

Minutes of the
Lake County Senior Citizens Advisory Panel
Tuesday, March 5, 2024
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. Shull, opened the meeting at 2:01 p.m.

Present:

Members: Lisa Manning, Lyle Shull, Ken Gauntner, Ellen Foley Kessler, Tom Dreher, Emily Koenig, Larry Sterk

Staff: Alyea Barajas, Cristen Kane, Commissioner Richard Regovich

Public: Joseph Tomsick, Gloria Majeski

Public Comments: Ms. Majeski, board member of the Willoughby Hills senior room, addressed the Panel regarding the recent denial of their requested \$113,206 in senior levy funds for 2024. Ms. Majeski urged the Panel to reconsider funding to the community center's senior room. Discussion continued amongst the Panel and Ms. Majeski regarding details of the activities and operations of the senior room and the advisory panel's recommendation to deny their request. Commissioner Regovich was present and explained to Ms. Majeski the Commissioners' decision to accept the advisory panel's recommendation.

Mr. Dreher made a motion to reconsider the 2024 senior levy request by the City of Willoughby Hills; Ms. Foley Kessler seconded the motion.

The Panel and Ms. Majeski discussed several items for clarification purposes. The motion was carried with the vote as follows:

"Ayes": Larry Sterk, Emily Koenig, Ellen Foley Kessler, Thomas Dreher

"Nays": Lisa Manning, Lyle Shull, Ken Gauntner

Motion carried.

Approval of the November 14, 2023 minutes:

Ms. Foley Kessler moved to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2023; Mr. Dreher seconded the motion to approve.

Vote: "All Ayes"

Motion carried.

Correspondence: Ms. Barajas provided information on the public information requests made by the City of Willoughby Hills, Brian Massie, and Lois Orosz pertaining to 2024 senior levy funds distributions.

Election of 2024 Officers:

Ms. Manning announced her intention to step down from the senior panel effective immediately. Based on this, Mr. Shull indicated nominations and elections for the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson would take place at the May 14, 2024, meeting.

Volunteer Services Coordinator – Lake County Volunteer Network (LCVN)/AmeriCorps SDP Update:

Ms. Kane provided the Panel with the following volunteer stats.

- 2022 total volunteers = 325 with 52,462 volunteer hours of service
- 2023 total volunteers = 359 with 52,641 hours of service
- 2022-23 a total of 191 inactive volunteers were purged from LCVN software
- 2023 - 77 new volunteers enrolled and began volunteering (2022 only 30 new volunteers)
- A total of 438 volunteers on the roster, with 48 reporting no hours in 2023

Ms. Kane provided an AmeriCorps Seniors grant update. The AmeriCorps SDP grant will end June 30, 2024 and final progress report will be due on July 30, 2024. Ms. Kane indicated she is still awaiting the announcement from AmeriCorps on new RSVP expansion grants. In 2023, a total of 27 new Meals on Wheels drivers for Lake County Council on Aging were recruited and have begun delivery. Additionally, 34 Phone Pal clients were enrolled, 30 Phone Pal volunteers were trained, and 929 calls were made for a total of 451 hours of Phone Pal connections. Currently, 22 Phone Pal clients are receiving a call each week from a LCVN Phone Pal volunteer.

Senior Services Manager Updates:

Ms. Barajas provided updates to the current operating procedures via email prior to the meeting. Ms. Barajas asked if everyone had a chance to review and if there were any questions. Ms. Barajas explained the changes are minor and included updating membership from five members to seven and clarifying some of the specific procedures related to the annual levy application process. Mr. Gauntner asked if changes were approved by legal. Ms. Barajas indicated they had.

Ms. Foley Kessler made a motion to approve the changes to the operating procedures; Ms. Manning seconded the motion to approve.

Vote: "All Ayes"

Motion carried.

Ms. Barajas reviewed the recently awarded Healthy Aging Grants (HAG). In October, Lake County was awarded \$447,954 by the Ohio Department of Aging for HAG initiatives. All funds have been obligated and must be spent by 09/30/24. Ms. Barajas provided a spreadsheet of all the applicants and amounts requested, as well as those projects that were awarded funding. Nineteen applications were received totaling more than \$1.2M in requests. Of the HAG funds allocated, 47% was spent on housing assistance, 30% on food assistance, and ~11-12% each on digital literacy and the other category. Additionally, \$329,125 in senior levy funds to additional projects that fall in line with the intention of the HAGs. Providers awarded funds will be required to submit quarterly progress reports.

Ms. Barajas reviewed a list of upcoming events including:

Courage to Caregivers Workshop on Friday, May 17

Senior Day at the Great Lakes Mall on Tuesday, May 21

World Elder Abuse Awareness Walk on Thursday, June 13 at the Lake County Administration Center

Senior Day at the Fair on Friday, July 26

Support Our Seniors Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, September 15 at the Willowick Senior Center

Annual Caregiver Forum TBD – possible locations Holiday Inn/Lakeland

Old Business: None.

New Business: None.

General Discussion: Mr. Tomsick welcomed the new panel members and provided a folder of Council on Aging materials to each member. Mr. Tomsick noted several upcoming event including March for Meals on March 16 at the Great Lakes Mall and extended an invitation for all to attend.

Mr. Dreher thanked Ms. Manning for her time on the senior advisory panel and wished her well in her other endeavors.

Adjournment:

Mr. Dreher moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:19 p.m. and Mr. Gauntner seconded the motion.

Vote: "All Ayes"

Motion carried.

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, May 14, 2024, at 2:00 p.m.