

LAKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES

JOHN R. HAMERCHECK, COMMISSIONER	JASON W. BOYD, ADMINISTRATOR
JOHN PLECNIK, COMMISSIONER	LEGAL COUNSEL
RICHARD J. REGOVICH, COMMISSIONER	NEWS MEDIA
JENNIFER BELL, CLERK	

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(Tape 2024-0919)

CALL TO ORDER: Commissioner Plecnik called the Meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, September 19, 2024.

ROLL CALL: Upon roll being called, Commissioners Hamercheck, Regovich, and Plecnik were present.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Commissioner Plecnik asked if anyone in the audience wished to address the Board. The Board presented a special certificate to Director of Job and Family Services, Ms. Suzanne Casar, in honor of Grandparents/Kinship Month. Ms. Casar thanked the Board and stated the Lake County Department of Job and Family Services works diligently to ensure safe and loving kinship homes for Lake County’s children and to increase public awareness of the importance of kinship care with other family members including grandparents.

Mr. Chris Bihary of Painesville asked for a moment of silent reflection and explained how peace starts within. He also asked for a moment of silence in honor of Lady Bishop Mirbel’s passing.

President and CEO of United Way Lake County, Ms. Dione DiMitro, was present and wanted to thank everyone who helped make the Jail and Bail event such a great success with special thanks to Laketran CEO Ben Capelle for driving the "jail" bus all day to pick-up the prisoners and to the Lake County Sheriff’s Office for making all the arrests. She stated that they raised more than \$13,000.

Mr. Elliott Pelarchik of Painesville thanked the Board for the work they do and shared that his father was a township trustee for 43 years.

Mr. Brian Massie of Painesville, as a Lake County resident, spoke of election integrity and how the Lake County Board of Elections does a superb job so Lake County has free and fair elections. He also spoke of his public records request and read the following letter from Attorney General Yost’s Office to the Lake County Prosecutor into the record:

“Re: Lake County Board of Elections Computer Investigation

Dear Mr. Coulson:

On September 7, 2021, the Special Prosecutions Section of the Ohio Attorney General's Office was appointed as Special Prosecutor pertaining to the above-referenced case. The Special Prosecutions Section has completed a review of the investigative file provided to our office, in conjunction with other law enforcement authorities in the United States. After a careful inspection of the materials provided and consultation with the victim, our office has determined it is not appropriate to pursue a criminal prosecution in this matter, based upon that finding, we are closing our investigation into this matter. Thank you for the opportunity to serve the citizens of Lake County. The Ohio Attorney General's Office is committed to seeking justice for the citizens of the State of Ohio and remains available if any future needs arise, if you have any questions regarding this letter or any other concerns, please contact me at 419-327-4494.”

Mr. John Marra of Timberlake, spoke as a resident, as the Mayor of Timberlake and on behalf of all concerned residents of Timberlake and Lake County, regarding the sexennial tax reevaluation. He stated that he would exceed the permitted time of three minutes and therefore respectfully requested either a brief extension of that time or the opportunity to revisit his remarks during the New Business portion. Commissioner Plecnik stated that the Board could address any questions he may have and cannot permit additional time to him as it would not be fair for one resident to receive more time than another even if that someone is a mayor. He added that there is always the next meeting and that the Board is all available off line to talk anytime. Mayor Marra stated what he has to say is very important, adding that he is not speaking just as a resident but speaking on behalf of concerned Timberlake citizens that he is getting a lot of complaints from about the sexennial tax reevaluation and he feels it’s something that needs to be addressed. He stated that he believes the County Auditor used a third-party to do these investigations. He continued by stating that he finds it disheartening that he cannot, even as a mayor of Timberlake representing many, many, many residents be permitted a time extension and that this is only one of a dozen issues he has with the county. He submitted his written statement to the Clerk. He also believes the meeting minutes do not include enough of what is said by the public and that they should be more detailed.

RESOLUTIONS:

**1.RESOLUTION INCREASING APPROPRIATIONS AND TRANSFERRING CASH WITHIN LAKE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF UTILITIES SEWER FUND AND PROJECT FUND 596, CENTER ROAD PUMP STATION & FORCEMAIN REPLACEMENT, 485-S-2024(20240919\U01)(UT-2)**

On a motion by Commissioner Regovich, seconded by Commissioner Hamercheck, the foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows: "AYES": Commissioners Hamercheck, Regovich and Plecnik “NAYS”: None.

**2.RESOLUTION ACCEPTING A THREE-YEAR MAINTENANCE BOND IN THE AMOUNT OF \$24,391.81 FOR SANITARY SEWERS AND \$27,732.45 FOR WATERLINES FOR HIDDEN VILLAGE PHASE 5 SUBDIVISION IN PERRY VILLAGE (JOB NOS. 23-35 and 23-34)(20240919\U02)(SD-437)**

On a motion by Commissioner Regovich, seconded by Commissioner Hamercheck, the foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows: "AYES": Commissioners Hamercheck, Regovich and Plecnik “NAYS”: None.

**3.RESOLUTION INCREASING APPROPRIATIONS WITHIN LAKE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF UTILITIES PROJECT FUND 595, AQUARIUS WATER TREATMENT PLANT MOTOR CONTROL CENTER REPLACEMENT, 451-W-2021 (20240919\U03)(UT-2)**

On a motion by Commissioner Regovich, seconded by Commissioner Hamercheck, the foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows: "AYES": Commissioners Hamercheck, Regovich and Plecnik "NAYS": None.

**4.RESOLUTION CERTIFYING UNPAID WATER AND SEWER SUMS AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGES TO THE LAKE COUNTY AUDITOR(20240919\U04)(UT-7)**

On a motion by Commissioner Regovich, seconded by Commissioner Hamercheck, the foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows: "AYES": Commissioners Hamercheck, Regovich and Plecnik "NAYS": None.

**5.RESOLUTION AWARDING A BID CONTRACT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$112,282.73 TO A&B FENCING, LLC FOR SECURITY FENCING REPLACEMENT AT 8505 GARFIELD ROAD FOR THE LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS (20240919\C01)(504-A)**

On a motion by Commissioner Regovich, seconded by Commissioner Hamercheck. The foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows: "AYES": Commissioners Hamercheck, Regovich and Plecnik "NAYS": None.

**6. RESOLUTION APPROVING PAYMENT OF BILLS AS LISTED ON THE COMMISSIONERS' APPROVAL JOURNAL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$4,813,084.55(20240919\BC01)(C-4)**

On a motion by Commissioner Regovich, seconded by Commissioner Hamercheck, the foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows: "AYES": Commissioners Hamercheck, Regovich and Plecnik "NAYS": None.

**7.RESOLUTION APPROVING PURCHASE ORDERS AS LISTED ON THE COMMISSIONERS' PURCHASE ORDER APPROVAL JOURNAL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$423,186.69(20240919\BC02)(C-17)**

On a motion by Commissioner Regovich, seconded by Commissioner Hamercheck, the foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows: "AYES": Commissioners Hamercheck, Regovich and Plecnik "NAYS": None.

**8.RESOLUTION INCREASING AND DECREASING APPROPRIATIONS FOR VARIOUS NON-GENERAL FUND ACCOUNTS(20240919\BC03)(C-111)**

On a motion by Commissioner Regovich, seconded by Commissioner Hamercheck, the foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows: "AYES": Commissioners Hamercheck, Regovich and Plecnik "NAYS": None.

**9.RESOLUTION TRANSFERRING CASH AND APPROPRIATIONS WITHIN VARIOUS GENERAL AND NON-GENERAL FUND ACCOUNTS(20240919\BC04)(C-111)**

On a motion by Commissioner Regovich, seconded by Commissioner Hamercheck, the foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows: "AYES": Commissioners Hamercheck, Regovich and Plecnik "NAYS": None.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

UTILITIES –Sanitary Engineer, Mr. Randy Rothlisberger, stated that the final Special Collection of the year for Household Hazardous Waste will be this Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup> from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm at the Lake County Fairgrounds.

JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES – Director of Job and Family Services, Ms. Suzanne Casar, stated that October is "Manufacturing Month" and to highlight this OMJ-Lake County will be hosting a Career Fair on October 29, 2024 at 1:00 PM at Manry Park in Willowick.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – Mr. Jason Boyd provided an update on the jail financing strategy. He explained that he, along with Budget Manager Mr. Zachary Underwood, Chief Izzo, and the underwriting fiscal team went to Market this past Monday and had really good results. Lake County was the only deal being priced in Ohio which was really good and it was an intense observation watching in real time. There was an hour and a half to sell \$50 million in notes and \$65 million in bonds; which was a unique combination and being the only deal in Ohio that day meant there was a spotlight on the County which proved to be a good thing. A few of the highlights include the following: the County was able to borrow \$115 million versus the original plan of \$120 million through conservative budgeting, the true interest cost for the notes was about 3.47%; we conservatively budgeted 4% and the bonds at true interest cost 4.48% when we conservatively budgeted 5%. Annual debt beginning in 2025 will be approximately \$6.4 million versus what we were budgeting which was north of \$7.1 - 7.2 million. There is \$500,000 to \$600,000 of liquidity and with those dollars the plan is to pay down the notes from those savings thus reducing the minimum debt service in the county moving forward. He thanked Mr. Underwood, Chief Izzo and our underwriting fiscal team for all of their hard work and to the Commissioners for supporting them over the last two months as they worked with Gilbane and K2M to maintain the overall budget number. Mr. Boyd provided an update on County owned parcels stating that the old Burger King site is officially torn down and seeded, the fence is or soon should be up around 125 East Erie and the former OSU Extension building and it is anticipated that the structures will come down in the next 14 days. He stated that he has been speaking with LandBank Director, John Rogers, regarding the final three Parcels. These parcels are the multi-unit family brick home on St. Clair, the former Mexican restaurant and barber shop, and a duplex that wraps around Jackson Street across the street from the post office. Commissioner Plecnik stated how he really wanted to emphasize the importance of the numbers; \$6.4 million as an annual debt service payment is well below the surplus that the County has enjoyed in recent years and while there's no way to predict the future with any surety, it is well within a responsible number. The fact that the County has chosen to borrow a big portion of the debt in the form of short-term notes gives us the flexibility to repay a substantial amount of this debt ahead of schedule and that is the County's goal. This Board wants to budget as fiscally responsible as possible in the next coming years so this debt can be paid down faster which will lower the annual payment further and then have the option of refinancing if interest rates were to go down. He gave special thanks to County Administrator Boyd for leading the team both inside and outside of County government to make sure there was a successful Bond issuance

and how it fit the budget of the jail of roughly \$25 million which does make this the largest Capital project in Lake County history. Commissioner Regovich also thanked Mr. Boyd, Budget Manager Mr. Zachary Underwood, Chief Izzo and our underwriting fiscal team.

CLERK – Commissioners Clerk, Ms. Jennifer Bell, stated that the next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 26, 2024 at 10:00 am.

LEGAL – none.

OLD BUSINESS: Commissioner Hamercheck stated that he attended a OneOhio Region 13 meeting and it went very well as the Board discussed grants and grant amounts and that it has gone down to the state foundation for final approval. Lake County fared well and we've leveraged our partnership with our fellow counties of Ashtabula, Geauga and Portage. They are in the process of allocating approximately \$2.4 million for the opioid mitigation. Ted St. John from Portage County is our representative. Commissioner Regovich addressed Mayor Marra, stating that the meeting minutes are simply a concise picture of what happens at the Commissioner meetings, not an actual transcript and he offered to meet with him and the County Auditor at another time. Commissioner Plecnik also stated that the meeting minutes reflect topics and are not verbatim or a transcript. He apologized to Mayor Marra for his frustration but explained that verbatim minutes is very resource intensive and it means not only that the clerks have to spend countless hours typing and can get some things wrong. If you're trying to type up hundreds of pages of discussion, there can be turns of phrase, misspellings and arguments over what was said. He reminded him and others that a full record of all of the meetings are saved forever so every detail is available for residents to watch and hear. He complimented Mayor Marra for being a great public servant in Lake County. Commissioner Hamercheck stated that he doesn't believe Mayor Marra is asking for verbatim minutes but having the meeting minutes be reflective of the actual meeting. He thanked Mr. Massie for reading the communication from the Attorney General into the record.

NEW BUSINESS:

Commissioner Plecnik congratulated the Lake County Captains as Midwest Champions by winning game three of a three-game series against the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers. Commissioner Plecnik made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Regovich, to declare September "Lake County Captains Month" in Lake County, Ohio. Commissioner Regovich stated he has attended several of the games and knows how much Mayor Dennis Morley would have enjoyed this season. Motion was adopted with the vote as follows: "AYES": Commissioners: Hamercheck, Regovich and Plecnik "NAYS": None.

Commissioner Plecnik, on behalf of the Board, offered condolences to Bishop Mirbel on the passing of his wife, the Lady Bishop Mirbel.

Commissioner Hamercheck stated that he believes in the interest of good governance, openness and transparency when other elected officials are asking to meet separately the only way they can meet with this board is in a meeting such as this. He believes that there should be a way by which they could address the Board. He asked Commissioner Plecnik to permit Mayor Marra some additional time to express his concerns. The Board continued to discuss whether Mayor Marra should be allotted additional time.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: On a motion by Commissioner Hamercheck, seconded by Commissioner Regovich, the Board convened an Executive Session at 10:58 a.m. to discuss Real Estate-Acquisition with the vote as follows: "AYES": Commissioners: Hamercheck, Regovich and Plecnik "NAYS": None.

The Lake County Board of Commissioners adjourned to Executive Session at 1:00 p.m.

ADJOURN: On a motion by Commissioner Regovich, seconded by Commissioner Hamercheck, the Board adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m. with the vote as follows: "AYES": Commissioners: Hamercheck, Regovich and Plecnik "NAYS": None.

Minutes approved this twelfth day of December, 2024.

**BOARD OF LAKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

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JOHN PLECNIK, PRESIDENT

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JOHN R. HAMERCHECK, COMMISSIONER

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RICHARD J. REGOVICH, COMMISSIONER

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JENNIFER BELL, CLERK