



CUYAHOGA COUNTY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

CUYAHOGA COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE HEADQUARTERS

4th FLOOR

MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2025 — 1:00 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Council President Miller called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Council President Miller asked Clerk Richardson to call the roll. Councilmembers Sweeney, Casselberry, Gallagher, Schleper, Conwell, Turner, Houser and Miller were in attendance, and a quorum was determined. Councilmember Jones was absent.

[Clerk's Note: Councilmember Simon entered the meeting shortly after the roll call was taken and Councilmember Kelly joined the meeting after Executive Session].

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following individuals addressed Council regarding Resolution No. R2025-0293, adopting the 2026/2027 Biennial Operating Budget and Capital Improvements Program:

- a) **Loh, addressed Council regarding County funding for Health & Human Services.**
- b) **Che Gadison, member of the Millionaires Row Association, addressed Council regarding funding for the City of East Cleveland**
- c) **Jennifer Johnson, Executive Director of Canopy Child Advocacy Center, addressed Council regarding funding for The Child Protection Team.**
- d) **Gail Long, Citizen, addressed Council regarding The MetroHealth System Subsidy.**

A motion was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. Conwell and approved by unanimous vote, to excuse Councilmember Kelly from the meeting.

4. MATTERS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE/DISCUSSION:

- a) **R2025-0304: A Resolution authorizing the issuance and sale of General Obligation Bond Anticipation Notes in a principal amount not-to-exceed \$14,220,000.00, in anticipation of the issuance of bonds, to retire outstanding bond anticipation notes issued to provide funds for the purpose of paying the costs of constructing, renovating, improving or repairing sports**

facilities, including specifically major capital repairs to such sports facilities, together with all necessary appurtenances and work incidental thereto, and to pay the costs of issuance in connection therewith; authorizing the preparation and use of a preliminary and final official statement; approving and authorizing the execution of a purchase agreement and a continuing disclosure agreement; and declaring the necessity that this Resolution become immediately effective.

Mr. Walter Parfejewiec, Director of the Office of Budget & Management and Mr. Robert Franz, Director of Public Finance for Stifel Financial Corp., addressed Council and gave a presentation regarding the Cuyahoga County General Obligation Capital Improvement Bond Anticipation Notes. Discussion ensued.

Councilmembers asked questions of Mr. Parfejewiec and Mr. Franz, pertaining to the item, which they answered accordingly.

On a motion by Ms. Turner with a second by Mr. Casselberry, Resolution No. R2025-0304 was considered and approved by unanimous vote, to be referred to the full Council agenda with a recommendation for passage under second reading suspension of the rules.

- b) R2025-0300: A Resolution awarding a total sum, not to exceed \$25,000, to Flats Forward Inc. for the Flats Revitalization Project from the District 3 ARPA Community Grant Fund; and declaring the necessity that this Resolution become immediately effective.

Mr. Jim Haviland, Executive Director of Flats Forward Inc., addressed Council and gave a presentation regarding the Flats Revitalization Project. Discussion ensued.

Councilmembers asked questions of Mr. Haviland, pertaining to the item, which he answered accordingly.

On a motion by Mr. Miller with a second by Mr. Sweeney, Resolution No. R2025-0300 was considered and approved by unanimous vote, to be referred to the full Council agenda for second reading. Councilmembers Conwell, Schleper, Turner and Casselberry requested to have their names added as co-sponsors to the legislation.

Council President Miller turned the gavel over to Councilmember Turner, Chair of the Finance & Budgeting Committee.

- c) O2025-0007: An Ordinance enacting Section 202.11 of the County Code to establish a Building Department under the supervision of the County Executive and the Fiscal Officer to exercise enforcement authority of, and to accept and approve construction documents and conduct inspections in accordance with, the rules of the State of Ohio Board of Building Standards relating to both residential and non-residential construction within the County; and declaring the necessity that this Ordinance become immediately effective.

Ms. Dawn Ford, Appraisal Permit Coordinator for Cuyahoga County, and Mr. Christopher Alvarado, Director of Regional Collaboration for the Executive' Office, addressed Council and gave a presentation regarding the Proposed Cuyahoga County Building Department. Discussion ensued.

Councilmembers asked questions of Ms. Ford and Mr. Alvarado, pertaining to the item, which they answered accordingly.

On a motion by Mr. Houser with a second by Mr. Sweeney, Ordinance No. O2025-0007 was considered and approved by unanimous vote, to be referred to the full Council agenda for second reading.

- d) R2025-0293: A Resolution adopting the 2026/2027 Biennial Operating Budget and Capital Improvements Program, and declaring the necessity that this Resolution become immediately effective:

- 1) Additional Departmental Hearings (if needed)

There were no additional departmental hearings needed.

- 2) Discussion of Budget Amendment Concepts

Chair Turner asked if any of her colleagues wanted to express their thoughts on any budget amendments or suggestions they may have. Ms. Turner told Committee members if they are not ready to discuss any amendments at this time, to submit their items by the deadline date of Friday, November 15, so they can be fully discussed at the next budget hearing scheduled for Monday, November 17, during the Committee of the Whole Meeting.

Council President Miller stated that the General fund budget is close to what the Administration proposed, and there is not much room for error. Mr. Miller commented that because Council had to provide a technical amendment to add additional funding for the Board of Elections, further removed any flexibility.

Mr. Miller stated that it's late in the Health and Human Services Levy cycle and we tend to have more money in the beginning of the cycle and less money towards the end. We're getting close to the time where we will be reaching out to the voters, and given that, we can go into reserves a little bit and try to respond to some of the highest needs requested. Mr. Miller said he is open to making some adjustments in a couple of the most critical areas of Health and Human Services.

Mr. Sweeney commended Chairwoman Turner for her leadership in chairing the Budget Hearings. Mr. Sweeney asked as we near the conclusion of our budget process what is anticipated in the deliberations among Councilmembers to continue to make final decisions collectively. Discussion ensued.

Councilmember Simon commented that the County Sheriff will address Councilmembers on Monday, November 17, which is after the November 15th deadline, and stated she will consider latitude after that process has taken place, as that is a large portion of the County's budget.

- 3) Departmental Appeals

There were no departmental appeals.

[Clerk's Notes: Item No. 4d (4)) was taken out of order after Item No. 4.c.)]

4) Public Testimony

- a) **Michael Seering, Chief Program Officer for Lutheran Metropolitan Ministries, addressed Council regarding funding for Homeless Shelter Services.**
- b) **Loh addressed Council regarding funding for Homeless Shelter Services.**
- c) **Larry Bresler, Northern Ohioans for Budget Legislation Equality (NOBLE), addressed Council regarding funding for Housing, Healthcare, Mental Health and Children's**
- d) **Che Gadison, Northern Ohioans for Budget Legislation Equality (NOBLE), addressed Council regarding funding for critical needs programs that support Kinship care.**
- e) **Gail Long, Northern Ohioans for Budget Legislation Equality (NOBLE), addressed Council regarding increasing funding for administrative services for Cuyahoga County Jobs and Family Services.**

5. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a) Pending or imminent court action

A motion was made by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Ms. Conwell, and approved by unanimous roll-call vote to move to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing pending or imminent court action and for no other purpose whatsoever. Executive Session was then called to order by Council President Miller at 3:11 p.m. The following Councilmembers were present: Sweeney, Casselberry, Gallagher, Schleper, Conwell, Turner, Houser, Simon and Miller.

The following additional attendees were present: Senior Counsel Gregory Huth; Civil Division Chief David Lambert; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Mark Musson; Amy Ryder Wentz, Shareholder Littler Mendelson, P.C.; Katherine Gallagher, Chief of Operations; Council Chief of Staff Joseph Nanni; Assistant Law Director Rebecca Divoky; Assistant Law Director Alex Cortes; Chief Deputy Sheriff Aaron Reese; Council Chief of Staff Joseph Nanni; Special Counsel Michael King; Legislative Budget Advisor Trevor McAleer and Research and Policy Analyst Laura Black.

At 4:19 p.m., Executive Session was adjourned without objection and Council President Miller then reconvened the meeting.

6. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

There was no miscellaneous business.

7. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Chair Miller adjourned the meeting at 4:19 p.m., without objection.