



Steal City

Faced with state takeover of city pension fund, Pittsburgh City Council opts for massive increase in parking-meter fees – while spending time and money on bizarre crusade against Marcellus

FLASHBACK:

- **Mayor Luke Ravenstahl:** “Opposes a ban, in part because drilling would create jobs, tax revenue for the state and spinoff revenue — such as earned-income tax — for the financially strapped city.” (Post-Gazette, [8/17/10](#))
- **Allegheny Co. Exec. (and '10 Democratic candidate for governor) Dan Onorato:** The “council’s action gives a black eye to the entire region.” (Pittsburgh Business Times, [12/3/10](#))

Out-of-Touch Pitt. City Council Works to Halt Job-Creating, Revenue-Generating Marcellus Development Across PA ...

... As Same “Leaders” Seek 75% Hike on Parking Meters to Avoid State Takeover of City Pensions

State threatens to take over city’s pension fund ... but Pitt. City Council more focused on getting *Shippensburg, Pa.* (171 miles away) to ban Marcellus development?

Pension Plan on Brink of State Takeover Due to City Govt. Incompetence

“Pittsburgh City Council has asked other municipalities around the state, including Shippensburg Borough, to support their efforts to ban hydro-fracturing natural gas drilling.

“Pittsburgh City Council is expected to consider an 11th hour plan to shore up the city’s underfunded pensions in hopes of preventing a state takeover of the fund.

“At last week’s council meeting, Mayor Bruce Hockersmith said that he had received a letter and model ordinance from the Pittsburgh City Council.

“The Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System has the power to take over Pittsburgh’s system if the city doesn’t fund its obligations at 50 percent by year’s end. The city has about \$1 billion in pension obligations, but only \$270 million - or 27 percent - to meet those payments.” (Associated Press, [12/28/10](#))

““They’re asking us to pass a resolution to support their position on this,” he said. “They don’t want to allow natural gas drilling within...any boroughs of the state.””

Council plans to use parking meter fee hike to meet “\$1 billion in obligations for 8,000 active and retired employees”

“Borough Manager Earl Parshall said that he had submitted the ordinance and two resolutions that came from the Pittsburgh Council to the borough solicitor. After a quick glance, there was much he didn’t like about it, said

“Pittsburgh City Council today said it wants to dedicate money from parking fee increases to strengthen the city’s

Parshall. Some of it he said wasn't legal." (Shippensburg News-Chronicle, [12/23/10](#))

Wag The Dog: Activist groups using Pitt. Council as pass-through for anti-shale resolutions

"The Pennsylvania nonprofit [Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund] was the architect behind Pittsburgh's ordinance and now wants to see similar laws passed in communities statewide." (Altoona Mirror, [12/15/10](#))

Josh Fox and Councilman Doug Shields: BFF

"During the film, the crowd cheered (and booed) in a spirited reaction to the film. At the Q&A after, the panel of environmental activists was joined by anti-fracking politician [Pittsburgh] City Councilman Doug Shields." (Rooftop Films blog, [9/14/10](#))



Pittsburgh city councilman Doug Shields (right) with [GasLand](#) director Josh Fox – whom DEP secretary John Hanger refers to as a "[propagandist](#)."

SHIELDS FLASHBACK: "Doug, Doug. We cannot insult women at the table [when] ask[ing] for a gender and equity study. You can't do that." ("Doug Shields Gone Wild," captured on YouTube, [8/13/08](#))

ailing pension funds and avoid a state takeover.

"The city has about \$1 billion in obligations for 8,000 active and retired employees." (Tribune-Review, [12/28/10](#))

"The plan calls for an increase in parking rates around the city"

"Pittsburgh City Council President Darlene Harris presented a proposal on Tuesday, aimed at resolving the city's pension crisis.

"The plan calls for an increase in parking rates around the city, which city leaders said would fund 50 percent of the pension plan over the next 30 years. The estimated revenue is \$880 million, Hall reported.

"In some spots ... the price will go up from \$.25 to \$1.00. The rate increase would begin in 2011." (WTAE-TV, [12/28/10](#))