

Westshore Council of Governments Meeting
Bay Village City Hall

Wednesday, September 9, 2020

Mayor Koomar called the meeting to order at 9:38 a.m.

Present for the meeting were Mayor Koomar (Bay Village), Mayor Cooney (Fairview Park), Mayor Bobst (Rocky River), Mayor George (Lakewood) and Mayor Clough (Westlake), Mayor Kennedy (North Olmsted). Also in attendance: Debbie Comery, Clerk of Courts for Rocky River Municipal Court, Judge Brian Hagan and Judge Donna Congeni Fitzsimmons of Rocky River Municipal Court, State Representative Dave Greenspan, 16th District, and Susan Murnane, LWV. Fiscal Officer Renee Mahoney was absent.

New Business: Mayor Kennedy requested a discussion on the efficiency of the Rocky River Municipal Court. Debbie Comery, Clerk of Rocky River Municipal Court, and Judge Donna Congeni Fitzsimmons and Judge Brian Hagan were here to discuss operations during Covid and the increased need for their services as Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court was closed and North Olmsted's Mayors Court was closed for a time during the pandemic. Rocky River Municipal Court has been fully open since the beginning of May. Judge Hagan, Judge Fitzsimmons and Ms. Comery spoke at length about the services they have continued to provide with increased need for social services during the time the other courts remain closed to civil cases, citing their Probation Dept. has stayed very busy. Court operations were discussed at length.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the August 12, 2020 meeting were distributed for review and approval. Mayor Clough moved to approve the minutes. Mayor Bobst seconded. The minutes were approved as written.

Fiscal Officer's Report: Renee Mahoney was unable to attend. She will answer any questions concerning the Agreed Upon Procedures from the Auditor of State that she distributed following the August meeting, at the next meeting.

Commission Reports

RTA: Mayor Clough reported the RTA received \$111 million and that finances remain good at this time. There is no plan for a tax levy or an increase in sales tax for RTA in 2021. Mayor Koomar asked about the Capital investment needed. Mayor Clough told all that they have sufficient funds to get one third of the cars needed. Mayor Clough's term on the RTA Board will end Feb. 28, 2021. The General Manager will notify the county which generally meets in December to select the next Board member. Dave Greenspan

reports the transportation budget is coming up in February 2021 and they will be seeking additional funds for public transportation. Mayor Clough noted Senator Dolan and Representative Greenspan were instrumental in getting dollars from the state for the RTA.

NOACA: Mayor Bobst noted there is a virtual meeting on Friday. Nothing to report. The NOACA website is seeking public comment on a number of issues. Mayor George is on NOACA as well.

County Planning Commission: Mayor Bobst noted they have conducted 8 interviews for the position of Executive Director, and have narrowed the field down to 3-4 candidates. They are hoping to set up interviews in-person.

Cuyahoga County Mayors and Managers Association: Mayor Bobst noted that Senator Dolan introduced legislation, SB357 which the senate passed unanimously giving additional \$650 million CARES Act dollars to local communities. The bill is now in the House. Lisa Barno, Cuyahoga County Mayors and Managers, distributed a spreadsheet to the mayors with distribution amounts. Mayor Bobst is waiting to hear from Tim Cosgrove regarding a possible second fund distribution from the Local Government Fund. She added that Rocky River should receive \$720,000 from the per capita distribution (from the 3rd distribution – the Senate Bill). More direction is needed from the Treasury as to how these funds can be spent. Representative Greenspan added a letter was sent to the Treasury asking for guidance. There was discussion on the cities losses and possible use of the funds to cover losses.

Mayor George announced that Lakewood was using the funds for safety services based on the fact the city has “significantly changed operations” incurring additional costs due to COVID. Funds can be used for police, fire and community services if significantly impacted. Mayor Cooney noted that Westcom was able to breakout Covid costs. Representative Greenspan recommended passing a Council Resolution with a spending formula for auditing purposes. Mayor George will share with the group documentation from Lakewood’s Safety Services as to how they are using their funds. Mayor Kennedy has his Administrative Assistant checking with other communities to see what they are spending their CARES Act funds on. Further conversation on the spending of CARES Act dollars followed.

Rep. Dave Greenspan gave updates on the state capital budget. Mayor Koomar noted that we are having a difficult time getting new contracts from the state. Representative Greenspan said they are moving slowly possibly due to many working remotely. Money has been re-appropriated and is in the pipeline for previously budgeted projects, but no new projects are being considered at this time. They will be discussing a new capital budget by the end of the year.

New Business: Covid testing will be needed in order to re-open Senior Centers. Mayor Bobst announced the orders to reopen Senior Centers 9/21/20. They are looking for more definitive language on screening for participants and testing for staff and participants. Frequency of testing is not yet known.

Rep. Greenspan announced the passing of HB 606, indemnification bill for frivolous lawsuits for Covid related cases is on the governor's desk to be signed. This will protect hospitals, businesses, schools, etc. through Sept. of 2021. There was no emergency clause, so it will go into effect 90 days after it is signed.

Mayor Bobst announced the RRWTP flow study will be finalized in mid-October.

There being no further business Mayor Koomar moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:08 am. Mayor's Clough and Cooney seconded.

The next COG meeting will be Wednesday, October 14, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. in the Community Room at the Bay Village Police Station, 28000 Wolf Rd., Bay Village