

JANUARY 19, 2023

LAKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES

JOHN R HAMERCHECK, COMMISSIONER JASON W. BOYD, ADMINISTRATOR
JOHN PLECNIK, COMMISSIONER LEGAL COUNSEL
RICHARD J. REGOVICH, COMMISSIONER MIKE MATAS, BUDGET DIRECTOR
JENNIFER BELL, CLERK NEWS MEDIA

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(Tape 2023-0119)

CALL TO ORDER: Commissioner Hamercheck called the Meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Thursday, January 19, 2023

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

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Commissioner Hamercheck asked if anyone in the audience wished to address the Board. The following residents requested that the board rescind the previously adopted sales tax increase resolution: Mr. David Lima of 7774 Litchfield in Mentor and Mr. Jason Kasunick of Eastlake.

Ms. Mary Ellen Abel in Painesville Township, asked who would have had oversight of the construction of the Lake County Jail when it was built 30+ years ago.

Eastlake City Mayor, Dennis Morley, explained the very serious financial issues that the City of Eastlake has faced in the past and how those issues have affected the City.

Mr. Brian Massie asked a procedural question regarding the sales tax resolution that was tabled and recently voted on. Assistant Prosecutor, Mr. David Hackman, explained that when the resolution was originally tabled, it was stated that it would be considered at a specific meeting (January 12, 2023) therefore there was no need for a motion to return the resolution to the table.

Mr. John Muzik of 45 Coventry Drive in Painesville, discussed some flooding issues that have been occurring over the years near his home. He expressed his concerns that the answer he continues to receive is that "it is being worked on". Mr. Muzik stated that he would be happy to supply photos and hoped that something would be done soon. County Engineer, Mr. James Gills, was present and explained that his department recently met with Painesville Township to discuss this matter and there is an issue with a key property that the County would need to obtain an easement from in order to complete the repair and that the homeowner continues to refuse granting this easement. He further explained the age of the lines, the drastic increase in rainfall, and the costs and problems in dealing with the Army Corp of Engineers.

Mr. Chris Weiss of Leroy, made several inquiries to County Engineer Gills regarding several road closures in his area.

RESOLUTIONS:

1.RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE LAKE COUNTY ENGINEER TO ENTER INTO A LOCAL PUBLIC AGENT (LPA) AGREEMENT WITH THE DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION OF THE STATE OF OHIO FOR THE LAK-BISHOP ROAD (CR 711-0.59) BRIDGE (PID 117510) PROJECT; LCE PROJECT NO. 2022-017(20230119\E01)(E-3)

On a motion by Commissioner Regovich, seconded by Commissioner Plecnik. County Engineer Gills explained that this and the following resolution pertain to funding approved by NOACA and CCAO for these projects. Each project will have an 80/20 match and must be completed by the end of this year. One of the projects will be an inhouse design, the other will be an outside design/build firm. The foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows: "AYES": Commissioners Plecnik, Regovich and Hamercheck "NAYS": None.

2.RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE LAKE COUNTY ENGINEER TO ENTER INTO A LOCAL PUBLIC AGENT (LPA) AGREEMENT WITH THE DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTATION OF THE STATE OF OHIO FOR THE LAK-BOOTH ROAD (CR 609-0.24) BRIDGE (PID 117512) PROJECT; LCE PROJECT No. 2022-018(20230119\E02)(E-3)

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

3.RESOLUTION TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS FOR THE LAKE COUNTY RESURFACING PROJECT – 2023 IN THE CITY OF PAINESVILLE, LAKE COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS, CONCORD TOWNSHIP, & PAINESVILLE TOWNSHIP, OHIO, LCE PROJECT NO. 2022-019 (Bid Opening February 15, 2023)(20230119\E03)(E-2)

On a motion by Commissioner Regovich, seconded by Commissioner Plecnik. Mr. Gills stated that this is a major paving project which includes all paved surfaces in the Lake County Fairgrounds and should last approximately 15 to 20 years. The foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows: "AYES": Commissioners Plecnik, Regovich and Hamercheck "NAYS": None.

4.RESOLUTION AWARDDING A BID CONTRACT TO J.D. WILLIAMSON CONSTRUCTION CO., INC. FOR THE LAK-SANCTUARY DRIVE BRIDGE PROJECT, AS REQUIRED BY THE LAKE COUNTY ENGINEER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,499,751.10(20230119\E04)(E-3)

On a motion by Commissioner Plecnik, seconded by Commissioner Regovich. Mr. Gills stated that this project is in Kirtland and Kirtland Hills and is a developer designed bridge. Mr. Gills explained the technical and structural issues. The foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows: "AYES": Commissioners Plecnik, Regovich and Hamercheck "NAYS": None.

5.RESOLUTION APPROVING PLANS, SPECIFICATIONS AND ESTIMATES OF COST IN THE AMOUNT OF \$936,200.00 FOR BELLFLOWER AREA SANITARY SEWER IMPROVEMENT, PALMERSTON SANITARY SEWER REHAB PROJECT NO 403-S, AND ADVERTISING FOR BIDS FOR SAME (BID Opening February 15, 2023)(20230119\U01)(UT-8)

On a motion by Commissioner Regovich, seconded by Commissioner Plecnik. Sanitary Engineer, Mr. Randy Rothlisberger, stated that this is part of their Capital Improvement Plan. The foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows: "AYES": Commissioners Plecnik, Regovich and Hamercheck "NAYS": None.

6.RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT WITH CT CONSULTANTS, INC., FOR THE LAKE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF UTILITIES(20230119\U02)(UT-4)

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

7.RESOLUTION INCREASING APPROPRIATIONS AND TRANSFERRING CASH WITHIN LAKE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF UTILITIES WATER OPERATING FUND AND PROJECT FUND 595, DIVISION/BANK/ATWATER WATERLINE PROJECT 446-W(20230119\U03)(UT-2)

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

8.RESOLUTION ASSIGNING AUTHORITY TO SUZANNE CASAR, DIRECTOR OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES TO ACT AS THE LAKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' DESIGNEE FOR APPROVING INTER-COUNTY ADJUSTMENTS OF ALLOCATED FUNDS(20230119\JFS01)(JFS-11)

On a motion by Commissioner Plecnik, seconded by Commissioner Regovich. Director of Job and Family Services, Ms. Suzanne Casar, explained that this is an annual resolution. The law allows for the Board of Commissioners to assign authority to the Director of Job and Family Services to sign inter-county agreements. She explained this will allow for the 'trading' of funds between other Jobs and Family Services Departments throughout the State. The federal and state funds are not given away but can be given or traded to other counties where a funding need may be within a particular county. She added that before any transfer of funds is made, approval of the Budget Director and the County Administrator is necessary. The foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows: "AYES": Commissioners Plecnik, Regovich and Hamercheck "NAYS": None.

9.RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO RENEW THE PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANT CONTRACT WITH MCDONALD HOPKINS FOR AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (20230119\C01)(C-107)

On a motion by Commissioner Regovich, seconded by Commissioner Plecnik. Commissioner Hamercheck stated that this renews the agreement for outside counsel to continue to review proposed ARPA projects. The foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows: "AYES": Commissioners Plecnik, Regovich and Hamercheck "NAYS": None.

10.RESOLUTION APPOINTING THE CLERK AND ASSISTANT CLERK OF THE BOARD OF LAKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AS DESIGNEES OF THE BOARD TO ATTEND THE CERTIFIED PUBLIC RECORDS TRAINING AS REQUIRED BY OHIO REVISED CODE SECTION 109.43(20230119\C02)(C-107)

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

11. RESOLUTION APPROVING PAYMENT OF BILLS AS LISTED ON THE COMMISSIONERS' APPROVAL JOURNAL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,063,636.02(20230119\BC01)(C-4)

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

12. RESOLUTION APPROVING PURCHASE ORDERS AS LISTED ON THE COMMISSIONERS' PURCHASE ORDER APPROVAL JOURNAL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,695,941.23(20230119\BC02)(C-17)

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

13. RESOLUTION INCREASING APPROPRIATIONS FOR VARIOUS GENERAL FUND ACCOUNTS (20230119\BC03)(C-111)

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

14. RESOLUTION TRANSFERRING CASH WITHIN NON-GENERAL FUND ACCOUNTS(20230119\BC04)(C-111)

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

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

UTILITIES – Sanitary Engineer, Mr. Randy Rothlisberger, stated that bids were received yesterday, Wednesday, January 18th, 2023 for the Old Towne Kirtland Sanitary Sewer Project and that two bids were received. One bid was more than 20% over the Engineer's estimate and the other was only 6%. The consultant is currently reviewing the bids.

JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES – Commissioner Plecnik asked that Job and Family Services Director, Mr. Suzanne Casar, reiterate the upcoming changes to SNAP benefits. Ms. Casar stated that SNAP participants have been receiving their normal allotment on their normal issuance dates from the 1st to the 20th of the month and their emergency

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allotments at the end of the month. Beginning in March 2023, clients will only receive their normal monthly allotment. SNAP recipients will not see their SNAP benefits terminate due to this change, but all households will experience a decrease of at least \$95 per month beginning March 2023. She also stated that the department recognizes that this is likely going to cause an unexpected and significant hardship on many individuals in our community who rely on SNAP benefits. Approximately 25,000 individuals receive SNAP assistance and nearly 46,000 individuals receive Medicaid assistance. To check your normal SNAP benefit amount, you can go to connectEBT.com. If you have questions or need more information, please call 1-844-640-6446.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – Mr. Jason Boyd, stated that he will be meeting with Budget Director, Mr. Michael Matas, to apply for an additional \$100,000 in ARPA funding that has been made available to all counties throughout the US. He will keep the Board updated as information is received.

FINANCE – none.

CLERK – Commissioners Clerk, Ms. Jennifer Bell, stated that the Regular Meeting is scheduled for next Thursday, January 26, 2023 at 10:00 am.

LEGAL – none.

OLD BUSINESS: Commissioner Regovich briefly addressed the sales tax issue, stating that the County does not collect all the inside mills that is permitted which would be added to the property taxes of all county residents. The Board chose not to consider this option. He referred to several news stories; one out of Lorain County pertaining to their 9-1-1 emergency radio systems of their first responders being down and the issues it had caused, a drive-by shooting in Euclid and the lack of police officer applicants at a Lake County and Cuyahoga County Police Department; one of which is the highest paying departments in the State. These are the safety issues that he had taken into consideration with the sales tax increase. Commissioner Plecnik referred to Ms. Casar's statement of the number of people receiving SNAP and Medicaid assistance and shared his opposition to the sales tax increase. Commissioner Hamercheck addressed the 9-1-1 system failure in Lorain County, stating that the patient was an 80-year-old in cardiac arrest and how not too long ago Lake County experienced this type of failure and that it should never happen again. Lake County has one of the highest ranked emergency operations in the State. He spoke of the recent arrest of a Cuyahoga County individual in connection with a homicide. Commissioner Hamercheck acknowledged Commissioner Plecnik's opposition to the sales tax and encouraged him to discuss his opinions at the table and not through individual press releases and/ or social media posts. He clarified several items that the public may have found confusing. Next, he explained how the new Lake County Administration was paid in full out of the General Fund in 2021 and that the remaining debt is the Utilities portion and that will be paid out of the Lake County Department of Utilities Enterprise Funds which are restricted funds and may not be used for General Fund use. Commissioner Hamercheck addressed County Prosecutor, Mr. Charles Coulson to further explain the Lake County Department of Utilities Enterprise Funds for General Fund debt. Mr. Coulson reiterated that the Lake County Department of Utilities Enterprise Funds absolutely cannot be used for General Fund debt. Commissioner Hamercheck and Mr. Coulson discussed the County's investments being more than \$100 million and how the County/Board of Commissioners, under any circumstances, may not use any funds collected through levies for Deepwood, LakeTran, Lake MetroParks, etc.

Commissioner Plecnik stated that transparency to the residents is of utmost importance to him and that he will continue to use any and all platforms available as well as discussions at the Commissioner's meetings. He also added that he has confirmed and stands by the numbers and information that was provided to him by the County Auditor.

NEW BUSINESS: none.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Commissioner Hamercheck asked if anyone in the audience wished to address the Board. Mr. Richard Kunsman of South Madison, stated his opposition to the sales tax increase and hoped it would go to a vote of the people. He also opposed any proposed property tax increase and how he is considering moving out of state simply due to the high property taxes.

Ms. (name inaudible) of Mentor, offered her opposition and opinion regarding the sales taxes. Commissioners Hamercheck and Regovich clarified that no one is considering a property tax increase and adding that Lake County has chosen not to collect the full inside mills permitted by law. City of Eastlake Mayor Dennis Morley discussed the difficult city services budget cuts he was faced with making.

Mr. David Lima of 7774 Litchfield in Mentor, discussed crime and gun violence.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: On a motion by Commissioner Plecnik, seconded by Commissioner Plecnik, the Board convened an Executive Session at 11:50 a.m. to discuss Personnel-Collective Bargaining with the vote as follows: "AYES": Commissioners Plecnik, Regovich and Hamercheck "NAYS": None.

The Lake County Board of Commissioners adjourned to Executive Session at 12:24 p.m.

ADJOURN: On a motion by Commissioner Plecnik seconded by Commissioner Regovich, the Board adjourned the meeting at 12:24 p.m. with the vote as follows: "AYES": Commissioners Plecnik, Regovich and Hamercheck "NAYS": None.

Minutes approved this thirteenth day of April, 2023.

BOARD OF LAKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

JOHN R. HAMERCHECK, PRESIDENT

JOHN PLECNIK, COMMISSIONER

RICHARD J. REGOVICH, COMMISSIONER

JENNIFER BELL, CLERK