

**CASS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

May 18, 2023

Vice-Chair Laylin called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers on Thursday, May 18, 2023. Chair Jones offered the Invocation. Commissioner Marchetti 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.

STAFF PRESENT: Administrator Matthew Newton, Finance Director Jennifer Rentfrow and Deputy Finance Director James Tito.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment occurred.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Commissioner Barrera, to amend the agenda to add a New Business item - Fraternization Policy. Motion to amend carried by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Lawrence moved, seconded by Commissioner Lee, to approve the May 18, 2023, Cass County Committee of the Whole Agenda as amended. Motion to approve the agenda carried by voice vote.

PRESENTATIONS

Chris Scharrer of DCS Technology Design LLC shared a presentation on Broadband Mapping.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Locke moved, seconded by Commissioner Jones, to approve the April 20, 2023, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes. Motion carried by voice vote.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Commissioner Marchetti shared a Committee Report.

DISTRICT REPORTS

Commissioners Locke, Howie, Barrera, Marchetti and Lee provided district reports.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Newton shared the Administrator's Report.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial Director Jennifer Rentfrow offered the Finance Report.

VETERAN'S REPORT

Veteran's Services Officer Karee Krause shared the Veteran's Report.

COUNTY PARTNERS

Parks Director Scott Wyman shared updates from the Parks Department.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Treasurer Hope Anderson and Sheriff Behnke offered updates from their departments.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Village of Marcellus

Because no representative was present from the Village of Marcellus, Administrator Newton shared information on the Village of Marcellus Annexation Petition. He stated that the Village of Marcellus published all required materials after submitting a petition

to annex a parcel of land in the Township of Marcellus. Both the Village and the Township approve of the annexation but also need the County to approve. Commissioners agreed to move the item to the June 1, 2023 Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting but requested a representative from the Village of Marcellus attend the meeting.

B. Silver Creek Poultry Farm

Chair Jones stated that he added discussion on the Silver Creek Poultry Farm after hearing from citizens. He stated that he should have added discussion regarding the Penn Township Marijuana Ordinance. Chair Jones went on to discuss the rights of townships versus counties. Administrator Newton shared information gathered from the county legal counsel advised that the Board of Commissioners could legally appeal the decision of the state to approve the poultry farm. Commissioner Laylin stated that appeals had to be factual and anyone filing an appeal needed a valid reason to do so. Commissioner Lee cautioned the board on attacking farmers. He stated that regulations were in place to protect all entities. Commissioner Laylin stated he would stand with any decision that Silver Creek Township made and would not appeal if the township did not do so. Clerk/Register McMichael reported her office received notice from MDARD that more information was needed and they recommended the owner did not begin construction. Chair Jones then asked if residents had contacted PETA as the animals most likely would receive unkind treatment. Chair Jones suggested discussion on the Silver Creek Poultry Farm move to the June 1st Regular Board Meeting. June 8, 2023, was the deadline to appeal.

Commissioners agreed to place the item on the June 1st Regular Board Meeting Agenda under Unfinished Business as a discussion item.

C. FY2024 Community Corrections Application and Plan

Sheriff Behnke explained that the county applied for the community corrections grant annually. The grant funded a full-time position as well as severable programs that were valuable to the jail.

Board members agreed to move the item to the June 1, 2023, Regular Board Meeting for approval.

D. L-4029 Tax Rate Request

Equalization Director Tami Stewart informed commissioners that, due to the increase in taxable value, the county must hold a Truth in Taxation hearing. The hearing set for June 1, 2023, would determine rates for 2023 summer and winter tax bills.

Commissioners agreed to move the item to the June 1, 2023, Regular Board Meeting Agenda.

E. Broadband Mapping Agreement

Administrator Newton stated that the agreement for Broadband Mapping Services was the result of a \$100,000 MDARD Grant Award that required \$44,000 of county matching funds. DCS Technology would provide the mapping services.

Commissioners agreed to move the item to the June 1, 2023, Regular Board Meeting Agenda.

F. Resolution Recognizing June as Reunification Month

Administrator Newton informed commissioners that June was designated as Reunification Month. The courts worked hard to reunite families and held an annual reunification ceremony in June.

Commissioners agreed to place the resolution on the June 1, 2023 Regular Board Meeting Agenda.

G. FY23 Budget Amendments

Finance Director Rentfrow informed commissioners that a list of budget amendments was included in the packet. The largest adjustments were legacy debt expense retirement plan costs. Fortunately, the increased marijuana revenues and the great interest rates helped to offset the increased costs to the General Fund.

All commissioners agreed to move the item to the June 1, 2023, Regular Board Meeting Agenda.

H. Fraternalization Policy

Chair Jones and Commissioner Locke opened discussion by questioning what prompted the policy. Commissioner Howie stated it was an important policy most entities had in place that protected employees as well as the company/government entity. She went on to say that the county should be proactive and have policies in place before issues arose. Discussion continued regarding the Policy Committee and how documents flowed to and from the committee. A motion was not approved in the committee meeting moving the policy forward; however, Commissioner Howie asked that the policy move to the Board of Commissioners Agenda for approval. Commissioners agreed to discuss a process for policy approval at a board workshop.

Commissioners agreed to remand the Fraternalization Policy back to the Policy Committee.

Commissioners discussed the process for items to move from the Committee of the Whole to the Regular Board Agenda. Commissioners were unsure if the Poultry Farm agenda item should move to the June 1st Regular Board Meeting Agenda or if it should

appear on the next COW Agenda. Clerk McMichael would research rules approved for the Committee of the Whole and share with commissioners.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioners Marchetti and Howie shared comments.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Approved: _____
Date

Chair Jeremiah Jones

Monica McMichael, Clerk/Register