

The News-Herald (<http://www.news-herald.com>)

Lake County Council on Aging concerned with funding levels

[John Arthur Hutchison](#)

Saturday, September 28, 2013

Lake County Council on Aging officials are concerned the level of revenue to continue to provide the same level of services for seniors may not be enough.

LCCA Director Joseph Tomsick spoke Thursday at the Lake County commissioners weekly meeting, saying that during the past five years the agency has seen a steady increase in the number of seniors served.

Tomsick said about 25 percent more clients have been served and the percentage continues to increase as the population ages.

In 2012, the agency served 11,030 clients in various ways including case management, outreach, and nutrition such as Meals on Wheels, he said.

Tomsick said the growth of the senior population is projected to increase significantly by 2030 in Lake County.

Revenue from a 0.5-mill senior citizens levy passed last year has also decreased in part because property valuations have reduced the revenue collected, he said.

Tomsick noted that a 10 percent contingency fund collected from levy proceeds has meant less revenue and a decrease in funding of almost \$300,000 since last year.

“The Lake County Council on Aging is here today to meet commissioners to discuss future solutions to potential problems,” he said.

Tomsick said they don’t want to eliminate services and that’s not the approach they want to pursue.

The idea behind addressing the commissioners was to keep the communication lines open, he said.

“We’re here to open dialogue,” Tomsick said.

Commissioner Daniel P. Troy said commissioners previously created a senior advisory panel to help best determine how the funding should be distributed.

He said the idea was to prevent locking in funding formulas and to base decisions on need.

“I understand your call for additional resources but that is one reason we set up the advisory panel,”

Troy said. “We want a budget based on need.”

Revenue from the levy also helps to support the 12 senior citizen centers located in the county and Troy wondered if it might be time to look ways to help eliminate duplication of services.

“If we continue business as usual, business as usual might not be enough,” Troy said. “I think we need to collectively look at what the greatest needs are.”

He also said whenever there are talks of consolidating any of the senior citizens center the idea is usually met with resistance.