

**CASS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING**

October 5, 2023

The Cass County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, October 5, 2023, in Commission Chambers.

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: RJ Lee.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment occurred.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Barrera moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to approve the October 5, 2023, Cass County Board of Commissioner's Agenda. Motion carried by voice vote.

RECOGNITIONS

R-151-23

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

**A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING GRADUATION FROM THE NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES HIGH PERFORMANCE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY**

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties offers a High-Performance Leadership Academy, developed by the Professional Development Academy, in partnership with Fortune

1000 executives, public sector leaders, world-renowned academics, and thought leaders, including General Colin Powell and Dr. Marshall Goldsmith; and

WHEREAS, the Academy is an intensive, 12-week program designed and created to equip frontline County government professionals with leadership skills to deliver results for counties and communities; and

WHEREAS, the HLPAs are focused on leadership development in key areas including Leadership Mindset & Positive Engagement, Leading Effective Change, Communication and Collaboration, and Leading High-Performance Teams; and

WHEREAS, participants in the academy devote an additional 6 to 8 hours of time each week above and beyond their normal work responsibilities to complete the activities and learning assignments of the course; and

WHEREAS, completion of the course enables our local government professionals to improve their capabilities, increase their team engagement, and improve organizational outcomes.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Cass County Board of Commissioners commends Finance Director Jennifer Rentfrow on completing and graduating the High-Performance Leadership Academy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Cass County Board of Commissioners acknowledges and thanks Jennifer for her continued commitment to improving Cass County operations to better serve all the residents of Cass County.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

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

No (0): None.

Absent (1): Commissioner Lee.

Resolution R-151-23 carried by roll call vote.

PRESENTATIONS

Drain Commissioner Jeff VanBelle shared the Annual County Drains Report.

CONSENT AGENDA

Vice-Chair Laylin 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-152-23) Motion to approve the claims dated September 2, 2023 and September 30, 2023

(M-153-23) Motion to approve September 7, 2023 Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting Minutes

(M-154-23) Motion to approve September 21, 2023 Board of Commissioners Special Meeting Minutes

(M-155-23) Motion to approve the appointment of Michael O'Rourke to the Solid Waste Planning Commission as Industry Representative to a term ending 06/01/2025

(M-156-23) Motion to approve the reappointment of Rudy Gourdine and Brigid Forlenza to the Cass County Board of Canvassers for terms expiring 10/31/2027

(R-157-23) Resolution Supporting Operation Green Light for Veterans

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING OPERATION GREEN LIGHT FOR VETERANS

WHEREAS, the residents of Cass County have great respect, admiration, and the utmost gratitude for all the men and women who have selflessly served our country and this community in the Armed Forces;

WHEREAS, the contributions and sacrifices of those who served in the Armed Forces have been vital in maintaining the freedoms and way of life enjoyed by our citizens;

WHEREAS, Cass County seeks to honor individuals who have made countless sacrifices for freedom by placing themselves in harm's way for the good of all;

WHEREAS, veterans continue to serve our community in the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, religious groups, civil service, and by functioning as County Veterans Service Officers in 29 states to help fellow former service members access more than \$52 billion in federal health, disability and compensation benefits each year;

WHEREAS, approximately 200,000 service members transition to civilian communities annually;

WHEREAS, an estimated 20 percent increase of service members will transition to civilian life in the near future;

WHEREAS, studies indicate that 44-72 percent of service members experience high levels of stress during transition from military to civilian life;

WHEREAS, active military service members transitioning from military service are at a high risk for suicide during their first year after military service;

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties encourages all counties, parishes, and boroughs to recognize Operation Green Light for Veterans; and

WHEREAS, Cass County appreciates the sacrifices of our United States military personnel and believes specific recognition should be granted.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with designation as a Green Light for Veterans County, Cass County hereby declares from October through Veterans Day, November 11th, 2023, a time to salute and honor the service and sacrifices of our men and women in uniform transitioning from active service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in observance of Operation Green Light, Cass County encourages its citizens in patriotic tradition to recognize the importance of honoring all those who made immeasurable sacrifices to preserve freedom by displaying green lights in a window of their place of business or residence from November 6th through the 12th, 2023.

(M-158-23) Motion to approve Interagency Facilities Agreement

(M-159-23) Motion to approve Interagency Marketing Agreement

(M-160-23) Motion to approve revised Remonumentation Contract

(R-161-23) Resolution Opposing any Legislation Preempting Local Control for Solar and Wind Developments

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING ANY LEGISLATION PREEMPTING LOCAL CONTROL FOR SOLAR AND WIND DEVELOPMENTS

WHEREAS, Executive Directive 2020-10 aims to achieve 100 percent carbon neutrality in Michigan by 2050;

WHEREAS, industry leaders have pledged to reduce carbon emissions to help achieve this goal;

WHEREAS, efforts to expand renewable energy projects will continue to increase in this state;

WHEREAS, the governor has proposed the Michigan Public Service Commission be the sole regulating authority for solar and wind projects to expedite these efforts;

WHEREAS, by granting the Michigan Public Service Commission this authority, local control will be preempted;

WHEREAS, should local control be preempted, a county, township, city, or village would be unable to determine the location, size, setback distance, decibel level or any other criteria for a solar or wind facility;

WHEREAS, should local control be preempted, a county, township, city, or village would be unable to determine requirements for construction, operation, use, or maintenance of a solar or wind facility;

WHEREAS, if a county already has a solar or wind policy, practice, regulation, rule or ordinance on record it would be null and void;

WHEREAS, all other types of energy facilities, while regulated by the Michigan Public Service Commission, must adhere to local zoning;

WHEREAS, this proposal grants far more regulating authority to the Michigan Public Service Commission than for any other energy source; and

WHEREAS, the Michigan Association of Counties opposes any legislative action that may grant the Michigan Public Service Commission this power.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Cass County opposes the pre-emption of local control in solar and wind siting and zoning.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of Cass County is hereby directed to prepare and deliver certified copies of this Resolution to all 82 County Clerks, Representative Brad Paquette, Representative Steve Carra, Senator Jonathon Lindsey, and the Office of the Governor.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

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

No (0): None.

Absent (1): Commissioner Lee.

The Consent Agenda carried by roll call vote.

COUNTY PARTNERS

Cass County Transportation Authority Director Gerry Bundle informed the board that he submitted a written request for \$254,000 in fiscal aid from the County Board of Commissioners. Preferably, the Transportation Authority needed the funds by the end of October.

MSU Regional Director informed board members that the MSU 4-H Coordinator position was vacant. The position was posted and a team was ready to interview candidates within the next 2-3 weeks.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Clerk/Register McMichael, Treasurer Anderson and Sheriff Behnke provided departmental updates.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

M-162-23

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Vice-Chair Laylin, to approve the 2023 Special Assessment rolls. Motion carried by voice vote.

M-163-23

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Vice-Chair Laylin, to hold a Special BOC Meeting on October 19 at 4:30 p.m. Motion carried by voice vote.

CLOSED SESSION

M-164-23

Chair Jones announced that no business would be conducted after the closed session.

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Vice-Chair Laylin, to enter a Closed Session to consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute – a written legal opinion and to include Attorney Karl Butterer, County Administrator Matthew Newton, Finance Director Jennifer Rentfrow, and Human Resources Director Beth Daly.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

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

No (0): None.

Absent (1): Commissioner Lee.

Motion to enter Closed Session carried by roll call vote. The meeting moved to closed session at 5:50 p.m.

The meeting returned to open session at 6:49 p.m.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

MOTION

Vice-Chair Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Howie, to direct Administrator Newton to bring forward the state statute regarding the Board of Commissioner's Annual Meeting setting the parameters on the number of APAs, the term limits and the salaries. Motion carried by voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Approved: _____
Date

Chair Jeremiah Jones

Monica McMichael, Clerk/Register