LAKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING MINUTES

MORRIS W. BEVERAGE III, COMMISSIONER
JOHN PLECNIK, COMMISSIONER
MORGAN R. McINTOSH, COMMISSIONER
JENNIFER BELL, CLERK

JASON W. BOYD, ADMINISTRATOR
LEGAL COUNSEL
NEWS MEDIA

(Tape 2026-0604)

CALL TO ORDER: Commissioner Beverage called the Meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Thursday, June 4, 2026

ROLL CALL: Upon roll being called, Commissioners: Plecnik, McIntosh and Beverage were present.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Commissioner Beverage asked if anyone in the audience wished to address the Board. No one present wished to address the Board.

RESOLUTIONS:

1. RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY IN LAKE COUNTY, OHIO ON JUNE 15, 2026 (20260604\F01)(C-126)

On a motion by Commissioner Plecnik, seconded by Commissioner McIntosh. Job and Family Services Director, Suzanne Casar stated that June 15, 2026 is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day in Lake County and across our country. It is the time of year when cities and states can take a moment to shed light on this significant issue. Ms. Casar introduced Ms. Mary Udics. Ms. Udics thanked the Board for the recognition. She explained that Lake County Job and Family Services is mandated to investigate each and every call and report they receive and that Lake County is fortunate to have a dedicated unit of social workers who investigate elder abuse and neglect. Ms. Udics reported that Lake County received more than 1,000 calls last year concerning elder abuse and neglect and that each and every concern was investigated. She stated that anyone who suspects an elderly individual in our community is being abused, neglected or exploited should contact their hotline to report it. This hotline is manned 24/7 and the number to call is 440-350-4000, choose Option #1. Commissioner Plecnik stressed that “if you see something, say something” and that friends and family should watch out for the elderly as well as the many ways in which they can be exploited. Ms. Casar stated that the Department of Job and Family Services will host a World Elder Abuse Awareness walk on June 11th at 11:45 AM beginning at Job and Family Services. All are welcome to attend, and participants are encouraged to wear purple; the color designated for elder abuse awareness. Commissioner McIntosh shared how he appreciates the opportunity to recognize these very important community issues. Commissioner Beverage agreed with Commissioners Plecnik and McIntosh and thanked Senior Services staff, Ms. Alyea Barajas and Ms. Cristen Kane for the work they do. The foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows : "AYES”: Commissioners: McIntosh, Plecnik and Beverage “NAYS": None.

2. RESOLUTION AWARDING A BID CONTRACT TO GRAND RIVER ASPHALT FOR THE ROADWAY MATERIALS – 2026 – PLANT MIX CONTRACT, AS REQUIRED BY THE LAKE COUNTY ENGINEER IN THE AMOUNT OF $438,000.00(20260604\E01)(E-3)

On a motion by Commissioner Plecnik, seconded by Commissioner McIntosh, the foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows : "AYES”: Commissioners: McIntosh, Plecnik and Beverage “NAYS": None.

3. RESOLUTION CERTIFYING TO THE LAKE COUNTY AUDITOR THE 2026 DRAINAGE CHARGES FOR THE LAKE COUNTY REGIONAL SEWER, WATER, AND DRAINAGE DISTRICT FOR THE SECOND HALF OF THE 2025 TAX BILL(20260604\C01)(UT-46)

On a motion by Commissioner Plecnik, seconded by Commissioner McIntosh, the foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows : "AYES”: Commissioners: McIntosh, Plecnik and Beverage “NAYS": None.

4.RESOLUTION APPROVING PAYMENT OF BILLS AS LISTED ON THE COMMISSIONERS' APPROVAL JOURNAL IN THE AMOUNT OF $2,975,005.40(20260521\BC01)(C-4)

On a motion by Commissioner Plecnik, seconded by Commissioner McIntosh, the foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows : "AYES”: Commissioners: McIntosh, Plecnik and Beverage “NAYS": None.

5.RESOLUTION APPROVING PURCHASE ORDERS AS LISTED ON THE COMMISSIONERS' PURCHASE ORDER APPROVAL JOURNAL IN THE AMOUNT OF $633,673.51(20260521\BC02)(C-17)

On a motion by Commissioner Plecnik, seconded by Commissioner McIntosh, the foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows : "AYES”: Commissioners: McIntosh, Plecnik and Beverage “NAYS": None.

6.RESOLUTION INCREASING APPROPRIATIONS FOR VARIOUS GENERAL AND NON-GENERAL FUND ACCOUNTS (20260528\BC03)(C-111)

On a motion by Commissioner Plecnik, seconded by Commissioner McIntosh, the foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows : "AYES”: Commissioners: McIntosh, Plecnik and Beverage “NAYS": None.

7.RESOLUTION TRANSFERRING APPROPRIATIONS WITHIN VARIOUS GENERAL AND NON-GENERAL FUND ACCOUNTS (20260528\BC04)(C-111)

On a motion by Commissioner Plecnik, seconded by Commissioner McIntosh, the foregoing resolution was adopted with the vote follows : "AYES”: Commissioners: McIntosh, Plecnik and Beverage “NAYS": None.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

UTILITIES – Sanitary Engineer, Mr. Randy Rothlisberger stated that in November 2023, the Environmental Protection Agency announced the proposed Lead and Copper Rule Improvements. Key provisions include achieving 100% lead pipe replacement within 10 years. He provided an update on some of the changes to the lead laws from the state, and the United States EPA. He explained that one requirement was that letters be sent to all customers whose service lines contain lead or are unknown materials and records are difficult to obtain from years past so most service connections are unknown. His department is preparing to send out the letters for this year and annually until all homes have been identified within one of the categories and his department will be checking all those lines and verifying what that material is as a requirement of the new lead laws.

JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES – Director of Job and Family Services, Ms. Suzanne Casar, reminded everyone that the 5th Annual World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEADD) Walk will take place on June 11th at the JFS Building with step off at 11:45 am. She also asked that everyone wears purple to the event.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – Mr. Boyd thanked the Osgood Group for their senior study presentation at last week's Commissioners Meeting and stated that they will complete that study over the next couple months. He stated that Vision 2050 Consultant, Envision, will also be coming in soon for a presentation on their progress of the comprehensive plan. He noted that this is a high-level comprehensive planning document to guide the County, with all due respect to the local communities in their home rules. It will give some guiding principles on some things moving ahead.

CLERK – Commissioners Clerk, Ms. Jennifer Bell, stated that the next Commissioners Meeting will be next Tuesday, June 9, at 10:00 a.m. Following the meeting today a workshop is scheduled for 10:30 in Chambers. There is also an America 250th Meeting scheduled today at 11:30 am in Chambers.

LEGAL: none.

OLD BUSINESS: Commissioner Beverage wanted to speak on the State Route 2 maintenance agreement and its timeline. He reminded everyone that the maintenance agreement for State Route 2 has been in place for 50 years and is between the municipalities along State Route 2 whose responsibility it is to maintain it and the county engineers office. As part of the state audit that was completed last year, one of the recommendations was to revisit this contract for multiple reasons. One of which was financial, there are some legal or liability obligations and other issues that need to be corrected. The County is required to provide a six-month notice before terminating said contract, which is set to begin January 1, 2027, which means notice would need to be given by the end of this month (June). He also briefly discussed the ongoing discussions regarding the SR2 lighting issue. Commissioner McIntosh provided an update on his meetings with the municipalities regarding the SR2 lighting issue and how he will continue to work on this issue with them. Commissioner Plecnik wanted to remind everyone that his ongoing concern was the state of the maintenance on Route 2, not only the lights, but everything from the guard rails to the garbage pickup. Route 2 is a very important part of Lake County's infrastructure and it's going to take the cities, villages, and the Engineer coming together to make that possible. He thanked Commissioners Beverage and McIntosh for their hard work in trying to facilitate that because this is an instance of persuasion and influence without authority. Commissioner Beverage requested that the Clerk place the State Route 2 maintenance agreement in the *Old Business Section* of the June 9 agenda to allow anyone from the community or elsewhere to come in and discuss it in public portion that they would have the ability to.

NEW BUSINESS: Commissioner Beverage stated that he would like to discuss another decision that must be made by June 30, which is the Property Tax Piggyback Provisions. He wanted to remind everyone that the state legislature last year, as part of the budget, gave County Commissioners the opportunity to double the Owner Occupancy credit to a full 2.5% and the homestead credit. This year's decision must be made by June 30, 2026 to make that decision effective for tax year 2026 collected in 2027. He explained that prior to any decision being made, he held an all-entity meeting in Willoughby Hills where he shared that the law became effective September 30th and the Board was given approximately 30 days to decide based on the information provided. The Board made the decision last October to move forward with the piggyback provisions. This rolled back approximately $15 million of property tax collections which, unlike the original owner occupancy and homestead are covered by the state, were not and reduced budgets countywide. He next spoke of Mentor and received about a $3 million increase in their property taxes, all of which were attributed to inside millage, explaining that inside millage is basically what the state has carved out for entities, counties, cities, townships, and schools to collect and inside millage traditionally has gone up as property values have gone up but this will be capped on their increases moving forward from 2027 and beyond. He stated that in his opinion, this will lead entities to look at other tax revenues to keep up with inflation. The other important thing that happened was the expansion of the owner occupancy credit and that before the piggybacks were available, there was a 10% non-businesses credit, and a 2½ % owner occupancy credit and that a homeowner would get both credits because they owned a property that was a non- business. They are now phasing out the non-businesses such as rental units or Airbnb's. Commissioner Beverage wanted to assure the residents that the Board continues to engage our schools, superintendents, and CFO's on this conversation and understand some of the frustrations in the community with dialing back these property taxes, but we had the opportunity to give property tax relief to homeowners as well as seniors on limited incomes. Commissioner McIntosh stated that he understands the rationale the Board used in terms of this vote last fall to enact those and how this Board is at a crossroads with respect to government funding. He shared that as an elected official for the last seven years, he has had taxpayers ask him to do more with less at the same time, governments and schools are facing the same inflationary pressures, how the cost of delivering services has gone up, and how it has affected the government and schools the same way it affected households. In his opinion, we need to do a better job looking at how to deliver those services and rationalize the costs without having to diminish the need for the revenue. He thanked Commissioner Beverage for this thoughtful and thorough explanation. Commissioner Plecnik stated that he is approaching this as both a County Commissioner and a tax professor who has long-standing views on equity, fairness and taxation and how those principles were violated by the massive unvoted increases and property taxes that resulted in the highest inflation in his lifetime. He explained that excessive spending in Washington D.C. diminished the value of the dollar and ultimately inflated property values across Ohio. Lake County was a bellwether in this in that just like Ohio which had an average property value increase of 30% Lake County experienced exactly that 30% increase which translated to an approximate 15% tax property tax increase to all residents. This type of increase can be the difference between affordability or not, whether someone will have the ability to age in place, to stay in their home, or whether a young family looking at the cost of a mortgage plus property taxes, can even afford to buy a home. He stated that this Board has been given the opportunity to give a very small amount of property tax relief by the state legislature. Last October, late Commissioner Regovich, Commissioner Beverage and himself voted unanimously to double the Homestead exemption for low-income seniors, which gives an average benefit of an additional $500 to those low-income seniors making $41,000 or less, for tax year 2026 and to double the owner occupancy credit, which goes from a 2.5 to a 5% roll back on most property taxes. The Board is also required to renew it every year. Commissioner Plecnik also spoke of how much some Lake County school districts collect, and the great job the cities, townships and villages are doing with the dollars they receive. He will be voting to double the homestead exemption for low-income seniors and the owner occupancy credit for homeowners who have and are being taxed way too much. Commissioner Beverage requested the clerk place property tax piggyback discussion under *New Business* on the June 9 and June 16 meeting agendas to allow the community to come in and speak. He also requested the two property tax resolutions be placed on the June 25 agenda for consideration by the Board. Commissioner Plecnik briefly spoke about the recent arrest of a journalist and blogger that was filed in the Lake County court system.

<u>EXECUTIVE SESSION:</u> On a motion by Commissioner Plecnik, seconded by Commissioner McIntosh, the Board convened for an Executive Session at 11:15 a.m. for the purpose of protecting the interests of an applicant or the possible investment or expenditure of public funds to be made in connection with an economic development project pursuant to R.C. 121.22(G)(8)with the vote as follows: "AYES”: Commissioners: McIntosh, Plecnik and Beverage “NAYS": None.

The Lake County Board of Commissioners adjourned to Executive Session at 12:26 p.m.

<u>ADJOURN:</u> On a motion by Commissioner Plecnik seconded by Commissioner McIntosh, the Board adjourned the meeting at 12:26 p.m. with the vote as follows: "AYES": Commissioners: McIntosh, Plecnik and Beverage “NAYS": None.

Minutes approved this ninth day of July, 2026.

BOARD OF LAKE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

MORRIS W. BEVERAGE III, PRESIDENT

JOHN T. PLECNIK, COMMISSIONER

MORGAN R. McINTOSH, COMMISSIONER

JENNIFER BELL, CLERK