

**CASS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING**

**January 4, 2024**

The Cass County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, January 4, 2024, in Commission Chambers.

Clerk/Register Monica McMichael called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Commissioner Howie provided the Invocation. Commissioner Lawrence 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.

**ORGANIZATIONAL BUSINESS**

Clerk/Register McMichael opened the floor for nominations for Chair of the Board of the Commissioners for a one-year term:

Commissioner Laylin nominated Commissioner Jones.

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Lee, to close nominations. Motion carried by voice vote. Commissioner Jones was elected Chair for a one-year term. Clerk/Register McMichael turned the meeting over to Chair Jones.

Chair Jones opened the floor for nominations for Vice-Chair of the Cass County Board of Commissioners, a one-year term.

Commissioner Marchetti nominated Commissioner Laylin.

Commissioner Lawrence nominated Commissioner Barrera.

Commissioner Laylin nominated Commissioner Lawrence.

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Lee, to close nominations. Motion carried by voice vote.

Chair Jones moved, seconded by Commissioner Lee, to amend the Cass County Board of Commissioner's Rules of Procedure to change the vote for Vice-Chair from a roll call vote to a secret ballot vote. Discussion followed.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Yes (8): Commissioners Lawrence, Locke, Howie, Jones, Laylin, Barrera, Marchetti and Lee.

No (0): None.

Motion to update the Rules of Procedure carried by roll call vote.

Commissioners voted by secret ballot. The results were:

Commissioner Barrera:	Four votes
Commissioner Laylin:	Four votes

Chair Jones instructed commissioners to vote again via secret ballot. The results were:

Commissioner Barrera:	Four votes
Commissioner Laylin:	Four votes

Administrator Newton informed board members that MCL 46.3a stipulated only the vote for Chairperson could be conducted by secret ballot. The vote for Vice-Chair was required to be open and recorded.

Chair Jones instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Commissioner Laylin:	Commissioner Laylin
Commissioner Lawrence:	Commissioner Barrera
Commissioner Locke:	Commissioner Laylin
Chair Jones:	Commissioner Laylin
Commissioner Howie:	Commissioner Barrera
Commissioner Barrera:	Commissioner Barrera
Commissioner Marchetti:	Commissioner Laylin
Commissioner Lee:	Commissioner Barrera

Voting resulted in a 4-4 tie.

Board members chose to leave the meeting at 5:12 p.m. in order to caucus.

Board members returned from caucus at 5:34 p.m.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Commissioner Locke:	Commissioner Laylin
Chair Jones:	Commissioner Laylin
Commissioner Howie:	Commissioner Barrera
Commissioner Barrera:	Commissioner Barrera
Commissioner Marchetti:	Commissioner Laylin
Commissioner Lee:	Commissioner Barrera
Commissioner Laylin:	Commissioner Laylin
Commissioner Lawrence:	Commissioner Barrera

Voting resulted in a 4-4 tie. Chair Jones announced that board members preferred to move forward without a Vice-Chair. Administrator Newton informed board members that, per MCL 46.3(4), they could not move forward without electing a Vice-Chair.

Commissioners chose to caucus a second time. They left the meeting at 5:37 p.m. Board members returned from caucus at 6:05 p.m.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Commissioner Howie:	Commissioner Barrera
Commissioner Lawrence:	Commissioner Barrera
Commissioner Locke:	Commissioner Laylin
Chair Jones:	Commissioner Barrera
Commissioner Howie:	Commissioner Barrera
Commissioner Barrera:	Commissioner Laylin
Commissioner Marchetti:	Commissioner Laylin
Commissioner Lee:	Commissioner Barrera
Commissioner Laylin:	Commissioner Laylin

With a 5-3 majority vote, Commissioner Barrera was elected Vice-Chair of the Cass County Board of Commissioners for a one-year term.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Public comment occurred.

### **ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Commissioner Laylin requested that M-010-24 and M-013-24 be removed from the agenda.

Commissioner Howie asked that M-010-24 and M-013-24 be added to the agenda to appear under New Business.

## **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Commissioner Locke moved, seconded by Commissioner Lee, to approve the January 4, 2024, Cass County Board of Commissioner's Agenda with the addition of motions M-010-24 and M-013-24 under New Business. Motion carried by voice vote.

## **RECOGNITIONS**

None.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

None.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Vice-Chair Barrera moved, seconded by Commissioner Laylin, 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-001-24)** Motion to approve the claims dated December 1, 2023, through December 28, 2023.

**(M-002-24)** Motion to approve December 7, 2023 Board of Commissioner Regular Meeting Minutes.

**(M-003-24)** Motion to reappoint Doug Tyler to the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission for a term expiring 12/31/2025.

**(M-004-24)** Motion to reappoint James Dodd to the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission for a term expiring 12/31/2025.

**(M-005-24)** Motion to reappoint Don Delong to the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission for a term expiring 12/31/2025.

**(M-006-24)** Motion to reappoint Dan Wyant to the Kinexus Board for a term expiring 12/31/2026.

**(M-007-24)** Motion to approve CCLBA Part-Time, Temporary Position and associated Budget Adjustment as presented.

**(M-008-24)** Motion to approve Contract between Cass County and Assessing Solutions, Inc. for Appraisal Services as presented.

**(M-009-24)** Motion to approve Agreement for Provision of Broadband Services between Midwest Energy & Communications and Cass County as presented.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Yes (8): Commissioners Laylin, Lawrence, Locke, Jones, Howie, Barrera, Marchetti and Lee.

No (0): None.

The Consent Agenda carried by roll call vote.

**COUNTY PARTNERS**

None.

**ELECTED OFFICIALS**

In the absence of Sheriff Behnke, Undersheriff Roach offered a statement in support of Animal Control.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**M-011-24**

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Commissioner Lee, to approve the 2024 Board of Commissioner Meeting Schedule. Discussion followed.

**REGULAR MEETINGS**

January 4  
February 1  
March 7  
April 11  
May 2  
June 6  
August 8  
September 5  
October 3  
November 7  
December 5

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

January 18  
February 15  
March 21  
April 18  
May 16  
June 20  
August 15  
September 19  
October 17  
November 21  
December 19

Motion carried by voice vote.

**M-012-24**

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Lee, to approve the Contract between Marcellus Township, the County of Cass, and the Office of Sheriff, Cass County from January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024. Motion carried by voice vote.

**M-013-24**

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Lawrence, to approve two part-time Animal Control positions and a budget amendment in the amount of \$48,899.00 to part-time wages (101-430-703.000) to accommodate the added positions. Discussion followed. Motion carried by voice vote.

**M-010-24**

Commissioner Howie moved, seconded by Commissioner Lee, to approve the revised CCHC Bylaws as presented. Discussion followed.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Yes (1): Commissioner Howie.

No (7): Commissioners Marchetti, Barrera, Laylin, Jones, Locke, Lawrence and Lee.

Motion M-010-24 failed by roll call vote.

**CLOSED SESSION**

None.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Lee, to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair Jeremiah Jones

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