

## — Lake County port authority hires manager to implement coastal plan

One of the key strategies to promote economic development identified by the Lake County Ohio Port and Economic Development Authority is to implement the county's Coastal Development Plan.

The Authority has hired Peter Zahirsky to serve as the agency's new coastal manager and it will be his job to help put the plan into effect.

The plan was completed in 2005 by the county Planning Commission and identified opportunities for waterfront development and coastal improvements at several sites along with lakefront.

'Having someone who can focus full-time on the Coastal Development Plan will really help to get it off the ground, and we believe it can bring a significant boost to the county's economy,' said Authority Executive Director Mark Rantala.

'We are excited to have Peter as a member of the LCOPAEDA.'

Zahirsky is a licensed attorney with experience in both the public and private sectors and his position will be funded initially through a \$50,000 one-year grant from the Cleveland Foundation's Lake-Geauga Fund.

Authority Board Chairman Harry Allen worked on the county's Coastal Plan along with Lake County Administrator Jason Boyd, who at that time worked for the Planning Commission.

Allen said because there are many different communities along the county's lakefront, it requires a lot of ongoing due diligence to coordinate and implement different facets of the coastal development plan.

'Anything done well requires a lot of creative thought and a lot of organization on getting people together,' Allen said.

'Over the years, Jason and I worked with all the municipalities on the plan. We would make presentations and thought we understood what the particular institution wanted. You leave and then you find out there is a lot of different thoughts on what the leadership in that community wanted.'

Allen said it will be Zahirsky's job to dedicate his time to help ensure the right choices are made.

The authority board chairman said it's his belief that an anchor tenant is needed along the lakefront to draw additional entities to the region.

'I'm talking about hospitality, entertainment and whatever,' Allen said.

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by John Arthur Hutchison

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