

**CASS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING**

April 11, 2024

The Cass County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, April 11, 2024, in Commission Chambers.

Chair Jeremiah Jones called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Vice-Chair Barrera provided the Invocation. Commissioner Laylin led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Clerk/Register Monica McMichael called roll:

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: James Lawrence.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment occurred.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

Commissioner Laylin removed motion M-055-24 from the consent agenda and placed it under New Business.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Lee moved, seconded by Commissioner Laylin, to approve the April 11, 2024, Cass County Board of Commissioner's Agenda as amended. Motion carried by voice vote.

RECOGNITIONS

R-042-24

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

A RESOLUTION IN APPRECIATION OF ANIMAL CONTROL

WHEREAS, the National Animal Care and Control Association designated the second full week of April as NATIONAL ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL APPRECIATION WEEK.

WHEREAS, various federal, state, and local government officials throughout the country take this time to recognize, thank, and commend all Animal Control Officers and Animal Services Staff for the dedicated service they provide to the citizens, public safety, and domestic animals and livestock across the nation; and

WHEREAS, every day, Animal Control Officers and Animal Control Technicians put themselves in potentially dangerous situations to protect the health and welfare of all kinds of animals and the public; and

WHEREAS, Cass County recognizes and commends the Animal Control personnel who answer calls for assistance, capture roaming, and potentially dangerous animals, rescue animals, investigate reports of animal abuse, educate pet owners about responsible care, and mediate disputes between neighbors regarding pets.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Cass County Board of Commissioners hereby proclaims:

The Week of April 14-20, 2024, as:

ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL APPRECIATION WEEK

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

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

No (0): None.

Absent (1): Commissioner Lawrence.

Resolution R-042-24 carried by roll call vote.

R-043-24

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

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATORS WEEK

WHEREAS, emergencies that require police, fire, or emergency medical services can occur at any time;

WHEREAS, when an emergency occurs the prompt response of police officers, firefighters, and paramedics is critical to the protection of life and preservation of property;

WHEREAS, the safety of our police officers, firefighters, and paramedics is dependent upon the quality and accuracy of information obtained from citizens who contact the Cass County Emergency Operations Center;

WHEREAS, Public Safety Telecommunicators are the first and most critical contact our citizens have with emergency services;

WHEREAS, Public Safety Telecommunicators are the single vital link for our police officers, firefighters, and paramedics by monitoring their activities by radio, providing them information and ensuring their safety;

WHEREAS, Public Safety Telecommunicators of Cass County have contributed substantially to the apprehension of criminals, suppression of fires, and treatment of patients; and

WHEREAS, each dispatcher has exhibited compassion, understanding, and professionalism during the performance of their job in the past year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Cass County Board of Commissioners declares the week of April 14 through 20, 2024, to be National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week in Cass County, in honor of the men and women, especially our exemplary staff here in Cass County, whose diligence and professionalism keep our community and citizens safe.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

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

No (0): None.

Absent (1): Commissioner Lawrence.

Resolution R-043-24 carried by roll call vote.

R-044-24

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

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

WHEREAS, the term "victim" is more than just a label and has legal standing and protections that go along with it;

WHEREAS, crime victims' rights acts passed here in Michigan and at the federal level guarantee victims the right to meaningfully participate and use their voice in the criminal justice process;

WHEREAS, victim service providers, advocates, law enforcement officers, attorneys, and other allied professionals can help survivors find their justice by enforcing these rights;

WHEREAS, the right to provide an impact statement ensures that victims' voices are considered in court during the sentencing and, when applicable, restitution processes;

WHEREAS, including and elevating the voices of survivors makes certain they are heard and seen and creates a path to forging and sustaining community trust;

WHEREAS, engaging survivors creates responses and services that are credible, meaningful, and centered on individual needs;

WHEREAS, survivors' lived experience can serve as a catalyst for implementing innovative programs, shifting existing programs in new directions, and changing policies or practices that prevent survivors from accessing services or pursuing justice;

WHEREAS, National Crime Victims' Rights Week provides an opportunity to recommit to listening to crime survivors in every space where decisions are made that could impact them; and

WHEREAS, Cass County is hereby dedicated to amplifying the voices of survivors and creating an environment where survivors have the confidence that they will be heard, believed, and supported.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Cass County Board of Commissioners hereby proclaims the week of April 21–27, 2024, as Crime Victims' Rights Week reaffirming Cass County's commitment to creating a victim service and criminal justice response that assists all victims of crime during Crime Victims' Rights Week and throughout the year; and expressing our sincere gratitude and appreciation for those community members, victim service providers, and criminal justice professionals who are committed to improving our response to all victims of crime so that they may find relevant assistance, support, justice, and peace; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Annual Flagpole Ceremony in support of the families of victims who lost their lives to crime in Cass County will be held on April 25, 2024 at 12:15 PM at the Cass County Law & Courts Building and hosted by the Cass County Prosecutor's Office.

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

No (0): None.

Absent (1): Commissioner Lawrence.

Resolution R-044-24 carried by roll call vote.

PRESENTATIONS

FY 23 Audit

Alan Panter of Yeo & Yeo presented the FY 23 Audit.

Woodlands Behavioral Healthcare Network

Woodlands Executive Director John Ruddell shared an update with the board.

CONSENT AGENDA

Vice-Chair Barrera 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-045-24) A motion to approve Claims dated March 2, 2024, through April 5, 2024.

(M-046-24) A motion to approve the March 7, 2024, Board of Commissioner Regular Meeting Minutes.

(R-047-24) A Resolution to Increase the Cass County Planning Commission to 11 Members.

A RESOLUTION TO INCREASE THE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

WHEREAS, MCL 125.3815(2), authorizes a County Planning Commission which shall consist of 5, 7, 9, or 11 members;

WHEREAS, the Cass County Planning Commission has previously been established by the Cass County Board of Commissioners consisting of 9 members; and

WHEREAS, the Cass County Planning Commission desires to increase the membership of the County Planning Commission to ensure increased representation of the entire territory of Cass County to the extent practicable.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Cass County Board of Commissioners hereby increases the membership of the Cass County Planning Commission to eleven members representing important segments of economic, governmental, educational, and social development of Cass County in accordance with the major interests as they exist in the County such as agriculture, education, government, transportation, industry, and commerce; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that these members shall be appointed by the Board of Commissioners, in accordance with MCL 125.3815(5); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the appointments shall initially be as follows:

- 1) One appointment to a term ending 07/31/26.
- 2) One appointment to a term ending 07/31/27.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all previous resolutions and parts of resolutions insofar as they conflict with this resolution are hereby repealed.

(M-048-24) A motion to approve Master Plan Commitment Agreements.

(R-049-24) A Resolution in Support of Citizens for Local Choice.

A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE CITIZENS FOR LOCAL CHOICE BALLOT INITIATIVE WHICH SEEKS TO AMEND THE CLEAN AND RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY WASTE REDUCTION ACT TO REPEAL PART 8 AS ADDED BY PUBLIC ACT 233 OF 2023, IN AN EFFORT TO RESTORE LOCAL CONTROL FOR WIND AND SOLAR OPERATIONS

WHEREAS, local jurisdictions should be able to determine for themselves which projects should and should not be in their local communities and what plans are best and reasonable for each neighborhood rather than these decisions be forced onto Counties without their best interests at hand;

WHEREAS, the legislature of the State of Michigan has passed, and the Governor has signed House Bill 5120, now Public Act 233 of 2023, that strips away local community control on these issues and places the control within the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC);

WHEREAS, Cass County will protect our community's land from the MPSC and special interests trying to strip away local control within legal limits; and

WHEREAS, the Cass County Board of Commissioners feels strongly that our local government is best able to assess the needs of our community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Cass County Board of Commissioners that Cass County is opposed to the legislature of the State of Michigan's passage of legislation that takes away local control and places it within the authority of the MPSC;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Cass County is opposed to corporation-prioritized action such as building utility-scale wind and solar projects in our community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Cass County supports the statewide ballot initiative, Citizens for Local Choice, a grassroots coalition of local officials and community organizers across Michigan working to amend the Clean and Renewable Energy and Energy Waste Reduction Act to, among other things, repeal Part 8 as added by Public Act 233 of 2023 which will restore local control of land use to ensure reasonable regulation in our widely diverse communities.

(M-050-24) A motion to approve the following agreements to implement the 2024 Survey Remonumentation Program:

- Tom Stephenson, Grant Representative Surveyor \$2,505
- Driesenga & Associates \$12,250
- Kesler Land Surveying \$12,250
- Stephenson Land Surveying \$12,250

Total Contracts: \$39,255

Total Grant Award: \$44,599

All costs will be reimbursed from the Michigan State Survey and Remonumentation Act Grant for 2024.

(M-051-24) A motion to approve expenditures of \$60,127 and a corresponding budget adjustment to increase Fund Balance Allocation from the General Fund for Presidential Primary Voting Costs.

(M-052-24) A motion to approve Lawless Park Cropland Lease Agreements with Masten Farms in the amount of \$201 per acre commencing May 1, 2024, and running through November 1, 2026.

(M-053-24) A motion to approve FY 24 Budget Amendments.

(M-054-24) A motion to approve FOPLC LOU Proposal.

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

No (0): None.

Absent (1): Commissioner Lawrence.

The Consent Agenda carried by roll call vote.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioners Laylin, Locke, Barrera, Marchetti and Jones offered committee reports.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Newton shared the Administrator's Report.

VETERANS REPORT

Veterans Services Officer Karee Krause provided the Veterans Report.

COUNTY PARTNERS

None.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Sheriff Behnke, Clerk/Register McMichael and Drain Commissioner VanBelle shared updates.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

M-056-24, M-057-24, M-058-24 & M-059-24

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to appoint Michael Grice, Robert Overholser, Ashlee Radzikowski and Sheila Witous to the Woodlands Healthcare Board for terms expiring 3/31/2027. Motion carried by voice vote.

M-060-24

Chair Jones moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to dissolve the Law Enforcement Millage Committee. Motion carried by voice vote.

M-055-24

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Lee, to authorize a loan to the Cass County Transit Authority in the amount of \$308,500.00 at an interest rate of 4% and to be paid in full through Winter 2024 Tax collection proceeds from the newly, voter-approved CCTA Millage. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Lee moved, seconded by Commissioner Laylin, to table motion M-055-24 until the next regular board meeting. Motion to table carried by voice vote.

CLOSED SESSION

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Jones adjourned the meeting at 6:24 p.m.

Approved: _____
Date

Chair Jeremiah Jones

Monica McMichael, Clerk/Register