

County Council Regular Meeting: September 13, 2016

Observer: Grennetta Taylor

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

I. Introduction.

The regular County Council meeting was called to order at 5pm by Council President Dan Brady.

II. Antecedents, Announcements and Public Comment.

County Executive Armond Budish discussed the importance of improving literacy among the workforce in order improve job opportunities for County residents. An alarming 435,000 adults in Cuyahoga County do not read at an 8th grade level which is the average reading level required for available jobs in the county.

Public comment after the meeting centered around three subjects. 1) An alleged need for training of first responders to improve interaction with hearing-impaired citizens. 2) Loss of revenue to RTA caused by public square rehabilitation and subsequent street closings. 3) Problems associated with the Lakewood Hospital issue. Several speakers discussed the additional burden they said would be placed on Metro Hospital and the alleged use of public funds by the Clinic to express opposition for Issue 64 which seeks to reverse legislation passed by Lakewood City Council.

III. Business Transacted.

* Council amended the 2016 schedule of County Council meetings by changing, canceling, rescheduling or adding various meetings:

- changing the time of the October 11 regular meeting from 4:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- canceling the November 10 regular meeting and rescheduling it for Tuesday, November 15.
- canceling the November 22 regular meeting and rescheduling it for Tuesday, November 29.
- adding a special meeting on Thursday, December 28 at 10:30 a.m. for consideration of year-end fiscal items.

* An ordinance creating a County Health and Human Services Plan was adopted. Councilman Miller explained that the County Administration will be more strategic in the delivery of service resulting in upfront funding, simplification of service delivery, increased collaboration and increased accessibility. The first Five-Year Plan is due July 1 2017.

* Another ordinance up for 3rd reading was instead referred back to committee. It established a competitive review process for the award of Casino Revenue Fund loans; and creating the Casino Revenue Development Committee. There was no discussion, but in a brief post meeting conversation Councilman Schron, the measure's sole sponsor, indicated a need to reduce political influence in determining how funds should be used. He also supports establishing an objective methodology to determine by competition the best projects to fund.

* A contract for TANF Summer Youth Employment Program was extended through to next summer, with additional scope and c. \$750,000 in additional funding. Councilman Jones indicated that the program will be expanded to increase the number of summer jobs and may lead to permanent employment for some youth.

- * Among 18 resolutions read once and referred to committee were the following:
- The County Executive's appointment of various individuals to fill unexpired terms on the Cuyahoga County Audit Committee;
 - Tax rates as determined by the Budget Commission; authorizing the necessary tax levies and certifying them to the County Fiscal Officer. This is a routine step in the budgeting process, not necessarily a sign that a tax levy request is on the near horizon.
 - A \$2 million Economic Development Fund loan for a project at E. 105th and Cedar.
 - A \$2 million Economic Development Fund Loan to JumpStart, Inc. for the administration of the Accelerated Growth Program
 - An \$8 million award to Americab Transportation for Medicaid non-emergency transportation.
 - \$1 million in additional funds to Catholic Charities for various services to Ohio Works First and Disability Financial Assistance recipients, also extending the time of the original contract.
 - \$4.6 million and \$5 million in two awards to 11 different providers for programs and services for youth in connection with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The largest single award was \$4.4 million to the United Labor Agency.
 - A \$12 million revenue generating award for inmate communication and financial management systems, sponsored by the Sheriff.
 - \$1.1 million contract for Community-Based Treatment Center services.

- * Two resolutions were read a second time and set for final action at a future meeting:
- A \$1.9 million agreement with MetroHealth System for healthcare and management services for youth residing at the County Detention Center.
 - A \$1 million contract for administration of the 2015 Rental Assistance Program.