

**Westshore Council of Governments Meeting**  
**Nov. 13, 2019**

*This report is not an official statement of the League of Women Voters. Mayor Summers' office prepares official minutes.*

**Present:** Mayors Summers (Lakewood) presiding; Kennedy (N. Olmsted), Bobst (Rocky River), Patton (Fairview Park), Koomar (Bay Village), and Renee Mahoney, COG Fiscal Officer.

**Guests:** County Council Members Nan Baker and Dale Miller.

Meeting was called to order at 9:30 and adjourned at 11:30.

1. **Mayor Summers** welcomed Meghan George, newly elected to replace him as Lakewood mayor; and Patrick Cooney (not present), elected to replace Mayor Patton of Fairview Park. He explained the background of WCOG and noted that the Police Chiefs (Fire Chiefs?) also meet monthly to discuss common issues. There being little routine business, this meeting would take up some policy discussions.

2-3. Mayor Summers called roll and minutes of previous meeting were approved without objections.

4. **Fiscal Officer's Report:** Budget allocations for enforcement in 2020 went according to previous years. Sept. financials were received. It was noted that there is one undercover investigative agent in addition to uniformed officers.

5. **Commission Reports:**

a. **RTA:** Their new president will come to next meeting. There is still a vacancy on their board. Patton stated that Fairview is having safety problems with the transit station on Center Ridge. There is no off-street parking, and people have been sleeping in the heated shelter. She wants to know the role of the transit police. Are there general safety regulations? She will bring up these concerns at the end of the next meeting, as they may need to have a separate conversation.

b. **NOACA:** Nothing new to report.

c. **Land Bank:** Miller reported that they are making a strategic shift, turning to restoration rather than demolition. Summers assumes that he is leaving the board due to stepping down as mayor, but then wondered who would replace him? The board is appointed, not ex officio, so he might be able to remain in the position as a private citizen, or else new Mayor George might step in. He would have to find out what's expected.

**d. County Planning Commission** has a new director, a former Fairview Park employee. He should be invited to a WCOG meeting, too, to tell them what the commission actually does. Now the Service and Development Director position is open in Fairview. This is a key position, almost like a City Manager.

Summers noted that he expects to see a lot of work on I-90 in the next 2-3 years, so be aware of coming traffic problems.

**Mayors and Managers Assn.** The next meeting will include training for the new mayors.

The Lakefront Trail project, proposed by Cuy. Co., is in very beginning stage. Jeff (?) will come to next meeting to discuss it.

**Other issues:** Recycling and its costs: What happens with city contracts? Rocky River and Lakewood handle their own recycling, so they don't have contracts with haulers. Surcharges are coming. Bobst stated that the cities have to be honest and careful with residents in explaining the changes. Where city used to get paid for recycled materials, now the city has to pay to have it hauled away. Contaminated bags go to landfill. People don't want to abandon their habits, but these are the realities. The best option is not to buy single-use items, or packaging, in the first place.

**School District issues** (on March primary?): These affect districts that have students crossing city lines. Consolidation, very controversial on the East Side, is not a West Side consideration.

**Eminent Domain** for trails and connectors: No WCOG action needed; this is mainly in rural areas.

**6. Old Business: Reserve engine:** There has been discussion of sharing the expense of a new fire engine. This is for the Fire Chiefs to discuss. Meanwhile, City of Cleveland's fleet is so old, they're buying a used one from one of the West Shore cities, and it will be their newest.

**Home Rule:** County Charter states that Charter Cities can create law that supersedes County law, but could this be contested? It is not a violation of Home Rule for County to pass legislation. But State wants to supersede cities in spite of Home Rule.

**Blue Bag Ban:** This is an example of where cities may want to "opt out" of the County legislation by writing their own. Meanwhile, cities that do want to implement the ban aren't sure how to do it, and how to enforce it. The date the ban is to take effect has already changed from Oct. 1 to Jan. 1. Miller stated that it is a consumer driven law, therefore voluntary compliance is key. They didn't expressly plan a soft roll-out, but that is probably the way it will work out. The

Consumer Affairs department visits stores regularly, and will be able to communicate if they see non-compliance.

The elephant in the room is the question of whether the State will intervene. Miller said they would be lucky if the State stayed out of the way and let the County do its own thing. Cities will have to wait and see, but it makes it difficult to know what to say to businesses.

WCOG wants to cooperate with the County, and in turn, County recognizes the right of cities to deal with the issues. Baker admitted the County acted unilaterally in this case, without reaching out to local mayors. Many businesses don't even know about the ban, at least they haven't contacted the mayors to ask about it. The message the mayors want to communicate to the Council members is that if the bag ban isn't communicated or implemented well, cities will be forced to react. The cities can help with implementation, but they need to be brought on board so they'll know what to tell businesses.

Summers said he will ask Rep. Greenspan and Sen. Dolan for the status of H.B. 242 and S.B. 222, which would allow the use of "alternate containers."

Baker noted that she is always glad to come talk to this group about issues before Council—likewise, she wants to be invited when there is a West Shore issue she should know about. Summers assured her she is always welcome to attend the meetings.

Respectfully submitted,  
Judith Weiss  
LWVGC-Rocky River Chapter Chair