

**CASS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING**

August 10, 2023

The Cass County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, August 10, 2023, in Commission Chambers.

Chair Jeremiah Jones called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Commissioner Marchetti provided the Invocation. Commissioner Barrera 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.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment occurred.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

Commissioner Marchetti requested that motion M-127-23 be removed from the consent agenda and placed under New Business as item C. Discussion followed. It was agreed that support and a vote was not necessary as any commissioner was allowed to remove items from the consent agenda per the approved Cass County Board of Commissioner Bylaws.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Lawrence moved, seconded by Commissioner Lee, to approve the August 10, 2023, Cass County Board of Commissioner's Agenda. Motion carried by voice vote.

RECOGNITIONS

None.

PRESENTATIONS

COIN CONTEST WINNER: Chair Jones presented the 1st challenge coin to art contest winner Paige Linbeck.

FY 24 BUDGET: Administrator Newton presented the updated FY24 Budget which included a balanced budget option as well as an administrator recommended option.

Commissioner Howie left the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Vice-Chair Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Lee, 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-119-23) Motion to approve the claims dated June 30, 2023 through August 4, 2023

(M-120-23) Motion to approve July 6, 2023 Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting Minutes

(M-121-23) Motion to appoint Bruce Stack to the Central Dispatch Authority as representative for Cass County Fire Chief's Association

(M-122-23) Motion to appoint Barbara Belland to the Solid Waste Planning Committee to a term expiring June 30, 2025

(M-123-23) Motion to appoint Mary Howie to the Historic Commission to a term expiring July 1, 2026

(M-124-23) Motion to obligate up to \$3,500.00 of Opioid Settlement Funds be utilized in support of Sobriety Day Event

(R-125-23) Resolution to Establish Opioid Settlement Advisory Panel

A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE CASS COUNTY OPIOID SETTLEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, The Cass County Board of Commissioners adopted R-231-21 and R-56-23 to approve participation in National Opioid Settlement Agreements;

WHEREAS, the County expects settlement proceeds of approximately \$1,225,274.52 through 2031;

WHEREAS, the County desires to utilize said proceeds to support the full range of care, services and support for people who use drugs and people with opioid dependence and to rethink prevention to address underlying determinants of opioid use and dependence;

WHEREAS, the creation of an Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee will bring together a range of stakeholders to gather information, determine strategies and priorities, and

evaluate the use of settlement proceeds to provide for the effective utilization of funds to benefit the community; and

WHEREAS, the Committee will prepare and offer recommendations to the Board of Commissioners for the use of Opioid Settlement funds.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Cass County Board of Commissioners to establish the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee to be comprised of 2 Commissioners, the County Administrator, the Finance Director, the Chief Judge, the Sheriff, a representative from the Van Buren-Cass District Health Department, a representative from the Cass Family Clinic, and a representative from the Woodlands Behavioral Healthcare Network.

(R-126-23) Resolution Authorizing Engagement of the State Land Bank Authority of Michigan's Blight Elimination Program Round 3 & 4 by the Cass County Land Bank Authority

WHEREAS, The Cass County Treasurer acquires properties through foreclosure processes;

WHEREAS, there needed to be a means to dispose of said properties and to assist our local jurisdictions in development, redevelopment, and removal of blight;

WHEREAS, the Cass County Board of Commissioners created the Cass County Land Bank Authority on October 16, 2008 as a separate legal entity and as a public body corporate under Public Act 258 of 2003;

WHEREAS, the Michigan legislature allocated \$75 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to expand the State's Blight Elimination Program. These funds are to be distributed by the State Land Bank Authority to revitalize communities and grow the economy;

WHEREAS, county land banks are guaranteed a \$500,000 allocation to address vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties in their communities. In areas served by a land bank authority, the land bank authority must serve as the lead applicant for grants within its jurisdiction;

WHEREAS, county land banks may apply for grants above the guaranteed minimum of \$500,000; and

WHEREAS, the Cass County Land Bank will receive a Letter of Acceptance of Grant Funds by July 10, 2023 with a response due August 1, 2023. The Grant Agreement will be sent by August 31, 2023 with approval and execution required by September 20, 2023. The proposals will be due for pre-approval by March 31, 2024.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Cass County Board of Commissioners authorizes engagement of the State Land Bank Authority of Michigan's Blight Elimination Program Round 3 and 4 by the Cass County Land Bank Authority.

(R-128-23) Resolution in Support of Cass County Land Bank Authority's MI-HOPE Phase 4 Grant Application

WHEREAS, Cass County is dedicated to providing support and resources to County homeowners; and

WHEREAS, the Cass County Land Bank Authority is applying for round four of MSHDA's MI-HOPE grant initiative, designed to promote energy efficiency in homes in which homeowners may not be able to independently fund the necessary repairs; and

WHEREAS, many homeowners needing these repairs have been identified; and

WHEREAS, the project, if approved, will fund improvements for at least 20 homeowners throughout the County; and

WHEREAS, significant improvements to County homes made possible by this grant will increase the taxable value of those homes, thus increasing revenue for the County; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Cass County Board of Commissioners pledge their support of the Cass County Landbank Authority's submission of MSHDA'S MI-HOPE Program.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Yes (7): Commissioners Laylin, Lawrence, Locke, Jones, Barrera, Marchetti and Lee.

No (0): None.

Absent (1): Commissioner Howie.

The Consent Agenda carried by roll call vote.

COUNTY PARTNERS

None.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

R-129-23

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

A RESOLUTION APPROVING DR. LAWLESS INTERNATIONAL DARK SKY PARK RENOVATION PROJECT AGREEMENT

WHEREAS, Cass County successfully applied to the Land Water Conservation Fund in 2022 for the Dr. Lawless International Dark Sky Park Renovation Project (#26-01885); and

WHEREAS, Cass County does hereby accept the full terms of the project agreement regarding as received from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DEPARTMENT) and does specifically agree, but not by way of limitation, as follows:

1. To appropriate all funds necessary to complete the project during the project period and to provide \$428,625.00 (50%) of the \$857,250.00 total project cost to match the grant authorized by the DEPARTMENT.
2. To maintain satisfactory financial accounts, documents, and records to make them available to the DEPARTMENT for auditing at reasonable times.
3. To construct the project and provide such funds, services and materials as may be necessary to satisfy the terms of said Agreement.
4. To regulate the use of the facility constructed and reserved under this Agreement to assure the use thereof by the public on equal and reasonable terms.
5. To comply with any and all terms of said Agreement including terms not specifically set forth in the following portions of the Resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cass County Board of Commissioners does hereby accept the terms and conditions of the Agreement as received from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and as outlined above.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Yes (7): Commissioners Lawrence, Locke, Jones, Barrera, Marchetti, Lee and Laylin.

No (0): None.

Absent (1): Commissioner Howie.

Resolution R-129-23 carried by roll call vote.

M-130-23

Vice-Chair Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Lee, to approve FY 23 Budget Amendments as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.

M-127-23

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Vice-Chair Laylin, to postpone M-127-23 until the October 3, 2023, Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting. Discussion followed.

A roll call vote was requested:

Yes (3): Commissioners Marchetti, Laylin and Locke.

No (4): Commissioners Lee, Barrera, Jones and Lawrence.

Absent (1): Commissioner Howie.

Motion to postpone failed by roll call vote.

Commissioner Lee moved, seconded by Commissioner Barrera, to establish a MERS Committee.

Vice-Chair Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to amend the motion to require that any further defined benefit/defined compensation talks and committee meetings be held publicly, allowing for public participation. Motion to amend carried by voice vote.

Motion to approve M-127-23 as amended carried by voice vote.

Chair Jones appointed himself, Commissioner Howie and Commissioner Lawrence to the committee with Commissioner Lawrence to serve as chair.

CLOSED SESSION

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioners Barrera, Marchetti and Laylin offered comments or announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:24 p.m.

Approved: _____
Date

Chair Jeremiah Jones

Monica McMichael, Clerk/Register