

**CASS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING**

December 1, 2022

The Cass County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, December 1, 2022, in Commission Chambers.

Chair Dyes called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Commissioner File provided the Invocation. Vice-Chair Grice led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Clerk/Register Monica McMichael called roll:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Ryan Laylin, Annie File, Roseann Marchetti, Skip Dyes, Robert Benjamin, Mike Grice and Jeremiah Jones.

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None.

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

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Visitors present introduced themselves.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Village of Cassopolis Manager and Cass County Land Bank Authority Member Emilie LaGrow thanked the board for reviewing the updated Land Bank By-Laws and offered to answer any questions.

County Treasurer and Land Bank Chair Hope Anderson thanked Ms. LaGrow for being present and congratulated the Village of Cassopolis on receiving the 2022 Community Excellence Award from the Michigan Municipal League.

Jefferson Township resident and Commissioner Elect Mary Howie commented on the wonderful student event she attended at the Kalamazoo Air Zoo.

Taras Lyssenko shared that the students from Cassopolis High School had a successful trip to the Kalamazoo Air Zoo and plan to next visit a nuclear laboratory.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Commissioner Laylin, to approve the December 1, 2022, Cass County Board of Commissioner's Agenda with the addition of R-233-22 under Recognitions. Motion carried by voice vote.

RECOGNITIONS

R-232-22

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to approve the following resolution:

A RESOLUTION IN RECOGNITION OF YEARS OF SERVICE FOR SHERIFF DEPUTY K9 FAUST

WHEREAS, Sheriff Deputy K9 Faust became a member of the Cass County Sheriff's Office in July of 2016 and was assigned to Deputy David Nevins; and

WHEREAS, during his career, Faust and K9 Handler Nevins built an impressive list of accomplishments including carrying a 70% success rate on his tracks locating over 135 individuals: 60 suspected criminals and 75 missing persons, children, or specific persons; and

WHEREAS, K9 Faust located over 3 kilograms of illegal substances and 5 handguns during his tenure; and

WHEREAS, Faust also received a letter of commendation from Senator Jon Proos.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that on behalf of the Cass County Board of Commissioners and the citizens of Cass County, K9 Faust is recognized for his years of service to the community and being a trusted and faithful partner to Deputy Nevins. Deputy K9 Faust has been a valued asset of the Sheriff's Office and completed incredible work for the citizens of Cass County. We wish you the best in your retirement, at home with your family.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Yes (7): Commissioners Benjamin, Grice, Jones, Laylin, Dyes and Marchetti.

No (0): None.

Resolution R-232-22 carried by roll call vote.

R-233-22

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Commissioner Laylin, to approve the following resolution:

RECOGNITION FOR YEARS OF SERVICE

WHEREAS, Dixie File was elected to the Cass County Board of Commissioners in 2002; and

WHEREAS, Ms. File has served on the Board for twenty years and presently represents District 2; and

WHEREAS, Ms. File has represented the County and her constituents on many boards and commissions including the Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, Soil Conservation District, Appointments Committee as well as various others.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Cass County Board of Commissioners recognizes Ms. File for her years of service on the Board of Commissioners; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board wishes Commissioner File all the best in the years ahead.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Yes (7): Commissioners Marchetti, Benjamin, Grice, Jones, Laylin, File and Dyes.

No (0): None.

Resolution R-233-22 carried by roll call vote.

PRESENTATIONS

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Benjamin asked that M-223-22 be removed from the Consent Agenda and added to New Business.

Vice-Chair Grice moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, that the following items be voted on at one time by roll call vote and be considered as a consent agenda by the Board of Commissioners:

(M-224-22) A motion to approve the November 17, 2022 Board of Commissioner Regular Meeting Minutes.

The Vice Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Yes (7): Commissioners Laylin, File, Marchetti, Dyes, Benjamin, Grice and Jones.

No (0): None.

The Consent Agenda carried by roll call vote.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Commissioners Laylin, Marchetti and Jones shared Committee Reports.

APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE REPORT

No report.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Newton shared the Administrator's Report.

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

No report.

COUNTY PARTNERS

No report.

ELECTED OFFICIALS UPDATE

Clerk/Register McMichael shared budgetary concerns and provided an example of the cost of summoning jurors. Earlier that week her office summoned 90 jurors for a Circuit Court trial. Of the 90 summoned, 69 appeared. Unfortunately, no trial occurred and all jurors were sent home. The cost to pay jurors mileage and per diem for that morning was \$2,000.

Clerk/Register McMichael also reported that a Michigan resident filed for a partial recount of statewide ballot proposals 2 and 3 that included more than 600 precincts across the State of Michigan. No precincts in Cass County were requested to be recounted.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

M-225-22

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Jones, to approve the revised Board of Commissioners Rules of Procedure as recommended by the Policy Committee. Discussion followed. Motion carried by voice vote.

M-226-22

Vice-Chair Grice moved, seconded by Commissioner Jones, to approve the revised Land Bank Authority By-Laws. Motion carried by voice vote.

M-227-22

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Commissioner Laylin, to reclassify the IT Website Content Manager at Grade 6, Step 9 to Marketing & Communications Manager at Grade 9, Step 6. Discussion followed. Motion carried by voice vote.

M-228-22

Commissioner Jones moved, seconded by Commissioner Benjamin, to approve Letters of Understanding for the following Collective Bargaining Units:

- a. Dispatch
- b. Animal Control
- c. Corrections
- d. Corrections Sergeants
- e. Road Sergeants

A voice vote occurred; however, the result was not clear. The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Yes (3): Commissioners Benjamin, Marchetti and Jones.

No (4): Commissioners Laylin, Dyes, Grice and File.

Motion M-228-22 failed by roll call vote.

R-229-22

Commissioner File moved, seconded by Commissioner Laylin, to approve the following resolution:

A RESOLUTION TO REAUTHORIZE STEP LEVEL HIRING ACROSS FULL PAY SCALE

WHEREAS, Section 4 of the Cass County Wage & Salary Administration Policy provides that the County Administrator may approve step level hiring at the midpoint of paygrades; and

WHEREAS, a number of recent cases have resulted in no qualified applicants for county positions either internally from county service or external from the community, or the applicants have been unwilling to accept midpoint range in the grade and step; and

WHEREAS, R-213-22 authorized step level hiring across the full pay scale through December 31, 2022; and

WHEREAS, economic conditions across the region continue to contribute to labor shortages forecasted to continue through 2023.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Cass County Board of Commissioners that through December 31, 2023, the County Administrator is authorized to make “full use” of the compensation schedule when a Department Head or Elected Official determines it is necessary and in the County’s interest to attract and maintain an acceptable level of talent. Additionally, in every instance of such use, the County Administrator will notify the Board of Commissioners by providing a copy of the County Employee Status Change Form together with a Memorandum explaining the necessity.

Discussion followed.

Yes (6): Commissioners File, Dyes, Marchetti, Grice, Jones and Laylin.

No (1): Commissioner Benjamin.

Resolution R-229-22 carried by roll call vote.

CLOSED SESSION

M-230-22

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Grice, to enter a Closed Session to discuss trial and/or settlement strategy in the tax foreclosure litigation including the pending lawsuits in Grainger v County of Ottawa, Calkins v Kent County, and Sattler v Kent County, pursuant to MCL 15.268(e) and to discuss material exempt from disclosure under the attorney-client privilege pursuant to MCL 15.268(h). Closed Session to include Hope Anderson, Monica McMichael, Jennifer Rentfrow, Matthew Newton, Allen Vanderlaan, Nic Spigiel, and any other party as may be designated by the Board Chair.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Yes (7): Commissioners Dyes, Marchetti, Grice, Benjamin, Jones, Laylin and File.

No (0): None.

Motion to enter Closed Session carried by roll call vote. The meeting entered closed session at 5:52 p.m. The Chair announced that the board may conduct business after the closed session.

The meeting returned to open session at 6:52 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

M-231-22

Commissioner Benjamin moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to table motion M-231-22 until the December 15, 2022, Regular Board Meeting. Motion carried by voice vote.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Benjamin shared that it was Public Act 156 of 1851 - MCL 46.3 Sec. 5, which states that the Board Chair must lead all meetings.

Commissioner Laylin asked that a discussion on CCDET appear on the next regular board meeting agenda. He also asked that the original CCDET millage language be provided to board members.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Benjamin moved, seconded by Commissioner Laylin, to adjourn. Motion carried by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Approved: _____
Date

Chair Skip Dyes

Monica McMichael, Clerk/Register