County Council Regular (Remote) Meeting, June 9, 2020
Observer: Debbie Andersen

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

This meeting was held by teleconference. Council President Dan Brady called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.; it ended at 2:37pm. All members were present, although Mr. Jones arrived several minutes late.

II. Antecedents, Announcements and Public Comment

Members of the public can email comments to Jeanne Schmotzer, council clerk, before the meeting and she will enter them into the record. There was one public comment submitted by Ms. Lu. It had been distributed to the Council but was not read aloud during the meeting. County Executive Budish said that the national unemployment report for April is slightly lower than expected at 14%-15%. Ohio is slightly higher than the federal average at 17% and Cuyahoga County is even higher at 24%. These numbers will impact tax revenues. The Veteran Service Commissioner submitted a budget to council, but no action is necessary.

III. Business Transacted

* Among several resolutions and one ordinance passed at this meeting were the following:

-- An ordinance delaying the enforcement of the plastic bag ordinance until 1/1/2021

-- Cost saving-agreements with employees from 8 different employee union groups to serve 10 unpaid furlough days between now and 3/27/2021

-- Hazard pay agreements with 13 other employee union groups effective immediately

-- A $12.9 million loan to Metro-Health to cover services provided to County employees

-- $15 million in awards to 8 contractors to make COVID emergency building modifications over the next 12 months. These are the controversial no-bid contracts reported in the Plain Dealer, although permitted in emergencies and approved by all Council members.

-- $1.6 million to resurface E. 131 St. in Cleveland and Garfield Hts

-- $8.9 million for improving jail food services over the next 3 years

* Read for the second time and moved along to the next meeting for final action was a total of $22.3 million in contracts for 14 different road resurfacing projects in the County.

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

-- Annual Alternative Tax Budget for 2021

-- $3.5 million Economic Development Loan to a manufacturing facility in Maple Heights. This is the maker of Purell and other sanitizers, reported in the PD, which is part of the Ohio Manufacturing Alliance to fight COVID-19.
-- $1.25 million in stop-loss insurance for employees with Medical Mutual insurance through the County’s regional benefits program.

-- $5 million in COVID Relief funds and $1.8 million in block grants to provide emergency rental assistance to CHN tenants adversely impacted by COVID-19.

-- $2.1 million in additional funds and an extended time line to operate the Workforce Service Center and for management of the On-the-Job Training Program.

-- $4 million in additional funds and extended time frame for a program for young adults providing employment, education and training services.

-- $1 million to 4 local school districts (including Cleveland Hts – University Hts.) which use two programs aimed at closing the achievement gap.