

COMMISSIONERS

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Commissioners refute 'sanctuary' label for county

BY MARIAN MCMAHON
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LAKE COUNTY — The topic of Painesville and Lake County being named sanctuary locations for illegal immigrants was introduced at the July 30 meeting of the Lake County Board of Commissioners.

Arzella Melnyk of Kirtland stated she recently read Painesville and Lake County were listed as a sanctuary city and county. She said Congress had recently passed legislation to withhold federal funding from sanctuary cities and/or counties.

"If this were to become law, what, as county commissioners, do you plan on doing to make sure Lake County is not listed as a sanctuary county?" Melnyk said. "Otherwise we could lose some of those federal dollars."

Dan Troy, president of the Lake County Board of Commissioners, said Lake County could not pass any legislation declaring any place a sanctuary. He said he would like to see where Lake County is listed as a sanctuary county.

"As far as the city of Painesville, it's my understanding that they

are absolutely not a sanctuary city," he said. "In fact, they have indicated, I think, by a resolution they passed in 2008 that they support the enforcement of U.S. immigration laws and will assist all appropriate law enforcement agencies in the enforcement of said laws."

Troy said they knew about the federal legislation and the county did not have any notice that anything the county has done would put it at risk for losing federal funds.

He said there has been campaign literature put out which states Painesville and Lake County are sanctuary locations, but the statement is untrue. He added the claims on websites did not make it true either.

Melnyk said one website which lists sanctuary cities and counties used the commissioners' passage of a resolution (Oct. 13, 2005) endorsing the use of the matricula consular card (an identification card issued by Mexican consulates to Mexicans in the United States) for identification here.

Troy said the Board of Commissioners "felt comfortable" that

it had done nothing to jeopardize receipt of federal funding.

John Muzic of Painesville Township referred to the last time the commissioners were asked to rescind the resolution and noted he had shared information from the FBI about the unreliability of the matricula consular cards (MCCs). He added that even the Lake County Sheriff's Office had opposed the resolution, but it was passed anyway.

He asked that the commissioners reconsider the resolution, adding the surrounding counties had all declined to pass such resolutions.

"In my opinion, the only reason anybody would need an MCC as identification is if they are not here legally in this country," Muzic said. Lake County Prosecutor Charles Coulson, who was present at the meeting, addressed the topic.

"I have never read a single, solitary police report where it (MCC) was used as identification for anything, so it really is a non-issue as far as the police go, as far

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as our county goes," he said.

Coulson noted the MCC was an identification card issued by the Mexican government and meant nothing as far as a holder's legal status in this country. He added the commissioners' resolution did not give the holders of such cards any additional rights or privileges either.

Commissioner Judy Morra said the websites listing Painesville and Lake County as sanctuary locations were not affiliated with the government. She repeated the fact that the Board of Commissioners does not have any authority to act or otherwise legislate on any immigration matters.

RESOLUTIONS:

UTILITIES DEPARTMENT
• Increasing appropriations for LCDU Water District contract services.

• Establishing an appropriation line item to be known as Farmout Nursery Road Waterline Replace-ment 369-W assessments and increasing appropriations and transferring cash from LCDU Water District.

• Awarding a bid contract in the amount of \$237,457.50 to United Survey for Heidi Park Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Project 365-S.

The project is a trenchless sanitary sewer rehabilitation project on Rolling Acres, Danvers and Brian. The high bid was \$247,916. The low bid was 3 percent less than the engineer's estimate.

• Awarding a bid contract in the amount of \$437,100 to United Survey for Cedar Glen Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Phase 2 Project 334-S.

Bids ranged from \$619,750 to \$437,100, with the low bid being 3 percent less than the engineer's estimate.

estimate.

• Certifying unpaid sewer and water sums to the Lake County Auditor.

• Establishing tap-in charges for River Road Waterline in Madison Township.

JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES DEPT

• Authorizing execution of Amendment I to the IV-D Service Contract with the Lake County Domestic Relations Court for child support services.

"These are federal funds that come to the state of Ohio," Troy said. "It helps us do things that we would normally be doing anyway, but doing it with some extra outside money."

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE

• Amending the policy governing participation in the Lake County Life and Health Insurance Program offered by the Lake County Board of Commissioners to its employees and to Lake County political subdivisions.

• Amending the Lake County employees share of the monthly premium for medical and dental insurance coverage, effective Jan. 1 through Dec. 31.

• Establishing the monthly premiums for medical and dental insurance coverage for subgovernment entities participating in the county employee health plans effective Jan. 1 through Dec. 31.

• Accepting the subsidy grant for Smart Ohio pilot funding and authorizing execution of the grant agreement on behalf of the Lake County Adult Probation Department and the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction.

The grant amount is \$375,000.

• Authorizing execution of an agreement between the Lake County Board of Commissioners and Lake-Gaucha Habitat for Humanity, Inc. for prior years HOME Investment Partnership Program funds.

Marian Norman, Lake County Community Development program manager, said Lake-Gaucha Habitat for Humanity, Inc. was being awarded prior year funds in the amount of \$40,000 to help construct a new single family home at 477 Chardon St. in Painesville.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

• Approving payment of bills in the amount of \$1,356,328.65.

• Approving purchase orders in the amount of \$473,755.20.

• Increasing appropriations for various non-general fund accounts.

• Transferring cash and appropriations within various general and non-general fund accounts.

NEW BUSINESS

• Commissioner Kevin Malecek said he swore in R. Ross McDonald as deputy director of the Lake County Board of Elections.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

• The commissioners adjourned to executive session to discuss pending litigation.

MEETINGS

• Meetings are held in the Commissioners' Chambers of the Lake County Administration Building, 105 Main St., Painesville.

All meetings are open to the public. Requests to address the government board may be made at any board meeting or presented to the Commissioners' Office by calling (440) 360-2753.

There was a meeting Aug. 4. The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, Aug. 11 at 2 p.m.