

**Report: Westshore Council of Governments (WCOG) meeting, Jan 8, 2014  
by LWV observers Susan Murnane (Bay Village); Kathy Kosiorek and Mary Warren (Lakewood)**

*This report, which contains observations and selected highlights of a meeting of the WCOG, is not an official statement of the LWV. Official minutes are prepared by Mayor Patton's office.*

Present: Mayors Bobst (Rocky River), Patton (Fairview Park), Summers (Lakewood), Sutherland (Bay Village)

Absent: Mayors Kennedy (North Olmsted) and Clough (Westlake)

Also in attendance: Dave Greenspan, District 1 Representative, Cuyahoga County Council; Steve Presley

The meeting was called to order 9:40 in the Birch Room at the Gemini Center in Fairview Park. Mayor Patton of Fairview Park presided as Chair of the WCOG.

Commission Reports:

The formal reappointment of Mayor Sutherland to NOACA as representative from the Westshore was approved in principle, but NOACA rules require paper ballot submission, for which the deadline was December 31. The next meeting is Friday Jan. 10. All mayors present agreed to make prompt return of paper ballots a priority so Mayor Sutherland would be formally reappointed in time to attend Friday's meeting. Mayor Summers enjoys a standing appointment. Mayor Summers expressed concern about the absence of representation from Cuyahoga County in NOACA's leadership. Mayor Sutherland recommended a conversation with Valerie McCall, President NOACA Board of Directors.

The mayors discussed the Land Bank's role in economic development. Mayor Bobst commended their participation in the recent demolition and remediation of a city-owned gas station. Mayor Summers discussed a joint project to demolish a school involving the City of Lakewood, the school board and the Land Bank.

The opening of the Avon Cleveland Clinic facility has complicated Senior Transportation. In the past, Fairview Park received a grant for senior transportation that prevented them from going to the Avon facility because it crossed the county line. They decided to abandon the grant, and now charge a low fee for senior use of the service. None of the other cities receive grant support, and they also charge for use of senior transportation. Most charge extra to cross the county line and go to the Avon facility. The mayors felt that the provision of senior transportation was very important to their constituents, but that the existing model does not work very well. Mr. Greenspan promised to look into it at the county level.

The recent appointment of Craig Butler as interim leader of EPA was noted. Mr. Butler previously represented EPA in negotiations regarding water treatment plant issues.

#### Old Business:

William Denihan, head of Cuyahoga County Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health Services, followed up on his November 2013 presentation to WCOG with an invitation for a March 2014 joint crisis intervention training session for west shore police. Mayor Patton will follow up on the invitation, and will look into the possibility of including librarians and other city employees with extensive public contact.

#### New Business:

Mayor Patton also proposed autism awareness training through Akron Police Sergeant Mark Farrar. The proposal was well received and all mayors agreed to consult with their safety forces.

Mayor Patton was reappointed to the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission.

Mayor Patton expressed interest in a regional civil service examination. Fairview Park's most recent examination had very few applicants. Mayor Summers said that a recent study into civil service examinations found that regional entrance examinations were possible, but regional promotion examinations were not feasible because of different requirements among the different cities. Furthermore, the cost savings from regional entrance examinations were minimal since applicants paid for the administration of the examination. Mayor Bobst added that strategic timing considerations also meant cities could find themselves working off stale lists. Mayor Patton felt the timing problems could be addressed by scheduling examinations at regular intervals, and that the cost savings from room rental and advertising justified regionalization. Joint administration also would create larger eligibility lists in more communities, to the benefit of both the municipal employers and the candidates.

Mayor Clough had not recommended changes to the WCOG dues allocation formula, so the mayors voted to continue the existing formula. The scheduled discussion of November's Westshore Fire Investigation Unit proposal was also continued.

It was decided to continue meeting monthly through 2014.

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