

LAKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES

MORRIS W. BEVERAGE III, COMMISSIONER	JASON W. BOYD, ADMINISTRATOR
JOHN PLECNIK, COMMISSIONER	LEGAL COUNSEL
MORGAN R. McINTOSH, COMMISSIONER	NEWS MEDIA
JENNIFER BELL, CLERK	

(Tape 2026-0122)

CALL TO ORDER: Commissioner Beverage called the Meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Thursday, January 22, 2026

ROLL CALL: Upon roll being called, Commissioners: McIntosh, Plecnik and Beverage were present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Upon a motion by Commissioner McIntosh, seconded by Commissioner Plecnik, the minutes of the Organizational Meeting of January 8, 2026 and the Regular Meetings of January 8 and January 13, 2026 were approved with the vote as follows: "AYES": Commissioners: McIntosh, Plecnik and Beverage "NAYS": None.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Commissioner Beverage asked if anyone in the audience wished to address the Board.

Timberlake Mayor, John Marra, read a prepared statement referring to agenda item #9 which proposes to ratify an amendment related to the representation and control within NOACA. Several highlights included that over time NOACA has moved in a direction that does not align with the core needs of Lake County communities. Their focus has increasingly shifted towards initiatives such as climate change policies, economic development initiatives, the installation of electric charging stations, expanding bike lanes, and a greater emphasis on public transportation rather than fundamental infrastructure needs like roads and bridges, and storm water management that truly impact Lake County. He stated that he feels one of the most pressing and costly infrastructure challenges facing our communities, especially in Timberlake, has been effectively abandoned as a priority. While flooding, drainage failures, and aging storm systems directly affect public safety, property damage, and long-term infrastructure costs, these issues receive little attention on NOACA's current agenda. Furthermore, he feels they have become involved in projects that stray from these priorities, for example, coordinating traffic studies for the Browns or focusing on murals and other aesthetic projects. These initiatives divert focus and resources away from what NOACA's primary mission is by maintaining and improving roads and bridges. By ratifying this amendment, we risk handing over more control to entities like the City of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County who will dominate NOACA's agenda. Mayor Marra strongly feels that Lake County should move forward with forming their own metropolitan planning organization in partnership with Geauga County.

Mr. James Chesnic of 4229 Seminole Street, Mentor was present to speak on NOACA. Mr. Chesnic shared that he is a veteran and proud Lake County resident who enjoys the park systems in Lake and Geauga Counties. He shared some concerns about NOACA, stating they need to focus on making Cuyahoga County a success before they start imposing their will on Lake County, Geauga County and the other counties. NOACA needs to prove to everyone first how they are going to spend their money to improve things. He feels they are becoming bureaucratic monsters. There's a reason Lake County and Geauga County are wonderful, and it is because there is self-governance. We don't have bureaucratic monsters taking control and absorbing smaller counties.

RESOLUTIONS:

1.RESOLUTION APPROVING PLANS AND SPECIFICATION FOR DISCOVERY LANE PAVEMENT IMPROVEMENTS IN CONCORD TOWNSHIP(20260122\E01)(E-3)

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

2.RESOLUTION APPROVING FINAL ESTIMATE NO. 3 (RELEASE OF RETAINAGE) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$9,221.20 WITH MONTE CONSTRUCTION LLC AND ACCEPTING A THREE-YEAR MAINTENANCE BOND IN THE AMOUNT OF \$276,070.00 FOR THE LAKE ROAD FORCEMAIN REPLACEMENT PROJECT 484-S-2024 FOR THE LAKE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF UTILITIES(20260122\U01)(UT-12)

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

3.RESOLUTION INCREASING APPROPRIATIONS AND TRANSFERRING CASH WITHIN LAKE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF UTILITIES FUND 596, PROJECT 445-S-2021 KIRTLAND OLD TOWN SEWER AND THE SEWER FUND (20260122\U02)(UT-2)

On a motion by Commissioner McIntosh, seconded by Commissioner Plecnik. Commissioner Plecnik wanted to thank Mr. Rothlisberger for his leadership on this issue along with Mayor Potter, Kirtland City Council and Commissioner Beverage. Commissioner Beverage stated that he appreciates all the work of everyone involved to get this done over the past year to lessen the burden on residents. The foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows : "AYES": Commissioners: McIntosh, Plecnik and Beverage "NAYS": None.

4.RESOLUTION INCREASING APPROPRIATIONS AND TRANSFERRING CASH WITHIN LAKE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF UTILITIES WATER FUND AND FUND 595 FOR PROJECT 470-W-2023, AQUARIUS RAW WATER TRAVELING SCREENS REPLACEMENT(20260122\U03)(UT-2)

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

5.RESOLUTION APPROVING FINAL ESTIMATE NO. 3 (RELEASE OF RETAINAGE) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$8,251.88 WITH DAVIS DIGGERS, INC. AND ACCEPTING A THREE-YEAR MAINTENANCE BOND IN THE AMOUNT OF

\$20,803.35 FOR THE UNION STREET WATERLINE REPLACEMENT PROJECT 479-W-2024 FOR THE LAKE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF UTILITIES(20260122\U04)(UT-12)

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

6.RESOLUTION CERTIFYING UNPAID WATER AND SEWER SUMS AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGES TO THE LAKE COUNTY AUDITOR(20260122\U05)(UT-7)

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

7.RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF AN ENGINEERING AGREEMENT WITH BROWN & CALDWELL FOR THE BARBARA DRIVE SANITARY SEWER IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT 457-S-2021 FOR THE LAKE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF UTILITIES(20260122\U06)(UT-4)

On a motion by Commissioner McIntosh, seconded by Commissioner Plecnik, the foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows : "AYES": Commissioners: McIntosh, Plecnik and Beverage "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(20260122\JFS01)(JFS-11)

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

9.RESOLUTION APPROVING A REVISION TO THE NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY CODE OF REGULATIONS(20260122\C01)(C-102)

On a motion by Commissioner McIntosh, seconded by Commissioner Plecnik. Commissioner Plecnik stated that he agrees with his alternate, Mayor Marra, and finds it deeply troubling that NOACA has become a bureaucratic monster. NOACA engages in everything from climate change to green energy studies and has priorities that not only fail to align with Lake and Geauga counties but also many other surrounding counties. He shared that the change currently on the table is something that Commission President Beverage has worked very hard to fight for and to get more independence from NOACA rather than their bylaws telling Lake County which members represent the County. For example, the head of LakeTran is a member under the bylaws. He doesn't feel that this is right as he is not an elected official so there is no accountability to the public. He did state for the record, "that LakeTran current CEO Mr. Ben Cappelle is a great representative for the county. It works well. But we can imagine a future where the Commissioners might even be at odds with the head of the busing agency. And yet we would be told that one of our five votes, 20% of our say, is dictated to us and for us by NOACA. That's not right. This amendment actually gives more independence to Lake County where your elected Commissioners can decide who represents us. So, this is a small improvement. It's not enough. Independence from NOACA is the goal, but this is a small improvement and it's something that President Beverage has fought very hard for. So, I am supportive of declaring independence from NOACA. This is the first shot and we're firing it today." Commissioner McIntosh echoed Commissioner Plecnik's comments and stated that he served as an alternate for several commissioners and has attended NOACA meetings over the last couple years. He certainly appreciates Commissioners Beverage and Plecnik's concerns and understands what they are expressing. He acknowledged how Commissioner Beverage has been working diligently over the last year as a member of NOACA for some of the changes alluded to and he wholeheartedly supports them. He shared that he had the opportunity to meet with Commissioners Beverage and Regovich in Washington along with ODOT to talk about MPO's. Commissioner Beverage explained that this resolution will give Lake County more control over the contingency of board members, it does not give any more power to any other county or change the number. It does not change the proportionality; it simply gives the local counties more control over their own fate as far as who represents them. He further explained that there are some areas that NOACA has gotten into or is involved in that he does not agree with and as Commissioner McIntosh pointed out, their discussions in DC in June of last year were to get a better understanding of the role of a Metropolitan Planning Organization, (MPO) and the benefits the county may or may not have. Another conversation was to assess the financial impact one way or another. He discussed funding and how some are based on population as well as core funding and merit funding and the importance of advocacy. He stated that there are concerns to discuss before considering separating from NOACA. One is that there are eight MPO's across this state that have direct funding from the US Department of Transportation that goes to transit entities. By being a part of NOACA, LakeTran receives a bigger or earlier chance for those grant dollars. He also explained that the dollars that come into NOACA come in from a population and percentage of urbanization base, meaning the dollars coming in from the federal government come in based on what percentage of your county is urbanized. He explained that for Geauga County, they are only 25%-30% urbanized, Lake County is approximately 90% and Cuyahoga County is about 100% urbanized, so it benefits counties to be joined up with other counties that have a higher urbanization percentage. The foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows : "AYES": Commissioners: McIntosh, Plecnik and Beverage "NAYS": None.

10. RESOLUTION APPOINTING LAKE COUNTY, OHIO REPRESENTATIVES AND ALTERNATES TO THE NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY CODE OF REGULATIONS(20260122\C02)(C-102)

On a motion by Commissioner McIntosh, seconded by Commissioner Plecnik. Commissioner Plecnik thanked his NOACA alternate, Mayor John Marra of Timberlake, for his service and stated how he is grateful for his willingness to take so much time to represent Lake County. The foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows : "AYES": Commissioners: McIntosh, Plecnik and Beverage "NAYS": None.

11.RESOLUTION APPROVING PAYMENT OF BILLS AS LISTED ON THE COMMISSIONERS' APPROVAL JOURNAL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$8,187,437.16(20260122\BC01)(C-4)

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

12.RESOLUTION APPROVING PURCHASE ORDERS AS LISTED ON THE COMMISSIONERS' PURCHASE ORDER APPROVAL JOURNAL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,112,636.06(20260122\BC02)(C-17)

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

13. RESOLUTION INCREASING AND DECREASING APPROPRIATIONS FOR VARIOUS GENERAL AND NON-GENERAL FUND ACCOUNTS(20260122\BC03)(C-111)

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

14. RESOLUTION TRANSFERRING CASH WITHIN GENERAL AND NON-GENERAL FUND ACCOUNTS (20260122\BC04)(C-111)

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

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

UTILITIES – Sanitary Engineer, Mr. Randy Rothlisberger, provided an update on the ongoing odor issue. He explained that the program of pre-treatment of wastewater has been very effective, complaints have drastically reduced and they will continue to monitor this. Mr. Rothlisberger wanted to offer his thanks and gratitude to the water main crews in anticipation of the extreme cold we are expecting over the next 8 to 9 days. He explained that with the extreme cold weather comes watermain breaks and his crews must work in these elements to make these important repairs for our residents to make sure that everybody has water and wastewater services. He stated these workers will be working along the side of the road and asked residents to please slow down and give them space to do their jobs safely. The Board also offered their thanks and how they understand and appreciate the hard work that these men and women do for Lake County residents.

JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES – Ms. Suzanne Casar, Director of Job and Family Services, stated that she wanted to provide a public service announcement to those individuals who are eligible for food assistance benefits. She explained that the State has made local Job and Family Services aware that there has been an uptick in security issues associated with EBT cards. She stated that all clients should download The Connect EBT app on their phones which will then allow them to receive transaction alerts, lock and unlock their cards, and check their card statements for any unusual transactions.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – Mr. Jason Boyd provided an update on the Public Safety Center stating that there were 68 trades people onsite during yesterday’s extreme cold and that today they are pouring concrete in the basement. They are 75% of the way to temporarily closing up the building, which is critical to keep people working. He added that the project remains on time and budget.

CLERK – Commissioners Clerk, Ms. Jennifer Bell, stated that the next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 29, 2026 at 10:00 am. with a Quarterly Investment Meeting beginning at 9:45am and a workshop following the Commissioners Meeting at 10:30. Ms. Bell also stated that the County is still looking for an apiary, and anyone interested can find information on the website.

LEGAL – none.

OLD BUSINESS: none.

NEW BUSINESS: none.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: On a motion by Commissioner Plecnik, seconded by Commissioner McIntosh, the Board convened for an Executive Session at 10:29 a.m. to discuss Personnel – Collective Bargaining and Legal-Pending Litigation with the vote as follows: "AYES": Commissioners: McIntosh, Plecnik and Beverage "NAYS": None.

The Lake County Board of Commissioners adjourned to Executive Session at 10:29 a.m.

ADJOURN: On a motion by Commissioner Plecnik seconded by Commissioner McIntosh, the Board adjourned the meeting at 10:53 a.m. with the vote as follows: "AYES": Commissioners: McIntosh, Plecnik and Beverage "NAYS": None.

Minutes approved this fifth day of February, 2026.

BOARD OF LAKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

MORRIS W. BEVERAGE III, PRESIDENT

JOHN T. PLECNIK, COMMISSIONER

MORGAN R. McINTOSH, COMMISSIONER

JENNIFER BELL, CLERK