

ALLEGHENY COUNTY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

- - -

BEFORE:

Patrick Catena	-	President, District 4
Robert J. Macey	-	Vice-President, District 9
Samuel DeMarco, III	-	Council-at-Large
Bethany Hallam	-	Council-at-Large
Jack Betkowski		District 1
Suzanne Filiaggi	-	District 2
Anita Prizio	-	District 3
Tom Duerr	-	District 5
John F. Palmiere	-	District 6
Nicholas Futules	-	District 7
Michelle Naccarati-Chapkis	-	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 11, 2022 - 4:59 p.m.

SARGENT'S COURT REPORTING SERVICE, INC.
429 Forbes Avenue, Suite 1300
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
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IN ATTENDANCE:

Jared Barker - Director, Legislative Services
Rich Fitzgerald - Chief Executive
William McKain - County Manager
Nabin Sharma
Mike Suley
Alan Kroniser
Andraya Williams
Ralph Proctor

Caroline Evans
Kimberly Davis
Stephen Wells

PRESIDENT CATENA: Good evening everyone. I'd like to call this meeting of Allegheny Counsel --- County Counsel to order. Please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Pledge of Allegiance.)

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

(Moment of Silence.)

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

MR. BARKER:	Ms. Bennett?
MS. BENNETT:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Betkowski?
MR. BETKOWSKI:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. DeMarco?
MR. DEMARCO:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Duerr?
MR. DUERR:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Filiaggi.
MS. FILIAGGI:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Futules?
MR. FUTULES:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Hallam?
MS. HALLAM:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Klein?
MR. KLEIN:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Macey?
MR. MACEY:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Naccarati-Chapkis?
MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Palmiere?
MR. PALMIERE:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Pالموسينا?
MR. PALMOSINA:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Prizio?
MS. PRIZIO:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Walton?
MR. WALTON:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	President Catena?
PRESIDENT CATENA:	Here.
MR. BARKER:	We have 14 members

present at the moment.

MR. DUERR: Jared, Nick did say here.

MR. BARKER: Did he? I apologize, Mr. Futules. I did not hear you. We have 15 members present.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. At this point in time, we'll have the 2023 comprehensive plan and budget address by our Chief Executive. Chief Executive Fitzgerald.

MR. FITZGERALD: Thank you, Mr. President and members of council. In an era in which inflation this year is abroad seven or eight percent, we're proud of the fact that we're going to be bringing a budget presenting tonight, one that does not have a millage increase, not even inflation adjustment millage increase, and this will be the 21st time in 22 years that Allegheny County residents will be paying the same millage that they paid the previous year.

It's really an incredible record of stability, knowing people predictably can be --- know what their property tax --- their property tax level will be for --- for county, with respect to county taxes. The increase this year is going to be about 2.9 percent over last year. The budget is --- the operating budget that we're going to be proposing is a \$1.02 billion operating budget.

This will be the first time that the budget has gone over that B word, billion. I think last year it was 990 something. I can't remember the exact number. Also going to be presenting to you a capital budget of \$84.4 million to do our roads and our bridges. And the fact is, we're fortunate in --- in many ways that we don't have to come with a millage increase, because of the American Rescue Plan.

So, I want to thank the Biden administration and our congressional delegation for getting that passed. The second part of that is the fact is this will be the first time in 43 years that we don't have to go out to borrow money to do our capital projects, our roads, our bridges, our parks, our buildings.

Again, because of the American Rescue Plan dollars, it really put us in --- in good stead. We also see this year that our revenues were up. New construction was up significantly over a billion dollars of new construction. We also saw significant increases in our regional assets, the RAD Tax, the one percent sales tax of retail sales, very strong here in Allegheny County and our drink and car rental tax also were up significantly to be

able to make our investments in Pittsburgh Regional Transit for our local match.

The other thing I think sometimes gets lost is the fact that we've seen a significant increase in property values. When I first took office, the average median sale price in Allegheny County was around \$100,000. It's close to \$250,000. So two and a half times people seeing an increase in their wealth, particularly folks who that is their number one asset is --- is their home. But having done that, we also are very progressive when it comes to the property tax rate that we charge. So, for example, somebody that has an assessed value of \$50,000 of their --- their --- their home, they get a 36 percent reduction in their property tax. Let me say that again. They get a 36 percent reduction in their county property tax.

Now, for the person that owns a \$500,000 house, they don't get quite as much. They get a 3.6 percent reduction in their county property tax. And the --- the multimillion commercial property does not get a discount at all. So we do provide a significant discount for people, at the low end of the economic scale.

The budget as --- as I indicated, is --- is pretty stable in --- in what we're looking to do. We're going to have about \$101.77 billion in the grants budget. Most of that, of course, comes from our friends at the state, dealing with human services or Kane, and some other things along those lines. You also have a budget block that we're presenting tonight of a little over \$9 million, and that's the first tranche of money that we expect to see with the opioid settlement, a lawsuit that our law department filed a number of years ago. And that money will be used to certainly help folks with our health department, our human service department to try to deal with the opioid addiction that we all know affects so many of us here in --- in Allegheny County.

Again, I --- I think it's a --- it's a --- it's a mark of stability that we've been able to see for --- for --- for many, many years. the fact is the bond rating is still the highest it's been in almost 40 years, and that's a testament to what Standard & Poors and Moody's, and the rating agencies, feel about the work that the --- the budget department and this council and along with the administration, have been able to do over --- over many, many years.

You'll see a few increases in --- in some of the departments. We're going to have a little bit of an increase, in HR. The --- the challenge of hiring people, across all sectors of our economy right now is challenging, including in our, various departments. You'll also see for the first time legislation that you passed a while back and that I signed, a sustainability department. We have that as a line item in the budget tonight, and when that hopefully passes when you pass the budget in a few months that we will have a --- a new director.

That director will answer directly to the county manager, like all of the other directors in our various departments. The children's initiative, we're going to fund again. For the first time last year we had funded that, and we've seen good success in some of the work that that --- has happened. And we want to make sure that --- that children have the opportunity and get all the benefits that they can have with reading and other skills to be able to start school and succeed in --- in the economy that we have and where we're going --- where we're going.

So, those are some of the things that I think we should be --- be very, very proud of on the budget. I'm going to ask at some point that we're going to place this on the agenda. I'll give this to the --- to the clerk, and ask that you place it on the agenda as you go through your budget hearings as we move on.

Off budget, I just want to go through a few things before --- before I open it up. We're --- we're --- we're pretty proud of the fact that human services has been chosen as one of four jurisdictions in the country to be, by the Kennedy School of Government performance Lab for 2022-2023, an alternative to 911 Emergency Response Implementation Cohort. Again, you know, we know how important 911 is, but certain calls that go through that system don't necessarily need to go through that system. So, our human service department is working on that.

I'm also proud of the fact that our human service department is coming up with a pilot program to provide reduced fares for Pittsburgh Regional Transit, formerly the Port Authority. Some of us, I still get stuck on that once in a while. But Pittsburgh Regional Transit will be able to provide to a --- a certain segment of folks that are eligible for SNAP and some other

programs through that program to be able to get to work, get to school, get to medical appointments, et cetera throughout --- throughout Allegheny County.

I wanted to also highlight the fact back to the, you know, American Rescue Plan, that our redevelopment authority just recently awarded over \$21 million in grants for trail development throughout Allegheny County. Many municipalities and other organizations came forward with some really good plans to continue to connect their trails and also, you know, obviously provide great quality of life and some of the things that we want to --- what we want to do.

Wanted to also recap some of the things we did with the summer concert program. I know we haven't been here since --- since the summer, but we ended up with over 125,000 people who visited our summer concert series at Heartwood Acres in South Park, again, to give the parks department and --- and that team a --- a great job of all the things that --- that they continue to do. Just a little over a month ago, we announced our public works is going to be lighting up our three sister bridges, the Clemente, the Rachel Carson and the Andy Warhol bridges, and that project will --- will begin, you know, as we speak. And hopefully by the end of next year those bridges will be lit up, but also be lit up in a way in which seasonally the --- the colors could change. 4th of July, red, white, and blue, et cetera, et cetera, along those lines. So, that's something we are --- we're continuing to see.

Also wanted to highlight, you know, an initiative that this council passed, I guess about a year or two ago. And that is the --- the development of blight, the blight fund, over \$2 million of funding over 33 applications. I know some --- Councilman Macey in his district was really interested in the Act 152 demolition fund, are able to --- to provide some --- some remediation and being able to take down some of those --- the demolition of some of those properties that have become unable to be utilized and unable to be --- and not inhabitable.

So they've been working with our cogs and are various municipalities in --- in doing those type of things. I think that pretty much --- I want to also, again, back to the human service department, getting an accredited for --- for the work that they've done,

recognition award that Erin Dalton and her team have gotten. Also, public works director Steve Shanley has been designated emeritus member of the International Bridge Conference on Bridges, was certainly in the news and continue to be. And we're very proud of the fact that we've --- we've invested in our bridges, not just recently, but throughout my administration to make sure that, you know, we have --- that the bridges are in good shape and people have confidence in going over them.

And you'll see in the capital budget again tonight as we present it that there is, again, substantial amount of money going into Bridges. And --- and then on the Roads program, we've talked about being over 40 miles a year that we're going to be paving since we own 400 miles and the civil engineering standards are to do 10 percent a year. We've been keeping that up, I think over the last five or six years at this point, and we'll continue to be in this year. So with that, let me open up the questions you may have on the budget.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you, Mr. Executive. Are there any questions? Councilwoman Hallam.

MS. HALLAM: Yeah. Thank you, County Executive.

So first of all, I do want to highlight some of the --- the positives that you mentioned today. You know, I wanted to thank you for your work on DHS alternative response and --- and also the reduced fares for PRT. I think that both those things are going to go a long way to help a lot of people, but I do have a couple questions. So, my first question is something that you said. You said that --- you said earlier in your address that people can be certain of their property taxes, but from everything that I've been hearing, it's anything but.

How can we make sure that the residents of Allegheny County can be certain about their property taxes with all the issues and --- issues and lawsuits that have been going on lately?

MR. FITZGERLAD: Well, one thing that we don't have control over is when school districts and municipalities go after a homeowner and try to have their property values, their property assessment raised. And unfortunately, there's something called the newcomer tax that municipalities in school districts seem to go after newly purchased homes. The fact is we've seen increased in property values and in --- in many neighborhoods

throughout Allegheny County. And they have that ability to do that.

I would --- I wish they wouldn't. I've been speaking out about that probably about 15 years that I would not like to see school districts and municipalities go after new homeowners. The county does not. The county does not go after new property owners. So that's state law, that's a process they can go through and we'll try and keep it as stable as we have. I have said that I'm not interested in doing a countywide reassessment. I haven't done one, and I don't plan on doing one over the --- the last year of my administration.

MS. HALLAM: Can you speak as to why?

MR. FITZGERALD: Because I think it --- it --- it has provided the stability of predictability of why people know when they invest in a property in Allegheny County, commercial or residential, that they know what their property assessment is --- their property tax bill is going to be.

When we had reassessments, you would have some property taxes double, triple, and even more, and that is a disincentive for investment coming into this county. Our surrounding counties, who in some ways we compete with, have not done reassessments, some of them more than 40 or 50 years. We had a court-ordered reassessment about a decade or so ago, and again, the fact that we haven't had one since then, I think the proof is in the pudding that there has been investment. There've been an increase in our population and there's been an increase in new construction and --- and again, putting instability into a property tax system I think is going to be detrimental to our economic growth.

MS. HALLAM: Yeah, I agree. I'm just very worried that it seems like there's a lot of instability right now because of the newcomer tax, because that is the right under state law for school districts and municipalities to sue for the increased value on the house. So, okay. But I digress. I'll go onto my next question.

So, you know, I've been seeing a lot on the news lately about lawsuits stemming from the Allegheny County Jail, and I'm wondering where in the budget is money for potential lawsuits allocated, if that's something, and if that's not something that we allocate for in the budget, where do we end up taking that money from? I saw just

recently, I think a million was announced this week, \$700,000 a month ago. There have been millions and millions of dollars of lawsuits just stemming around the Allegheny County Jail paid out over the past few years. So, I'm just wondering where that money is coming from.

MR. FITZGERALD: Well, and --- and all of our budgets every year, there's contingency money that's put in place for lawsuits that occur sometimes in various departments. It's --- it's we have an entire law department that handles exactly that, whether it's around injuries, whether it's around, you know, employment, et cetera.

So, I'll ask the manager. What would --- what would that be under in the --- when they look at the budget?

MR. MCKAIN: We actually have assignments within our fund balance for those type of lawsuits and settlements.

MS. HALLAM: Okay. So it's actually in the fund balance. It's not allocated to a certain department as contingency. It's just an overall county contingency ---

MR. MCKAIN: That's correct.

MS. HALLAM: --- and fund balance.

Okay. Thank you very much. And one more question. I apologize. I would have more. I just --- I do think it does a disservice to council members that we have to ask questions about the proposed budget before any of us have even been able to see it. So I would just like, you know, going forward, maybe we can try to get that to us before you formally introduce it to us on this date that happens every year.

PRESIDENT CATENA: You'll have your chance next week again.

MS. HALLAM: I know. I know. But this is a great opportunity for questions that I don't want to miss out on.

So, one of the things that I've --- I've heard a lot of folks in the community talking about is --- and I'm wondering if this is something that we fund and if this is something we could fund or if it comes from the state, is overnight coverage of preliminary arraignments.

So the district attorney's office has someone who works overnight for overnight arraignments. That they have someone that goes to those arraignments, the Public Defender's office does not have someone. I'm wondering if

that's something that requires an increased funding to the public Defender's office, or how you think is best to go about a solution to make sure that even people who come into our system overnight have adequate representation.

MR. FITZGERALD: Well, one of the things, again, I'd say I'll be proudest of is when I came in the office the public defender was often a certain person who was detained would wait three or four days, sometimes longer. I understand right now it's within 24 hours they will see a public defender. We've got one of the most robust public defender systems, and --- and funded of any county in --- in this commonwealth.

And we're proud to have done that. That money would, whether it's a district attorney and/or the public defender and/or the courts, that all comes through public --- that comes through our budget.

MS. HALLAM: Okay. Yeah. I'm not --- I'm not talking about like how long it takes them to see a public defender. I'm talking about the fact that they are arraigned in a court proceeding before they ever get representation from a public defender. So that could happen within a few mere hours after they're brought into the facility. So, I'm wondering if you have any creative solutions in the budget to address that.

MR. FITZGERALD: We can take a look at that.

MS. HALLAM: Okay. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Any other ---?

MS. HALLAM: That's all I have.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. Any other questions?

MR. DUERR: Go ahead.

MR. DUERR: County Executive, first off, I want to thank all the hard work, the budget team did putting this together. I know this is a very difficult job to --- to put forward a budget of over a billion dollars. So, I want to hats off to them and the work that they do. But one of the things we spoke about last year was improvements to the elections office. And I believe it was IT as well, and I wanted to ask, you know, how you and the county manager and your team thought that those improvements went, but also, wanted to see if the administration felt that it heading into very important election season that --- and heading into next year with this budget, there wasn't going to be any additional money needed to further those improvements of the elections office or boosting up election staff. One of the things

that I wanted to make sure that we did with those improvements was to ensure that questions were being answered consistently, concisely, and uniformly across when folks reached out to the elections office. And I think that the upgrades there were certainly a big part of getting to that goal.

So I just wasn't sure if there was --- if any part in --- in the budget that --- there would need to be any more further improvements to --- to get to where you guys wanted to be with those two offices?

MR. FITZGERALD: Well, when the --- and when the county manager in the budget department obviously met with IT and --- and that team, Jason and his team. They take all that into consideration. They've made tremendous amount of improvements across the board and --- and a lot of things that we do. And if you go back, you --- you would know that we used to handle, say a lot more cash when it came into --- into our parks and now a lot of that's cashless. The --- the applications that people would make would be done in paper, and now we're done electronically when people apply for jobs, things along those lines. So, one of the things with --- with elections, which is again, I'm going to be proud of, the --- the ballots have already gone out. Elections is four weeks from today and --- and a week. People were getting their ballots and able to cast their ballots. So, we got them out early so people would have a little more time to be able to --- to deal with that.

There was another court case, my understanding today ---

MR. DUERR: Yeah.

MR. FITZGERALD: --- a ruling that came down. So, there's always changes that we're --- we're kind of dealing with that the election department has to --- has to consider. And --- and I'm also thankful that the state, and I have been critical of the unfunded mandate of mail in ballots, along with keeping all 1300 plus polling places open and staffed without funding, but this year we were able to get \$4.7 million to help fund those operations. So that'll be helpful, but we will always be looking to improve all of our processes infrastructure-wise, but certainly IT will be one of those things we'll continue to try to improve upon.

MR. DUERR: Excellent. I was excited about the upgrades of those offices. And --- and on a quick caveat

about --- about poll workers. How has this poll worker recruitment been this year so far?

MR. FITZGERALD: I think it's been pretty good. I think we're --- we're maybe a little bit ahead of where we were, but if you have anybody you want to send over.

MR. DUERR: Yeah. Yeah. I know. .

MR. FITZGERALD: I would give that to everybody up on that board. If you got people that want to, you know, put in a --- serve their constituency and serve their neighborhoods, we can certainly use those workers too.

MR. DUERR: Thank you very much. Appreciate it.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Councilman DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: County Executive Fitzgerald, thank you for coming here today and presenting your budget. I'd like to thank your team and the budget staff for putting this together. And thank you as well for meeting with a number of the council members, which I know you had meetings with council folks to answer some of our questions prior. I really do appreciate that. It helps inform us and allows us to, well, prepare substantive questions for you to come up. I also appreciate, you know, your positive remarks regarding the American Rescue Plan. And I know it's been a difficult situation with you guys as you try to negotiate many union contracts, because these folks are dealing with the effects of inflation right now, which is currently running at, I believe over eight percent, you know, 8.3 to 8.5. Many folks out there believe it was the American Rescue Plan itself, which has helped exacerbate this.

That being said, you know, I've always been a proponent here on council of taking and accepting any monies that we have the ability to get from the federal government, from the state, because it relieves the tax burden that we ourselves as an entity have to place on our taxpayers. So I appreciate that. And I also would like to thank you, for some of the things that you've done here in regards to this. As far as taking that the CARES Act money and the American Rescue Plan money and feathering it out instead of taking and spending it at one time or in one tranche, like many folks were asking you to do.

This has allowed us to take and come forward this year and present a plan that doesn't have a millage increase in it. Okay? Could you give the folks, just an outlook on what you see, not just with --- forget about

this budget because you're presenting this. There's not a plan, but what about next year or the year after? What --- what do folks have to look forward? Do you anticipate having a tax increase next year when this money runs out?

MR. FITZGERALD: I would hope not because one of the things with the American Rescue Plan money is it's basically a two-year plan. And then the money has to be spent within a couple of years, or at least appropriated and then spent within a year or two after that. We're going to try to be as fiscally responsible as we can be, and we want to --- we didn't touch the fund balance. We want to keep that over the five percent level that the --- that the bond rating agencies have --- have done. And that's what this budget will continue to do. We don't know where interest rates will go. So for, you know, when it comes to bond going out for bond, I'm sure next year we're going to have to do that.

I don't know if we'll be able to go, more than a year in doing that. So when we have to do roads, bridges, and other things along those lines, those capital borrowings may increase. We're seeing these, as you indicated, inflation being what it was, and the feds trying to --- to tamp it down by --- by raising interest rates.

So, I would hope not to bring a tax increase, but I will tell you that at some point, some council and some county executive is going have to do an inflation adjustment on the millage. It's going to happen. It might not be next year, the year --- I don't know when it's going to be, but it won't be able to stay that way forever as the operating budget continues to rise. Unless there's other significant revenues that may change and again, a lot of that comes from the state. They'll have to do things, you know, there could be other revenues that they provide. We'll --- we'll --- we'll see how that plays out. But you know, I give director Soroka, budget Director and her team, they work extremely hard with every single department, every single row office, the courts, and all of our entities to try to make sure that they have the resources they need to operate, to provide the quality of life that we want to see here in Allegheny County, along with the economic growth and the jobs that we want to provide for --- for people.

So, it's a balance and we're going to try to, you know, we'll just try to continue to do that. But to

stand here tonight and make a prediction as to what we could, what I can do a year from now, I don't want to give you any false hope. I'll let you ---.

MR. DEMARCO: Well, I also appreciate the, wisdom in spreading that money out of our couple year period, because like you said, while we're --- everybody else is seeing increasing expenses regarding interest rates, you know, the county was able to take and fund our capital budget without taking, going out the bond issue. So, that just is a demonstration of the fiscal prudence that the, administration's operating under. So I do appreciate that.

MR. FITZGERALD: Yeah. And it lowers the debt obligation of all the citizens of Allegheny County by not being able to --- not having to do that.

MR. DEMARCO: Let me ask you one last question here, is we --- we're talking about, actually, I guess two. There's two things going on right now when we talk about the property tax assessments, right? We understand that, Judge Hertzberg made a ruling that a city school district has --- Pittsburgh School District has appealed that. Okay? Is there any reason why we're not able to just hold assessment hearings on assessments even though we don't have the final number on what a COR would be, but just to determine what the --- what the assessed value should be.

MR. FITZGERALD: I don't know that there's any reason. First of all, I know there's a bill that Councilman Walton has introduced about extending the --- the --- the period of appeals and I'm fine with that. I'll support that if --- if --- if that's the will of council. I think it would be very difficult for individuals or property owners to make decisions based on an unknown of what the step ratio is ultimately going to be because they're making basically a financial decision of what they think their assessed value will be. And until that court case is finished, I think it'd be very difficult for people to make that decision.

MR. DEMARCO: Okay. And then last question. This is the last one, and I apologize for not taking --- bringing this up early. We had a number of employees from the Allegheny County that were terminated because they didn't get a vaccination, and that was done at the time. When any folks believed that a vaccination would prevent folks from either catching COVID or passing it on. Since

science has shown us, you know, a number of different things since, any thought to the potential allowing those folks to reapply for their jobs?

MR. FITZGERALD: We --- we have not at this time, no.

MR. DEMARCO: Okay. Thank you, County Executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Any other questions? Hearing no other questions at this point in time ---.

MR. FUTULES: Yeah.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead, Councilman Futules.

MR. FUTULES: I'm sorry. The fact that I'm on the phone makes it very difficult, but this --- this is not a question. It's more like a request for Rich Fitzgerald. If you don't mind, Rich, I'd like you to recognize, our friend Tony DeLuca this evening on the record for his loss.

He had died Sunday, and Tony DeLuca was the longest running state representative of 39 years.

MR. FUTULES: You're absolutely right. I'm sorry. Yeah. You're absolutely right, Councilman. He was a ---.

MR. FUTULES: Sorry.

MR. FITZGERALD: He was a hard working person who represented working people. We did put out a statement yesterday and we've done a number of things along those lines talking about the great work that representative DeLuca had done. And he will be --- he'll be sorely missed. But thank you for, yes, I know you --- you knew Tony because you represented that area and again, he will be missed. Thank you, guys. Good luck.

MR. FUTULES: Yeah, he was a good friend. He was a good friend of all ours. I just wanted to recognize him this evening. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you, Councilman Futules. At this point in time, is there a motion to amend the agenda to add these two budget tools?

MR. MACEY: So moved.

MR. PALMIERE: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Is there anyone that disputes just taking a simple --- simple voice vote?

MS. HALLAM: No, but President Catena, I do have a question. Why is this the process that opposed to us, like, getting the information and it being placed on the

agenda, that we have to amend the agenda when we know the budget addresses tonight?

PRESIDENT CATENA: I don't have a --- Jared, any?

MR. BARKER: It's just a matter of when the bills are submitted. If --- if they were brought tonight, then amending the agenda is the appropriate process for putting them on the agenda tonight.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Yeah, typically they're given to us at the meeting.

MR. BARKER: Yeah.

PRESIDENT CATENA: So that's just past process.

MS. HALLAM: Okay, thanks.

PRESIDENT CATENA: You're welcome. All those in favor signify by saying Aye.

(Chorus of ayes)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed?

MS. HALLAM: No.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion carries. Go ahead and read the titles of the bill, Jared.

MR. BARKER: The first 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 for fiscal year 2023.

The second is a resolution of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania adopting an operating budget pursuant to Article four, section two and Article seven, section four 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, 2023, and ending in December 31st, 2023. 2023 fiscal year.

The third is a resolution of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, adopting a capital budget pursuant to Article four, section two in Article seven, section four of the home rule charter by setting forth appropriations to pay the expenses for capital expenditures during the fiscal year, beginning January 1st, 2023, and ending December 31st, 2023. The 2023 fiscal year.

And the last bill is a resolution of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, adopting the grants and special accounts --- special accounts budget

and agency fund budget by setting forth appropriations to pay set expenses during the fiscal year, beginning January 1st, 2023, and ending December 31st, 2023. The 2023 fiscal year.

PRESIDENT CATENA: All of those will go to budget and finance. Proclamation and certificates all will be read into the record.

12461-22.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation recognizing Bruce Gelman on the occasion of his 60th birthday sponsored by council member Betkowski.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12462-22.

MR. BARKER: A proclamation recognizing October as Homeless Children's Awareness Month sponsored by Council member Walton.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12464-22

MR. BARKER: Proclamation honoring congratulating Congressman Mike Doyle on a lengthy and successful legislative career sponsored by council member Palimere.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Is there any public comment on any agenda items?

MR. BARKER: Not on agenda items.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. We'll move ahead to approval of minutes.

12463-22.

MR. BARKER: A motion to approve the minutes of the July 5th, 2022 regular meeting of counsel.

MR. MACEY: So moved.

MR. DUERR: 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.

12465-22.

MR. BARKER: A motion to approve the minutes of July 19th, 2022, special meeting of counsel.

MR. MACEY: Motion to approve.

MR. PALMOSINA: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor signified by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed? Motion carries. Presentation of appointments.

12460-22.

MR. BARKER: Approving the appointment of Darrin Kelly to the Allegheny County Sanitary Authority for a term to expire on December 31st, 2023 sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: That will go to appointment review. Unfinished business, committee on budget and finance for the second reading.

12457-22.

MR. BARKER: A resolution to the County of Allegheny amending the grants and special accounts budget for 2022, submission 04-22 sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Councilman Palmosina.

MR. PALMOSINA: Thank you Mr. President. The budget and finance committee met on September 28th and has firmly recommended his bill. I move for approval.

MR. MACEY: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Hearing no discussion, Jared, please take a role.

MR. BARKER:	On the motion to
approve. Ms. Bennett?	
MS. BENNET:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Betkowski?
MR. BETKOWSKI:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. DeMarco?
MR. DEMARCO:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Duerr?
MR. DUERR:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Filiaggi?
MS. FILIAGGI:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Futules?
MR. FUTULES:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Hallam?
MS. HALLAM:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Klein?
MR. KLEIN:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Macey?
MR. MACEY:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Naccarati-Chapkis?
MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS:	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: Aye.
 MR. BARKER: President Catena?
 PRESIDENT CATENA: Yes.
 MR. BARKER: Ayes 15, noes zero.

The bill passes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Committee on parks for the second reading.

12398-22.

MR. BARKER: An ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing South Park Boxing, Incorporated to continue to use a structure on Hundred Acres Drive in the County's South Park sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Councilman Palmiere.

MR. PALMIERE: Thank you, Mr. President.

President William --- excuse me. We met, our council met a week ago, and this particular item, I'm moving for approval, please.

MR. MACEY: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Hearing no discussion, Jared, please roll.

MR. BARKER: On the motion to approve. Ms. Bennett?

MS. BENNET: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Betkowski?

MR. BETKOWSKI: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Duerr?

MR. DUERR: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Filiaggi?

MS. FILIAGGI: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Futules?

MR. FUTULES: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Hallam?

MS. HALLAM: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Klein?

MR. KLEIN: Yes.

MR. BARKER:	Mr. Macey?
MR. MACEY:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Naccarati-Chapkis?
MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS:	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:	Aye.
MR. BARKER:	President Catena?
PRESIDENT CATENA:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ayes 15, noes zero.

The bill passes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12399-22.

MR. BARKER: An ordinance to the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing Western Pennsylvania Police Athletic League to continue to use the structure on Monroeville Trestle Road in the County's Boyce Park sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Councilman Palmiere.

MR. PALMIERE: Thank you, Mr. President. We met again last week on this particular item to move for --- it's also was recommended affirmative by the council --- by the committee, and I move for approval.

MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Hearing no discussion, Jared, please roll.

MR. BARKER: On the motion to approve. Ms. Bennett?

MS. BENNETT: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Betkowski?

MR. BETKOWSKI: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Duerr?

MR. DUERR: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Filiaggi?

MS. FILIAGGI: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Futules?

MR. FUTULES: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Hallam?

MS. HALLAM: Yes.
 MR. BARKER: Mr. Klein?
 MR. KLEIN: Yes.
 MR. BARKER: Mr. Macey?
 MR. MACEY: Yes.
 MR. BARKER: Ms. Naccarati-Chapkis?
 MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS: 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: Aye.
 MR. BARKER: President Catena?
 PRESIDENT CATENA: Yes.
 MR. BARKER: Ayes 15, noes zero.

The bill passes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12444-22.

MR. BARKER: An ordinance to the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, authorizing the acceptance of a donation to the County of approximately one half acre of land located contiguous to the County's White Oak Park sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Councilman Palmiere, again.

MR. PALMIERE: Thank you, Mr. President. The committee met last week on this particular issue, and again, with an affirmative recommendation, move for approval.

MR. MACEY: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Hearing no discussion, Jared, please take roll.

MR. BARKER: On the motion to approve. Ms. Bennett?

MS. BENNET: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Betkowski?

MR. BETKOWSKI: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. DeMarco?

MR. DEMARCO: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Mr. Duerr?

MR. DUERR: Yes.

MR. BARKER: Ms. Filiaggi?

MS. FILIAGGI: Yes.

MR. BARKER:	Mr. Futules?
MR. FUTULES:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Hallam?
MS. HALLAM:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Klein?
MR. KLEIN:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Macey?
MR. MACEY:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Naccarati-Chapkis?
MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Palmiere?
MR. PALMIERE:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Pالموسينا?
MR. PALMOSINA:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Prizio?
MS. PRIZIO:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Walton?
MR. WALTON:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	President Catena?
PRESIDENT CATENA:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ayes 15, noes zero.

The bill passes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12442-22.

MR. BARKER: An ordinance authorizing the County of Allegheny in conjunction with the Department of Public Works and the law department to convey by quit claim deed, one parcel of County-owned land identified as block and lot 15-C-202 to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Transportation sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Councilman Betkowski.

MR. BETKOWSKI: On September 29th, the Committee on Public Works met to discuss this item and affirmatively recommended to council for approval. I make that motion.

MR. DUERR: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. At any discussion? Hearing none, Jared, please take roll.

MR. BARKER:	On the motion to
approve. Ms. Bennett?	
MS. BENNET:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Betkowski?
MR. BETKOWSKI:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. DeMarco?
MR. DEMARCO:	Yes.

MR. BARKER:	Mr. Duerr?
MR. DUERR:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Filiaggi?
MS. FILIAGGI:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Futules?
MR. FUTULES:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Hallam?
MS. HALLAM:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Klein?
MR. KLEIN:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Macey?
MR. MACEY:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Naccarati-Chapkis?
MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS:	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:	President Catena?
PRESIDENT CATENA:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ayes 15, noes zero.

The bill passes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: 12443-22.

MR. BARKER: An ordinance authorizing the County of Allegheny in conjunction with the Department of Public Works and the law department to donate a portion of block and lot 375-C-191 and a portion of block and lot 375-C-185, located in the Borough of North Braddock, Allegheny County, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Councilman Betkowski.

MR. BETKOWSKI: The Committee on Public Works met on September 29th and affirmatively recommended this ordinance to council. I make that motion.

MR. DUERR: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Hearing none, Jared, please roll.

MR. BARKER: On the motion to approve. Ms. Bennett?

MS. BENNET:	Yes.
ME. BARKER:	Mr. Betkowski?
MR. BETKOWSKI:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. DeMarco?
MR. DEMARCO:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Duerr?
MR. DUERR:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Filiaggi?
MS. FILIAGGI:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Futules?
MR. FUTULES:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Hallam?
MS. HALLAM:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Klein?
MR. KLEIN:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Macey?
MR. MACEY:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Naccarati-Chapkis?
MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS:	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:	President Catena?
PRESIDENT CATENA:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ayes 15, noes zero.

The bill passes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Are there any liaison reports this evening? See --- go ahead.

MR. DEMARCO: Do you want to give one on --- on the committee for --- special committee for assessments?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Yeah. We've had for the special committee for assessments. We had our first meeting last week. I expect to be scheduling another meeting. I hate to do it next week cause we also have budget hearings, but it's probably looking more or less like it's going to be next week. We heard from David Montgomery, who's the chair of the BPAAR board, basically to discuss the process of what's going --- how the --- how the --- how appeals go through the process, and basically

it's sort of --- we're on a fact finding to try to understand exactly what happened.

It's apparent to me that there appears to have been some sort of breakdown in process at the county level, to be quite honest, just reading the preliminary pretrial statement. I'm not --- I'm urging everyone to keep an open mind at this point until we can get to the bottom, and obviously we're going to have a number of people come in and offer us testimony about the entire process.

And then what I'm anticipating, the group or every member of the committee will come up with legislation to possibly prevent this happening in the future or --- or basically prevent anything like this --- anything like this from occurring again because it was, it's a little bit of a mess to be quite honest.

From what --- from --- I mean, we're all, the members of the committee are all pretty familiar with the Joffrey case and it's, I mean, we'll see where the facts lead us, I guess, at this point in time. But we'll have a --- we definitely do have our work cut out for us, Councilman DeMarco, and go ahead and, I mean, what --- I mean, whatever else you'd want add.

MR. DEMARCO: No, I was going to talk about Board of Election stuff, but, so ---

PRESIDENT CATENA: Go ahead.

MR. DEMARCO: --- if you finish with that.

In regards to the Board of Elections, couple things that have occurred recently. Right after the Board of Elections meeting, we had the last one and folks had brought up a company called Konnech, who manufactures a software that we use for our poll workers called Poll Chief.

And so, there is with some negative information put out about this company by a group called True the Vote. So some folks made comments at the last Board of Elections meeting alleging that the --- this company was affiliated with the CCP, meaning Chinese Communist Party, things of that nature. So, after that meeting, I know that election's office had looked into it and they had received a document from Konnech saying that, no, our data is safe. It was stored here in the United States, and that there wasn't an issue, that this group was incorrect.

And to that point, Konnech filed a suit in Texas against that group for the --- I'm trying to think of the proper term, but for, you know ---

MR. DUERR: Defamation.

MR. DEMARCO: Defamation of --- of --- of --- of the organization, things like that. So then following that it seems that the county of Los Angeles, arrested --- they put an indictment and had the founder or the president of the Konnech arrested claiming that his --- some of the data that he had been given of folks in Los Angeles were found on servers in Communist China. So then there's also information out there, recent court case that the judge in the Texas case issued a restraining order against the True the Vote, the organization going after Konnech and took and forced them to take and share the name of who their confidential source was supposed to be.

I only bring it up, Mr. President, because I'm getting a lot of e-mails. I'm getting comments from folks who are concerned and are demanding that we take and switch the software or do something different. And I think there's enough smoke there that it bears further investigation, but I don't believe that we can make any definitive, you know, switch or movement at this point in time with the election being less than 30 days away and the requirement to get 6,615 poll workers in place.

So, the County had reached out during this, to this company and this company came back and reiterated that our data is kept on servers, they said in East Lansing, Michigan, and then stored in a Microsoft Azure cloud. So they're telling us one thing. There's smoke out there, which many of our folks are reading, you know, on some of these right-wing websites and are coming back to us demanding change. At this point in time, I don't think we have the information to be able to make an informed decision and --- but I wanted to bring this up so everyone knew what was taking place.

The second thing here in regards to elections is today the United States Supreme Court issued a ruling, vacating the Third Circuit Court's decision of June of this year, which ruled that ballots which lack a date should be counted.

Now, media has reached out to me today and folks are reaching out, you know, asking for comment. I don't know what to tell them because we have to wait and see, you know, when the lawyers review this, you know, what

does it mean and how does it affect it? But I think for --- for the most part, I think if people just go ahead, if you have a mailing ballot, submit your mailing ballot, make sure you sign and date it, or if you're going to go to the polls in person, make sure that you go to the polls in person. And I think that we'll be fine. As more information becomes available. I'm sure the Board of Elections will take and get that out to everybody. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share that, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Councilwoman Hallam.

MS. HALLAM: I just have a quick liaison report, as President Catena's designee to the Jail Oversight Board. We had a Jail Oversight Board meeting this past Thursday, and since our previous meeting, another person died in the Allegheny County Jail. And I just want to make sure that all of the members of council are aware that since March of 2020, now 17 people have died in the Allegheny County Jail.

That's the sixth person to die in our jail this week. If you are not mad yet, I suggest that you get mad. Now, the most recent death, his name was Anthony Talotta. He had a family and friends that loved him very much, and so I implore council to work with me to find a solution to stop these deaths in our custody. And so I look forward to talking with you about it in the future, but just wanted to make sure that was on everyone's radar. 17 deaths in our jail since March of 2020. Six in 2022 alone. As it stands now per capita, we have one of the highest death rates of any county jail in the entire nation. So, that came out of the last jail board meeting.

Another update is we are working towards, the possibility of we're looking into, a pilot program to pay incarcerated workers. Currently, over 200 incarcerated individuals work a job in our county jail. Some of them serve the food, some of them do laundry, some of them clean the pods, and they don't make even one penny per hour, not one penny. So we're --- we're looking into different avenues to take to possibly implement that at our county jail. It would be first of its kind to pay incarcerated workers in a county jail. And again, a lot of the various departments actually run an incarcerated labor, we're just not paying them. So that's my update from J.O.B. Thanks, President Catena.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Anyone else?
Anyone else this evening?

Ken, can you work with the administration?
I know we talked about setting up a tour for the Allegheny County Jail, but that was during COVID. So let's get that back on track for now. At this point in time we'll have new businesses --- new business ordinances and resolutions.

12466-22.

MR. BARKER: A resolution of the County of Allegheny amending the grants and special accounts budget for 2022, submission number 05-22 sponsored by the Chief Executive.

PRESIDENT CATENA: That will go to budget and finance. New business motions.

12467-22.

MR. BARKER: A motion of the Council of Allegheny County authorizing retention to the services of the law firm of Frank, Gale, Bails & Pocrass, PC, to provide legal advice, representation and consultation to County Council. Sponsored by council member Palmiere.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Council member Palmiere.

MR. PALMIERE: Thank you, Mr. President. We met last week and I would like to --- I would like to make a motion to --- excuse me. I would like to make a motion to get this approved, please.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Is there a second?

MR. PALMOSINA: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion has been made and seconded. Any discussion? Hearing no discussion, Jared -
--

MR. DEMARCO: No. There is discussion.

PRESIDENT CATENA: I'm sorry. I didn't see you guys.

MR. DEMARCO: That's okay. Thank you, Mr. President. This --- my points during discussion aren't directed to the members of council, since most of them have already made up their own minds. My points here are directed to the people of Allegheny County and the need for them to look in and --- and pay attention to what happens in local government here in Allegheny County.

This --- what we're hiring here, this motion is to hire a solicitor, solicitors to give us advice and counsel in the duties of Allegheny County Council. We just had the County Executive come before us and announce

a \$3.015 billion, that's billion with a B, budget. We have a very complex county government. We have over 7,000 employees. Again, you heard the numbers in regards to the finances, so we need somebody that has a great deal of experience and understands, you know, county government, the role of the solicitor. I'm sure that this law firm is very good at what they do, which in the review that we've had that appeared to focus more on family law, it's no worthy that of the 130 municipalities in Allegheny County and the 45 school districts in Allegheny County, this --- this law firm doesn't represent a single one, not one.

So folks, when you're talking to your council representatives, you may want to ask them, you know, how does someone like this, you know, earn --- earn the trust of council in their business? And when this RFP was first put out back in the spring, only one response was received to the RFP. It was to the firm here on the budget, and before the RFP was even opened, some members of council had invited this firm down to meet immediately afterwards. I --- and I thought they thought they were going to give them a contract. And when a number of us pointed out that the response didn't meet the specs, and they would have to go out for another RFP, another RFP was issued.

Research was done. Many firms were contacted and a number of --- number of firms responded, many of which are very reputable firms in --- in this city, in Allegheny County who act as solicitors and many of the municipalities, and for the school districts, these folks submitted their RFPs. And at one of the executive committee meetings, the suggestion was made that we take and we narrowed the pool down because we had a number of qualified bidders.

So after the suggestions of the folks that reviewed the RFPs were made, there was a suggestion that, no, we needed to include this firm even though they didn't represent anybody as a solicitor. The question was why? The remarks were, well, we felt we owe them. I said --- I said owe them what? Well, he came down to the meeting before he was there. Well, you invited him. You know, it wasn't like he took time out of his day on his own to do this. So they put him into the process. So then they went through a process where the executive committee called in all these folks to do interviews. Then the executive committee met, they talked about it.

Then at the 9/13 --- no, 10/5 meeting. It was a 10/5 meeting. It's a 9/30, which meeting? 9/13. So 9/13 meeting, tried to do a vote, it wasn't on the agenda, but tried to do a vote to take and recommend this firm here for the business. At that time, that motion was defeated in committee 3/3. So the next thing that happens is, on turn 10/13, the meeting is scheduled.

For any one of the Jewish faith out there, you recognize the 10/13 was Yom Kippur and one of the executive committee meetings --- or excuse me --- executive committee members, was not able to attend the meeting and these folks decided to move forward with this firm. I hope as I expect this council's going to vote to affirm this, that this firm represents us in a great fashion and moves forward. But it's just amazing to me, it just looks bad. It looks very bad from an optics perspective. It makes it look like the results were predetermined, and I think what's happened here is we've seen the press basically leave here in the town. I mean, the Tribune Review doesn't really print here. The Post-Gazette is a shadow of its former self.

I don't believe that the citizens and taxpayers of Allegheny County are well served by not having folks, you know, shine a light on the operation of local government and how we operate it. We have folks that walk around and talk about, well, we're not a rubber stamp for anybody. We used to be a rubber stamp. We're not a rubber stamp for anybody. And most of the time they're referring to the County Executive because they believe that a lot of the legislation that we've passed, 98 percent of which is perfunctory, you know, is just basically doing the County's business, is approved. That that equates to rubber stamp.

There's a rock group, The Who, many years ago they wrote a song called Won't Get Fooled Again, and the lyrics of the song, go meet the new boss, same as the old boss. My opinion is that while we may not be a rubber stamp for one, we've just traded that to be a rubber stamp for another. I will be voting no on this motion. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Suzanne.

MS. FILIAGGI: Thank you, President Catena and members of council. I echo Councilman DeMarco's comments, and I will say that for anyone who is interested in the reasoning behind my vote, which will be a no vote as well,

I encourage you to listen to the audio tapes from the September 13th executive committee meeting and the October 5th Executive Committee meeting.

While I do not support this motion, be that as it may, as --- as the predetermined result is today. While I do not support the motion authorizing Frank, Gale, Bails & Procrass to the firm, to be the solicitor of Allegheny County, I do want to assure ---

PRESIDENT CATENA: County Council, I'm sorry.

MS. FILIAGGI: I'm sorry. Solicitor.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Solicitor. County council, not Allegheny County.

MS. FILIAGGI: Allegheny County Council. I'm sorry.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Yeah.

MS. FILIAGGI: The solicitor.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Just to clarify, we're not --- we're not the county. We're council. You said Allegheny County.

MS. FILIAGGI: I appreciate that. I'm sorry, can I continue?

PRESIDENT CATENA: Yeah, sorry. I didn't mean to interrupt you.

MS. FILIAGGI: Thank you. I do want to assure Mr. Frank and the residents of Allegheny County and my constituents that once this firm is confirmed, I will fully support his efforts and I am committed to being part of the solution, not a part of the problem. Thank you very much, President Catena.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Anyone else this evening? Hearing no one else. Jared --- sorry Tom.

MR DUERR: No, no, it's okay. It's very quick. Kind of about this, more about the executive committee meeting. I just want to make sure that going forward, you know, Sam mentioned it. Placing an executive committee meeting on Yom Kippur with one of the members not being able to attend because of his faith and celebrating that holiday, I just want to make sure we're --- we're very, you know, cognizant of that going forward. I know the vote was, I believe four to one, so I don't think, Councilman Klein's attendance would've been, you know, determinative of the outcome. But he is a member of the executive committee and, you know, there might be other members of council who might have to miss because of a certain day. And I just want to make sure that we're, you

know, accommodating of that going forward. It --- it just, it seemed to me that that was a little bit of an oversight when that meeting was set. So just, you know, as president of council, I hope you take that into consideration, with the various committee chairs that you set, that we're making sure that we're accommodating that.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay.

MR. DUERR: That's it. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Anyone else? Hearing no one else. Jared, please roll.

MR. BARKER:	On the motion to
approve. Ms. Bennett?	
MS. BENNET:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Betkowski?
MR. BETKOWSKI:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. DeMarco?
MR. DEMARCO:	No.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Duerr?
MR. DUERR:	No.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Filiaggi?
MS. FILIAGGI:	No.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Futules?
MR. FUTULES:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Hallam?
MS. HALLAM:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Klein?
MR. KLEIN:	No.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Macey?
MR. MACEY:	No.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Naccarati-Chapkis?
MS. NACCARATI-CHAPKIS:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Palmiere?
MR. PALMIERE:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Pالموسينا?
MR. PALMOSINA:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ms. Prizio?
MS. PRIZIO:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Mr. Walton?
MR. WALTON:	No.
MR. BARKER:	President Catena?
PRESIDENT CATENA:	Yes.
MR. BARKER:	Ayes nine, noes six.

The motion passes.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. Notification of contracts.

12468-22.

MR. BARKER: A communication summarizing approved executive actions for the month of September, 2022.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Is there a motion to receive and file?

MR. MACEY: Receive and file.

MR. KLEIN: Second.

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

(Chorus of ayes.)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed? Motion carries. We'll now have public comment on general items. Go ahead Jared.

MR. BARKER: We have quite a few. First up is Nabin Sharma.

MR. SHARMA: Hello. This is my second presentation here. I'm sorry to tell. I faced lot of like a disability accommodation is lacking in the county. I myself went bunch of places and they even wonder when I say invisible disability accommodation. And I'm still curious who handles the disability service of Allegheny County. I even do not know that service has been closed since pandemic started and it's still not open, and people like me where we can go and ask little bit accommodation. That is one agenda. And like, when I try to submit, try to request ---

PRESIDENT CATENA: Could you face the --- yeah, thank you.

MR. SHARMA: Try to request bonds of personal information, which is much more confidential, that will jeopardize my family, myself and growing underage children, those kind of confidentiality is not respected lot of places where I supposed to raise those type of issues. And besides that, I found most of the places go hire the lawyer or legal counsel. People who are low income, who --- who needs to get some type of judgment, who doesn't want to afford a lot of legal system. When I afford myself, I got, instead of reducing problem, I get more problem.

Then I try to do by myself as a pro se and most of the places I have a communication issue disability. I am individual disabled. I cannot pick right word and right time. People utilize wrong way. This type of thing

where I supposed to go, where public people like me go and discuss. The first thing I realized disability services of Allegheny County is the one needs to take care of this type of situation.

When I ask them, they report me, still reports to --- I'm sorry. I --- I cannot take a lot of time. I -- I'm still struggling my previous issues. I just did this time disability accommodation and confidentiality of vulnerable public data, those kind of things. I'm asking help. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you.

MR. BARKER: Next is Mike Suley.

MR. SULEY: Thank you, President Catena and council. Tonight I got to see government in action. I --- I appreciated seeing the County Executive here with a lot of respect for him. In fact, a couple things he said tonight, I agreed with. A --- number one, a property 10 years ago was worth a hundred thousand, today it's worth 250. However, in court, his assessment office and the county solicitor argued that property values have only gone up half that much. That's why the county lost that lawsuit. I know the math.

Number two, I agree with him that you should open the appeals schedule a second chance, appeal schedule this year. The hearings don't have to be this here, but open an appeal schedule for people who bought homes last year that the school district didn't appeal. I --- I gave the president of council five of the properties. I have 111 Rosemont in Pittsburgh, they would receive \$3,100 as their tax refund if they appealed their sale price this year, they would be entitled to a tax refund. 6101 Kentucky Avenue in Pittsburgh, they would receive a \$5,600 tax refund this year with the new ratio, the new honest ratio.

So number one, I agree with the County Executive on --- on the appreciation rates. I believe we will prevail with the 63:5 ratio. Number two, I agree with him that you should open the appeals schedule. I hope it's unanimous. Just give people an opportunity to be heard, and I disagree with him on two items. One, the newcomer tax is now morphing into the newcomer tax refund because of the lower ratio. Let the school --- the school districts have been neutralized by this, and I'm showing you examples of this.

One last thing. The County Appeals Board is performing a disservice to Allegheny County residents. A majority of the pending appeals that haven't been heard yet will result in tax refunds to those taxpayers. The County Executive said they couldn't budget for these appeals that haven't been heard. I would encourage the County Appeals Board to continue the appeals, finish them, do their job by the end of the years and let --- let the chips fall where they may, because once that ratio comes down, I have good news for a lot of people whose appeals were heard this year. The good news is they'll receive refunds.

One last thing. If I'm the school district, the tactic used by the appeals board favors the school district. Next, I don't know if you know this, but if the school district files an appeal, they can withdraw at any time. If they withdraw the appeal, you're out of luck. You don't get the tax refund. That's why I'm encouraging you to get the appeals board, to get their act together and get their work done and open the appeal schedule. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you.

MR. BARKER: Next up is Alan Kroniser.

MR. KRONISER: I'd like to thank you for letting me come here tonight to air a complaint. It's about the shooting range that comes out of North Park for the Allegheny County Police. The shooting that comes from this range, which is located in a residential neighborhood, is beyond what should be accepted in the 21st century. It starts at times at 8:00 AM and goes till 9:00 PM in the evening. In the fall and winter when the windows are closed, at times it can be unbearable, and I can provide years of recordings since I moved into this neighborhood nine years ago as to this. This range needs to be updated. Nothing has ever been done to quiet the noise since the range was opened in the 1970s and the type of firearms that are now being shot are military grade, and they're extremely loud.

If you want to know what a firefight and a war zone sounds like I asked you to come out and when --- do it, when they're doing a SWAT or a new recruit class. On September 29th of this year was one of those days. Chris Carnes of the county police told me they knew the noise was going to be excessive, but the state mandates that all recruits must fire at least 50 rounds.

So when you got 50 rounds going through 30, 40 people, it is un-frigging believable. Okay? This range is --- this range no longer is used by just the county, but it's used by over a hundred departments to train. My main concern is not only the effect that the noise has on the children, the neighborhood, but the possible hearing loss that can be gradual over the years.

I personally have had hearing loss since moving here in 2014, which can be verified by the veteran's administration. I had previously talked to Cindy Kirk on the issue, and all that she could get done was to have them pile up some dirt along the sides to try to contain the noise. She also suggested maybe it was possible to have spotter devices installed throughout the neighborhood that when this shooting goes on, that it would go back to the police range, that they can understand what's going on in the neighborhood.

I also gave letters to her at that time on, the Spokane Review in Spokane, Washington, and a police magazine on why these type of weapons when they're being used and need to have suppressors put on them. If nothing is going to be done soon in to this regard of updating this range, I believe the next step should be for the county to provide baseline hearing tests for anybody living in the neighborhood that wants one, because in the future, if the hearing loss starts to show up, it's not like Flint, Michigan. Where nobody wants to say we didn't know about it. Now, it's also true that the state mandates a lot of this.

PRESIDENT CATENA: If you could wrap it up.

MR. KRONISER: Okay. I just want to --- I'll wrap it up real quick with just telling you, Heartwood Acres had an issue. We all know about Heartwood Acres and what they did to appease the people there. This is gunfire. I'm a Vietnam veteran. I can tell you it's like a war zone whenever it goes on. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. Jared, next.

MR. BARKER: Next up is Andraya Williams.

MS. WILLIAMS: Hello. I'm Andraya Williams from the Pitt Caring Borough. As a healthcare worker, I relocated from North Carolina to further my career, advance my education, and benefit from inclusion policies and protection bills created for marginalized communities I am at the intersectionality of, and I now regret that decision. I have financially contributed to a county

system that is currently corrupt and failing. I do not feel safe. I do not feel heard, and I most definitely do not feel protected. Currently, I am being victimized by corrupt government officials. I have recently experienced police brutality, falsified police reports, police intimidation, police retaliation, and color of law violations.

As a direct result, I have been terminated from my career as a healthcare worker. And due to pending false accusations, I have found it difficult to gain employment and continue to be a tax contributing citizen. Despite the fact that I've been offered many opportunities due to my career experience and education, they have been recanted. I am now officially another statistic, and what I need to happen is for you to trust me, hear me clearly and honestly, and learn from my current excruciating pain. Improvement is needed. I am asking for you to be regional leaders in promoting and facilitating a just society. We can start by holding officials accountable for their negligence and their malicious actions under sworn oath.

Accountability is crucial in all efforts of gaining respect and building trust. Especially in communities. Currently, my livelihood, my reputation, and my freedoms are in jeopardy. I am requesting full support in holding all negligent and malicious parties accountable. I think judicial reform is due, and this is an effort to raise awareness of the overwhelming existing --- existence of officials who lack the integrity and discipline required.

Let us work together to make Allegheny County safe and just for all. Please provide me with the needed resources to start my redemption journey, a meaning that is necessary for our survival as a community and for the betterment of society. Thank you.

MS. HALLAM: Thank you.

MR. BARKER: Next up is Keith McCombs. No? After Mr. McCombs, would be Eric Miskovitch. After Mr. Miskovitch, would be Ralph Proctor.

MR. PROCTOR: Good evening. My name is Ralph Proctor. And a special hello to Olivia Bennett, my County Council representative. Thanks for allowing me to talk today. I was born in reared in a remarkable community called the Hill District. I was a gang member at 13, a warlord at 15. I was headed down a steep slippery slope towards incarceration, addiction, or worse. Then a young

teacher showed me a new way. It was called education, college.

I took a new path and my life was changed forever. I went and earned a Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh. I've taught at most of the colleges in the tristate area. I have worked at Fort Fortune 500 companies, hosted radio and TV shows. I'm a United States Army veteran and veteran of Civil Rights Movement, and I am no different from my colleagues with whom I work at Community College of Allegheny County. We are as talented as any educators anywhere. None of the things I have done are as important as the mission I share with my friends at CCAC, a labor of love helping dreams to come true.

I first heard about this dream when I met a young black legislator by the name of K. Leroy Irvis. He shared his dream of a college where students could avail themselves of a high quality, affordable education. It did not matter if the education led to a college degree or a union card. Both are equally important, equally valuable. The young Senator Irvis felt he did not have the power, did not have the name recognition to make the dream come true. So he shared his dream with a much better known and experienced legislator, Thomas Forrester, result, Community College of Allegheny County. We honor and give thanks to both those dreamers.

I come here tonight to say to you, were my old friends still alive, he would weep because that dream, once realized, has become a dream deferred or put off forever as enrollment at CCAC has dropped dramatically. The roles of secretaries and janitor staff and faculty have also dropped. But this is not a tale of despair. Not --- not at all a doom and gloom. We need to be the end --- we do not need to be the end of dreams.

There are thousands of dreams that lie unawaken, thousands of students we have not reached. We're now working on the program with HBCU and minority serving institutions to connect their dreams. I once read an article that said CCAC was the best kept secret in the state. It does not continue to be so. All is not lost. We can come back, we can rebound, we can serve better, we can create new dreams, we can rekindle old dreams.

We need your help. We would like you to allocate the one third of your operating budget that was originally planned back in 1963. Please allocate and designate the money for the service of students. Let us

be the place of opportunity. My colleagues will do a much better job than I in providing the requisite information behind our request. My job, I'm simply here to beg, plead, cajole, ask you help us, please. Thank you.

MR. BARKER: Next up is Caroline Evans.

MS. EVANS: Thanks. Ralph's hard to follow, but I'll try my best. I'm a professor of biology and biotechnology at the Community College of Allegheny County. I grew up in Carrick and am a product of the Pittsburgh public school system. Service to the community is in my family as both my father and brother are firefighters in the city, and they live in Paul Klein's district, along with 1,305 students from CCAC. After finishing my college degree, I became a voting resident at John Palmiere's District, along with 2,355 students at CCAC. From 2016 to 2021, I was the shepherd for a \$630,000 scholarship from the National Science foundation. It gave me the opportunity to help students achieve their dreams by getting an education that could get them a real job in Allegheny County, in the biotechnology industry.

The scholarship was focused on students providing not only tuition, book stipends, bus passes, a paid internship and regular access to a clinical social worker. This provided some stability for the students so that they could still care for their families and their education at the same time, as most of our students also hold full-time jobs while they're pursuing an education. I'm proud to tell you that 91 percent success rate and service to almost a hundred students over the course of that timeline. But unfortunately, the scholarship has passed. The funds are all spent, and now I have a budget of \$2,000 to run my entire program, and in reality, it costs \$12,000. So what am I supposed to do? Should students be made to pay that burden? A four-credit course costs about \$500. If I pass this fee onto them, they will be paying \$750 per semester to deal with the coverage of costs to just get the labs and materials they need to get that workforce job.

So what happens when my equipment breaks and needs replaced? The water purification system alone costs \$5,000. Should I add a water fee to my students in addition to a lab fee and a technology fee that then makes tuition unattainable for so many in our districts? That's not fair. We're pushing these costs to the students and they're paying more than 40 percent of the overall burden

at the Community College of Allegheny County. We have balanced the budget over the last several years, but that's because we're making cuts to all our essential staff and services that are there to support the students in the time of need. If we cannot fund CCAC, underfunding means that students will not be able to complete in time, and that will blunt their chance at upward mobility. Something I feel honored to have observed over the past 15 years while working at the college. Acting now to increase the county's contribution to CCAC will prevent further cuts and ensure that our students can get the success they need to be a part of the Allegheny County workforce. Thank you all very much.

MR. BARKER: Kimberly Davis.

MS. DAVIS: Good evening to Mr. President and all of the council members. My name is Kimberly Davis, and I'm a counselor and associate professor at the Allegheny Campus and Homewood Brushton Branch. I am a resident of Forest Hills and my council person is Mr. Walton. Mr. Walton, your district also covers Homewood Brushton Center. So, I'd like to take some time to share with you a little bit of stories about my students while entering the campus building. One day there was a group of students standing at a bus stop, and as I walked past, I overheard their conversation. One was crying while the others were sharing with each other that they would have to leave the Allied Health program at CCAC, unable to afford the cost of background checks, fingerprinting and other mandatory costs.

This is something that is not unusual. During my workday, I also encounter students who report mild and severe mental health issues and difficulty focusing on their studies in class. Attending school is vital to them. They know that getting through college will be life changing. Some of them, they're supporting families. They are the first in their families to attend college. By attending community college, this has made getting a degree possible for them. But these days, the needs of our students are greater than the resources that we have available to provide.

For example, CCAC has the Gap Student Emergency Fund that awards \$500 per semester for students who --- who experience unforeseen circumstances that may prevent them from attending their education. In the first one third of this year, our gap fund has already awarded two

thirds of the fiscal year monies. Our students cannot obtain or maintain the most basic, essential needs. They need to thrive without --- they cannot thrive without our help.

The COVID and care funds are already gone, so what we are looking for, as I mentioned earlier, we are seeing an increased demand of mental health resources, and this has caused our caseloads to increase significantly. Also, with the change of seasons, more time spent indoors means more increased cost of utility bills, household expenses, food and rent are rising. Some of our students are literally forced to make hard choices between survival or school, and many have had to forego school so they can figure out how to survive.

Our students deserve the opportunity to graduate and fulfill that dream of a college education. Additional funds from the county would help us provide these supports to our students. Council person Walton, I read in your bio that you are dedicated to breaking the chains of poverty. I assure you, so are the counselors and the navigators that I work with at CCAC. We work tirelessly to find the resources and supports that our student needs.

PRESIDENT CATENA: If you could wrap it up.

MS. DAVIS: Sure. At CCAC, our motto is, our goal is your success. I'm sure you all agree that CCAC is an incredible asset in Allegheny County, and I hope you will support increasing the funding for the college this year. If you give us more, we will be able to do more to help our students. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you.

MR. BARKER: Last up is Stephen Wells.

MR. WELLS: Thank you very much. I'm Stephen Wells. I'm an English professor at the Community College of Allegheny County. I live and I vote in Mount Lebanon, where I've lived for the past 30 years and raised a family. I've taught at CCAC for over 20 years, but before that, I was a student there. After graduating from high school at Mount Lebanon, I went off to Virginia Tech full of high hopes, but not full of a whole lot of direction.

I hung on there for about a year and a half before I failed out. Spent some time in the Air Force finding my direction. Spent a couple more years working construction jobs, first in South Carolina and then back here in Pittsburgh, and I got laid off two days before a semester started at CCAC. So I took that as --- as a

sign. I went back and the professors there provided me with the academic foundation and with the confidence to go on. I graduated from CCAC with associate's degree, transferred to Duquesne, where I finished a bachelor's degree, a master's degree, and eventually a Ph.D.

My story is not uncommon. I now see that institution CCAC as --- well, we heard earlier about the importance of bridges. For me, funding this bridge took me from Aimlessness to direction to success and contribution to our community. I'm reminded of thousands of other students who have the need, not for a second chance like I needed, but for a first chance or sometimes an only chance. Ten (10) years ago, a student came into my English Comp one classroom. Her name was Holly. She had left an abusive husband who had repeatedly told her for years that she was too stupid to go to college. She came into my classroom afraid, insecure, and we were able to provide her with the confidence and the pride that she needed to move on with her life. I last saw her about five years ago. She had graduated from CCAC's nursing program, was working in a hospital in --- in Allegheny County, and had finished up her BSN.

All these stories are based on the people who make the Community College of Allegheny County work. Many of them are AFT people, so the advisors, the counselors, the --- the librarians, and the faculty of the college are the ones who make this possible. But unfortunately we can't fill those positions. We don't have the resources to do it. I chair college council at the college. Last year we had requests for 47 full-time faculty and we had funding to fill 16 of those positions. The year before that, there were 50 requests for full-time faculty positions, and we were able to fund 16 of those. We're not even keeping up with retirements. Those requesting the positions at these annual meetings have started to call them the Hunger Games because they come in and they're fighting for their --- their programs for ---.

PRESIDENT CATENA: If you could wrap it up, please.

MR. WELLS: I'm bringing it home. They're fighting for the resources to fund these programs and they don't have it. The return on investment in people at the college is worth every penny that we choose to spend on it. Thanks for your time at the end of a long day.

MS. BENNETT: Thank you.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Thank you. I believe that's it for public speakers, Jared.

MR. BARKER: Correct.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay.

MR. DEMARCO: Mr. President, just a point of personal privilege, I just wanted to ask a question about a meeting. Our November 1st meeting in November ---

MS. HALLAM: Election Day.

MR. DEMARCO: --- is scheduled for Election Day.

PRESIDENT CATENA: I was going to make an announcement about that.

MR. DEMARCO: Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Our first meeting is actually scheduled Election Day, and obviously the county conducts business that day. So originally we scheduled it for that day. I was going to move it to the following Wednesday. The immediate --- the immediate Wednesday. Is everyone good with that? Okay. Does that work?

MR. WALTON: The day after the election?

(Chorus of ayes.)

MS. HALLAM: It's the day after.

MR. WALTON: The ninth?

PRESIDENT CATENA: It would go from the eighth to the ninth.

MR. WALTON: That's what it --- yeah.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Okay. So that will be the next meeting. So, Ken, if you could make that --- sure -- - make that gets advertised. And then, is there a motion to adjourn?

MR. WALTON: So moved.

MR. MACEY: Second.

PRESIDENT CATENA: Motion is made and seconded. And all those in favor signify by saying aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

PRESIDENT CATENA: All those opposed. Motion carries. Thank you everyone.

MEETING CONCLUDED AT 6:26 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 9 day of December, 2022

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Amber Garbinski", is written above a horizontal line.

Amber Garbinski,

Court Reporter