

County Council Regular Meeting: May 10, 2016

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 the League of Women Voters of Greater Cleveland. For the official disposition of all agenda items, consult the Cuyahoga County Council website at council.cuyahogacounty.us

I. Introduction.

The meeting was called to order by Council President Brady at 5pm with all Council members present.

2. Antecedents, Announcements or Public Comment.

A Committee of the Whole session met earlier to hear a report by Jeffrey Applebaum regarding progress on the County's new Hilton Hotel next to the Convention Center. Our observer missed most of that but was given a paper copy of the power point presentation. The Council and others will meet on site next Tuesday at 2:30pm for a walk-through inspection. Mr. Applebaum explained that the hotel, although technically owned at present by the Port Authority, is indeed under the County's control, and that any rumors about County plans to sell off the hotel are false. Although it will operate at a loss during 2016 - 2018, it expects to generate a surplus by 2019 or 2020. He also reported that inclusion goals are all on track.

County Executive Budish talked briefly about the key mission of workforce development and announced a new program for former prisoners re-entering that workforce. Public Comment consisted of Rev. Pinkney Butz, who mentioned she is running for U.S. President this year; an advocate for better treatment for deaf persons; and Norman Edwards, who claimed that all reports of improved minority contractor inclusion on County projects are bogus, and that the County should not trust the Building Trades Union representatives. He actually threatened to "shut down everything" at the Natural History Museum worksite. After the Council meeting, two women from Lakewood urged the County to intervene in the struggle to keep Lakewood Hospital from being sold or closed.

3. Business Transacted.

* Several infrastructure projects were introduced and referred to committee:

- \$7.9 million to resurface West 130th Street from Brookpark to Lorain Roads.
- \$1.4 million to replace the Lakeshore Boulevard Bridge over Nine Mile Creek in Bratenahl.
- \$1.6 million for the 2016 Operations Resurfacing Program, Group 5, in the City of Cleveland.
- \$2.3 million to replace the Bagley Road Bridge over Plum Creek in Olmsted Falls.

* Mark D. Griffin was confirmed and appointed to a 5-year term as the Cuyahoga County Inspector General. He had been serving in an interim capacity since the previous IG, Nialah Byrd, was transferred to the position of Clerk of Courts. Mr. Griffin took the oath of office from Mr. Budish, even though his new term does not officially begin until July 1.

* Karen Moss's reappointment to the RTA Board of Trustees was also confirmed. Councilwoman Conwell spoke glowingly of her service. She also used the Moss appointment as an example of the opportunity available to interested citizens to serve on some of the County's many

boards and commissions which have current openings. These openings are listed on the County website, and interested citizens should seek interesting ways in which they can serve.

4. Notes.

After the very short meeting, Councilwoman Shontel Brown responded to the observer's questions about RTA service cuts and rate increases by sharing the handouts she has received on that subject. She is now aware of the concerns expressed by LWVGC members and especially those voiced at the Shaker Heights Chapter's annual meeting.