

**Report: Westshore Council of Governments (WCOG) meeting, Wednesday October 8, 2014  
by LWV observers Conda Boyd (Bay Village) and Kathy Kosiorek (Lakewood)**

*This report is not an official LWV statement. Official minutes are prepared by Mayor Patton's office and posted on Fairview Park's website.*

**Present:** Mayors Bobst (Rocky River), Kennedy (North Olmsted), Patton (Fairview Park), Sutherland (Bay Village), and Summers (Lakewood).

**Absent:** Mayor Clough (Westlake)

**Also in attendance:** Fiscal Officer Renee Mahoney, Cuyahoga County Council District 1 Representative Dave Greenspan.

**Duration:** 9:45-10:35

**RTA:** There will be a public meeting about RTA's future on October 21 at 2pm at RTA headquarters. Lakewood's upgraded transit stations are due to be completed in November.

**Cuyahoga County Mayors & City Managers Association (CCMCMA):** Mayor Sutherland reported that HB5 municipal income tax changes will be taken up by the lame duck Ohio Senate and will require close monitoring to ensure progress.

North Royalton Mayor Robert Stefanik is asking the CCMCMA to endorse his letter demanding that the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) manage the deer population. Mayors Clough and Sutherland declined to sign this letter, but Mayor Sutherland stated that the ODNR is trying to shift the burden onto homeowners. In Avon Lake, homeowners can request permits from ODNR and the city to cull deer on private property. Mayor Kennedy noted that the MetroParks culls 30-120 deer a year in Bradley Woods. North Olmsted is examining options, including an ordinance similar to Avon Lake's. Rocky River sent residents an advisory on how to discourage deer. Bay Village has had 20 deer-vehicle accidents in the past year. Mayors Sutherland and Kennedy agreed that aggressive wild turkeys have also been problematic.

**Suburban Water Council:** Mayor Bobst stated that infrastructure improvements are built into the rates charged to all Cleveland Water customers, so it's important to bring those dollars back to the city via the renewal program. Rocky River is now checking water lines in conjunction with other projects. Fairview Park has evaluated water main breaks, matched them with their street program, and prioritized projects accordingly. Bay Village City Council has declined to participate in the renewal program. Lakewood owns and operates its own water system.

**Clean Fuels:** Mayor Summers met with Clean Fuels Ohio about fueling stations for alternative fuels. While potential fuel savings for cities and schools are substantial, the cost of these special stations may be prohibitive. Energy efficiency is a long-term goal for Lakewood, and he will continue to research the idea.

**Westcom:** Fairview Park's fire chief is now the chiefs' point person for Central Dispatch Center issues.

**County Council Update:** Mr. Greenspan described a new RTA program that will offer discounts for transportation to cultural events. He also discussed in detail a proposed \$50 million fund to demolish vacant buildings. Rather than outright grants, Mr. Greenspan favors a program whereby loans would be either repaid out of property tax appreciation, or forgiven under specific circumstances. Mayor Summers stated that while Cleveland's needs are disproportionately large, a reasonable percentage should be directed to the suburbs as well. Property value increases materialize much more quickly in the suburbs, spurring regional recovery.

**County Health Insurance Program:** Mayor Patton reported that Fairview Park is nearing the end of its first year under the county program. They opted for two of the seven plans and estimated \$300,000 savings in 2014. Employee satisfaction is high, and the 2015 premium increase is only 1.5%.

**Westshore Enforcement Bureau Audit:** Ms. Mahoney reported that the state audit is underway.

*The WCOG was founded in 1971 "to foster cooperation between municipalities in all areas of municipal service." All meetings are open to the public. Next meeting: November 12, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Fairview Park Gemini Center's Birch Room.*