



**Minutes of the November 29, 2023 meeting of the
NORTHEAST OHIO FIRST SUBURBS CONSORTIUM
Cassidy Theater Community Room in Parma Heights**

In Attendance:

Jim Rokakis
Brad Cromes, Cuyahoga County Treasurer
Mayor Georgine Welo, City of South Euclid
Christopher Alvarado, Cuyahoga County Regional Collaboration Director
Patrick Hewitt, County Planning Commission
Mary Cierebiej, County Planning Commission Executive Director
Geoff Englebrecht, City of University Heights
Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan, City of University Heights
Joe Sebes, City of Parma Heights
Mayor Marie Gallo, City of Parma Heights
Paul Marnecheck, City of Brook Park
Mayor Tim DeGeeter, City of Parma
Mayor Matthew Burke, City of Garfield Heights
Victoria Berry, Cuyahoga County Treasurer's Office
Michelle Taylor, Cuyahoga Treasurer's Office
Benjamin Brown, City of Warrensville Heights
Nicole Harris, City of Warrensville Heights
Raymon Turner, City of Warrensville Heights
Mayor Stan Koci, City of Bedford
Jennifer Kuzma, NEO-FSC
Pequita Hansberry, City of Maple Heights
Joe Duffy, City of Maple Heights
Tom Ott, Cott Media
Chris Henry
Andy Montlack

Mayor Koci opened the meeting at 9:21 AM, welcomed attendees to the meeting and thanked Mayor Gallo for hosting at the Cassidy Theater. Mayor Gallo thanked members for coming out to Parma Heights and offered the space whenever First Suburbs needs it for meetings. She also introduced Joe Sebes and they discussed many of the recent projects completed in Parma Heights.

Mayor Koci then turned the meeting over to Jennifer to introduce Ken Montlack's wife Chris Henry and son Andy Montlack. Both spoke of Ken's commitment to First Suburbs and thanked the members for their efforts to keep the organization focused on the original mission of redeveloping first ring suburbs. Jennifer then awarded the first annual Ken Montlack Visionary Leader award to Jim Rokakis for his commitment to First Suburbs and

the history of successful initiatives he brought to Cuyahoga County. The County Planning Commission was awarded the first Ken Montlack Visionary Program/Project Award for their leadership role in the Single-Family Zoning Code Analysis Initiative. Both Jim Rokakis and Mary Cierebiej spoke and thanked the organization for the award.

Mayor Koci then moved the meeting to the approval of the August 2023 NEO-FSC meeting minutes. Mayor Koci asked those present if any corrections or edits were needed to the minutes as they were presented. Hearing no edits needed, the minutes of the August 2023 NEO-FSC meeting were then unanimously approved with a motion made by Mayor DeGeeter which was seconded by Paul Marnecheck.

Discussion then turned to the approval of the 2024 operating budget. Jennifer walked those present through the proposed budget and answered questions from members. Following that discussion, Mayor Koci asked if there was a motion to approve the 2024 operating budget as proposed. Mayor Matthew Burke made the motion to approve the 2024 operating budget and Mayor Welo seconded the motion. All members present were in favor and the budget was approved unanimously.

Mayor Koci then asked Jennifer to give the report on 2024 leadership nominations. Jennifer reminded those present that the opportunity to self-nominate or nominate others was made available via email. Jennifer then provided the following nominations:

Chair: Mayor Tim DeGeeter
Vice-Chair: Mayor Annette Blackwell
Members: Mayor Kirsten Holzheimer Gail, Mayor Matthew Burke, Mayor Marie Gallo,
Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan and Mayor David Weiss

Jennifer asked if there were any additional nominations to be considered and none were given. Mayor Koci thanked Jennifer for her report and asked if there was a motion to approve the slate as presented. Paul Marnecheck made a motion to approve the slate and elect nominees into office. Mayor Gallo seconded that motion, and all members present unanimously approved the motion. Mayor Koci thanked the membership for their support and welcomed the elected members to their 2024 leadership positions. Mayor Welo thanked Mayor Koci for his leadership as Chair from 2021-2023.

In the First Suburbs Housing Committee Report, Jennifer reported on presentations at the Ohio APA Conference presentation on the Single-Family Zoning Analysis in two groups – one the project overall and a second on how to develop design guidelines for your community. Jennifer also thanked those who attended and participated in the November builder/developer event to share the updates from the SFZA and to market available infill lots. Presentation will be given to the Advocacy Committee of ACAR in December by Jennifer along with Patrick Hewitt on this project as well. Jennifer also reported that the regular meetings of the Citizenserve clerks are going well, and participants are learning from one another and giving some thought to 2024 focus.

In the First Suburbs Development Council Report, Jennifer reported that the research work on the impact of the small businesses in our economy is completed and will be used to advocate for more small business assistance programs. A presentation with Dr. Shawn Rohlin will be arranged so he can review the findings with members.

In the Staff Report Jennifer reported that the newly updated First Suburbs website has launched at www.firstusburbs.org and Tom Ott will be working with us in 2024 to do

monthly stories on First Suburbs efforts and work in our member communities. A new newsletter format will also be developed as a part of this refresh.

In Other Business, Cuyahoga County Treasurer Brad Cromes expressed his interest to work collaboratively with First Suburbs to meet our shared goals and to help our residents. Jim Rokakis took a moment to update on the Ohio brownfield and demo funds which recently made its first awards and upcoming programs to assist with home repair, rehab and acquisition funding coming from the State. Patrick Hewitt reported that the accessory dwelling unit study in Cleveland Heights will be shared with others once it is completed.

Jennifer reminded members that the next quarterly meeting of the NEO-FSC was scheduled for Wednesday, February 7, 2024, at 9 AM. The meeting adjourned at 10:05 AM.