

Dear Friends,

Thanks very for the opportunity to serve as your County Councilperson. Here is my update on County activities.

CAVALIERS CHAMPIONSHIP RESHAPES CITY AND COUNTY HISTORY

There are those who put down sports, saying "It's only a game," and downplay its significance. I am not among them, especially for Greater Cleveland. The 52 year drought on major sports championships has been a drag on how we think about ourselves, which in turn limits what we can accomplish. I watched the movie, *Believeland*, which I thought was excellent in the way that it weaved sports into the larger framework of the economic and social problems Greater Cleveland has been dealing with for the past 50 years.

We cannot know what the future impacts of the Cavaliers Championship will be, but I believe they will be significant, extend way beyond sports, and be very positive. Inner belief translates into reality. The dramatic way it happened only adds to the effect.

The Cavaliers Victory Parade will step off tomorrow, Wednesday, June 22, at 11 AM from the Q. It will continue on Huron and Carnegie to East Ninth Street, then up East 9th Street to the Mall area, where a celebrative program will be held.

HILTON HQ HOTEL OPENS; COUNTY PREPARES FOR REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION

The spectacular new Cleveland Hilton Convention Center Hotel opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony, right on time on June 1. The project also finished well within budget with at least \$20 million in contingency funding expected to remain unspent on what was approximately a \$250 million project, including both the construction of the building itself and interior and furnishing work.

The economical construction allowed for some additional amenities, especially an underground walkway from the Hotel to the Huntington Park Garage.

Logistical and security preparations for the Republican Convention are also in their final stages. Based on everything I've heard, I am convinced that we will be totally ready for the Convention and prepared for a wide variety of contingencies. My hope is that everyone will see the bigger picture about what our country is all about and act responsibly, but if not we will deal with it with the proper combination of effectiveness and restraint.

COUNTY RECEIVES \$2.9 MILLIOIN INFANT MORTALITY GRANT

County Executive Armond Budish has made reduction of infant mortality one his most important initiatives. Not only is the infant mortality rate in Cuyahoga County well above national average at about 9.5 per 1,000 births vs. 6.2, the rate is three times as high among African-Americans compared with Caucasians. In response, Cuyahoga County and the City of Cleveland formed the First Year Initiative, building on programs already in place that are known to be effective.

The First Year Initiative recently received a grant of \$2.9 million from the Ohio Department of Medicaid to help fund three programs. The Centering Pregnancy program provides prenatal care and birth-related information and support to pregnant women in a group setting. Funding of \$760,000 will allow the number of participants to be increased to 375. Through partnership with MomsFirst, the Ohio Infant Mortality Initiative, first time mothers will receive valuable knowledge and support in areas such as prenatal care, breastfeeding, safe sleep and family planning with funding of \$2 million. Finally, \$200,000 will be provided to local Fatherhood Initiatives to help new fathers take care of their babies. Credit is given to Donisha Greene's and Joan Mazzolini's Cleveland-Cuyahoga County press release of 6/7/16 for the information and presentation on the details of the grant award.

HEROIN AND FENTANYL OVERDOSE: PROBLEM WORSENING, STRONGER ACTION NEEDED

Overdose deaths from opiates, including heroin and now particularly fentanyl continue to climb and are not stabilizing. In the first four months of 2016 alone, there were 106 fatalities from fentanyl alone in Cuyahoga County, and the projected total from heroin and fentanyl for 2016 is 450. The numbers are staggering, despite considerable efforts. I totally support the infant mortality effort but note that the annual number of infant deaths in Cuyahoga County is about 150 and stable to decreasing.

The heroin-fentanyl overdose problem requires much stronger action and a collaboration of agencies. Opiate addiction and overdose is not concentrated in the inner city; rather, it is prevalent throughout the County. Those who have not used in a while, such as returning prisoners and people in recovery who have a relapse are particularly susceptible, as their systems cannot handle the potency of drugs now available.

Response to the problem centers around three strategies—preventing people from becoming addicted, improving addiction treatment, and harm reduction, such as by making the overdose antidote naloxone more readily available. All three strategies are vitally important. We can and must turn the tide with a strong, coordinated attack from human services and public safety agencies and help from individuals, block clubs, and neighborhood associations in spreading the word about how dangerous these drugs are and how important it is to avoid them.

CUYAHOGA COUNTY PROMOTES RESIDENTIAL SOLAR ENERGY, DEVELOPS SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

The Cuyahoga County Department of Sustainability has joined with OhioSun to create a co-op for residents wishing to install solar energy panels at their homes. The co-op program allows 30 or more families to contract together for the installation, resulting in a significant quantity discount. If you are interested in more information, please go to www.ohsun.org and click on “join a solar co-op” and “Cuyahoga County Co-op” or contact Mike Foley at the Cuyahoga County Department of Sustainability, 216-443-3055 or mfoley@cuyahogacounty.us.

Under legislation that I sponsored, the Department of Sustainability is developing a five-year sustainability plan to create a comprehensive approach to conservation of the County’s environmental, energy, and water resources. The plan is scheduled to be completed by September, 2017.

SAVE THE DATE!! FREE ICE CREAM SOCIAL MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

Carol and I invite you to our free Ice Cream Social on Monday, September 12, 2016, from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM at the Women’s Pavilion at Lakewood Park at 14532 Lake Av. See the new Solstice Steps while you’re there. Please let me know if you are coming by email at dalecta@gmail.com.

Please contact me at 216-252-7827 or dalecta@gmail.com if I can help with any county or other governmental matter.

Sincerely yours,
Dale Miller