

County Council Regular Meeting, March 10, 2020

Observer: Marcia Goldberg

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 5:05 p.m., a few minutes late because the Committee of the Whole had just ended an executive session. All Council members were present, although Mr. Schron walked in at 5:15. The meeting ended just after 5:30.

II. Antecedents, Announcements, and Public Comment.

County Executive Armond Budish reviewed the county's plans for preventing and combatting the coronavirus. The county's health department has set up its emergency operations center and joint information center (operated with Cleveland). He said communities in the county and across Ohio are working together to protect residents.

IV. Business Transacted

Council unanimously passed several resolutions: (the live links provide additional information)

* A \$19.1 million budget amendment which implements the first round of spending from the [Opioid Mitigation Fund](#), set up after last year's settlement of some of the opioid crisis lawsuits. The appropriation funds [several programs](#) to help treat opioid-addicted residents and their families. The county will eventually receive \$100 million from the Fund, Councilman Dale Miller said.

* A memorandum of understanding called "[One Ohio](#)" with the state of Ohio and local governments across the state to explore possible resolutions of other ongoing legal actions related to Ohio's opioid crisis. [This is separate from the funding noted above.]

*A \$3.2 million, 4-year contract with [Key Bank](#) for banking and treasury services. Although the contract is a routine measure, in return Key agreed to couple the contract with an offer of [financial assistance](#) that would increase access to capital for lower-income county residents—the first time in the U.S. this has ever been done at the county level, according to Mr. Miller. While Key Bank's offer of help with mortgages, home repairs, and small-business lending is not mandatory, Mr. Miller said Council will do regular reviews of the bank's actions.

*C. \$700,000 to [CHN Housing Partners](#) for administration of the [Down Payment Assistance Program](#) in Cuyahoga Urban County Communities and Parma through 2021.

* Over \$400,000 to various providers for veterans services and programs. The payments will be funded by the county's [Veterans Services Fund](#). Councilman Jack Schron, a veteran, said that Cuyahoga is the only Ohio county that makes sure these funds go directly to programs that serve veterans.

*A \$920,000 amendment to the county's 2019 agreement with Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio for fiscal agent services for the [Families and Schools Together Program](#) and other related activities and services. The amendment also extends the contract until the end of 2021. The program, Councilwoman Sunny Simon explained, is a third-grade service program for parents to encourage engagement in their children's education. The program, she said, "really works."

*\$240,000 to stripe ~~Lake Avenue~~ from Cove Avenue to Webb Road in Lakewood. The project will expand Lake Avenue access to bicyclists.

Other resolutions were referred to committees for further discussion.