

## **County Council Regular Meeting: Jan. 26, 2016**

Observer: Audrey Morris

*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**

Council President Dan Brady called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. with all members present and it was adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

### **II. Antecedents, Announcements & Public Comments**

Prior to this session, the Council met as Committee of the Whole, in executive session. County Executive Armond Budish announced the reopening of the Title Agency next to the Golden Gate License Bureau in Mayfield Heights. The county lost \$800,000 per year by not having this facility, he said. It's convenient, will capture more money for the county, and will help dealers on the east side of town. Mr. Budish also announced that the summit for National Drug and Alcohol Fact Week will include an open discussion for high school students about the current heroin epidemic. Rapper Machine Gun Kelly is scheduled to attend, but since he had to have emergency surgery, it is not certain if he will attend.

Rev. Pamela Pickney-Butts, who frequently makes public comments at Council meetings, raised concerns about various issues on the agenda. Jovana Smith talked about his Young Imaginations start-up and how it helps youth. Rico Nancy wants Council to support HB 369.6, which deals with rape victims and implored Council to put a bill together to benefit rape victims. James Lamb wanted to know what was being done about Tanisha Anderson, who died ago in Cleveland police custody 14 months ago and whose case has not been resolved. Mr. and Mrs. Eisenstat denounced Council's "15 percent pay raise" (see below) in light of the economy, the recent elimination of 2,500 jobs in the region and the county's shaky finances. The optics are bad, they said, and the raise is unconscionable.

### **III. Business Transacted**

\* A resolution was adopted that calls for an adjustment of the municipal boundary between Cleveland and Shaker Heights, which bisects eight parcels of land along Van Aken Boulevard between Sutton and Onaway roads, so as to render the entire piece within the municipal boundary of Shaker Heights. Councilwoman Brown (District 9), its sponsor, said it would put the parcels in one municipality and allow for redevelopment.

\* A resolution, discussed in executive session, was unanimously adopted (on first reading under suspension of rules) that approved a collective bargaining agreement between Cuyahoga County and International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, UAW, directing the funds to implement the collective bargaining agreement to be budgeted and appropriated.

\* A resolution authorizing \$3.2 million in additional funds for the County Airport Runway Safety Area Improvements was adopted. Councilman Germana (District 4) said it was the first part of a multi-part series of improvements at the Cuyahoga County Airport.

\* A resolution amending the 2016/2017 Biennial Operating Budget by providing additional fiscal appropriations from the General Fund for appropriation transfers between budget accounts was adopted.

\* A resolution authorizing an amendment to a contract for rapid re-housing assistance for additional funds (not to exceed \$908,000) was adopted.

\* Resolutions for two appointments, sponsored by County Executive Budish, were adopted.

\* **Among the many new resolutions introduced and referred to committee were these:**

-- An ordinance amending Titles 4 and 5 of the Cuyahoga County Code to clarify the ethical rights, responsibilities and prohibitions applicable to elected officials, employees, board members, contractors and lobbyists of Cuyahoga County;

-- An ordinance to grant a pay raise to members of Council, sponsored by Councilman Germana. Council members would be paid \$7,000 more, increasing their annual salary to \$52,000. The pay increase would not take effect until 2019, so effectively it is a “2 percent annual raise over the time period,” Germana said. “And I am not doing it for the people or the persons in office. I am doing it for the position.”

-- \$2.1 million for cleaning, televising and maintaining sanitary and storm sewers;

-- \$2.5 million for family support services;

-- \$3.2 million for the 2016 Sewer Repair Program in various county sewer districts;

#### **IV. Notes.**

Councilman Greenspan on the proposed pay raise for Council: “Philosophically, it is not a piece of legislation I would support.” He feels it would be better to wait 10 years after the new government is established.

The Environmental and Sustainability Committee will meet on Feb. 3 at 1 p.m. to discuss the dredging of the Cuyahoga River. On Feb. 16 at 3 p.m. there will be a meeting on the Ethics Legislation.