

**From:** [Chet Janik](#)  
**To:** [Board of Commissioners](#)  
**Cc:** [Alison Middleton](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Millage cuts.  
**Date:** Monday, September 20, 2021 10:27:20 AM

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-----Original Message-----

From: Mike Hartigan <hartigan.mike@gmail.com>  
Sent: Friday, September 17, 2021 10:43 AM  
To: Patricia Soutas-Little <psoutaslittle@leelanau.gov>; Chet Janik <cjanik@leelanau.gov>; Michelle Crocker <mcrocker@leelanau.gov>  
Subject: Millage cuts.

Please share this letter with the Leelanau County Commissioners.

I must admit I'm struggling to find a valid reason to zero out the early childhood services supported by the electorate in 2019. It is not the job of the commissioners to "correct" a "mistake" made by voters. To override a vote of the people that an elected official doesn't agree with is a very slippery slope leading to eroding one of the basic tenets of a democracy, voting. That voting doesn't matter because a board, legislature, township official, commissioner, or any other elected official can ignore the results of a vote is not in line with the foundation principles of our country. Period.

Elected officials of an organization that levy taxes may adjust the amount of the levy, but this instance is not how any board I've observed use this power. This isn't an adjustment to use the taxpayers money wisely. It's a power play to overturn the results of a legally held election. The only time I've ever seen a voter approved tax not levied is when a taxing unit might not need the funds for a year. An example would be a school who has a sinking fund for repairs and at a latter date passes a bond issue. While using the bond monies they may not need the sinking fund for a period of time. That is clearly not what was expressed at your last meeting.

Finally, early childhood services do work, as does quality early childhood programming. I've spent almost 40 years in education, the last 24 years in Leelanau County, and my experience says that is true beyond refute. Incoming Leland Kindergarten students who had the means, or qualified for a scholarship at the Leelanau Children's Center were better prepared as a group than most of the students who did not attend that program. Of course many students who could not access a quality program also came school ready but as a big picture view, the Center group was better prepared. They knew how to work together, resolve conflicts, and had a firm educational base for the next phase in their schooling. You can find studies that say I'm wrong but the vast majority of studies support my observations. This programming is just gearing up post COVID and needs at least two years to become fully implanted in our communities. Give them the time and funding provided by the voters. Then look at the results. I think you will be impressed.

Sent from my iPad