

**CASS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

**April 20, 2023**

Vice-Chair Laylin called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers on Thursday, April 20, 2023. Chair Jones offered the Invocation. Commissioner Howie led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Clerk/Register Monica McMichael called roll:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Ryan Laylin, James Lawrence, Joyce Locke, Jeremiah Jones, Mary Howie, Samuel Barrera, Roseann Marchetti and RJ Lee.

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Administrator Matthew Newton and Finance Director Jennifer Rentfrow.

**STATEMENT**

Commissioner Lee shared a statement.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Public comment occurred.

**ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Commissioner Howie moved, seconded by Commissioner Locke, to amend the agenda to add a New Business item - the purchase of a Marcellus Township Patrol Unit. Motion to amend carried by voice vote.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Commissioner Lee moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to approve the April 20, 2023, Cass County Committee of the Whole Agenda as amended. Motion to approve the agenda carried by voice vote.

**PRESENTATIONS**

Treasurer Hope Anderson presented the 2023 Tax Foreclosure Report.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

None.

## **DISTRICT REPORTS**

Commissioners Laylin, Lawrence, Jones, Howie, Barrera and Marchetti provided district reports.

## **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Administrator Newton shared the Administrator's Report.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Financial Director Jennifer Rentfrow offered the Finance Report.

## **VETERAN'S REPORT**

Veteran's Services Officer Karee Krause shared the Veteran's Report.

## **COUNTY PARTNERS**

None.

## **ELECTED OFFICIALS**

Judge Bealor announced the Law Day Ceremony would take place on Monday, May 1, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. in the Probate Court Room. Victim Advocate Marie Anderson will receive the Liberty Bell Award at the ceremony.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Appointments**

Chair Jones explained the Appointments Committee recommended the following appointments:

- i. Appoint Alexis O'Flynn to an unexpired term on the Economic Development Corporation Board ending 09/30/2024
- ii. Appoint Douglas Dallich Jr. to the Economic Development Corporation Board for a term ending 09/30/2028

- iii. Appoint Jesse Valdez to the Veteran's Trust Fund Board for a term expiring 12/31/2024 contingent upon approval of State of Michigan Veteran's Trust Fund Board of Trustees
- iv. Reappointment of Clint Roach to the Woodlands Behavioral Healthcare Network Board to a term expiring 03/31/2026
- v. Reappointment of Richard Palmisano to the Woodlands Behavioral Healthcare Network Board to a term expiring 03/31/2026

Board members agreed to move items i. through v. to the May 4, 2023, Regular Board Meeting Agenda.

**B. Resolution Expressing Opposition to Michigan Entering into National Popular Vote Interstate Compact**

Commissioner Lee explained that many of his constituents disagreed with Michigan entering into the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact.

Commissioners agreed to move the resolution to the May 4, 2023 Regular Board Meeting Agenda.

**C. CCIEA LOU for Juneteenth Observance – General & Court Units**

County Administrator Matt Newton and Judge Carol Bealor stated that because the State Court Administrator's Office declared Juneteenth a state holiday, the CCIEA General and Court Unit Contracts needed to be ratified to recognize the holiday. Judge Bealor drafted a Letter of Understanding (LOU) recognizing Juneteenth as a County Holiday.

Commissioners agreed to move the LOU to the May 4, 2023 Regular Board Meeting Agenda.

**D. Marcellus School Resource Officer**

Sheriff Behnke requested that the board approve a contract to place a licensed police officer in the Marcellus Public School District. Marcellus Schools was awarded a state grant that will pay the salary of the officer during the school months while the county will be responsible for the salary throughout the summer. The goal is to have someone in position by August 1, 2023.

Board members agreed to move the item to the May 4, 2023 Regular Board Meeting Agenda.

The Vice-Chair declared a five-minute recess at 6:06 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 6:11 p.m.

**E. Van Cass Intercounty Drain – Resolution Pledging Full Faith and Credit to Note or Notes**

Drain Commissioner Jeff VanBelle explained that 65% of the Van Cass Intercounty Drain lied in Van Buren County while 35% fell in Cass County. In order to secure funding, both counties must approve resolutions pledging full faith and credit for their percentage. Therefore, the Cass County Board of Commissioners must pledge their full faith and credit of 35% of the \$595,000 requested for the project. The Van Buren County Board of Commissioners recently approved their portion at a Committee of the Whole Meeting. Drain Commissioner VanBelle informed commissioners that the risk to Cass County was manageable.

Commissioners agreed to move the resolution to the May 4, 2023 Regular Board Meeting Agenda.

**F. Historical Commission Bylaws**

Administrator Newton stated that the County Historical Commission amended their bylaws on March 9, 2023. He went on to explain the amendments and express concerns. Commissioners decided to send the item to the Policy Committee before returning the bylaws to the Committee of the Whole.

**G. Resolution Accepting and Approving Blight Elimination Grant**

Commissioners agreed to move the resolution to the May 4, 2023 Regular Meeting Agenda as Treasurer Anderson had previously presented details of the grant.

**H. Resolution Accepting and Approving MI-HOPE Grant**

Commissioners agreed to move the resolution to the May 4, 2023 Regular Meeting Agenda as Treasurer Anderson had previously presented details of the grant.

**I. Resolutions of Recognition**

- i. Recognize May 7-13 as National Correctional Officers Memorial Week**
- ii. Recognize May 11-17 as National Police Officers Memorial Week**

Sheriff Behnke shared that he expected to hold the Shane Britton Memorial Ceremony on May 17, 2023.

Commissioners agreed to move both items to the May 4, 2023 Regular Board Meeting Agenda.

**J. Contract with Howard Township for Police Services**

Sheriff Behnke requested the board to approve the renewal of a contract for police services with Howard Township. The contract remained the same other than the purchase of a new squad car.

Commissioners agreed to move the item to the May 4, 2023 Regular Board Meeting Agenda.

**L. Marcellus Patrol Vehicle**

Sheriff Behnke asked the board to approve the purchase of a squad car for use in Marcellus Township in the amount of \$40,533. Marcellus Township would reimburse the Motor Pool Fund for the purchase with a payment of \$13,500 each year for three years.

Board members agreed to move the item to the May 4, 2023 Regular Board Meeting Agenda.

**K. Board of Commissioners Workshop**

Chair Jones opened discussion on a date and time to hold a workshop. After discussion, commissioners agreed that 1:00 p.m. on a Saturday worked best for most everyone. Administrator Newton would offer dates to be approved at the next regular board meeting.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Commissioners Marchetti, Barrera and Laylin shared comments.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Chair Jones, to adjourn. Motion carried by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Chair Jeremiah Jones

\_\_\_\_\_  
Monica McMichael, Clerk/Register