

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	

(Tape 2024-1024)

CALL TO ORDER: Commissioner Plecnik called the Meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Thursday, October 24, 2024.

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

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Commissioner Plecnik asked if anyone in the audience wished to address the Board. Mr. Chad Felton of the Lake County News-Herald wanted to address a public comment made at a previous Commissioners Meeting that he was absent from. He clarified that the News-Herald did run a story on the alleged attempted data breach in May of 2021 and that the article was written by himself and fellow reporter, Andrew Cass. He explained that if you Google "attempted breach," you'll see that the story did run the day after or the same day as the Washington Post and the New York Times. He also stated that they then followed up with corresponding Commissioner's meeting where Commissioner Hamercheck gave his statement.

Bishop Mirbel of Painesville spoke of his homeland and Thanksgiving and offered his appreciation and congratulations to all pastors.

Rev. Chris Bihary of Painesville asked for a moment of silent reflection for Lake County and peace.

Mr. Matt Hebebrand of Mentor, played an audio recording from March of 2024. The recording was a presentation by Dr. Douglas Frank who has been going across the entire country speaking about Lake County with regard to an alleged attempted election data breach in 2021.

Mr. Chris Weiss of Leroy, thanked County Engineer Jim Gills and his staff for their hard work to complete Paine Road. He stated that it is now open and that there are crews working on cleaning the ditches along Trask Road. He discussed how taxpayer dollars have been spent and listed several expenditures that he feels are unnecessary expenses. He offered his opinion on how he feels that Commissioner Plecnik's plan to fund the jail was to hide from the public staff cuts to law enforcement, the Prosecutor's Office and other departments and that he falsely claimed that the jail would get built without raising taxes. Mr. Weiss offered an apology to Commissioner Regovich for the use of an offensive word and explained his intention when using it.

Mr. Brian Kolkowski of Painesville, addressed Commissioner Hamercheck, asking for him to provide answers to many previously asked questions. He requested that Commissioners Plecnik and Regovich ask the Director of the County Information Technology Department to attend a meeting to provide more information regarding the 2021 incident and whether any sensitive information was released.

Ms. Lyndsie Wall of Mentor referred to the recording that Mr. Hebebrand played and stating that there are many red flags and more questions to be answered. She also referred to a previous question she had asked Ms. Becky Lynch that remains unanswered.

RESOLUTIONS:

**1.RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING OCTOBER 2024 MANUFACTURING MONTH IN LAKE COUNTY, OHIO (20241024\F01)(C-126)**

On a motion by Commissioner Regovich, seconded by Commissioner Hamercheck. Mr. Roger Sustar, Ms. Alyson Scott, and Ms. Teresa Simons from Alliance for Working Together (AWT) Foundation were present and thanked the Board for this recognition. Mr. Sustar explained the importance of bringing students into manufacturing and shared the success of this year's *ThinkMFG Expo*. They had a remarkable turnout of 850 students from surrounding schools and 40 local manufacturers. The foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows: "AYES": Commissioners: Regovich, Hamercheck and Plecnik "NAYS": None.

**2.RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE LAKE COUNTY ENGINEER TO BE THE LOCAL PUBLIC AGENT (LPA) WITH THE DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION OF THE STATE OF OHIO FOR THE LAK-MANCHESTER ROAD BRIDGE REPLACEMENT (PID 117744); LCE PROJECT NO. 2022-008(20241024\E01)(E-3)**

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

**3.RESOLUTION AWARDDING A BID CONTRACT TO J.D. STRIPING & SERVICES, INC. FOR THE COUNTY ROADS PAVEMENT MARKINGS PROJECT - 2024, AS REQUIRED BY THE LAKE COUNTY ENGINEER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$158,156.30(20241024\E02)(E-3)**

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

**4.RESOLUTION CERTIFYING UNPAID WATER AND SEWER SUMS AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGES TO THE LAKE COUNTY AUDITOR(20241024\U01)(UT-7)**

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

**5.RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS AND LAKE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FOR FUNDS RECEIVED FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY UNDER THE CORONAVIRUS STATE AND LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDS KNOWN AS THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021(20241024\C01)(C-107)**

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

**6.RESOLUTION APPROVING THE FINAL DEDICATION PLAT FOR THE VILLAS OF CANTERWOOD FARMS PHASE 4 SUBDIVISION IN CONCORD TOWNSHIP(20241024\C02)(SD-443)**

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

**7.RESOLUTION APPROVING THE LAKE COUNTY RECORDER'S TECHNOLOGY FUND PROPOSAL AS SUBMITTED PURSUANT TO R.C. 317.321(20241024\C03)(C-36)**

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

**8.RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF A GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$243,744.00 FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE ON BEHALF OF THE LAKE COUNTY CRIME LABORATORY, EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2024, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2026(20241024\C04)(CT-18)**

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

**9.RESOLUTION APPROVING PAYMENT OF BILLS AS LISTED ON THE COMMISSIONERS' APPROVAL JOURNAL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,009,630.32(20241024\BC01)(C-4)**

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

**10.RESOLUTION APPROVING PURCHASE ORDERS AS LISTED ON THE COMMISSIONERS' PURCHASE ORDER APPROVAL JOURNAL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,519,546.80 (20241024\BC02)(C-17)**

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

**11.RESOLUTION INCREASING APPROPRIATIONS FOR VARIOUS NON-GENERAL FUND ACCOUNTS (20241024\BC03)(C-111)**

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

**12.RESOLUTION TRANSFERRING APPROPRIATIONS WITHIN VARIOUS GENERAL AND NON-GENERAL FUND ACCOUNTS (20241024\BC04)(C-111)**

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

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

UTILITIES – none.

JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES – none.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – County Administrator, Mr. Jason Boyd, gave a brief update on the Public Safety Center Project stating that the County is well underway on the demolition process. He thanked the Lake County Landbank for their financial partnership for the demolition of three of the structures and also for acting as project management of these projects. He stated that a majority of the city permits have been approved and what the next permitting steps are. Mr. Boyd stated that the first State of the County report will be presented next Tuesday, October 29<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Plecnik asked Mr. Boyd if any of the Commissioners have proposed budget cuts or layoffs from the Sheriff's Department or Prosecutors Office. Mr. Boyd responded that there has not been any mention of that or any inquiries. Commissioner Plecnik stressed that the Board values all of the important work these Departments do to protect the residents of Lake County. He also stated that he raised this issue because he understands, from the perspective of employees who are watching these meetings, how important it is to hear directly from their Commissioners that this Board deeply values their work and recognizes that the County's investment in law enforcement has to increase rather than decrease.

CLERK – Commissioners Clerk, Ms. Jennifer Bell, stated that the next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 29, 2024 at 10:00 am.

LEGAL – Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Mr. David Hackman, shared that the Board of Elections has been extremely busy since early voting began and that the Prosecutors Office is very involved with Director Dante Lewis. Mr. Hackman commended Director Lewis and all the employees and stressed how they are doing a fantastic job ensuring voting is safe and secure. He also expressed his concern on how the public portions in Commissioners Meetings have been getting a bit out of line, but they are still within First Amendment rights and are fair questions. He cited examples of how Mr. Weiss criticizes Commissioner Plecnik every week and how other public comments from the audience speak of the

alleged attempted breach and the name calling of Commissioner Regovich. He stressed to everyone that while the Commissioners are public officials, they are human beings who try their best to do what's right. While the public does have every right to go to the podium and speak about what's on their mind week after week (which is fair game, they are still human).

He stated that he can't imagine how difficult it would be to listen to some of these comments every week. Mr. Hackman continued to discuss the unkind public comments detailing one comment that was far out of bounds and unfair, that he (Mr. Hackman) spoke to the person who made the comment.

Mr. Hackman read the following letter from the Ohio Attorney General's Office in its entirety:

"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."

OLD BUSINESS: none.

NEW BUSINESS: none.

ADJOURN: On a motion by Commissioner Regovich, seconded by Commissioner Hamercheck, the Board adjourned the meeting at 10:43 a.m. with the vote as follows: AYES": Commissioners Regovich, Hamercheck 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