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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COMMISSIONERS, POLICE CHIEFS AND SHERIFF ANNOUNCING INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE LAW ENFORCEMENT THROUGHOUT LAKE COUNTY IN UNPRECEDENTED MOVE

PAINESVILLE, OH, October 19, 2020 - Lake County Commissioners John Hamercheck, Jerry Cirino and Ron Young will announce at a news conference, Wednesday, October 21st, 2020, at 1:00 pm at the Commissioner's office at 105 Main Street in Painesville, an initiative with the police chiefs of all communities in Lake County, the Lake County Sheriff and the Corrections Department. The initiative will involve the County securing funding for a new program designed to enhance policy documentation, make sure that policies are in conformance to new legal developments, facilitate better training of officers and allow easy, digital access to all policies as determined by the law enforcement entity.

"As Commissioners, we are on record against 'defunding' law enforcement", said Commissioner Jerry Cirino. He continued, "Not only are we against defunding, we are actually going to be investing in a program that will enhance public safety and we want it to be available across the County". This new program, which will be put out for bid consistent with Ohio Revised Code, will include up to date corrections and law enforcement policies researched and written by public safety attorneys and various subject matter experts. The content of these policies and procedures will reflect the wishes of the individual departments participating.

This program initiative was nurtured and researched by Commission President John Hamercheck, a former law enforcement officer and member of Lake County's Begin the Conversation. "While this project is subject to final financing, we are confident that we will be able to commit to a five year subscription for all of Lake County", indicated Hamercheck. " While the City of Painesville is already on the program that meets the initiative requirements, we have been so impressed with its effectiveness that we concluded that the initiative effort should be an integral part of law enforcement throughout the County", he further noted.

It is the belief of the Commissioners, Chiefs and Sheriff, that this program initiative will enhance law enforcement confidence and integrity in the community by making sure that officers know and understand policies and that those policies are constantly updated to reflect state and national standards and legal questions. To make sure that this will help keep the community safe and enhance law enforcement, the Commissioners, Chiefs and Sheriff have been working with members of the community, including the late Bishop Roderick Coffee of Begin the Conversation. "Bishop Coffee's request to see the data is what brought us closer together and allowed me to use my training as a systems analyst to identify data is driven by policies, and policies are driven by controlling law," said Commissioner John Hamercheck. "This program will establish confidence at all levels and ensure the overall ongoing integrity of policies throughout Lake County."

Lake County Branch NAACP President, Deacon Albert Jones said, "I have been participating in these discussions for some time now as my interest is in keeping our community safe and to do everything we can to make sure that our policing is the very best and that negative encounters with police are minimized. I applaud the Commissioners for not only SAYING they want our community safe for all...but for actually doing something to make it happen." Deacon Jones continued, "This is the first County wide program of its type in the nation."

Commissioner Ron Young noted, "This is a very proactive program. The NAACP understands our motives and agrees that this will be a positive step in terms of relations between minority members of the community and the police. "

It is expected that the total cost of a five year subscription to this program will be around \$1 million. This will include initial start-up and training and ongoing updates to stay current. It is expected that bid specifications will be going out in the next couple of weeks.

The media and selected guests are invited to the news conference at 1:00 pm on Wednesday, October 21st 2020 in the Commissioner's office. All of the Chiefs and the Sheriff will be available to answer questions and to talk about the great value of this program.

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