

County Council Regular Meeting: February 13, 2018

Observers: Tessa Xuan and 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

I. Introduction.

Council President Dan Brady called the meeting to order at 5pm. All Council members were present. The meeting adjourned at 5:42pm.

II. Antecedents, Announcements and Public Comment.

President Brady spoke about the Greater Cleveland Food Bank's Harvest for Hunger kickoff event on February 15th. County Executive Armond Budish spoke about the departure of his chief of staff Sharon Sobol Jordan and announced that Shaker Heights Mayor Earl Leiken had been selected to fill the position. The county did not post the position.

Public Comment: 1) Rev. Pinkney-Butts was concerned that upcoming RTA service cuts would negatively affect those with multiple jobs. She was opposed to the \$3.9 million Health & Human Services tax levy as well as several resolutions on the agenda concerning contracts for Invest in Children. 2) Lynn Solomon and Rich Rafael spoke on behalf of advocacy group Clevelanders for Public Transit. They were "gravely concerned" about the "death spiral" and funding crisis resulting from continued RTA service cuts and fare hikes. Rafael said he looked forward to sharing proposed RTA reforms with the Council. 3) Miss Lu spoke about recent violent incidents in homeless shelters caused by overcrowding, and said the current service provider didn't recognize the importance of having overflow space for homeless shelters. She also was concerned that RTA cuts would eventually lead to job loss and economic recession.

III. Business Transacted.

* Adopted: A \$3.1 million award to Terik Roofing, Inc. for roof replacement at the Virgil E. Brown Building on Payne Avenue as well as a 30-year warranty on wind, hail, and puncture damage and a 20-year warranty on seams for skylights.

* The following resolutions were first read and referred to committee:

-- The reappointment of Yvette Ittu to the County Audit Committee.

-- A \$2.1 million award to W.B. Mason Co., Inc. for general office supplies & related services.

-- A total of \$1 million in awards to 21 municipalities and non-profit organizations, for various projects in connection with the 2018 Community Development Supplemental Grant Program. All Council members requested to join County Executive Budish/Department of Development and Councilmember Jones as co-sponsors.

-- Several contracts for administrative services for Invest in Children programs, including: \$2.9 million for the Family Child Care Homes program; \$1.6 million for the Teacher Education and Compensation Help and Early Care and Education Center Capacity Expansion program and

Child Care Resource Referral program; \$4 million for the Special Needs Child Care program; and \$2.5 million for the Bright Beginnings and Parents as Teachers programs.

-- A \$1.3 million agreement with Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board of Cuyahoga County for the Early Childhood Mental Health program for Invest in Children.

* A \$24 million bond issue to pay for demolition of blighted and nuisance properties was read for the second time and will be acted upon at the next Council meeting.

* The following ordinances were first read and referred to committee:

-- Modifications to the county Human Resources Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual.

-- Establishment of a county Consumer Protection Code.

-- Establishment of a county Weights & Measures Code.

IV. Notes.

After Clevelanders for Public Transit publicly presented their “Fair Fares” proposal to the RTA board on February 20th, an RTA committee recommended delaying the \$0.25 fare hike scheduled for August 2018 by at least one year. The RTA board is scheduled to consider the postponement at a public meeting at 9am on March 27th at 1240 W. Sixth Street.

One week later: on February 20th, several County Council members voiced their opposition to the latest draft of the Human Resources Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual, which includes perks such as bonuses and overtime to attract and retain salaried employees. This issue has been sparking adverse media coverage and differences between the Council and the County Executive and is not yet resolved.