

ERIE COUNTY CITIZENS' BUDGET REVIEW COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting from June 28, 2017

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ATTENDEES: Jorge deRosas, Joseph Heins, Edward Kumrow, Gregory Inglut, Joseph Hanna, E. Peter Forrestel, Stefan Mychajliw, Scott Bylewski and Joseph Winter

INVITEES: Buffalo News and League of Women Voters

EXCUSED: Mark Davis, Michael Otto, Richard Schneider and Jeremy Toth  
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Call to Order:

The meeting commenced at approximately 9:00 am

Review of Prior Committee Minutes:

With a motion from Mr. Hanna and seconded by Mr. Heins, minutes from the meeting on 10.27.16 were unanimously approved

Introduction of Committee Member:

A discussion began with the purpose of the Erie County Budget Commission for the 2017 calendar year. The Commission welcomed Mr. Gregory Inglut as a new member. Greg gave a brief background about himself and his general experience to the Commission members and the general public at the meeting. Other members also spoke briefly of their backgrounds.

Overview of Erie County Finances:

Mr. Winter asked Mr. Mychajliw to begin the meeting with a review of the prior year Erie County financial results. Stefan noted a \$120 million fund balance was expected for 2016 (approximately \$100 million is unassigned) with the audit report to be available in the near future and a formal presentation to the Commission at the next meeting. Stefan discussed the amount of ECMC IGT payments and the negative impact on the budget year to date thru April 2017.

Discussion of Budget Monitoring Report for period ended 4.30.17:

Mr. Winter asked Mr. Bylewski to review the most recent Budget Monitoring Report for the Committee. A discussion started with Scott pointing out that a total year to date negative budget variance of approximately \$10,800,000 exists at 4.30.17. Total revenues were approximately \$10.6 million less than budget while total operating expenses were approximately \$250 thousand more than budget leading to the variance. It was noted during Scott's presentation, that the above discussed ECMC IGT payments appeared to be the largest driver of the negative budget variance year to date.

The following matters that the Commission discussed in more detail for financial clarification included:

Mr. Hanna raised the point of a budget shortfall of property tax related matters amounted to approximately \$600 thousand while sales tax revenue demonstrated a small \$31 thousand positive budget variance at 4.30.17; the Division of Budget was going to continue to closely monitor sales tax collections to ascertain the overall financial impact to the County as well as budget implications.

It was also noted that Gaming Facilities had a negative revenue variance of approximately \$1.1 million as of 4.30.2017

Mr. Forrestel noted the approximate \$9 million negative budget variance pertaining to Medicaid Indigent Care to ECMC payments as of 4.30.17. It was also noted that a positive budget variance of approximately \$2.9 million in full time salaries as of 4.30.17, slightly offset by a negative budget variance of approximately \$702 thousand in overtime costs most of which related to the Erie County Sheriff's office. Mr. Bylewski also pointed out the Erie County positions vacancy Commission members could review noting the various employment differences by department.

Mr. Kumrow raised some points regarding accruals versus actual payments for reporting purposes as well as confirming staffing of some departments within Erie County.

Upon motion made by Mr. Winter and seconded by Mr. Heins with unanimous Commission approval, it was moved to accept the Budget Monitoring Report at 4.30.17.

Discussion of Chairmanship for the Erie County Citizens' Budget Review Commission:

Mr. Winter noted that the Chairman and Vice Chairman roles of the Commission need to be formally appointed for each calendar year. Joseph and Edward indicated their interest in these roles and surveyed all Commission members of their interest. Upon a motion by Mr. Hanna and seconded by Mr. Heins with unanimous Commission approval, Joseph and Edward were reappointed to these roles.

Mid-Year Erie County Budget Hearings Schedule:

Mr. Winter noted the mid-year Budget Hearings are to take place on July 18, 2017 – July 19, 2017, with callbacks slated for July 20, 2017. These are open session public meetings and Commission members were encouraged if their schedule permitted to attend any of these sessions.

Other Business Matters:

No matters were discussed at this meeting.

The Committee Opened Questions to the Public:

No matters were discussed at this meeting.

Next Meeting:

Will be determined by Committee consensus

Adjourn:

With a motion from Mr. Hanna and seconded by Mr. Heins, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:55 am

Chairman:

Joseph Winter