

Minutes of the
Lake County Senior Citizens Advisory Panel
Special Meeting
Tuesday, November 17, 2015
2:00 p.m.

The Lake County Senior Citizens Advisory Panel hereby finds and determines that all formal actions were taken in an open meeting and that all deliberations of the Senior Citizens Advisory Panel, which resulted in formal action, were taken in a meeting open to the general public, in full compliance with applicable legal requirements of Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

The Chair, Mr. Ken Gauntner, opened the meeting at 2:06 p.m. Mr. Gauntner stated Mr. Kline was not able to be in attendance today but submitted information for today's meeting.

Present

Members: Ellen Cantor, Ken Gauntner, Tom Dreher and Frank Doberdruk.

Staff: Jason Boyd and Donna Tyson, Kathy Russo

Absent: Spence Kline, Joel DiMare, Jr.

Correspondence

Ms. Cantor supplied the panel with correspondence from the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging pertaining to food insecurity and believes this will be the focus of what they will advocate for. Ms. Cantor explained this information, in addition to the Senior Study, will be helpful to the panel when they begin making decisions.

Mr. Dreher presented a letter regarding the senior survey. He explained his thoughts to move more quickly toward conclusions would be to assign each of the 5 panel members one specific from the survey, allowing each panel member to expedite a plan.

Mr. Boyd explained, from an operational standpoint, that a dedicated Senior Levy Program Manager to administer the study full time would expedite the implementation of the plan and would be available to assist the panel in facilitating any special work items.

Mr. Gauntner commented he agrees with Mr. Boyd in that the full-time staff person would have the time and capabilities go through any and all the issues that may need to be addressed.

Mr. Boyd stated this staff person would alleviate some of the work from the panel members and adding some levy funds to support this project manager is an option. Mr. Boyd drew attention to the study that suggests developing staff capacity at the County to administer the levy on a full time basis would be beneficial.

Ms. Cantor explained she feels it might give this study a greater sense of importance with a dedicated staff person and perhaps developing a Department of Aging to assume the responsibilities should be considered. She cited some examples of County departments that have the capacity to fund and dedicate full time staff to their programs.

Mr. Boyd stated the hiring of a program manager would be the first step toward the implementation of the County becoming the managing entity.

Mr. Boyd indicated he and Mrs. Tyson would be attending the Senior Coalition meeting this Thursday and are looking forward to hearing some candid comments regarding the report and getting a better idea of the levy process. Discussion continued on the levy funds and its process for renewal.

Mr. Dreher agrees with the possibility of establishing a full time person for the purpose of managing the levy and the senior study issues and concerns. Mr. Gauntner also agrees a full time person would benefit the program. He added there is confusion by many that the money from the levy is to strictly be used to fund the Senior Centers, while in fact it is to also fund many senior programs.

Mr. Dreher asked if the appointment of a full time program manager would dissolve the Senior Panel; Mr. Boyd responded it would not and that the manager would work in conjunction with the panel. Mr. Boyd reviewed several items in the study that could be implemented in 2016. He further explained to the panel that should there be a question or concern from a panel member, a staff person would be available to investigate the issue and report back in a timely manner.

Mr. Gauntner shared an email and letter correspondence received from Mr. Joey Tomsick of the Council on Aging and the Coalition. The panel discussed the correspondence and Mr. Boyd pointed out that the Council on Aging does in fact promote the Senior Levy.

Mr. Boyd reviewed an email correspondence received from Ms. Judean Baker, Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Willoughby. Ms. Baker had requested a redirection of levy funds, not contingency funds, for the purchase and installation of a new boiler in the Willoughby Senior Center. Mr. Boyd explained Ms. Baker stated they would defer nonpriority projects in order to replace the boiler within their existing budget. The Panel approved the redirection of funds for this necessary repair.

The Panel reviewed and approved the tentative meeting schedule for 2016 as submitted.

Senior Study - Update

Mrs. Tyson reported there were 53 attendees at the October 27, 2015 Senior Study presentation and most of the Senior Centers had more than one representative in attendance. Mr. Boyd stated thus far, he has had positive feedback regarding the presentation. Mr. Gauntner stated he received some negative responses. The Panel began to review and discuss the Recommended Operation Plan submitted by MCS Consulting. Mr. Boyd feels that the "*III. Recommended Operational Plan*", Goal #1 of the study can be implemented rather easily as it is administrative and would require performance reports before any money would be allocated. He stated that one decision that would need to be addressed sooner rather than later would be to require capital and major equipment purchases be funded through the Contingency Fund rather than operating funds. Ms. Cantor stated quite a few of the Senior Center buildings are owned by the host city and wondered if there weren't some obligation by the cities to make some necessary repairs. Mr. Gauntner stated that Ms. Cantor makes a good point and perhaps this should be looked into. Mr. Boyd suggested further discussion on placing a maximum reimbursement threshold for capital improvements of the Centers annual

allocations as the contingency fund is for unexpected emergencies. Mr. Dreher stated this might be something to review in detail as to where the line between municipalities' responsibility and that of the Senior Levy relative to senior center activity functions as well as facility functions falls. The Panel feels perhaps there needs to be further discussion of the definition and requirements of the contingency fund. Ms. Cantor suggested redefining the contingency fund requirements to be used exclusively for emergency repairs. Mrs. Tyson explained over the next year the centers will be required to submit reports before approval of their funds.

Levy Fund 2015 Balance

Mrs. Tyson reported there is currently an approximate balance of \$172,000 in the Levy Fund from the last installment of the mobile home/homestead rollbacks and all of the entities have been paid in full for 2015 at the highest awarded amount. Mrs. Tyson explained the expenditures and disbursements in detail. Mr. Boyd reviewed the balance as well as the third and final disbursements at the end of 2015. He suggested the possibility of developing a collaborative project between centers. Mr. Boyd stated he is open to any suggestions from the panel. The panel is of the collective thought that the funds be directed towards programs for seniors and discussed several ideas in detail. Mr. Dreher suggested a portion of the balance be distributed and the panel continued to discuss the best approach to allocate the remaining funds so that all of the seniors of Lake County could benefit directly.

Ms. Cantor discussed the allocation of funds for the Council on Aging's Meals on Wheels Program, the holiday food banks, and the home delivered meals to seniors. Ms. Cantor also suggested several services and/or programs that would directly benefit all of the seniors of the County.

Mr. Boyd asked if the panel was comfortable with allocating \$72,000 and withholding the remaining balance for a yet to be determined program or programs. Mr. Boyd reviewed the possible breakdown of distributions to senior centers and services throughout the County.

Ms. Cantor suggested the distribution of some monies for Adult Protective Services in response to concerns she has heard. Mr. Boyd stated that he would discuss the suggestion with Job and Family Services Director, Mr. Matthew Battiato. Discussion continued on recommendations for the best use of the funds. The panel believes, that at this time the best use for a portion of the money would be allocated for Adult Protective Services staff member(s) as well as addressing the needs of the seniors. The panel would also like Mr. Boyd to look into the possibility of the home delivery of holiday meals and mileage reimbursement for the volunteer drivers.

Old Business - none

New Business - Ms. Ellen Cantor was reappointed for a three-year term ending September 30, 2018 at the Commissioners meeting of November 5, 2015.

Mrs. Tyson reported she attended an Innovations Conference, sponsored by the Spencin Foundation, which serves Mahoning, Trumbull and Columbiana Counties. MSC Consulting had suggested Lake County look into this type of event. Mrs. Tyson and Mr. Boyd suggested beginning with a lunch series or a quarterly speaker series to engage the centers throughout the County.

Adjournment

Mr. Gauntner moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:39 p.m. and Mr. Doberdruk seconded the motion.

All voted "Aye".

*The next meeting will be held March 15, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.