
From: Houck, Linda McClosky
Sent: Thursday, April 26, 2018 11:37 AM
To: McGinley, Tim;Lawrence, Sharon;Luzerne County Council Members
Subject: COUNTY ROADS LIST

Mr. McGinley,

Please provide to all Council the complete list of County-owned road sections and bridges, including locations and length.

Should you or our own County Operations division not have the list at hand, it is readily available from PennDOT, as it was supplied to me and Mr. Brominski a few years ago when we met with PennDOT officials regarding a potential "takeover" of the roads.

Thank you.

Linda Houck

From: Houck, Linda McClosky
Sent: Monday, April 23, 2018 11:57 AM
To: McGinley, Tim; Luzerne County Council Members
Subject: Re: 2018 Position Budget & Budget Itemization

From: McGinley, Tim
Sent: Saturday, April 21, 2018 12:38 PM
To: Luzerne County Council Members

Council,

The below notice forwarded to us on Saturday informs us of the 7th Position Budget change in April 2018; it is the 15th change of which we have received notice since the start of 2018. As I mentioned during the April 10th Council meeting, when Ordinance 2014-01 requiring this notice was introduced at my request, then-County Manager Lawton was vehemently opposed to it and claimed that it would “slow down government operations to a snail’s pace.”

Yet, the 2014 Council persevered and enacted the ordinance, in an attempt to get some handle on the moving target that is the County workforce funded through the County budgets. This ordinance first required a list of positions – the position budget – to be submitted as a supporting budget to the County budgets submitted annually by the Manager; then, it required ongoing information regarding changes to that list.

This does not “tie the Manager’s hands,” as was claimed in January 2014, nor does it implement an unwieldy task on County administration. On the contrary, this is information that management must keep current in order to properly budget for personnel and to manage the budget during the year when changes occur. It also does not require hirings to come before Council for approval – it simply requires management to inform Council of changes.

The fact that we regularly receive notice of these changes underscores the need for such information to be available to Council, as the notices also provide us with notice of any impact the change might have to the annual budgets. And, despite management’s argument in 2014 – this regular and frequent notice to Council has not slowed County government to a snail’s pace. More than 4 years later, we accept the submission of the position budget as well as these notices as a matter of course and good governmental procedure.

But, I ask you - does this sound familiar?

On Tuesday, we as a Council will consider the new ordinance I have proposed regarding the preparation of the annual County budgets to require the listing of contracts or purposes above a certain level of expense to be listed individually in the annual budget. This is a requirement for a listing at a drill-down level of large contracts or allocations – information that is clearly already at hand for management to provide the gross total that is now listed in the annual budgets for such expenses.

The resistance from management on providing this information is predictable but illogical. In the past 3 years, as we have scrutinized the Manager's proposed budgets between October and December, we have regularly asked for itemization of these contracts; this ordinance simply requires that they be listed as line items when the budget is presented.

Despite the Manager's April 10th histrionics, this does NOT tie the Manager's hands regarding signing contracts, nor does it require that every contract signed come before Council for approval. It simply asks that large contracts or allocations be itemized – with the vendor's name, if the contract is already in place, or with a purpose as the line description, if a contract is anticipated.

Recall, also, that prior to 2012 every single contract – regardless of amount - and every single hire in the County had to be approved by the Commissioners at a public meeting. Information about these contracts and hirings were printed in the agenda and available to the public. This ordinance does not even come close to that level of publication; it asks for an **annual** itemized list of contracts over \$25,000 that are expected be paid from the budget. The suggestion that providing these listings once a year would “bring government to a halt” is ludicrous, especially seen in the perspective of governmental history.

Our sister counties in Pennsylvania – with healthier reserves -- provide budgets for approval that are detailed in purpose and vendor where possible.

One lists an expected expenditure of several hundred dollars for “bottled water” – yet Luzerne County management, with debt in the hundreds of millions and limited reserve funds, resists listing anticipated expenses over the level of \$25,000. In the interest of clarity and good budgeting practices, this itemization should be done without legislation; however, since it is not, I have proposed this ordinance to require organization and itemization of large contracts for clarity and transparency.

I ask you to consider these thoughts and support the ordinance I have proposed in the interest of better government for Luzerne County.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Linda Houck

Subject: Fw: 2018 Position Budget

FYI

From: Parsnik, David

Sent: Friday, April 20, 2018 1:56 PM

To: McGinley, Tim

Cc: Hill, Lynn; Dalessandro, Chris; Swetz, Brian; Gavlick, Angela; Watchilla, Shelby; Meehan, Ellen; Van Saun, Joanne; Pedri, David

Subject: 2018 Position Budget

Chair McGinley,

Per Section 8.02C., of the Luzerne County Administrative Code: The Division of Human Services (Children & Youth) will be eliminating one (1) Fiscal Officer 3 position in Human Services and adding one(1) Fiscal Officer 3 position in Children & Youth. The General Fund will not be affected by this action.

Any questions or concerns can be directed to me.

V/R,

Dave Parsnik

From: Walsh Waitkus, Jane
Sent: Friday, April 20, 2018 9:42 AM
To: Lawrence, Sharon
Cc: Walsh Waitkus, Jane
Subject: County owned roads and bridges list

Hi Sharon,

Would you please make a copy of the list of roads and bridges Owned by the county and place in my mailbox. I cannot find that list and I remember seeing it.

Thank you.

Jane

Sent from my iPhone

From: Houck, Linda McClosky
Sent: Friday, April 06, 2018 8:15 AM
To: McGinley, Tim;Lawrence, Sharon;Luzerne County Council Members
Subject: Agenda item for April 9

Mr. McGinley,

Please add an item to the voting session agenda for Tuesday, April 9 as follows:

Motion for introduction of ordinance amending Administrative Code regarding Budget, requiring all contracts that involve allocation of \$25,000 in one year or \$75,000 in multiple years to have their own budget line item in the annual budget and a defined scope of work.

I am preparing a draft ordinance for consideration and will email it to all Council and Solicitor for review prior to Monday.

Thank you.

Linda Houck

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone