



# Board of Commissioners

*Jason W. Boyd, Administrator*

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## **LAKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ANNOUNCE GRANTS TO SUPPORT LAKE COUNTY EVENTS**

PAINESVILLE, OH, April 14, 2022 – The Lake County Board of Commissioners, at its April 14, 2022 meeting, agreed to appropriate funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to support nearly 40 different events that will take place in Lake County in 2022.

Over the past two years, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, events across the county had to be canceled, postponed and/or modified in the interest of public safety. These unavoidable changes caused significant financial hardships for the organizations and communities who work tirelessly to host great events, large and small, that Lake County residents and visitors from outside the area look forward to attending every year.

The County is partnering with the Lake County Visitors Bureau, Remarkable Lake County, OH, to direct these funds. Remarkable Lake County promotes travel and tourism for the County and has their own Arts & Culture Grant program, introduced a Community Events Grant program in 2021 and has long-supported major events that bring in thousands of visitors from outside the region. Remarkable Lake County scores and evaluates applications and awards grants based upon criteria such as number of overnight visitors, total number of attendees and the value the event adds to Lake County's Arts & Culture scene.

Neil Stein, Executive Director of Remarkable Lake County, OH is thrilled about the impact these grants programs will have on Lake County communities. "The Lake County Visitors Bureau wants to thank our Lake County Commissioners for having the leadership and vision to support our local economy through their supplemental grant programs." Lake County has so many amazing natural assets and attractions that appeal to visitors, but the wide variety of events throughout the county are essential for both locals and visitors alike. Many of these events showcase our historical attractions, beaches, rivers and lakefront, our award-winning wine region and our unique communities and help tell the story as to what makes Lake County remarkable."

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The appropriation of \$115,000 from the County's ARPA fund includes \$90,000 for the creation of the Lake County Commissioners' Supplementary Grant Program which will double the amount of money Remarkable Lake County, OH will award through its Arts & Culture Grant program and Community Event Grant programs; hereby providing a total of \$180,000 in direct economic support for these area events.

The Lake County Commissioners' Support for Signature Events Program will allow Remarkable Lake County, OH to provide an additional \$25,000 in support for several of the biggest events in the County. Examples of these major events include Vintage Ohio Wine Festival, hosted at Lake Farmpark, which brings nearly 10,000 visitors to the area to experience the wines of the Grand River Valley. The Wonderstruck Music Festival was new to Lake County in 2021 and attracted over 20,000 people to the campus of Lakeland Community College for a two-day music festival which included upscale culinary options, a robust artisan village and showcased the very best Alternative, Indie-Pop, Funk and Jam bands in the country.

"The Board of Commissioners understands not only the financial impact that these events have on our area, but also the sense of community they generate among attendees" said Commission President John Hamercheck. "We know how hard it has been to try to host an in-person event over the past two years and we want to support these organizations & events in order for them to continue for many years to come."

"This grant program demonstrates our strong commitment to keep Lake County open for business. As residents we are extremely lucky to have so many great in-person events taking place from Wickliffe to Madison and everywhere in between," said Commissioner John Plecnik. "All of these events have a huge positive economic impact on our communities by attracting not only local attendees but also visitors from across the region who stay in our hotels, eat in our restaurants and shop in our locally-owned stores. This excitement throughout our communities has been missing for nearly two years and we are looking forward to seeing it back in full force in 2022."

Commissioner Ron Young added, "We sympathize for the communities and event organizers who were forced to cancel their events in 2020 and then tried hosting events in 2021 through the challenge of a global pandemic. We are glad to utilize funding from the American Rescue Plan to support tourism recovery in Lake County by assisting these events as they look to emerge stronger and welcome more people than ever to their events in 2022 and beyond."

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