

## **County Council Regular Meeting: January 23, 2018**

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 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.**

The meeting was called to order by Council President Brady shortly after 5pm, following the swearing in of new District #10 (NE Cleveland, Bratenahl, East Cleveland, Cleveland Heights & University Heights) Council Member, Michael Houser. He was appointed by district Democratic Party Committee members to fill the vacancy left by departing Anthony Hairston. Official group photographs were also taken, as all Council members were in attendance. The meeting adjourned shortly before 6pm.

### **II. Antecedents, Announcements and Public Comment.**

A Committee of the Whole beforehand was concerned largely with collective bargaining contracts.

County Executive Budish spoke about the upcoming need to renew one of the two Health and Human Service levies, enumerating some of the essential services which that revenue source currently provides (see below).

Public Comment consisted of 1) Rev. Pinkney-Butts in opposition to County funds being spent on renovating the Cleveland Athletic Club building (see below); and 2) three individuals concerned with the upcoming fare hikes for RTA ridership, which are likely to put the cost public transportation beyond the ability of many low-income people to pay. All three (Akshai Singh, Dan McCarthy and Miss Lu) urged the Council to look at a fare-relief measure recently passed by Chicago/Cook County IL and consider something similar for this metro-area. The two young men spoke as part of a Transportation Subcommittee and advocates for students and those who have no other way to get to jobs or appointments. Miss Lu spoke for the homeless unemployed who often cannot get to their job interviews.

### **III. Business Transacted.**

\* Adopted: Submission to May Primary voters of a 3.9 mill, 2-year renewal levy request to supplement general fund appropriations in the area of health and human services. All 11 Council members co-sponsored the resolution, and Mr. Miller spoke for all in urging voters to support the levy. This is the smaller of two H&HS levies which keep many essential County services afloat. It is expected to bring in \$104 million each year – if it were to be defeated, the County would have to cut \$104 million from its annual expenditures, across the board.

\* Among other adopted resolutions were the following:

-- a \$8.7 million contract extension to Youth Opportunities Unlimited for its Summer Youth Employment Program, expanding the program through the end of Y2018.

-- a total of \$842,000 to 11 separate providers of programs or services to the County's Fatherhood Initiative through 2018.

-- a revenue-generating agreement with East Cleveland for the maintenance and repair of that city's storm sewers, sanitary sewers and water lines.

-- a similar agreement with RTA (up to \$1.3 million) for maintenance and repair of those same facilities at RTA's various facilities around the County.

-- a \$2 million Economic Development loan to the project developer of the Cleveland Athletic Club Reuse Project on the south side of Euclid Avenue. Mr. Schron explained that the building comprises the last block of Euclid Avenue to have a facelift (its façade currently looks very dilapidated, with scaffolding and sidewalk detours), and that it will be converted into housing stock – not athletic facilities and hotel rooms as the previous speaker had spoken against. The project will furnish 275 construction jobs and afterward, 50+ permanent jobs, he said.

-- a \$2.4 million award to Rainbow Babies' & Children's Hospital for health care and management at the Juvenile Court Detention Center.

-- a \$1.2 million agreement with the Board of Developmental Disabilities for eligibility verification services and reimbursement of Medicaid Home- and Community-based Services.

\* a \$3.1 million award for roof replacement at the Virgil E. Brown Building on Payne Avenue was introduced and referred to the appropriate committee.

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

One of new Council Member Houser's committee assignments is the Environment etc. Committee chaired by Ms. Simon – the same committee where the Plastic Bag Ordinance has been delayed, due in part to that vacant committee seat. So it is again possible that further action could be forthcoming. League members may also want to follow the prospects of the public transportation advocates' proposal for fare relief, after a model ordinance recently passed in the Chicago area.