

## Some still take issue with resolution on campaign contributions

BY MARIAN MCMAHON

*Gazette Newspapers*

LAKE COUNTY — Some people still felt a resolution passed by the Lake County Board of Commissioners about campaign contributions was too limited in its scope, and stated so at the Jan. 10 commissioners meeting.

Dave Lima of Mentor addressed the topic of the resolution passed at the previous meeting about the Board of Commissioners setting a policy of non-acceptance of campaign contributions from county employees under their direct supervision.

"The resolution attempts to remove any appearance of impropriety and any potential conflicts of interest, but only singles out county employees," he said. "However, in my opinion, the resolution falls short of removing all

appearances of impropriety by not including the (commissioners') board appointees and private contractors doing business with the county."

Commissioner Ron Young said they need to research what has been done elsewhere when crafting a resolution. The one they passed was modeled after one from Cuyahoga County which, (decades ago), had a serious problem with officials pressuring employees for donations.

"To expand it beyond that is a new world," he said. "I don't think we're ready to go there yet."

Commissioner Jerry Cirino said they appreciate comments from the public, whether they agree or disagree with the commissioners.

"On the one hand, some people last week were suggesting that this is abridging the 1st Amendment rights,

the 14th Amendment rights, etc., on the other hand, others were suggesting it didn't go far enough to restrict acceptance of contributions. I'm not sure which it really is," he said.

Brian Massie of Concord Township said, on first hearing Lima's suggestion, it sounded like a good idea, but he planned to give it more consideration.

Sharon Saracene of Wickliffe said she believed it was in the self-interest of appointed board members and contractors to donate to the commissioners' campaigns and in the commissioners' self-interest to accept such donations.

"The comments I've heard are just about rationalizing the resolution you already made, not really commenting on this having the potential to be good for avoiding conflicts of interest," she said.