvania Pittsburgh chapter of the Cystic  
Fibrosis Foundation and Pittsburgh's 50 Finest for their  
dedication and commitment in its raising awareness and  
funding, the CF's goals and mission. And if I can just  
say, Justin, you know, RJ, well, some of you have probably  
gotten to know RJ a little bit through the campaign. And  
this I believe it's a two-year campaign. Some of you've  
been involved for two full years this time around, which  
is --- which is pretty remarkable. Happy to share I  
mentioned RJ earlier, I get no guarantee that he'd still

be living in his mid to late 30s and his daughter lost her first tooth today. So that's one --- so that's --- Amelia literally lost her first tooth.

So right, pretty good. It was really --- yeah. Well, thanks can still happen even if they're not on Facebook. No, it was on Twitter, though. It was on Twitter. That is true. All right. So we know who, which honorees are here. So Tim Prex.

MR. DAVIS: Tim actually didn't make it.

MR. BAKER: Okay. That's okay. All right. We got, Alexandra Kovalchick. All right. Congratulations. All right. Yeah. Alyssa Cavallaro. Madeline Adamczyk. And Connor Sease. Congratulations.

Mr. Board Member Justin Davis, do you want to say a few words about this esteemed group of the 50 Finest.

MR. DAVIS: I'd love to. And thank you, Councilman Baker and the Council. I'm sorry? So we had an unexpected --- it's in the pack --- yeah, I don't want to take up too much of your time. And you're right, some things do happen without them being on Facebook. And that's the kind of wisdom from you that I think is going to send you on a path straight to the White House. So thank you. Thank you, Tom.

And Council, we appreciate this honor. It really means a lot to us. This class of 50 Finest was notified in March of 2020 that they had been selected to participate in Pittsburgh's 50 Finest, and one week later the entire world shut down. So a lot of this group was not previously familiar with cystic fibrosis and what the cause and the mission was. This is an honorary-based event and they know it's a great fundraiser and they were getting ready to learn all about it. They didn't throw in the towel, they --- they stuck with it. It was the 65th anniversary of our foundation, which was formed by parents who didn't want to take no for an answer that their children had this terminal illness, and 25 years of Pittsburgh's 50 Finest.

The reason it's really important that Allegheny County Council is honoring us is because the genetic defect for cystic fibrosis was discovered in Allegheny County. That's world-changing in 1989. It's huge. And now you have this honorary program of these amazing fighters who have now just rolled up their sleeves and fought for two years now and not taking no for an answer.

And we have created this program in Western Pennsylvania in Allegheny County, which is now a national program, raising millions of dollars every year. So these are things that are history-making in Allegheny County and we want to stand here in front of you one day and tell you that we've cured cystic fibrosis here in Allegheny County because of these fighters.

So again, a round of applause for this group. Thank you for this honor.

MR. BAKER: If you can just say your name --- I know I've said your name --- and then where you live so that my colleagues know which district you're from. So come on up. If you can just say your name and what community you live in so we know who to be.

MR. SEASE: I'm Connor Sease, and I live in downtown, right here. Not too far. And I have my cousin, Christopher --- Christopher Raybuck, to whom I've dedicated all my fundraising efforts for, will be turning 30 in December. And he was diagnosed with cystic fibrosis at age one. And it was right when they started testing and he had a double lung transplant and has had a second chance on life, basically all because of this --- the advancements in research. And it's just been a remarkable experience for our family. And I thank you all for --- on behalf of him and our family, from the bottom of my hearts, for all your --- for Allegheny County's efforts for cystic fibrosis. So thank you very much.

MR. BAKER: Wow, thank you downtown proud. That was --- that was amazing.

MS. KOVALCHICK: Hi, I'm Alexandra Kovalchick, I live in Brighton Heights.

MR. BAKER: Liv is --- Councilwoman Bennett is doing well so far.

MS. CAVALLARO: Hi. My name is Alyssa Cavallaro, and I live in Mt. Washington.

MS. PLUMMER: I'm Alicia Plummer, and I'm in Coraopolis.

MR. BAKER: That's mine. All right. Here we go.

MS. ADAMCZYK: I'm Madeline Adamczyk and I live in Alison Park, Pennsylvania.

MR. BAKER: Cindy Kirk, right. Okay. Very good. All right. Well, congratulations to all of you. We'll get a group photo now. And we have all of the other honorees, we have their proclamations, too, so we'll make

sure --- and have a great event this Friday, then you have great. Okay. Come on --- come on over.

(Photographs taken.)

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12047-21.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation recognizing the American Cancer Society and the 2021 Real Men Wear Pink of Pittsburgh candidates for helping to create a world free from the pain and suffering of breast cancer, sponsored by Councilmember Baker.

MR. BAKER: All right. Okay. I will go. Of course, congrats on the 50 Finest. Now we're going to talk about real men who like to wear pink. And I'm an alum of this program as well. Very proud of this group. CF crew. Thanks for coming out. We got the executive director, we got Board members, we got all the honorees who are going to have a very good time on Friday night. So congratulations to all you. But if I could have my friend of many years, Dawn Keefer and the real men who are wearing pink for American Cancer Society, come on up.

Look, we've got a pink jacket there. That's nice. Couple of pink jackets.

So I will say, when we did the campaign in 2016, I did wear pink every day for 30 --- for 30 days. It was quite a thing. And these years later, every day, when I asked my daughter what I should wear today, she says pink. So she was not there for that. She would've literally loved the campaign. You know, it's --- Dr. Emil Fernando, I know is one of your colleagues and a friend, he's a former neighbor of ours and we were together. He's having the time of his life for this campaign. And I hope for all of you that you're enjoying it. The brotherhood and the camaraderie that comes out of being part of real men who wear pink together is really remarkable.

I've stayed in touch with a lot of the guys that I did the program with. And it was a lot of fun and we make a big difference along the way. For my colleagues you might recognize the picture. My Facebook profile picture is still the kickoff to this event at Savoy years ago, back in 2016 and my mom that night --- and I know a lot of us get our family's involvement. My mom that night --- and Dawn can probably attest to this. Cindy Kirk was --- Cindy Kirk was there as well, too, that night. It was probably the greatest speech I'd ever heard or given my life. Some of my colleagues might know that my dad

actually passed away when he was 39. So three years younger than I am now, back in 1991.

So being involved in ACS through Relay for Life over the years and particularly through Real Men Wear Pink has been an incredible honor. So I compliment you guys. I congratulate you guys. With that, we'll go with --- to the proclamation. Whereas every year too many Americans are touched by the pain and hardship caused by breast cancer or disease that among women --- and we've learned some of these things from Councilmember Kirk earlier. It's not only one of the most common cancers, but also one of the leading causes of cancer related to death. Whereas hundreds of thousands of Americans will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year and tens of thousands will lose their battle with the disease.

Although both women and men have --- can have breast cancer, women are a higher risk. Whereas, the American Cancer Society, ACS, is dedicated to helping people who face cancer and determine save lives from breast cancer, by promoting early detection and prevention funding, groundbreaking research and providing comprehensive support.

Whereas, Real Men Wear Pink of Pittsburgh is --- it's a distinguished group of community leaders, including an ambassador. And this is true, Alex Highsmith is part of the campaigners, ambassador this year, which is very good, from the Steelers, and the men of Busy Beaver executive team that are committed to raising awareness and funds to support the ACS's mission. Now, therefore, be it resolved that Allegheny County Council does hereby recognize the ACS and the 2021 Real Men Wear Pink of Pittsburgh candidates for helping create a world free from the pain and suffering of breast cancer. So congratulations guys, I feel like this is like a GQ shoot here, too. Like this is, this is a very dapper group.

So honor all of my new friends, because we've all done the program. Aaron Reed, right? Oh, there. Hi, Aaron. You got your name on your shirt. All right. Very good. Congratulations, Aaron. Paul Purdy. All right, Paul. All right. Alexander Papson. Joseph Beatty. All right. Ashton Teasley. The men of Busy Beaver. And Alex Highsmith. There he is.

All right. Very good. Well, congratulations, guys. And thank you for being part of the campaign. Thanks for all the good that you're doing. Raising funds

is incredibly important through this, but also the exposure and the awareness that you bring to American Cancer Society does so much good for our region.

So if it's okay like we did with the 50 Finest, if you guys want to come up and say your name and what neighborhood you look in --- live in, and then all 15 of us, we'll fight over taking credit for all of your good work. So come up, Mr. Reed, please.

MR. REED: Aaron Reed, owner Reed Building Supply, and I'm from Sheridan.

MR. BEATTY: Joe Beatty, pharmacist, Cranberry.

MR. GUNNETT: Hello, I'm Adam Gunnnett. I live in Monroeville and Busy Beaver headquarters is in Harmer.

MR. BAKER: Okay. That's a little bit of Zavarella in Monroeville.

MR. PURDY: Paul Purdy. I'm in Bloomfield.

MR. PAPSON: Alex Papson, in Wexford.

MR. BAKER: Cindy. All right.

MR. HIGHSMITH: I'm Alex Highsmith, and I live on the South Side.

MR. BAKER: Nice. All right. Well, congratulations again, guys. Thank you for being here tonight and thanks for all of your good work. And if you want to come up, we'll do the big group photo.

(Photographs taken.)

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12049-21.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation declaring Tuesday, October 12th, 2021 is National Diaper Need Awareness Day in Allegheny County, sponsored by Councilmember Baker.

MR. BAKER: All right. Yeah. Okay. Okay. Council, I'm honored. I'm honored to bring up the Battle family, Reverend Battle. How are you, sir? Good to see you. Thanks certainly to you and Cathy, for all of your amazing work over the years. This organization, the Western PA Diaper Bank, I believe the numbers now, and we'll get to this in the millions; right?

I believe it's between four and five million diapers that they have helped distribute throughout our region. It's a pretty remarkable story. And without --- I'll get right to the proclamation, but it --- you got every --- if you can just take in all of the incredible good work that the Battle family and their organization has done over the years.

Whereas, every year 3.8 million babies are born in the U.S. many of which live in poor and low-income

families that are unable to provide their children with basic essentials for health and hygiene, a clean and dry diaper. Whereas, lack of clean diapers can jeopardize a child's chance to develop cognitive abilities and language skills normally, and contribute to home environments with more tension, less nurturing and possible possible abuse can occur.

Whereas, the nonprofit Western PA Diaper Bank was established in 2012 by the Reverend Phillip Battle and Cathy Battle, based in Pittsburgh's east end. The Western PA Diaper Bank was the first organization that solely addressed the need to provide diapers to low-income families. And whereas the Western Pennsylvania Diaper Bank is following its mission to help ensure that babies indeed are clean, healthy and dry has over these last nine years distributed more than four million diapers, four million diapers, to low-income or poverty families in Western PA through a network of 52 social service agency partners.

You all honestly might not find a person who likes having community partners more than me in the nonprofit world, but 52 is a pretty remarkable amount of partners to be working with. That's fantastic. Whereas the Western PA Diaper Bank also provides period supplies to women in need through those agencies as part of the National Alliance for Period Supplies, supporting women's health and enabling them to go to work and school, to break the cycle of poverty.

Whereas the Western PA Diaper Bank envisions a community where all families have an equal opportunity to thrive and joins the national Diaper Bank network in raising awareness of critical need during National Diaper Need Awareness Week, which is September 27th to October 3rd. Now, therefore be it resolved that I, County Councilmember Tom Baker, do hereby proclaim Tuesday, October 12th as National Diaper --- Diaper Need Awareness Day in Allegheny County. And I call upon citizens to join with the Western PA Diaper Bank in their efforts to ensure that the diaper crisis is solved and every child has a basic essential, a clean dry diaper. Reverend Battle. Thank you so much for your service and all that you do.

REVEREND BATTLE: I'd like to thank the Council and, in particular, Mr. Baker, for always supporting us and providing this proclamation for us. As we --- as I looked across the room and saw the other folks who came

before me who have such imminent problems or, issues that they raise awareness for such as cancer, I kind of wished that he would have waited until another day because their need is something that we're still working on. Cystic fibrosis and all different forms of cancer are things that we're still trying to find a solution for, but diaper need is something that we can do something that we have a solution for. And that is when we all just give a little of our time, a little bit of our substance, a little bit of our wealth, a little bit of thought to address a child that is found in a meth house during a drug raid, isolated from the other six children that are in the home, because nobody wants to mess with or play with stinky Suzy.

And any --- most of the time when you find a child in that situation or child that's being abused, a crying infant is usually not because they don't have enough food, because they have the EBT cards and SNAP and WIC to give them food. And you go to the refrigerator and the refrigerator and the cabinets and all the pantries are full. But when you go to the diaper bag, there's not one diaper in the house. And this child is sitting there with sores on his behind just because someone can't afford a diaper. And so we've expanded our services over the years and we now also supply women with period products and our senior citizens with incontinent supplies.

And we're looking forward to expanding into all essential needs, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, tissue, paper, anything that is taxed that you can not supply for a family with an EBT card. And then when we look a little further into the situation, we find that usually it's because we have the working poor who are not making a living wage. And so we are looking now to partner with the National Center for Urban Solutions, and address --- today we are addressing noncustodial parents who've been mandated by the court to find a job, but they don't have training. They don't have aptitude. Some of them are ADHD. Some of them have mental illness and they had some of them just plain lazy, and they need somebody to kick them in the butt.

So that goes along with that --- with that issue that I just raised, but we're doing something about it. We're partnering with people, as many companies and manufacturers and retailers, as we possibly can to give people who do not have a good record or some things in their record, especially things revolving around marijuana

and drug testing, so they can't get a job. But if we could just get them to work, if we could just feed them and hand them a sandwich. And maybe if we can diaper their child, we can get into their heart. And from their heart, we can get into her mind and change their mindset. And when they see their children smiling, and when they, when they feel like they are enough, then, it will --- it will help them address the other issues in their lives, such as mental illness, such as budgeting and balancing checkbooks, such as upping their skills, so that they can be a better provider for their children.

And so that's what the Western Pennsylvania Diaper Bank is all about. And I thank you guys for helping us raise awareness to the diaper need. God bless you.

(Photographs taken.)

PRESIDENT CATENA: The remaining proclamations will be read into the record. 12050-21.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation recognizing and thanking the Pink Pamper in their efforts to help women diagnosed with cancer, sponsored by Councilmember Baker.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12051-21.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation congratulating Keith T. Winter and Claire B. Winter upon the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary, sponsored by Councilmember Palmiere.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12052-21.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation recognizing Marilyn A. Jenkins upon her retirement from the Allegheny County Library Association, sponsored by Councilmember Baker.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12053-21.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation declaring Saturday, October 16th, 2021 to be Adeline's Angels day in Allegheny County, sponsored by Councilmember Baker.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12054-21.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation honoring the life, memory and legacy of Gregory Peter Pesanski, sponsored by Councilmember Futules.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Is there any public comment on any of the agenda items?

MR. VARHOLA: Yes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead.

PRESIDENT CATENA: We have several. Reverend John Welsh, City of Pittsburgh, 15221.

MaryJo Costello, Mount Lebanon. County Councilwoman Olivia Bennett is introducing a motion. Ms. Bennett's motion will further damage the business economy of Allegheny County and exacerbate the staffing shortages that we are now experiencing. Additionally, will simply drive business out of Allegheny County as people look for venues to dine and shop where they are free to choose whether to mask or not. We saw this occur during the shutdowns and we'll see it again.

Diane Schmitt, McKees Rocks, Kennedy Township. Sorry. That's not an appropriate one. Delores Thrower, municipality, City of Pittsburgh. Is Delores here? Delores is here?

PRESIDENT CATENA: For the record, Diane Schmitt's, I assume that was against or - just for the record?

MS. HALLAM: I read it.

MR. VARHOLA: It was not a mask mandate. It had nothing else to do --- it had nothing else to do --- it had nothing to do with mask mandate.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Oh, okay. Go ahead.

MS. THROWER: Good evening, Council. Let me just share with you. First of all, I used to sprint through here and be okay, but now I'm out of breath just from walking, from there to here. And --- and I need you also to know that I am Reverend Dolores Thrower. I have a small ministry located on the North Side, Pittsburgh Higher Ground Ministries.

And I have to always give honor, at least by reading a scripture, which is fitting for today, Romans 13 one and two says, obey the government for God is the one who has put it there. There's no government anywhere that God has not placed in power. So those who refuse to obey the law of the land are refusing to obey God and punishment will follow.

And I --- I start off with that to say this, we need a mask mandate. I have suffered with COVID. My daughter, who is an educator, has suffered with COVID. My son, his wife, a three-month-old baby, all in my family, has suffered with COVID. My member --- a member of my church passed away with COVID. A friend that I grew up with from childhood passed away. And these are not old people. These are not seniors --- passed away with COVID. Other members of my church have come down with COVID.

We need a mask mandate. I just got an email yesterday from my children's school. And I'm not going to say which school, but one of their teachers have COVID. I need this to be set --- etched in law so that people can follow it. See, we need the law to follow it. We need to wear masks. We need to say, get a shot. When you're on an island, what did I say? They're waiting for the plane. They waiting for a train. They waiting for a boat. We have Moderna, we have Johnson & Johnson. We have Pfizer. The rescue is here. The people have to get the shot and the masks have to be worn.

I'm tired of going to restaurants and people taking my money or want my money and they don't have a mask on. And I'm still not --- well, I'm still weak from the, from this disease. And we, you, the people have got to do something so that people can follow it. Amen. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you.

MR. VARHOLA: Linda Miller, Pittsburgh, 15223, Etna. Ms. Bennett's motion will further damage the business economy and exacerbate the staffing shortages. The same as the one we just read.

Susan Viola, Crafton, there's no scientific evidence that supports that the wearing of masks has any impact to suppress the transfer of the Coronavirus 19 or any other virus circulating in the air. To mandate this through county government or any other level of government infringes on my liberties established through the Constitution of our great nation. You, as elected Councilmembers, should ask to constituents who voted you into office, what issues need to be addressed and not your own personal agendas. Passing this on scientific-based mandate would adversely affect not only businesses, but our very way of life.

Bernard Miller, Etna, I'm completely against the mask mandate. There always will be some type of flu, virus that everyone has to deal with. This is totally ridiculous to have a mask mandate that will only further destroy the business community. So many small businesses have closed. If there are any in hope of reopening at some point, this would only discourage any chance of being --- to begin again.

Margo Pisula, Pittsburgh, 15221 --- I'm sorry. 15211. I oppose the implementation of the mask mandates for gatherings within Allegheny County. Our city,

especially downtown was and continues to be hurt the most from the pandemic and these pandemic-related mandates. It's a sad, pitiful sight to see businesses primarily closed are simply struggling to make ends meet. Those businesses that were able to survive are now also struggling to hire and retain employees. Add to that inflation, which is affecting all citizens, businesses and just about every other --- every sector in the economy at the national level. If you want to help businesses, especially in the era of recovery, choose liberty over tyranny. If you want business to stay in Allegheny County, instead of relocating, choose liberty over tyranny, let citizens and business have the freedom to make their own decisions.

Gerard and Margaret Wrabley, Crafton. Requiring masks at indoor gatherings, encouraging the vaccine. We want to go on record as voicing our opposition to motion 12044 that will be presented. This is just another in a long line of attempts to control peoples lives. It is based on flimsy and often contradictory CDC guidelines.

Tiffany Gary Webb, Pittsburgh, 15261. Is she here? Okay.

MS. WEBB: Good evening, everyone. My name is Tiffany Gary-Webb. I'm associate professor at the Graduate School of Public Health at the University of Pittsburgh. I'm an epidemiologist with over 20 years of experience. I'm also the chair of the American Public Health Association epidemiology section, which, has a network of 3,000 epidemiologists across the country.

Today I'm here on behalf of the Black Equity Coalition, and we support the legislation to urge the Allegheny County to consider the implementation of the mask mandates. The Black Equity Coalition is comprised of a group of physicians, researchers, epidemiologists, public health and healthcare practitioners, social sciences, community funders and government officials concerned about addressing COVID-19 in vulnerable populations.

Since the spring of 2021, the data shows that the overall vaccination rate in Allegheny County has increased steadily, but it's not where we need to be. Unfortunately from the very beginning, the vaccination rate for black and African-American populations has remained behind the overall vaccination rate in the county. As of October, the vaccination rate among the

black population is 42 percent, compared to 67 percent overall. So recent data from the CDC and the PA Department of Health show that over 90 percent of the cases, hospitalizations and deaths occur among those who were unvaccinated. So with cases continually rising, we know that masks will help to prevent the spread of the deadly virus and this has all impacted us in drastic ways.

Additionally, people under 12 are unable to be vaccinated as of now, so we need to do all that we can to protect those who are too young. Since early July COVID-related visits to Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh rose 15 percent from 15 percent to nearly 50 percent of all visits. Weekly COVID-19 visits to the ED total over 800 per week, or threefold increased since July.

And we know that masking is one of the ways that we can --- one of the only ways we can keep people safe. So further we have differences in vaccination rates, across ZIP Codes. The figure that I gave you shows the black rate --- vaccination rate, in the neighborhoods across Allegheny County with the highest black populations, those numbers range from 31 to 49 percent.

We know that people travel across ZIP Codes. And so a mask mandate is appropriate to keep everyone safe. So in conclusion, a mask mandate is essential to protect the health of all of Allegheny County residents, especially those most vulnerable to the continued presence of the virus. As the weather gets colder and people get gathered for holidays, having these plans in place will prevent a new surge of COVID-19. Without these efforts, Allegheny County will continue to see the devastating and disparate impacts of COVID-19.

MR. VARHOLA: Thank you. Brady Winter, Pittsburgh, 15211. I'll keep it short and sweet. The holiday season and winter months are the perfect storm for the pandemic to continue. If we care about our neighbors, the logical and decent decision would be to mandate masks indoors. I mean, for God's sake, can we put aside some of our pride for the greater good, selfish decisions, which will result in disaster? Let's be better than we have been, happy holidays.

Alyssa Monet.

MS. MONET: Good evening, everybody. I am here on behalf of being a resident of Allegheny County. Thank you all for being here tonight. And I just would like to go on record to say that I support the motion of the

Council of Allegheny County urging the Allegheny County Health Department to consider the implementation of mask mandates for indoor gatherings within Allegheny County at any time at which the county's COVID-19 transmission rate becomes moderate, as defined by the Center for Disease Control, also known as CDC. And strongly encourage county residents and employers to facilitate vaccination to the greatest extent. And I feel this way and support this on behalf of the health and wellbeing of my neighbors in Allegheny County. Thank you.

MR. VARHOLA: Thank you. Noble Maseru  
Pittsburgh, 15224.

MR. MASERU: Good evening, everyone. I'm Noble Maseru, professor of public health practice, University of Pittsburgh's, School of Health Sciences. I'm also a member of the Black Equity Coalition. And so I come to you with more than 45 years of experience in health and human services. The last 14 years of which before coming to Pitt was as health officer and health commissioner, respectively for the Cities of Detroit and Cincinnati.

I'm here in support of the resolution urging the Allegheny County Health Department to consider the implementation of mask mandates for indoor gatherings within Allegheny County. Just to be clear, we're not talking about policies like fracking or needle exchange or placing long acting reversible birth control in schools. We're talking about requiring folks to wear a mask to prevent the spread of a virus. We are experiencing a mass fatality event. That's what a pandemic is. My colleague, Dr. Tiffany Green-Webb has commented on the geographic distribution of the disease and the disproportionate burden on populations and residents in specific Allegheny County neighborhoods.

To dated, 716,000 souls in the United States have been lost to this pandemic and a few thousand shy of those lost in the four-year Civil War. A nature and medicine study tells us that 130,000 deaths would have been prevented if 95 percent wore masks. For Allegheny County, of the 2,226 deaths, 405 lives would have been prevented. And that's death, that's not even counting illness.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says if we were --- wore a mask, we would have the disease under control in four to eight weeks, two months. Our schools and young people ---. How much time do I have

after the 30 seconds --- our schools and young people are at high risk because the under age 12 population are not vaccine-eligible. However, if you want to see the visible effects of the virus in our children, just drive by Children's Hospital and see the temporary facilities outside to accommodate the emergency room overflow. Talk with your family pediatrician or better yet, talk with the chair of the pediatric medicine at Children's, Dr. Terence Dermody and see his opinion on passing this mask mandate.

So in conclusion, CDC recommends universal indoor masking, especially in schools K through 12 for students. See I have 13 seconds and I would just draw attention or recognize the city county - I'm sorry, the county exec's remarks regarding masking County Exec Fitzgerald says protect the persons who do business with the county are protected. If masking is good enough for the persons who come to the County Building, then it should be good enough for those who work, play and worship in the --- in the county. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you.

MR. VARHOLA: Mr. President, after referring to the agenda, the last commenter is appropriate at this time. And it is Diane Schmitt from Kennedy Township. Motion 12045-21, if approved by Allegheny County Council, would cast Council under the role of lobbyists for illicit opioid users. PA House Bill 1393 and Senate Bill 845 urge that legalizing of the personal use of fentanyl test strips to test the illicit drugs before use. This is certainly not a role that voters expect the elected County Councilmembers to play. The motion is inappropriate for the role as a county legislator. I urge County Council, reject motion 12045, and I encourage efforts on issues, which benefit all residents of Allegheny County instead of facilitating illicit drug use. And that's all on agenda items.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. And full disclosure, we received a number of emails about the masking. So please take a moment to read through your --- all of your emails. I know there were quite a few of them.

So the approval of minutes, 12041-21.

MR. BARKER: A motion to approve the minutes of the June 8th, 2021 regular meeting of Council.

MR. MACEY: So moved.

MR. FUTULES: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Hearing no discussion, all those in favor, signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed? Motion carries. 12042-21.

MR. BARKER: A motion to approve the minutes of the July 6th, 2021 regular meeting of Council.

MR. FUTULES: So moved.

MR. MACEY: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: The motion has been made and seconded. Is there any discussion? Hearing no discussion. All those in favor, signify by saying aye?

(Chorus of ayes.)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed? Motion carries. Presentation of appointments. 12034-21 through 12039-21 are all going to committee on appointment review.

Go ahead, Jared.

MR. BARKER: 12034-21, approving the appointment of Joe Downing to the Friends of the Park for Hartwood Acres returned to inspire October 12th, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember Bennett.

12035-21 approving the reappointment of Derek Uber, the Allegheny County Housing Authority for term to expire on December 31st, 2025, sponsored by the Chief Executive.

12036-21 approving the reappointment of Mary Ann Eisenreich to the Community College of Allegheny County, Board of Trustees for term to expire on December 31st, 2027, sponsored by the Chief Executive.

12037-21 approving the reappointment of William T. Cagney to the Community College of Allegheny County, Board of Trustees for a term to expire on December 31st, 2027 sponsored by the Chief Executive.

12038-21 approving the appointment of Joseph Angelelli to the Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council for a term to expire on December 31st, 2026, sponsored by the Chief Executive.

12039-21, approving the appointment of Amrita Chhetri to the Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council for term to expire on December 31st, 2026, sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. We'll, now have Unfinished Business Committee on Appointment Review for the second reading. If there are no objections, I'll

obviously like Ms. Hallam to make a single motion to approve all of the remaining appointments.

MS. HALLAM: That is also what I would like to do.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Is there a second?

MR. DUERR: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. All those in favor, signify by saying aye. (Chorus of ayes.)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed, motion carries. Go ahead and read the appointment.

MR. BARKER: Bill Number 11904-21. Approving the appointment of Carolyn Savikas to the Friends of the Park for South Park for a term to expire on July 6, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember Kline.

11905-21, approving the appointment of Jason Fincke to the Friends of the Park for South Park for a term to expire on July 6, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember Walton.

11906-21, approving the appointment of Angela Sue Zemba to the Friends of the Park for South Park for a term to expire on July 6, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember Duerr.

11907-21, approving the appointment of Bernadette Fincke to the Friends of the Park for South Park for a term to expire on July 6, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember Duerr.

11908-21, approving the appointment at Edward Eichenlaub to the Friends of the Park for South Park for a term to expire on July 6th, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember Duerr.

11910-21 approving the appointment of Dave Buchewicz to the Friends of the Park for South Park for a term to expire July 6th, 2024, Sponsored by Councilmember, Palmiere.

11911-21 approving the appointment of James Converse to the Friends of the Park for South Park for a term to expire July 6th, 2024 sponsored by Councilmember, Palmiere.

11912-21 approving the appointment of Thomas Woods at the Friends of the Park for South Park returned to expire July 6th, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember, Palmiere.

11915-21 approving the appointment of Leslie Brueggman to the Friends of the Park for South Park for a

term to expire July 6th, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember Palmiere.

11974-21, approving the appointment of Gail Scott to the Friends of the Park for Hartwood Acres for a term to expire August 31st, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember Prizio.

And 12027-21 approving the appointment of Heather Murphy to the Friends of the Park for South Park for a term to expire September 28, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember Duerr.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. At this point in time, all those in favor of these appointments, please signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed? Motion carries.

MS. KIRK: President Catena?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Yes.

MS. KIRK: A point of personal privilege.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead.

MS. KIRK: There are seven appointments to the Friends of North Park that had been pending in committee since this past July. At this time, I like to make a motion to pull the following Bill numbers from committee for a final vote of these seven people.

MR. FUTULES: Second.

MS. KIRK: Thank you. And I've vetted them. I've asked them the questions about conflict of interest and attendance.

PRESIDENT CATENA: The motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Hearing no ---.

MS. HALLAM: I would like to --- I would like to say something about that. Yeah. So I just think that this is a little bit ridiculous. You see here, we've been having many Appointment Review Committee meetings, many, which do you know --- certain many members of this Council don't even attend, but we are going through the processes.

We are asking the questions. We are giving every opportunity, not just the person who puts forward the appointment. I would hope anyone who puts forward an appointment would do the proper vetting. But I do think it's important that every member of Council has an opportunity to ask questions of each and every appointment that comes through us, like this Council has been doing since its inception.

I just think it's a little hurried when we are continuously having Appointment Review Committee meetings, there are many appointments up to skip to the front of the line, these folks, and make everyone else wait longer for them. I think that that is just not okay and does a disservice to the people of this county who look forward to having their elected officials vet each and every appointment that comes in front of us.

So that is my discussion.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead, Councilwoman Kirk.

MS. KIRK: I don't think they're skipping to the front of the line. They were the first in the line. They were from July 6th, that's 98 days. As soon as they could possibly talk, we'd be waiting probably at least another month because there's some that are from the executive, which would be bumped.

And at this time I think we need to get these committees going. We've helped them. We stopped the committees. We put them --- suspended this close to a year ago. And I'd like them to have some kind of meeting before Christmas, before the holidays and the winter. And you know, the cabins, aren't all heated where they meet.

So I think it's important to show transparency. These are volunteers who just loved the park and they applied in June and they're still waiting and we're at 98 days today. So I don't think that's --- and they were the --- they're the last ones left from July 6th and they were overseen by some other people from a later date. So I would like to go.

PRESIDENT CATENA: The motion has been made and seconded. Any further discussion?

MS. HALLAM: Yes. I have one more thing, President Catena. I would just like to ask if either Ken or Jared or someone can tell us how many Bills we have pending, or an estimate, that were introduced prior to July that have not even had a single committee meeting.

I think it's very relevant. We have had many Bills that are sitting in committee and never coming up for a vote while appointments are being pushed through in a very undemocratic process without vetting by all of the Councilmembers. I think it's inappropriate when we have other Bills that are much, much older. Some that have been introduced at the beginning of this year, some of them have been introduced in 2020 that have never come up for a vote yet.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made in seconded at this point in time. He doesn't have an answer at this point in time.

MS. HALLAM: He doesn't?

PRESIDENT CATENA: He can't --- so at this point in time. Please take a roll call vote, Jared.

MR. BARKER: on the motion to pull from committee Mr. Baker?

MR. BAKER: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Bennett?

MS. BENNETT: No.

MR. BARKER: Mr. DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Duerr?

MR. DUERR: No.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Futules?

MR. FUTULES: Sure.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Hallam?

MS. HALLAM: No.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Kirk?

MS. KIRK: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Klein?

MR. KLEIN: No.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Macey?

MR. MACEY: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Palmiere?

MR. PALMIERE: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Pamosina?

MR. PALMOSINA: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Prizio?

MS. PRIZIO: No.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Walton?

MR. WALTON: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Zavarella?

MR. ZAVARELLA: Yes.

MR. BARKER: President Catena?

President Catena: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ayes ten, noes five, the motion to pull passes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead.

MS. KIRK: Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: They need to be added to the agenda. We need to vote. I mean, you're pulling those from committee. I assume you want those voted on tonight.

MR. WALTON: Point of privilege, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead.

MR. WALTON: There have been a history since Council has been in --- since Council's inception that there is --- where appointments have been presented and approved the same night. So if Member Kirk is interested in making a motion that we approve them tonight, there is precedent to do just that.

PRESIDENT CATENA: So you would need to make the motion to approve those members.

MS. KIRK: Okay. So I'd like to make the motion to approve --- should I read them?

PRESIDENT CATENA: If you need the names.

MR. FUTULES: Can we name them again for the record?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Jared, do you have the names?

MR. BARKER: I do.

MS. KIRK: I have them. I should have them.

MR. BARKER: And please let me know if I miss any of them, but Bill Number 11916-21 is approving the appointment of Gerard Aufman Jr. to serve as a member of the Friends of the Park for North Park, for term to expire July 6, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember DeMarco.

11917-21 is approving the appointment of Kenneth Allshouse to serve as a member of the Friends of the Park for North Park for term to expire July 6th, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember Baker. And I believe Ms. Kirk was added to that.

11918-21 approving the appointment of Lawrence Steckel to serve as a member of the Friends of the Park for North Park for a term to expire on July 6th, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember Kirk.

11919-21 is approving the appointment of Michael Carroll to serve as a member of the Friends of the Park for North Park for term to expire July 6th, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember Kirk.

11920-21 is approving the appointment of Heidi Fomalczyk to serve as a member of the Friends of the Park for North Park, for term to expire July 6th, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember Kirk.

11921-21 approving the appointment of Nancy Furbee to serve as a member of the Friends of the Park for North Park, for term to expire on July 6th, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember Kirk.

And lastly, 11922-21 approving the appointment of Barbara Gaertner to serve as a member of the Friends of

the Park for North Park, for term to expire July 6th, 2024, sponsored by Councilmember Kirk.

PRESIDENT CATENA: And you're making the appointment to approve all of those this evening?

MS. KIRK: So moved, yes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Is there a second?

MR. FUTULES: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Is there any discussion on the actual appointments?

MS. HALLAM: Yes, I have something to say.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead.

MS. HALLAM: Yes. I just wish that my colleagues and I would have had the opportunity to ask questions of these appointments, like we had for the dozens, if not hundreds of appointments that we've had over the past two years, but here we are.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you.

MS. HALLAM: You're welcome.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Any other comments?

MR. FUTULES: I have one.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead.

MF. FUTULES: I understand that, you know, we do all the appointment review. And the people that are appointed into the parks by a Councilmember really isn't a concern of other Councilmembers, because that's our appointment in general speaking. But with the new ordinance that we had passed to --- to review them in the --- in the committee has created a bit of a log jam. So for the --- for the sake of those people that are waiting, I think it would be good for us to move us along, not make a regular habit of pulling them out of those committees so the process can continue.

So it's a double-edged sword here. In the past, when you talk about over the years, we've never had the Friends of the Park before committees. It was an appointment by each individual councilmember and that's it. So there was no question. So just in this case, for the sake of, like I said, these folks trying to get appointed, soon as possible, then I'm in favor of that.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Any other comment? Hearing no other comment we'll take a roll call vote, please, Jared.

MR. BARKER: On the motion to approve that group of appointments. Mr. Baker?

MR. BAKER: Yes.  
MR. BARKER: Ms. Bennett?  
MS. BENNETT: Yes.  
MR. BARKER: Mr. DeMarco?  
MR. DEMARCO: Yes.  
MR. BARKER: Mr. Duerr?  
MR. DUERR: Yes.  
MR. BARKER: Mr. Futules?  
MR. FUTULES: Yes.  
MR. BARKER: Ms. Hallam?  
MS. HALLAM: Yes.  
MR. BARKER: Ms. Kirk?  
MS. KIRK: Yes.  
MR. BARKER: Mr. Klein?  
MR. KLEIN: Yes.  
MR. BARKER: Mr. Macey?  
MR. MACEY: Yes.  
MR. BARKER: Mr. Palmiere?  
MR. PALMIERE: Yes.  
MR. BARKER: Mr. Palmosina?  
MR. PALMOSINA: Yes.  
MR. BARKER: Ms. Prizio?  
MS. PRIZIO: Yes.  
MR. BARKER: Mr. Walton?  
MR. WALTON: Yes.  
MR. BARKER: Mr. Zavarella?  
MR. ZAVARELLA: Yes.  
MR. BARKER: President Catena?  
President Catena: Yes.  
MR. BARKER: Ayes 15, noes zero. The

appointments pass.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Are there any liaison reports this evening, specifically for committees that you represent?

MS. HALLAM: Yeah, I would like to make a liaison report from the Jail Oversight Board.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead.

MS. HALLAM: I just want to state that another person has passed away at the Allegheny County Jail this weekend. We are still waiting for information regarding the circumstances of his death, but that brings the count up to five for just this year alone, five people in the custody of the Allegheny County Jail have died this year

alone. And so as a member of the Jail Oversight Board, it's my duty to represent Council on that Board and to advocate for the health and well-being of the people who are incarcerated there.

The fact that we have lost five members of our community just this year alone is a travesty. And I hope that my colleagues will join me in pushing for this county administration to investigate each and every one of those deaths beyond just a report from the medical examiner to find out what is the systemic failure at our Allegheny County Jail that is causing these people to lose their lives.

So thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Was there a --- I'm sorry, I'm going to ask you a question since you're on jail oversight. Typically we receive a press release when there's a death.

MS. HALLAM: Sometimes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Was there a press release? I didn't --- I don't recall seeing one. So the jail has not been really consistent on that. Members of the Jail Board are supposed to be notified after next of kin are notified. We have, historically, not always been notified if, for example, someone was released to the hospital before they passed away, the jail does not count those deaths. They only count the deaths of folks who are actually currently in custody when they pass away. So for example, if someone, let's say, goes to the hospital, as we as happened earlier this year, someone was in the hospital for over a month before they passed away due to COVID. That is not counted as a death in the jail because they were released from custody.

So the counting there's under-reporting, there could possibly be more deaths that we are not even aware of. There has been even more since the --- since the beginning of the pandemic. I believe we're up to 11 now, since the pandemic and two staff members also have passed away in that period of time.

So this is something that I hope you're all --- if you're not already aware of what's going on in the jail, that we all start paying attention to that, and possibly look into taking actions as a Council to investigate what is happening in the jail. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. Any other liaison reports this evening? Hearing no other liaison reports, we'll go into new business, ordinances and resolutions.  
12044-21.

MR. BARKER: That's a motion of the Council of Allegheny County urging the Allegheny County Health Department to consider the implementation of mask mandates for indoor gatherings within Allegheny County at any times at which the county's COVID-19/SARS-CoV-2 transmission rate becomes moderate, as defined by the Centers for Disease Control, and strongly encouraging county residents and employers to facilitate vaccination at the greatest extent possible, sponsored by Councilmember Bennett.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Ms. Bennett, I'll defer to you, do you want this to go to committee or do you want this voted on this evening?

MS. BENNETT: Yeah, it could go to committee, so we can further talk about the implications around it.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. That will go to Health and Human Services, then.  
12045-21.

MR. BARKER: Motion of the Council of Allegheny County urging the Pennsylvania General Assembly to enact House Bill 1393/Senate Bill 845 with all deliberate speed in order to help protect Pennsylvanians against the potential for inadvertent overdoses of the synthetic opioid fentanyl, sponsored by Councilmember Hallam.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Councilwoman Hallam, I'll defer to you. Do you want this to a vote tonight or do you prefer this go to committee?

MS. HALLAM: Truthfully, that's up to my colleagues. Does anyone feel like they need more information in a committee or are you comfortable voting on this Bill tonight? Am I allowed to ask that or no?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Personally I'd like more information, ---

MS. HALLAM: Cool.

PRESIDENT CATENA: --- because I haven't had the opportunity to read to read. I don't know what we're voting on to be honest.

MS. HALLAM: I'm cool with committee then. Okay. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: That would go to Health and Human Services then.

I believe, Ms. Bennett, you have a motion to offer at this time?

MS. BENNETT: I do. I have a motion to offer that will replace --- I'm sorry, I'm a little --- that will replace the 11941-21.

That is the motion sitting in the Education committee around Critical Race Theory. So the new motion that is being handed out to you now more aligns with what we're hearing from our experts, which we will hear from tomorrow at that - at the education committee meeting. And the language will be changed from Critical Race Theory to culturally relevant teaching, which is what the advocates and experts are actually asking for in the pre-K --- I mean, in the, elementary and secondary level education. So it is to align the language with what we will be hearing from the experts. And I would like to withdraw the 119 - 11941-21, and replace it with this motion that I'm introducing this evening.

PRESIDENT CATENA: So that will go to education, but that will be a new ---.

MS. HALLAM: Do you need a second or anything?

PRESIDENT CATENA: No. No, it's going right to committee. But that will need to go to --- I mean, that will need to be a new Bill number and everything; correct?

MR. BARKER: Correct. It will get a new Bill number. I'm guessing our Solicitor would like me to read the title at this point, just so it's ---.

MR. WALTON: Would it have the same number?

MR. BARKER: No, they will not have the same number. The other one was withdrawn. This is a new standalone motion, and this will be a motion of the Council of Allegheny County, urging school districts within Allegheny County to include culturally-responsive teaching perspectives in their curriculum as a means of providing students with an additional tool for undertaking the holistic analysis of social governmental and private institutions, as well as cultural, economic and other factors that shape the world in which they live, sponsored by Councilmember Bennett.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. And that will go, like I said, to Education.

Is there any public comment on any general items this evening?

MR. VARHOLA: There is, Mr. President.  
Jonas Caballero.

MR. CABALLERO: Hello again. I'm Jonas Caballero from Verona. I was here a couple of weeks ago making a comment about the atrocious and horrible and saddening loss of life at the Allegheny County Jail. And to learn that on Saturday yet another human being has passed in the custody of that torture hole down the street is just --- it's just disgusting. And this is happening on your watch.

Like literally people are dying while we sit here in this room. So I just want --- I wanted to thank Councilwoman Hallam for calling attention to the loss of yet another soul at the jail. His name was Paul Allen. He was 55 years old and he's no longer living --- living and breathing on this planet.

When Fitzgerald --- Mr. Fitzgerald was here earlier, making the comment that he was blaming the referendum for the horrific conditions at the jail and for the need to bring in more staff, there's --- there's been a historic lack of staff at that jail. You can't blame it on the will of the voters to then come around and say that it's the --- it's the fault of the referendum. I mean, this --- this county jail of ours is the worst jail in terms of uses of force in all of Pennsylvania, more than all jails in Philadelphia County --- the county jails in Philadelphia combined.

So when Mr. Fitzgerald says that he stands by every decision that Warden Harper makes, he's standing by the decisions that are leading to the deaths of these human beings at the Allegheny County jail.

Now, I was incarcerated at Rikers Island and we --- in terms of our uses of force and the numbers of deaths, we are so much higher here in Allegheny County than at Rikers Island. And that's a horrific thing to have to admit, but as Councilwoman Hallam has stated, ten people have died at the Allegheny County jail since April of last year. And this year alone, five people have died at that jail, whereas at Rikers, ten people have died and they have over three times the amount of individuals that are incarcerated at Rikers Island in those county jails than we have here. Now, if you do the math, it's clear that those numbers are atrociously skewed; right?

And again, we sit here, we come back to these meetings. We submit our comments to the Jail Oversight Board. We sit here, we discuss --- and these people are dying as we make our paychecks and go home to our loved

ones. So please just keep that in mind. Another one is going to die. We're going to come back to these meetings again. So if you --- you guys can do something, please. And stop this atrociousness from happening. Thank you.

MR. VARHOLA: Kimberly Andrews from McKeesport.

MS. ANDREWS: I don't get paid to be here and plus I'm about to have a baby in 18 days, just saying. It's hard to get here, public transportation. But I have papers, too, if you guys. There's not enough for everybody. I had to pay \$20 just to print them out, so I'm just saying.

Good evening members of the Council. I'm here today to speak out against the injustices of not only the incarcerated inmates of ACJ, but also the victims they have created that are no longer incarcerated or never made it out of ACJ alive.

On May 30th, 2019, I was assaulted in ACJ. The assault was led by Sergeant Alyssa Tucker and was captured on tape. On July 19th of 2021 a letter was sent to the U.S. Attorney's Office, along with the video evidence of the assault, requesting an investigation and also criminal charges. On July 27th, 2021 the same video evidence was released at KDKA and made public, not only by KDKA, but plenty of other news people, I don't know.

But under the Allegheny County charter, it states that the County Council has the powers and duties, so powers as in, yes, you guys have the power to investigate, but the duty is then makes it not an option. It doesn't make it, choose --- pick or choose whether you do your job or not. It's an oath, basically, to conduct investigation of county departments, agencies or functions and issues subpoenas as provided on Article IV the Allegheny County Home Rule Charter.

And I just want to let you guys know, like it takes a lot to have to find these kinds of things to bring to you all's attention, you know. I'm 22 years old. I really am clueless, for real. So just saying it took me a lot to do this.

As of October 12th, 2021, no disciplinary action was deemed necessary to surrounding this incident and no investigation ever took place in ACJ for the individuals involved. Just for --- just for the report prior to the Council meeting and email, I mean, just for the record, prior to the Council meeting an email --- evidence from the assault, which includes a video of --- the video, the

assault was made available to all Board members. No one is exempt from the law. We want fact over fiction, as the warden stated in one of his public press meetings. I am requesting an investigation to take place by the County Council in regards to an incident, and a report be made by the findings of the investigation.

You all, as the County Council have a duty and oath to do what's honorable --- honorable by the people definitely in the care of ACJ. The paperwork that I gave this man right here is reports from the --- every officer involved in the use of force claim, their physical reports that they wrote. All of --- everything from that day in that incident from Allegheny County jail, like things that the public wouldn't be able to see. I'm making that public. So regardless if you guys investigate, the people will know about that, because it's ridiculous.

And my son's going to be able to see that one day. And my son's going to be able to look up and see that, dang, that's how you get treated, period, whether you follow the rules or not. And I just don't want the law to be made a mockery anymore.

Like everybody deserves justice, everybody, no matter what you've done, no matter what. And there's a lot of --- and also there's comments that the videos and everything went on YouTube and everything. So a lot of people spoke out about it. I don't know these people, but they want to update. So I'm going to update them.

And one comment I would like to share is from Sean --- Sean Clarkson that just stuck out to me. These sorts of things should be investigated the same way a citizen would be investigated before a Judge as the defendant. So nobody's exempt from committing their crime or anything like that. And it should be made aware. And I will be here. Every Council meeting you guys will see me.

Okay. Thank you.

MR. VARHOLA: Corey Durant King, Mount Oliver. Aliana Bagel, Pittsburgh. Patrick Campbell, Gibsonia. Dear Allegheny County Council, good evening. My name is Patrick Campbell and I'm the new executive director of the Group Against Smog and Pollution, an environmental watchdog organization that's been advocating for improved their quality for more than 50 years.

Our outgoing leader, Rachel Filippini, was a member of the Allegheny County Air Advisory Committee and

the chairperson of the Pollution Prevention and Education Subcommittee prior to her resignation in September. Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald has the opportunity to appoint a replacement and we are respectfully requesting the GASP senior staff attorney, John Baillie, can be nominated for this role.

John previously served as Ms. Filippini's alternate on the Air Advisory Committee and is currently a sitting member of ACHD's regulation subcommittee. John has a deep understanding of air quality issues from the regulations to the data, to the process, by which decisions are made, making him extremely qualified for the position. We are requesting that Allegheny County Chief Executive Fitzgerald nominate him as a member of the Air Advisory Committee as soon as possible. Air quality remains one of the most serious public health issues in Allegheny County. It is important to ensure that the Air Advisory Committee is populated by knowledgeable, experienced professionals.

If you have any questions related to Mr. Bailey Bailey's qualifications, you can contact him.

Last one is out of state, Lori Laber, Ragland, Alabama. Why did 2E wait over three weeks for laundry? Why are the inmates made to paint over mold right before walk-throughs and inspections? Why was an inmate recently beat by guards? Why are meds not being given at directed times? Why are sleep pills being given after 2:00 a.m.? Why is hot water used as a punishment? Why are fed inmates not receiving their tablets at given times? Why is your new system taking money and inmates aren't always receiving their commissary? Why did the jail feel the need to blur around the inmates? Why is the chair still being used? How many inmates have had no medical medications prior to AJC but are now doped up on meds, pills? Why are inmates with med history not given their pills? Why are the old COVID tests still being used? Why does the ACJ not release names to the medical examiners?

And that is it, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Come on up.

MS. CARLINO: I am Marian Carlino. I live downtown. I'm here tonight because I wanted to address the mandate issue. I - at first I was hopeful that the Constitution was going to be labeled as something that we follow under God. You sir, tonight, said that you were opposed to the mandates, so your comment is public.

Okay. Vaccines are not, COVID are not, mandates for masks if you're going into committee --- and I'm thankful tonight that, Ms. Bennett did say that it should go into committee, because you need to address the elephant in the room when it comes to mandates. Are there studies that prove that the masks actually work? You're all working --- wearing cloth masks. Okay. My understanding is that it's N195s.

Are you aware of the VAERS website on the CDC website that indicates --- we talked a lot about death tonight --- the amount of people have died who have received the vaccine, the amount of people who have been permanently injured? Are you aware of all the lawsuits that are out there?

Mr. Fitzgerald kind of was arrogant in his assumption that people who aren't vaccinated, well, just move along. Lawsuits will come. They're coming now. Southwest Airlines is facing it. Tom Moran's is - has a federal one with information that 45,000 people died within three days of receiving the vaccines.

You can look him up. Senator --- he's from Wisconsin. He brought people into the Congress hall about people who had serious side effects and he also has gone on the record about, there is no approved FDA vaccine at this time. They are all under emergency authorization only. Do your homework. I used to teach, do your homework before you vote on any mandates.

And by the way, last Christmas, what a disappointment on December 11th, when all the effort those people put in for Market Square, that was the last night, all that effort they put in and all of a sudden the government came in and said you can't be open. It was an outdoor event and all that investment. It really made --- put a sour taste in my mouth and --- because Market Square was one reason why I moved downtown.

And the other thing is, is that if you're willing to be held personally accountable for any --- any of the issues, any of the, mandates you advise, check with your lawyers, check with your lawyers. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Is there a motion to adjourn?

MR. FUTULES: So moved.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Oh, I'm sorry, Jared. I'm sorry.

MR. BARKER: I'm sorry, we did have one additional item. Notification of contracts.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Notification of contract.

MR. BARKER: That's Bill 12048-21.

Communication summarizing approved executive actions for September 2021.

MR. FUTULES: Receive in fall.

MR. WALTON: So move for adjournment.

MR. PALMOSINA: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

(chorus of ayes)

MEETING CONCLUDED AT 6:54 P.M.

CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify, as the stenographic reporter, that the foregoing proceedings were taken stenographically by me, and thereafter reduced to typewriting by me or under my direction; and that this transcript is a true and accurate record to the best of my ability.

Dated the 19 day of January, 2022

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jeremy Harris", is written over a horizontal line.

Jeremy Harris,

Court Reporter