

Broad Street Brief: Commonwealth Court Sides With DA Krasner on Impeachment; Former Councilmember Gym Hires Campaign Manager

Commonwealth Court Sides With Philadelphia DA Krasner Regarding Impeachment; Next Steps Remain Unclear

Pennsylvania's Commonwealth Court concluded last Friday that none of the seven articles of impeachment filed by state House Republicans against Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner constitute "misbehavior in office." DA Krasner has held firm since the House approved the articles in November that his actions and policy decisions do not amount to impeachable offenses, and that he believes the proceedings to be partisan witch hunt, going so far as to appeal directly to the Commonwealth Court to have the articles declared "legally baseless." It is not immediately clear whether the impeachment trial in the Senate — which is currently scheduled for January 18 — will be moving forward as planned in light of the recent court filing.

DA Krasner Announces Formation of New Carjacking Unit

2022 was a record-breaking year for carjackings, which rose approximately 53% from the year before, according to Philadelphia Police Department data. In order to combat this, Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner has announced the formation of the Carjacking Enforcement Unit, which will work with existing law enforcement groups throughout the city to investigate and prosecute carjacking cases. One of the major goals of the unit, as described by DA Krasner, is to create efficiency by providing a consistent legal team rather than having different attorneys handling different phases of the prosecution. The unit is made possible by a \$1.5 million budget increase to the Office of the District Attorney.

2023 Mayoral Race Watch: Fetterman Campaign Alumnus Joins Former Councilmember Gym's Team; Four Mayoral Candidates Outline Plans to Combat Gentrification

No more than a few months after heading Lieutenant Governor John Fetterman's successful campaign for the U.S. Senate, Brendan McPhillips has already chosen his next adventure. The accomplished Democratic consultant will serve as campaign manager for former City Councilmember Helen Gym's mayoral run. While McPhillips has acknowledged that there are key differences between running a U.S. congressional and city mayoral campaign — as well as between a primary competing with eight fellow Democrats versus a general campaign against one Republican — he feels strongly about working to elect candidates with a good message.

In other mayoral race news, four candidates — including former Councilmembers Cherelle Parker, Helen Gym, and Maria Quiñones Sánchez, and former Controller Rebecca Rhynhart — recently answered a question posed by Billy Penn: As mayor, what would you do to combat gentrification? Answers ranged from shoring up existing grant and loan programs, creating new tax incentives for developers to create new affordable housing units, expanding mandatory inclusionary zoning, and continued work with partners like the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority and the Philadelphia Land Bank.

New Regulations for Airbnbs, Other Short-Term Rental Units Go Into Effect in Philadelphia

Regulations for the operation of Airbnbs and other short-term rental properties — namely, zoning permit requirements — have been in place since 2015, but have rarely, if ever, been enforced by the City. However, as the clock struck midnight on January 1, 2023, a new law originally passed by



Joseph Hill

Managing
Director, Cozen
O'Connor
Public
Strategies

jhill@cozen.com
Phone: (215) 665-2065
Fax: (215) 665-2013



Brianna A. Westbrook

Government
Relations
Associate,
Cozen O'Connor
Public
Strategies

bwestbrooks@cozen.com
Phone: (215) 665-4757
Fax: (215) 665-2013

Related Practice Areas

- Government Relations - Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies

City Council in 2021 went into effect that will allow tighter oversight, worrying some short-term rental property owners who did not even know that they had been violating the law. The new law requires a “limited lodging operator” license for those who live in the short-term rental properties they rent out, which also requires them to obtain various safety and code certifications as well. Short-term rentals of properties where the host does not live have never been legal unless the owner had secured a hotel license.

Which New Development Projects, Groups to Keep an Eye on in 2023

Philadelphia’s streets and skylines have undergone many changes throughout the years. As the city continues to emerge from the economic throes of the pandemic, many new development projects are expected to roar to life this year. These projects include everything from new parks and museums, two new Parkway Corporation towers — one to serve as the new Chubb headquarters, and the other to increase the city’s number of apartment units — in Center City, construction of new Turn the Key housing for municipal workers, and the greatly anticipated 76ers Place, to name only a few.

In other exciting real estate development news, Philly RiSE, an initiative created by a collective of Black and brown developers called Black Squirrel, just graduated its first cohort from its 14-week training program. Its goal is to diversify the real estate development industry in Philadelphia, thus creating more inclusive projects that benefit traditionally underserved residents and have far-reaching impact.

Opinion: Philadelphia Has Stricter Campaign Finance Laws; The Philadelphia Board of Ethics Intends to Enforce Them

Philadelphia Board of Ethics Chair Michael H. Reed and Executive Director J. Shane Creamer Jr. had a clear message for all candidates running for office at all levels in Philadelphia this year: the board is fully prepared to enforce the city’s campaign finance rules. This includes the strict \$12,600 limitation on the amount an organization can give in contributions to a campaign, as well as ensuring that political action committees (PACs) remain truly independent.

City to Crack Down on Popular “Streeteries” Operating Without Permits

As the cliché goes, necessity is the mother of invention. So when the global COVID-19 pandemic threatened to shut down many popular indoor restaurants in Center City and beyond — perhaps for good — business owners got creative and poured out onto streets and sidewalks. For the past few years, these “streeteries” have become increasingly extravagant fixtures of the Philadelphia dining scene, with many incorporating chic decor and even climate control elements. However, many of these parking-spot cafes are being permanently taken down, as the City has declared its intent to crack down on streeteries. All restaurants who operate streeteries must be fully licensed by January 9. Only 22 businesses have applied thus far, and none have been approved.
