

County Council Regular Meeting: October 22, 2019

Observer: Rebecca Parkes

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.

The meeting was called to order at 5:18 by Council President Dan Brady with all 11 members and County Executive Armond Budish present. It adjourned at 5:45pm.

II. Antecedents, Announcements and Pubic Comment.

Tracy Morris, a 26-year county employee, spoke regarding the County Employee Class Action Lawsuit resulting from pay cuts and increases in work hours. It has been 7 years since the lawsuit was filed. She expressed her frustration with the continued delays, and said that families like hers are suffering because there has yet to be a resolution. Sharon Hawthorne, another county employee, spoke regarding the same issue.

Ms. Lu expressed concerns about the changes to the Rocket Mortgage Field House she identified during the Open House. Specifically, she noted the increase in concession options, but that the costs are very high and not affordable for most. She also said the new designs are not as handicap friendly.

Mr. Budish announced that he spent Friday evening in court with several mayors and state attorneys general discussing the Global Settlement on the Opioid Cases, which was proposed as \$18B over 18 years to be distributed amongst several states. The proposal was rejected. Late Sunday evening a settlement was reached for Summit and Cuyahoga counties in the amount of \$235 million cash. All but \$20 million will be paid immediately. There is a second trial against CVS, Discount Drug Mart and others which will commence in early 2020.

III. Business Transacted.

* Resolutions adopted at today's meeting included the following:

- The appointment of Monica Houston to serve as Director of Internal Auditing for an unexpired term ending 6/30/2020. This position is appointed independently by the County Audit Committee, not by the County Executive.
- \$2.9 million in additional funds paid to Infor Public Sector for information technology services and solutions for the Enterprise Resource Planning system.
- \$73 million in funding to 50 providers for Out-of-Home Placement and Foster Care Services through 12/31/2020
- \$2 million for funding to 26 municipalities and providers for various services for the Community Social Services Program through 12/31/2020
- A Resolution which will distribute 40% of the 1% increase in the excise tax of hotel lodging transactions ("Bed Tax") to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, Inc., effective 1/1/2020. Mr. Shron thanked President Brady for the support and noted that this funding was previously provided by Destination Cleveland, and with Cuyahoga County now distributing the funds,

Destination Cleveland will have more funding to use on bringing key events to the city such as the NFL draft.

-- \$2 million Economic Development Fund Business Growth and Attraction Loan awarded to Redwood Corporate One LLC for the Redwood Living, Inc Headquarters Project to be located in the City of Independence.

* Read for a second time and referred to the November 12th meeting for final vote:

-- \$2.4 million in awards on various requisitions to various providers in the public works sector including sanitary sewer construction supplies, bridge concrete and joint supplies, sanitary stock tools and supplies and sanitary sewer monitoring supplies

-- \$2.5 million in various revenue generating agreements with eight providers for lease of space at various Adult Activities Centers for the period 1/1/2020- 12/31/2022

-- \$1.2 million awarded to Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry for adult guardianship services for the period 1/1/2020- 12/31/2021

* Among items introduced and referred to committees were the following:

-- An Ordinance to establish an Opioid Mitigation Fund was referred to the Finance Committee. This fund would collect and spend all funds received as part of any action related to Prescription Opiate Litigation. Such a dedicated fund would guarantee that any awards or settlements would be used for the sole purpose of mitigating the extreme human and budgetary costs of opioid abuse. This ordinance is proposed by the County Council.

-- \$1.4 million in contracts for preventative HVAC and fire alarm/security system maintenance services at various county buildings was referred to the Public Works Committee.