

County Council Regular Meeting: March 24, 2015

Observer: Patricia Solomon

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.

President Dan Brady called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. He asked for a moment of silence to remember David Rutt, spokesman for the County Crime Stoppers, who died today in a home accident. All Council members were present. The meeting ended at 5:50 p.m.

II. Antecedents, Announcements & Public Comment

A preceding Committee of the Whole session consisted of a confirmation hearing and a discussion of the County's contribution to the Public Square reconstruction. The second of these topics did not emerge at the following official session for a vote.

County Executive Armond Budish noted that there will be a Career Fair at the Polaris Career Center in Middleburg Hts. on April 1. In 2014 five hundred job seekers attended, and about 100 received job offers. He also noted that last week he spoke at a Town Hall in Fairview Park and at Hyland Software. The latter was part of his "100 businesses in 100 days" initiative. Finally, Budish bid farewell to Rick Werner, Director of Health & Human Services for the past twelve years, as he leaves for a new job as director of the Willoughby-Eastlake Library System.

Two residents spoke, one opposing the Public Square and Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridge projects and the other objecting to his eviction and denial of homeless services.

III. Business Transacted

* A proposed Ordinance amending the County Code to incorporate changes to the Cuyahoga County College Savings Account Program regarding the powers and duties of the CSAP Committee was referred to the Education, Environment and Sustainability Committee.

* An Ordinance amending the County Code to change the number of members serving on the Citizens' Advisory Council on Equity from fifteen to a range of nine to fifteen was adopted on third reading.

* Councilman Greenspan offered an amendment to a resolution amending the 2014/2015 Biennial Operating Budget for 2015. The proposed amendment deleted a section relating to County funds for the proposed pedestrian/bicycle bridge. In effect, the County will not act until confirmation of funding from various other sources is provided by the City of Cleveland. The resolution to amend the Budget with Greenspan's amendment was then adopted.

* Four resolutions on County appointments were referred to Committee of the Whole: W. Christopher Murray II (for Treasurer), Dennis G. Kennedy (for Fiscal Officer), Mark D. Griffin (for Inspector General), Michael W. Dever (for Director of Public Works).

* Three other resolutions were read once and referred to committee:

--- A \$1.8 million loan application to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Water Pollution Control Loan Fund, for a new sanitary sewer structure in Olmsted Township,

--- An \$1.4 million award to Perk Company, Inc. for rehabilitation and resurfacing of bridge decks in various municipalities,

--- \$4.4 million additional funds amendment to a contract with Americab Transportation, Inc. for transportation services.

* Resolutions adopted on second reading were:

--- Confirmation of Michael P. Foley as Director of the Department of Sustainability. Councilman Schron spoke against the confirmation, citing Mr. Foley's intention to "create and grow markets and green energy jobs". Schron averred that this is the job of venture capitalists, not government, and cited a list of government failures in this respect. Three council members spoke in favor of the confirmation and it was adopted with Schron dissenting.

--- Confirmation of George J. Taylor as Director of Public Safety and Justice Services. Both Foley and Taylor were sworn in by Mr. Budish.

--- A \$580,000 award to MCPc, Inc. for Wide Area Network monitoring services (Dept of Information Technology). Councilman Greenspan noted that this represents a change from an out-of-town firm to one located here in Cuyahoga County.

--- A c. \$700,000 award to Triad Engineering and Contracting for replacement of Warrensville Center Road Culvert in Shaker Heights. Councilman Germana noted that Triad was the only bidder but has significant expertise and came in under the estimate.

--- A total of \$7.6 million in agreements with three providers for child support services, fairly evenly divided among the three: County Court of Common Pleas/Division of Domestic Relations, County Court of Common Pleas/Division of Juvenile Court, and County Prosecuting Attorney's Office. Councilman Jones mentioned the Federal Financial Participation Program, which will reimburse the County for 66% of the cost.

--- A \$1.7 million amendment to a contract with Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry for emergency shelter services for homeless men. Councilman Jones noted that the facility at 2100 Lakeside Avenue serves 400 men per night and provides case management, counseling, and mental health and addiction services. It is supported 100% via the Health & Human Services levy.

--- Appointments to the Cuyahoga Arts & Culture Board (Joseph Gibbons reappointed) and to the Tri-C Board (Helen Forbes-Fields appointed, Jerry L. Kelsheimer reappointed).

IV. Notes.

Councilman Gallagher reminded Council that training on Sunshine Laws and Public Records is scheduled for the next day (Wednesday, March 25).