

Minutes of the  
Lake County Senior Citizens Advisory Panel  
Tuesday, September 14, 2021  
2:00 p.m.

The Lake County Senior Citizens Advisory Panel hereby finds and determines that all formal actions were taken in an open meeting and that all deliberations of the Senior Citizens Advisory Panel, which resulted in formal action, were taken in a meeting open to the general public, in full compliance with applicable legal requirements of Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Chairperson, Mr. Dreher, opened the meeting at 2:03 p.m.

Present:

Members: Tom Dreher, Ken Gauntner, Lisa Siciliano-Miller, Spence Kline, and Lyle Shull

Staff: Alyea Barajas, Cristen Kane, Donna Tyson, and Jason Boyd

Absent: None

Public: Joseph Tomsick

Public Comments: None.

Approval of the May 25, 2021 minutes:

Mr. Gauntner moved to approve the minutes of the May 25, 2021, Ms. Siciliano-Miller seconded the motion to approve.

Vote: "Ayes": Mr. Gauntner, Ms. Siciliano-Miller, Mr. Shull, and Mr. Dreher

Abstain: Mr. Kline

Motion carried.

Correspondence: None.

Levy Financial Review:

Mrs. Tyson presented a financial review of the senior services levy funds. Mrs. Tyson explained levy funds are deposited twice each year and that we received our second deposit for 2021 in August. This is reflected in the current cash value of the levy fund of 6.99 million. Mrs. Tyson explained that all encumbered expenses have not been paid out for 2021 so the balance will decrease by year end to reflect an estimated cash carryover of approximately 3.3 million. Mr. Gauntner inquired how the recent increase in property tax affects the senior levy. Mr. Boyd responded that given history, increase in property taxes doesn't necessarily correlate to increased revenue. Mrs. Tyson continued by explaining that not all levy recipients spent their awarded funds in 2020 due to COVID so we are seeing some extra carryover funds. Mrs. Tyson pointed out levy recipients that have not requested any 2021 funds to date. Mr. Gauntner asked if there was a deadline by which recipients have to request funds. Mrs. Barajas indicated that they have until early February 2022 to close out 2021 expenses. Mr. Boyd pointed out the new programs that were created in 2018 and 2019 and thanked them for their contributions as these programs were being launched.

Senior Services Coordinator Updates:

Mrs. Barajas reviewed the correspondence from the Prosecutor's office regarding the validity of the funding of RSVP, as well as the re-name of RSVP to the Lake County Volunteer Network which was discussed at the May 25, 2021 meeting. Mrs. Barajas read the following from the Prosecutor's office:

“The Commissioners have statutory authority to spend money to for the support of senior citizens services and facilities. This gives wide latitude for the Commissioners to spend this money, which includes using these funds as part of the budget of its office to provide services to senior citizens. There is no law that governs what the Commissioners can name one of its departments/programs, so there is no issue with the name “Lake County Volunteer Network.” Additionally, because this program is organized under the umbrella of the Board of Commissioners, and not as an outside entity, it is appropriate for the senior citizens levy funds to be included in the budget to provide senior citizens services as oppose to this money being awarded.”

Mrs. Barajas provided an update on the Lake County Mobile Food Pantry. Food pantry partners met last month to discuss extending the Mobile Pantry beyond September. The Greater Cleveland Foodbank offered to continue to box produce for the mobile pantry through their next fiscal year which begins in October 2021. Partners decided to offer one distribution each week October through January at the Mentor Park-n-Ride and increase distribution to 100 seniors. Registration is still required and can be done through either Lifeline or Council on Aging.

Mrs. Barajas briefed the Panel on her meeting with the City of Painesville recreation department regarding utilizing senior levy funds for various activities for City of Painesville seniors. Mrs. Barajas discussed with the city how senior funding works and the types of activities that are generally approved by the Commissioners for use of funds. The conversation also included other ways to meet the needs of the city’s senior population. Mrs. Barajas informed recreation department representatives of the free dial-a-ride for seniors to any Lake County senior center. The recreation department indicated they would review the information discussed in more detail and follow-up.

Mr. Dreher indicated agencies should have a set of requirements that need to be met by potential levy recipients prior to awarding funds. Discussion continued on current Coalition and Advisory Panel by-laws, levy ballot language, current process for awarding funds, and the authority granted to the Commissioners and the Senior Citizens Advisory Panel by the Commissioners. Mrs. Barajas informed the Panel that the Coalition was currently in the process of reviewing the by-laws as they are rather outdated since the creation of the Senior Citizens Advisory Panel. Mrs. Barajas also reviewed the resolution from June 28, 2012 which authorized the replacement of the Coalition with the Senior Advisory Panel as it pertains to allocation of funds. Mrs. Barajas mentioned it may be a good time to also revisit the Panel by-laws which have not been updated since the Panel’s inception in 2012. The Panel agreed and asked Mrs. Barajas to review with Mr. Boyd prior to sending to Panel for additional recommendations. Further discussion on topic will ensue at November meeting.

Mrs. Barajas indicated the terms for Mr. Kline and Mr. Guantner would end September 30, 2021. Both are interested in being re-appointed to the Panel. Two other individuals have also expressed interest. A board application, as well as a letter of interest and resume have been requested from all interested individuals.

Mrs. Barajas informed the Panel that senior services and the Lake County Volunteer Network was not successful with the federal grant application for the chore/errand program. There were 126 applicants and a quarter of those were awarded. Mrs. Barajas also provided an update on the RSVP federal funds and informed the Panel that the federal government did release a re-competition for current RSVP recipients but nothing so far for unfunded areas, which would include Lake County.

Mrs. Barajas indicated the application for 2022 senior levy funds would be sent to current levy recipients by Friday, October 1 with a due date of Friday, November 5. Recommendations would be presented at the November 16th meeting.

Old Business: Mr. Shull asked if we were still pursuing opportunities to better collect and measure senior center data. Mrs. Barajas indicated that she was looking into several software vendors to collect data on who is attending the centers and what they are doing while they are there. She indicated the plan was to gather the vendor information, get approval from Board of Commissioners, and then pilot with two senior centers.

New Business: None.

Discussion: Mr. Tomsick reviewed current operations of the Council on Aging including increase in home delivered meals, pet food delivery, Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, and plans for agency's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2022.

Mr. Dreher asked how funds that were previously allocated to RSVP and Painesville Senior Center will now be used. Mr. Boyd indicated Painesville has not received funds for the two previous years and those funds have been allocated to other entities for new programs including Project Hope and Lifeline. Mr. Gauntner noted that RSVP funds are still being utilized but have migrated to the senior services budget for the Lake County Volunteer Network operations.

Mr. Kline thanked the Commissioners for the opportunity to serve on the Panel and indicated he has learned a lot during his years serving. He indicated he looks forward to aging in Lake County.

Adjournment:

Mr. Shull moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:55 p.m. and Mr. Kline seconded the motion.

Vote: "All Ayes"

Motion carried.

\*The next meeting will be held Tuesday, November 16 at 2:00 p.m.\*