

## **County Council Regular Meeting: October 8, 2013**

Observer: Lynda Mayer

*This report contains member observations and selected highlights of a meeting of the Cuyahoga County Council and is not an official statement by any League of Women Voters in the county. For the official disposition of all agenda items, consult the Cuyahoga County Council website at [council.cuyahogacounty.us](http://council.cuyahogacounty.us)*

### **I. Introduction.**

The meeting was called to order at 5:10pm by Council President C. Ellen Connally with all members present except Jack Schron, who was excused.

Before business began, both Ms. Connally and County Executive Ed Fitzgerald spoke enthusiastically about the previous day's grand opening of the "med mart" or Global Center for Health Innovation. Both Ms. Connally and Councilman Jack Gallagher served on the board that oversaw its construction. The reception was in the atrium, from where it is possible to see all 4 floors and a long list of important nationwide tenants which already occupy space there.

On a less positive note, however, Mr. Fitzgerald spoke very somberly about fallout from the current federal government shutdown due to the "out-of-control" partisan impasse in Washington. He said that directors of County departments are currently compiling reports on the adverse impacts on County residents and operations.

### **II. Business Transacted.**

\* Council approved amendments to the NOACA bylaws which will enable the agency's board members and their alternates to become more involved in its operations and thereby more effectively to drive policy. Two of the planning agency's 5 member counties have so far endorsed the bylaw change. NOACA's new director, Grace Gallucci, explained the changes.

\* Three significant resolutions were passed on third reading"

-- A long-awaited Disparity Study, to be renewed every five years, will now get underway. Councilman Jones explained that this study will collect and analyze data on possible inequities in county contracting. He suggested this effort could become a national model of economic inclusion. Such a study is also a prerequisite for any future legal set-asides for minority or female contracting or sub-contracting.

-- An "additional DTAC fee" was enacted to begin in January -- this revenue source will secure the County Land Bank's base funding, which comes from contributions by the many taxing authorities (school districts, municipalities, special taxing districts) in the County.

-- Nearly \$3.7 million from the Casino Revenue Fund will be loaned to the Playhouse Square District Development Corp. for the purpose of streetscape improvements.

\* October is proclaimed "Disability Employment Awareness Month" in Cuyahoga County.

\* Resolutions passed on second reading (suspended rules) were the following:

- \$2.5 million for construction of a County Crime Lab in the Medical Examiner's office.
- \$1.2 million to Trafftech for "striping" in connection with the Countywide Preventative Maintenance Program. So far, 10 communities have signed on to this program, including Shaker Heights, Bay Village and Lakewood.
- \$ 1.05 million to 7 different municipalities for projects under the Municipal Block Grant program of the federal government. This money was sent before the federal shutdown.
- \$1.8 million for consultant services for the Case Management and Document Imaging System. This system will integrate the entire court/legal branches in the County, including the Prosecutor's operation.

\* New Resolutions introduced and assigned to committees include the following:

- \$3 million to Jack Doheny Companies, Inc. for 5+ years of sewer equipment and services.
- A \$1 million Economic Development loan to a company for renovation of a property at 1720 Willey Avenue in Cleveland.
- Issuance of up to \$17 million in E. D. Revenue Bonds to help finance phase II of the Flats East Bank Project.
- Issuance of up to \$6.5 million in E. D. Revenue Bonds to help finance the Westin Cleveland Hotel Project, to be built where the current County Administration Building now stands.
- \$1.8 million for legal services for indigent persons, through a revenue generating agreement with Cleveland's Municipal Court.