

Minutes of the
Lake County Senior Citizens Advisory Panel
Tuesday, November 19, 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.

Vice-Chairperson, Ms. Foley Kessler, opened the meeting at 2:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present:

Members: Ellen Foley Kessler, Lyle Shull, Tom Dreher, Emily Koenig, Jenna Bing, Greg Giegerich, Larry Sterk
Staff: Alyea Barajas, Cristen Kane, Commissioner John Hamercheck (entered at 2:25 p.m.)

Public: Mayor Chris Hallum and Karen Mehollin from the City of Willoughby Hills

Public Comments: None.

Approval of the September 10, 2024 minutes:

Ms. Bing moved to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2024; Mr. Shull seconded the motion to approve.

Vote: "All Ayes"
Motion carried.

Correspondence: None.

Nomination of 2025 Officers:

Ms. Foley Kessler indicated she would accept nominations from the Board for the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

Ms. Koenig nominated Ms. Foley Kessler as Chairperson, Mr. Giegerich seconded the nomination.

Vote: "All Ayes"
Motion carried.

Mr. Shull nominated Mr. Sterk as Vice-Chair, Ms. Bing seconded the nomination.

Vote: "All Ayes"
Motion carried.

2025 Senior Levy Allocations:

Ms. Barajas presented the staff recommendations for 2025 senior levy funds. The Panel members were provided a copy of all of the levy applications along with a spreadsheet containing historical data and staff recommendations on October 31, 2024 for their review. Ms. Barajas indicated the Panel's recommendations will be presented to the Board of Commissioners within the next couple of weeks and award letters will be sent to all approved recipients no later than Monday, December 16, 2024.

Ms. Bing opened the discussion regarding the funding recommendation to Willoughby Hills and the long-term vision of the senior levy as it pertains to municipally owned centers. Mayor Hallum responded specific to the City of Willoughby Hills and indicated there has been some turn over in leadership at the

center and with that, the city is embracing a future for Willoughby Hills seniors that includes more programming and additional space within city hall for senior center members. He indicated that the senior levy request of \$66,784 was a conservative ask and speaks to the commitment on the part of the city to invest its own funds in the development of the center. The Panel continued discussion on the Willoughby Hills senior center and their requested funding. Commissioner Hamercheck addressed the Panel and stated that if there was funding available, he would support providing more funding to Willoughby Hills, rather than less.

Discussion continued on various senior center related topics including the cost of instructors, center business hours, and salaries.

Ms. Foley Kessler asked the Panel members if there were questions about the other levy applications. Ms. Bing asked about the discretionary funding to Adult Protective Services. Ms. Barajas explained that the discretionary funding would not necessarily be something that would be awarded annually but that there was a need seen by many of the organizations requesting levy funds, to help clients with various projects related to food and housing. This might include having an appliance fixed, paying for a deep cleaning, buying a supply of groceries, etc.

Ms. Bing asked about the caregiver support program funding requested by Family Pride. Ms. Barajas explained this was a new program that was funded last year with Healthy Aging Grant funds. Family Pride is working to develop the program and it does address a need in Lake County to provide support to caregivers of older adults.

The Lake County General Health District requested funds for a cycling program. Ms. Bing questioned the amount requested and the need for this type of programming. Ms. Barajas explained the recommendation for the LCGHD to pull funds down based on a per person, per class unit rate rather than an awarded amount that could be drawn down by line item. Consensus of the Panel was that there were other, more important needs and that group exercise programming was already well funded with the allocations to the senior centers.

Mr. Sterk made a motion to approve the senior services levy recommendations as presented with the exception of the cycling program through the Lake County General Health District, which would not receive funding.

Vote "Ayes": Ms. Koenig, Ms. Bing, Mr. Shull, Mr. Giegerich, Mr. Sterk, Mr. Dreher, Ms. Foley Kessler
Motion carried.

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

The AmeriCorps RSVP federal grant application was officially submitted in September. Award notifications will occur January 2025. If awarded, the grant will begin April 1, 2025, and end March 31, 2028. The requested annual grant budget is \$126,879, which, in part, would cover the salary and partial benefits of the volunteer coordinator. The grant focuses on activities to increase social support and improve capacity for independent living. 150 unduplicated volunteers are included in the grant activities, Meals on Wheels, Phone Pal and Helping Hands for Seniors.

The Volunteer Recognition event, in partnership with the Lake County Council on Aging, was held on September 18, 2024, at Painesville Township Park. 186 volunteers were treated to entertainment by magician and illusionist, Rick Smith Jr. and enjoyed lunch by J&J Catering.

The LCVN is in the process of transitioning 428 volunteers from reporting hours each month via mail or email to an online portal. The goal is to have all volunteers transitioned by February 2025, which will reduce administrative time for tabulating volunteer hours. The online portal was initially purchased with AmeriCorps Senior SDP grant funds.

Senior Services Manager Updates:

The final Center for Community Solutions report, titled *Lake County Statistical Profile of Older Adults*, was distributed to all Panel members. Ms. Barajas requested members take some time to review and discussion would be added to the agenda for the March 4, 2025, meeting.

The Lake County Caregiver Forum was October 29, 2024, and was a huge success. The event was in partnership with the Lake County Council on Aging and Lifeline, Inc. and was attended by more than 150 caregivers of older adults. Speakers included Courage to Caregivers, Judge Mark J. Bartolotta, and CarePatrol of Northeast Ohio. Thirty-nine organizations were on hand to answer questions and educate on services. The fourth annual event is scheduled for October 29, 2025 at the Holiday Inn-Mentor.

Old Business: None.

New Business: None.

General Discussion: None.

Adjournment:

Mr. Giegerich moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:37 p.m. and Mr. Shull seconded the motion.

Vote: "All Ayes"

Motion carried.

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.