

**CASS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING**

February 1, 2024

The Cass County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, February 1, 2024, in Commission Chambers.

Chair Jeremiah Jones called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Vice-Chair Barrera provided the Invocation. Kenley Laylin, daughter of Commissioner Ryan 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, 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 Laylin added a motion to reopen negotiations between Cass County and the FOPLC Deputies/Detectives Unit for consideration of Wages, DB/DC Trigger, and Retirement Contribution Cap and establish a County negotiating team consisting of County Administrator Newton, Finance Director Rentfrow, Liaison to Negotiations Chair Jones, and Sheriff Behnke under New Business.

Commissioner Lawrence added discussion of the Letter of Understanding between Cass County and the Michigan Fraternal Order of Police Labor Council under New Business.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Commissioner Lee, to approve the February 1, 2024, Cass County Board of Commissioner's Agenda with the additions as stated. Motion carried by voice vote.

RECOGNITIONS

None.

PRESENTATIONS

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

Vice-Chair Barrera 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-016-24) A motion to approve Claims dated December 29, 2023 through January 25, 2024

(M-017-24) A motion to approve the January 4, 2024, Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting Minutes

(M-018-24) A motion to approve the January 16, 2024, BOC Workshop Minutes

(M-019-24) A motion to approve the January 18, 2024, BOC Special Meeting Minutes

(R-020-24) A Resolution to Authorize Submittal of CHILL Program Grant Application by Cass County Land Bank Authority.

WHEREAS, MSHDA has invited Unites of General Local Government to apply for its CDBG Housing Improving Local Livability (CHILL) Program;

WHEREAS, the Cass County Land Bank desires to request \$500,000 dollars in CDBG funds to pursue the creation of housing programs that benefit low- and moderate-income households;

WHEREAS, the CHILL Program has two eligible activity types including homeowner rehabilitation to preserve affordable housing units and demolition/reconstruction/resale, to remove blight and infill with single-family housing for resale to income eligible buyers;

WHEREAS, the proposed project will benefit all residents of the project area including the 61.68% percent of the residents of Cass County who are low-moderate income persons as determined by census data provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban and Development; and

WHEREAS, local funds to be invested in the project have not been obligated/incurred and will not be obligated/incurred prior to a formal grant award, completion of the environmental review procedures and a formal written authorization to obligate/incur costs from MSHDA.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Cass County Land Bank and the Cass County Board of Commissioners authorize the submittal of the grant application, and hereby designate Hope Anderson, Cass County Treasurer/Chairperson of the Cass County Land Bank as the person authorized to certify the Application and all attachments, the person authorized to sign the Grant Agreement any amendments to the Grant Agreement, and payment requests, and the person utilized to execute any additional documents required to carry out and complete the grant.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Cass County Land Bank also authorizes Hope Anderson to act as the Environmental Review Certifying Officer (CO) and the Environmental Review Officer (ERO).

(M-021-24) A motion to approve the Master Plan Update Proposal from McKenna in the amount of \$50,000.00.

(R-022-24) A resolution to designate GW Jones as depository of Cass County Friend of the Court.

WHEREAS, the Cass County Friend of the Court Office has a Cooperative Reimbursement Program (CRP) contract with the State of Michigan, Office of Child Support (OCS) to provide IV-D establishment-related and enforcement services in Cass County, Michigan;

WHEREAS, as part of its enforcement duties, the Friend of the Court must deposit child support payments received from payers into a bank account to be transmitted to the Michigan State Disbursement Unit (MiSDU);

WHEREAS, the Friend of the Court currently uses Fifth Third Bank to deposit and transmit child support payments to MiSDU and has a member of the Law & Courts Security staff make the secure deposits as part of its financial controls;

WHEREAS, the Friend of the Court has been informed that Fifth Third Bank is closing its Cassopolis Branch in January of 2024, and that security staff are not able to make deposits to the bank's Dowagiac branch; and

WHEREAS, GW Jones Exchange Bank can provide the same secure banking services required by the Friend of the Court that it has been receiving from Fifth Third Bank and is a location where security staff can make secure deposits.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Cass County Board of Commissioners that GW Jones Exchange Bank is hereby designated as a depository of the Cass County Friend of the Court and that a bank account in the required structure to send daily child support payments to the Michigan State Disbursement Unit (MiSDU) may be opened and maintained by the Cass County Friend of the Court with the Friend of the Court Director, Sarah Mathews, Deputy Friend of the Court Ravan Bakeman, and

Casework Supervisor Tracie Kuriata being authorized to take any actions necessary to open the account, sign receipts, process bills, or other actions necessary to maintain the account.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Friend of the Court Director, Sarah Mathews, Deputy Friend of the Director Ravan Bakeman, and Casework Supervisor Tracie Kuriata may take any and all steps necessary to close the Cass County Friend of the Court's bank account with Fifth Third Bank as soon as the Friend of the Court has an account set up with GW Jones Exchange Bank and is able to carry out its duty of transmitting child support payments to MiSDU through this new account.

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.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

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

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Newton shared the Administrator's Report.

COUNTY PARTNERS

None.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

M-023-24

Commissioner Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to reopen negotiations between Cass County and the FOPLC Deputies/Detectives Unit for consideration of Wages, DB/DC Trigger, and Retirement Contribution Cap and establish a County negotiating team consisting of County Administrator Newton, Finance Director Rentfrow, Liaison to Negotiations Chair Jones, and Sheriff Behnke under New Business. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Lee moved, seconded by Commissioner Howie, to lay the motion on the table. Motion carried by voice vote.

DISCUSSION

Commissioner Lawrence opened discussion on the Letter of Understanding, which was a proposal from the Michigan Fraternal Order of Police Labor Council. The proposal would open the current collective bargaining agreement of Road Deputies and Detectives in order to address the retention and hiring issues that the Sheriff's Office has experienced by updating the current contract with the following proposal:

1. A 6% pay increase effective January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2025.
2. Amend The Retirement Plan section of the contract to reflect:

ARTICLE XIV RETIREMENT PLAN

14:1: The County shall provide the Michigan Municipal Employees Retirement System (MERS) Defined Benefit with the following benefit options until which time as detailed in 14.3 below:

B-3 (80% max)
FAC -5 (5 Year Final Average Compensation)
10 Year Vesting
25 Years & Out

The Employees shall be required to contribute to MERS eight percent (8%) of their gross pay through September 30, 2022. Effective October 1, 2022, a 70% Employer, 30% Employee cost share will be put in place as calculated by MERS. The MERS required Employer contribution will be added to the Employee 8% base contribution, adjusted by the MERS published conversion factor for the Division. The Employee will then pay 30% of the total for the year beginning October 1 through September 30 and the Employer will pay 70%. The maximum required contribution to the MERS pension shall be capped at ten percent (10%) of their gross pay.

Discussion followed regarding motion M-023-24. Sheriff Behnke, Union President Joseph Sheteron and Union Representative Payne addressed the board and responded to questions.

Chair Jones called for a voice vote on motion M-023-24. Motion M-023-24 carried by voice vote.

CLOSED SESSION

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Jones adjourned the meeting at 6:16 p.m.

Approved: _____
Date

Chair Jeremiah Jones

Monica McMichael, Clerk/Register