

**Commissioners' Journal**  
**February 20, 2025**

*The Geauga County Board of Commissioners met in session on February 20, 2025 at 9:30 a.m. in the Commissioners' Offices located at 12611 Ravenwood Drive, in Room B303 in Chardon, Ohio.*

*It is declared and determined that all formal actions of the Board of County Commissioners concerning and relating to the adoption of all resolutions that were adopted in this meeting, and that all deliberations of the Board of County Commissioners that resulted in such formal action were open to the public and were in compliance with all legal requirements, including section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.*

*The President of the Board, James W. Dvorak opened the meeting at 9:34 a.m. by leading the Board and audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.*

*Commissioner Dvorak read the following prayer:*

*Dear Lord*

*Thank you for getting through this winter. We are tired of the snow, cold weather and being cooped up!*

*Each of us are praying for our friends and family to stay healthy.*

*The harder winter is, the more we welcome spring.*

*Whatever temperature, whatever the weather is, wherever you live. Spring is an annual reminder that God makes everything beautiful in its time.*

*The coming of spring lifts our spirits and renews our hope!*

*Amen*

**COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE - COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

*Acting County Administrator Linda Burhenne reported on the items approved, as authorized by Resolution #25-004 under the direction and supervision of the County Commissioners that were approved January 7, 2025, pursuant to O.R.C. 305.30.*

**February 14, 2025**

*Department on Aging:*

*Accepted the resignation of Laura Reed, Part-time Recreation and Education Assistant, to be effective February 21, 2025.*

*Granted permission to advertise for the position of Part-time Recreation and Education Assistant (#1005-1). This position will remain posted until filled.*

*Job and Family Services:*

*Acknowledged the following new hire appointment, as the Executive Director of Job and Family Services complied with the Board of Commissioners' recruitment and hiring procedures for: Meighan Gilday Child Advocacy Program Manager (replacement) effective January 21, 2025*

*Liquor License:*

*Concurred with the Bainbridge Township Trustees in not requesting a hearing on the Liquor License being requested by Daffodil Mart, LLC located at 17644 Chillicothe Road, Chagrin Falls, Ohio (C N 879380).*

*Concurred with the Newbury Township Trustees in not requesting a hearing on the Liquor License being requested by KZ 01 Corp Incorporated located at 10311 Kinsman Road, Newbury, Ohio (C NEW 4424666).*

**February 18, 2025**

*Department on Aging:*

*Approved hiring Jennifer Shaner to the position of Part-time Adult Day Services Assistant (#1041-1) to be effective March 3, 2025, at the rate of \$19.23 per hour with a one-year probationary period. This offer of employment is contingent upon the successful completion of the required pre-employment conditions.*

**MEETING MINUTES**

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to approve and execute the minutes for the meeting of February 4, 2025.*

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|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

**APPROVE FINANCIALS**

*Budget and Finance Manager Adrian Gorton explained the financials for today as including Supplemental Appropriations for the Clerk of Courts in their Certificate of Title Administration Fund Transfers Out expense account to pay the General Fund for money that was used by the COTA fund from ARPA; Cash transfer from the General Fund to the Engineer's Office for the Storm Water Management fund per the MOU dated April 30, 2013; Cash transfer from the Clerk of Courts from the Certificate of Title Administration Fund to the General Fund to pay the General Fund for money that was used by the COTA fund from ARPA; Formal Contract Purchase Order's from Community Development to Chester Township and ICP Geauga Lake LLC to re-establish encumbrances for 2025 in the Demo and Site Revitalization Fund; Travel request for the County Engineer's Office; Then and Now encumbrance from Water Resources to Stockton Gardens Phase 1 for snow plowing services from 2023 that were not previously encumbered; a payment for the Commissioners Office to Infinity Construction Company for pay request #16 of the Courthouse Expansion project in the amount of \$575,998.08; a payment for Job and Family Services to ThenDesign Architecture LTD for design services related to the new Youth Center project in the amount of \$166,600.00 and Revenue Certifications for the Commissioners' Office in the Capital Reserve Fund Phase II intergovernmental revenue account and from the Common Pleas Court in their Court Technology Fund transfers in revenue account for additional unbudgeted revenue to be received in 2025.*

*There was a brief discussion about the demo and site revitalization funds for Chester Township and ICP Geauga Lake LLC.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute Resolution #25-024 itemizing the financials for the meeting of February 20, 2025.*

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| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

**BUDGET DISCUSSION**

*Mr. Gorton discussed initializing the 2026 Budget. Over the years we have done several things to try to get the amount of unused appropriations down. Mr. Gorton provided numbers for previous years, just for the General Fund, that included unused appropriations, noting that for 2021, 90% was used, in 2022 89% was used, in 2023 88% was used and in 2024, mainly due to payroll being transferred to ARPA, 71% was used. Those funds were not allowed to be re-allocated, in order to fund the courthouse project. You can see that we are in the 10-12% range of appropriations that go unused. In previous years, we have initialized the budget at a 10% discounted rate of the previous year. Last year, we went with the adopted amount, so there are several different ways to do this. Mr. Gorton asked the Board to decide by next Thursday so the budget can be initialized and sent out to the departments.*

*There was a brief discussion about the options they could consider for doing the initialization.*

**COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – CERTIFICATION REQUEST TO COUNTY AUDITOR, REQUEST TO BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS QUARTERLY USE OF COUNTY CREDIT CARDS – COMMON PLEAS COURT, COMMON PLEAS COURT – ADULT PROBATION AND COMMON PLEAS COURT – DRUG COURT**

*Mr. Gorton asked the Board to approve the certification request for quarterly use of county credit cards for the Common Pleas Court, including Adult Probation and Drug Court.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri seconded by Commissioner Brakey to approve and execute the Certification Request to County Auditor, Request to Board of Commissioners Quarterly Use of County Credit Cards, pursuant to O.R.C. 301.27 for the Year 2025 (Quarters 1, 2 3 and 4) for the Common Pleas Court, Common Pleas Court – Adult Probation and Common Pleas Court - Drug Court.*

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| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

*Mary Heitzman, Observer for the League of Women Voters asked if there was a percentage or a benchmark for County Governments. Mr. Gorton replied that we try to get it as low as possible but he was not aware of any government-wide benchmark being communicated.*

*COUNTY ENGINEER'S OFFICE – RESOLUTION TO ORDER THE REPLACEMENT OF CULVERTS ON VARIOUS ROADS IN MUNSON TOWNSHIP – EXECUTE TITLE SHEET FOR PLANS – SET BID OPENING*

*Deputy Engineer Jacob Scotese asked the Board to approve the resolution to order the replacement of culverts on various roads in Munson Township, that includes to execute the title sheet of the plans and set a bid opening using Bid Express.*

*Commissioner Brakey asked about why the culverts need to be replaced. Mr. Scotese responded by explaining that Wilson Mills Road will be paved later in the year and as part of the process, the culverts are inspected for repairs ahead of paving. Mr. Scotese stated that eight culverts were identified, three across Wilson Mills and five along Wilson Mills across other side roads, and the idea is to get them replaced prior to paving, so that we don't have to tear out new road.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute Resolution #25-025 to Order the Replacement of Culverts on Various Roads, in Munson Township.*

*This resolution also requests the Board approve and execute the Title Sheet for the Plans for the same.*

*Further, this resolution sets a Bid Opening on March 14, 2025, at 10:05 a.m. using Bid Express at the County Engineer's Office. Notice of this Bid Opening will be advertised on February 27, 2025, and on the County website.*

*Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio*

*Date: February 20, 2025*  
*Resolution: #25-025*

**RESOLUTION TO ORDER THE REPLACEMENT OF CULVERTS  
ON VARIOUS ROADS, IN MUNSON TOWNSHIP**

*WHEREAS, the Geauga County Board of Commissioners (Board) has determined by Resolution 23 - 139 that the public convenience and welfare requires the improvement of Wilson Mills Road (CH-0008), Sections G-L from Heath Road (TR-0105) to Thwing Road (CH-0027) by constructing and reconstructing culverts, performing drainage improvements, subgrade stabilization, asphalt resurfacing and improving shoulders and related improvements as necessary in accordance with Ohio Revised Code (R.C.) 5555.06; and*

*WHEREAS, lands will not be taken relative to the improvements; and*

*WHEREAS, the cost of such improvement, which includes replacement of eight culverts under Wilson Mills Road and adjacent side roads, will not be excessive in view of the public utility thereof and no special assessments shall be collected to fund this improvement; and*

*WHEREAS, the Board, after reviewing the plans with the County Engineer in public session, is satisfied that the public convenience and welfare require that said improvement be made.*

*NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board in accordance with R.C. 5555.13 hereby orders that such improvement proceed.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board in accordance with R.C. 5555.022 hereby approves the surveys, plans, profiles, cross sections, estimates, and specifications for such*

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*improvement, the costs of which shall be paid from local and/or state funding sources in accordance with R.C. 5555.43.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the Board is hereby ordered to let this project for bids in accordance with R.C. 5555.61. The bids shall be let upon a unit price basis. Bids shall be received until 10:00 AM on March 14, 2025 and read publicly at 10:05 AM.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Board is hereby instructed to transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the Munson Township Board of Trustees and the Geauga County Engineer.*

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| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

**SHERIFF'S OFFICE – EQUITABLE SHARING AGREEMENT AND CERTIFICATION, ANNUAL CERTIFICATION REPORT – FY ENDING 2024**

*Chief Deputy Thomas Rowan asked the Board to authorize the President of the Board to execute the Equitable Sharing Agreement and Certification for FY ending 2024. Ms. Brakey asked if this was part of the Federal Asset Forfeiture Program. Chief Deputy Rowan explained that if we work with any federal agencies and there is a seizure, the funding goes into the account and then is distributed.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to approve and authorize the President of the Board to execute the Equitable Sharing Agreement and Certification, Annual Certification Report for FY Ending December 31, 2024.*

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| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

**DOG WARDEN – APPROVE SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION FOR CREDIT CARD – GEAUGA CREDIT UNION**

*Ms. Burhenne asked the Board to approve the submission of a credit card application to the Geauga Credit Union. Ms. Brakey asked why this was being done at a different time than the others. Clerk, Christine Blair explained that currently the Dog Warden does not have a credit card, so this request is the first step to obtaining a card. Ms. Blair explained that the Department on Aging submitted a request for a credit card and the Common Pleas Court had to request new cards with a change in the Judges and the Geauga Credit Union will not accept an application without a permission letter from the Board of Commissioners. With recent changes to the ORC that allows for expanded use of credit cards, other departments that have never had credit cards are requesting them to take advantage of the changes.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to approve the submission of an Application to the Geauga Credit Union for a Credit Card.*

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| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

**MAINTENANCE – FIRST ADDENDUM – SERVICE CONTRACT AGREEMENT – GABLE ELEVATOR, INCORPORATED**

*Contract Coordinator Matt Sieracki asked the Board to approve the First Addendum to the Gable Elevator, Incorporated service Contract Agreement to include the Courthouse Elevator.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute the First Addendum to the service Contract Agreement with Gable Elevator, Incorporated, originally executed June 4, 2024, to include the Geauga County Courthouse Elevator at an additional rate of \$148.00 a month, billed quarterly. All of the remaining terms and conditions of the original service Contract Agreement shall remain in full force and effect.*

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| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

**MAINTENANCE – AWARD BID – NORTH BAY CONSTRUCTION, INCORPORATED – DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES GENERATOR UPGRADE PROJECT**

*Mr. Sieracki asked the Board to award the bid to North Bay Construction for the Generator Upgrade project at the Department of Emergency Management. Ms. Burhenne asked if we knew when it would come in. Mr. Sieracki replied that the lead time was 270 days or nine months from contract execution, so maybe by next winter. Ms. Brakey asked for more information on the project. Mr. Sieracki explained that there are two generators, one for the radio tower and one for the building, so the plan is to install two new generators, redundant so they both power both. In the event one fails, they will have complete coverage so there will be no downed services. Mr. Dvorak asked if there was a warranty after the work is completed. Mr. Sieracki stated that they included in the specifications warranty, training and service. Ms. Brakey asked if this was the only bid to which Mr. Sieracki replied there were three bids received and the other two were both over \$300,000.00.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to award the Bid to North Bay Construction, Incorporated for the Department of Emergency Services Generator Upgrade Project in the amount of \$246,645.00, as they represented the lowest and best bid.*

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| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

**MAINTENANCE – AGREEMENTS FOR PROFESSIONAL DESIGN SERVICES – TECHNICAL ASSURANCE, INCORPORATED – MASONRY REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE OF 219 MAIN STREET BUILDING AND 215 MAIN STREET BUILDING AND THE OPERA HOUSE**

*Project Manager Charles Tkach asked the Board to approve the agreement for Professional Design Services with Technical Assurance, Incorporated for services related to repairing the masonry bulge and rolled leaning parapet on the exterior façade of the 219 Main Street Building. Ms. Brakey asked if this is for the design, what was the actual cost of the project going to be. Mr. Tkach responded that he was unsure, that it would depend on what was found with the bulge in the wall, but if he had to put a number on it, he would guess about \$200,000.00. Mr. Tkach stated that there is iron and steel that was left in the building after renovation that corroded and that is what is causing a lot of the problem. It needs to be removed and until we understand if it is structural, we won't know the exact cost.*

*Mr. Dvorak explained that he has been watching the bulge for the last three or four years and it is not good, it bulges out about four or five inches and swings back in. There is a very slight slope to get the water off the roof, and, depending on what is found, the roof may need to be secured inside and then put back down on new masonry. It is unsafe right now. Mr. Tkach noted that it was recommended to be addressed back in 2022, so we need to move on it and clarified that this is the Annex and not the whole thing, just the bulging areas.*

*Mr. Tkach asked the Board to also approve the agreement with Technical Assurance for professional design services to do a facelift on the brick and mortar on the Opera House. The last time this was done was before 2007. Ms. Burhenne noted that the County does not own 100% of the building and asked if the other owner would be contributing to this effort. Mr. Tkach stated that we are not doing the bottom area that is owned by the other owner, however the top of the building is being done where we have office space, adding that the back of the building that is also the other owner's will not be included. Ms. Brakey asked about an estimate on the total cost of the actual project. Mr. Tkach replied that they expect it to be between \$150,000 and \$200,000.00.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to approve and execute the Agreement for Professional Design Services with Technical Assurance, Incorporated to provide professional design and contract administration services related to repairing the masonry bulge and rolled, leaning parapet on the north elevation exterior façade of the 219 Main Street*

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*building and performing masonry repairs and maintenance on the remaining portion of the north elevation exterior façade of the 219 Main Street Building and the upper and lower west elevations of the 219 and 215 Main Street buildings located in Chardon, Ohio for the period February 20, 2025 through February 28, 2026 in an amount not to exceed \$17,500.00.*

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| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye*</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i>  |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i>  |

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to approve and execute the Agreement for Professional Design Services with Technical Assurance, Incorporated to provide professional design and contract administration services related to performing masonry repairs and maintenance on the exterior walls of the Opera House building and clean and repaint the façade surfaces located at 211 Main Street (Opera House) Chardon, Ohio for the period February 20, 2025 through February 28, 2026 in an amount not to exceed \$24,500.00.*

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| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye*</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i>  |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i>  |

*Commissioner Spidalieri voted in the affirmative with a comment, that this goes right back to what he has said before, that you should have a total running, as we continue to add up the costs on a building that was rated an F, that we continue to throw money at.*

**DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES – SERVICE CONTRACT AGREEMENT – COMFORT SYSTEMS**

*Fiscal and Personnel Specialist Kathleen Miller asked the Board to approve the service Contract Agreement with Comfort Systems for preventative maintenance repairs on HVAC systems.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute the service Contract Agreement with Comfort Systems to perform preventative maintenance and service on HVAC systems for the Department for a one-year period, effective February 20, 2025, in an amount not to exceed \$5,000.00.*

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| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

**DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES – SERVICE CONTRACT AGREEMENT – CUMMINS INCORPORATED D.B.A. CUMMINS SALES AND SERVICE**

*Ms. Miller asked the Board to approve the service Contract Agreement with Cummin for generator maintenance and repairs in both wastewater and water district locations. Ms. Brakey asked about the proposal being \$14,000.00. Ms. Miller responded by explaining that there is additional funding included for repairs that may be needed above that, so they don't have to do a separate contract for that.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute the service Contract Agreement with Cummins Incorporated d.b.a. Cummins Sales and Service to perform Planned Maintenance and Repairs as needed for Wastewater and Water locations with Cummins generators for the department for a one-year period, effective February 20, 2025, in an amount not to exceed \$25,000.00 (\$21,000.00 Wastewater and \$4,000.00 Water).*

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| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

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COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – 2025 CEBCO WELLNESS GRANT AGREEMENT

Benefits Specialist Megan Erickson asked the Board to approve the CEBCO Wellness Grant for this year that includes \$4,000.00 in administrative funds and \$15,510.00 in program funds. Ms. Brakey asked if Ms. Erickson was the wellness contact and what educational programming or community events are planned. Ms. Erickson stated that the next big event is the Wellness EXPO on May 8 for the employees that includes different vendors, including CEBCO, Anthem, Delta Dental, as well as places like Ubuntu and Heinen's. It was briefly discussed that the EXPO includes things like massages, blood pressure screenings and other activities.

*Motion:* by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and authorize the President of the Board to execute the 2025 CEBCO Wellness Grant Agreement to promote employee health and wellness lifestyles in the amount of \$4,000.00 of Administrative Funds and \$15,510.00 of Program Funds.

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| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | Commissioner Spidalieri | Aye |
|                        | Commissioner Brakey     | Aye |
|                        | Commissioner Dvorak     | Aye |

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – AUTHORIZE ADP ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE GILA LLC D.B.A. MUNICIPAL SERVICES BUREAU (MSB) PAYMENT CARD INDUSTRY DATA SECURITY STANDARD, SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE A AND B-IP AND ATTESTATION OF COMPLIANCE

Ms. Burhenne asked Frank Antenucci, ADP Administrator to assist with explaining what this was. Mr. Antenucci explained that he had been working with Mr. Gorton on this, adding that this is a standard now for accepting credit card payment. This is the first one we have had to do. Mr. Antenucci expressed that he felt this was the Board's responsibility not ADP's, however, Ms. Blair recommended that the Board authorize Mr. Antenucci to execute it, since he completed the assessments due to Security. Ms. Brakey asked if this was for departments to accept credit card payment and where it occurs, which Mr. Gorton responded it was, and that it included Water Resources, the Treasurer's Office, Job and Family Services, and Transit. Anyone that typically accepts money is using it or can do so. Mr. Antenucci added that he anticipates that we will see more of these standards in place as we continue to migrate towards being paperless.

*Motion:* by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to grant permission to ADP Administrator, Frank Antenucci to execute the Gila LLC d.b.a. Municipal Services Bureau (MSB) Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard, Self-Assessment Questionnaire A and Attestation of Compliance, and Self-Assessment Questionnaire B-IP and Attestation of Compliance, as a requirement for them to provide Financial Transaction Devices (online payment acceptance solutions, including credit / debit card and E-check).

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| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | Commissioner Spidalieri | Aye |
|                        | Commissioner Brakey     | Aye |
|                        | Commissioner Dvorak     | Aye |

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – RESOLUTIONS HONORING LEADERSHIP GEAUGA 2025 EMERALD LEADER AWARD WINNERS – ALICE SEMS, DR. BOB FAEHNLE, AND MELANIE SCANLON

Clerk Christine Blair explained that every year Leadership Geauga honors someone with the Emerald Leader Award and this year as they celebrate their 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary they are honoring the first three Executive Directors; Alice Sems, Dr. Bob Faehnle and Melanie Scanlon.

*Motion:* by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute Resolution #25-027 Honoring Leadership Geauga 2025 Emerald Leader Award Winner Alice Sems.

Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio

*Resolution:* 25-027  
*Date:* February 20, 2025

RESOLUTION HONORING LEADERSHIP GEAUGA  
2025 EMERALD LEADER AWARD WINNER ALICE SEMS

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*WHEREAS, since 1995 Leadership Geauga has been offering leadership training, civic education and valuable connections to individuals that desire to become effective leaders in Geauga County, and celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, this February 2025; and*

*WHEREAS, each year since 2001, Leadership Geauga has recognized community leaders who have significantly enhanced the quality of life in Geauga County. The Emerald Leader Award is presented annually to an individual, a business and / or a non-profit agency that exemplifies outstanding leadership by positive contributions through volunteerism, philanthropy, or innovation that impact the quality of life in Geauga County; and*

*WHEREAS, in 1997, Alice Sems was appointed as the first Executive Director of Leadership Geauga, bringing her years of experience with nonprofit organizations, community dedication and visionary leadership; and*

*WHEREAS, Alice Sems gave eight years as Executive Director, and ten years of total service to Leadership Geauga, in that tenure, 240 individuals completed and graduated the Leadership program. Alice Sems passion and dedication to empowering individuals, building community relationships and creating lasting networks laid the foundation for the program, and continues to play a key role in its success today; and*

*NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Geauga County Board of Commissioners wish to recognize and honor the dedicated service of Alice Sems on being named a recipient of the 2025 Leadership Geauga County Emerald Leader Award.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution becomes part of the permanent record of the Board of Commissioners of Geauga County, Ohio.*

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| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute Resolution #25-028 Honoring Leadership Geauga 2025 Emerald Leader Award Winner Dr. Bob Faehnle.*

*Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio*

*Resolution: 25-028*

*Date: February 20, 2025*

**RESOLUTION HONORING LEADERSHIP GEAUGA**  
**2025 EMERALD LEADER AWARD WINNER DR. BOB FAEHNLE**

*WHEREAS, since 1995 Leadership Geauga has been offering leadership training, civic education and valuable connections to individuals that desire to become effective leaders in Geauga County, and celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, this February 2025; and*

*WHEREAS, each year since 2001, Leadership Geauga has recognized community leaders who have significantly enhanced the quality of life in Geauga County. The Emerald Leader Award is presented annually to an individual, a business and / or a non-profit agency that exemplifies outstanding leadership by positive contributions through volunteerism, philanthropy, or innovation that impact the quality of life in Geauga County; and*

*WHEREAS, in 2004, Dr. Bob Faehnle took over the role of Executive Director at Leadership Geauga, bringing with him a passion for education, mentorship and fun. Dr. Bob Faehnle had a dedication to develop community leaders with a unique approach that made the program enriching and enjoyable; and*

*WHEREAS, Dr. Bob Faehnle was awarded a grant in 2008 from the Cleveland Foundation that funded the creation of the Youth Leadership program, expanding the program and opportunities to the Youth of Geauga County. Dr. Bob Faehnle extended his dedication to community service through the many organizations, educational and community boards he served on; and*

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*NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Geauga County Board of Commissioners wish to recognize and honor the dedicated service of Dr. Bob Faehnle on being named a recipient of the 2025 Leadership Geauga County Emerald Leader Award.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution becomes part of the permanent record of the Board of Commissioners of Geauga County, Ohio.*

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|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute Resolution #25-029 Honoring Leadership Geauga 2025 Emerald Leader Award Winner Melanie Scanlon.*

*Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio*

*Resolution: 25-029*  
*Date: February 20, 2025*

**RESOLUTION HONORING LEADERSHIP GEAUGA**  
**2025 EMERALD LEADER AWARD WINNER MELANIE SCANLON**

*WHEREAS, since 1995 Leadership Geauga has been offering leadership training, civic education and valuable connections to individuals that desire to become effective leaders in Geauga County, and celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, this February 2025; and*

*WHEREAS, each year since 2001, Leadership Geauga has recognized community leaders who have significantly enhanced the quality of life in Geauga County. The Emerald Leader Award is presented annually to an individual, a business and / or a non-profit agency that exemplifies outstanding leadership by positive contributions through volunteerism, philanthropy, or innovation that impact the quality of life in Geauga County; and*

*WHEREAS, in 2016, Melanie Scanlon began serving as the third Executive Director at Leadership Geauga, which in 2020 through funding from the Cleveland Foundation, launched the new Heritage Program, designed for retirees to address the needs of this population; and*

*WHEREAS, Melanie Scanlon initiated the tradition of raising funds for the Emerald Leader's non-profit organization through the "Call to the Heart" program during the annual Emerald Ball; and*

*NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Geauga County Board of Commissioners wish to recognize and honor the dedicated service of Melanie Scanlon on being named a recipient of the 2025 Leadership Geauga County Emerald Leader Award.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution becomes part of the permanent record of the Board of Commissioners of Geauga County, Ohio.*

|                        |                                |            |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

**COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – RESOLUTION HONORING JUNIOR GIRL SCOUT TROOP #71432 – ACHIEVING THE BRONZE AWARD**

*Ms. Blair explained that the Kenston Service Unit has two Troops this year that they are honoring at the Awards Ceremony. Junior Girl Scout Troop #71432 has eleven girls that earned their Bronze Award for their service project for Rescue Village.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute Resolution #25-030 Honoring Junior Girl Scout Troop #71432 for Achieving the Bronze Award, the Highest Honor for a Junior Girl Scout.*

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*Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio*

*Resolution: #25-030*

*Date: February 20, 2025*

**RESOLUTION HONORING JUNIOR GIRL SCOUT TROOP #71432 FOR ACHIEVING THE BRONZE AWARD, THE HIGHEST HONOR FOR A JUNIOR GIRL SCOUT**

*WHEREAS, the Girl Scouts are a nationally acclaimed organization known for training young women to build character, citizenship and leadership; and*

*WHEREAS, the Girl Scout Bronze Award is earned by Junior Girl Scouts, who are in fourth, fifth or sixth grade (Ages 8-12). In order to achieve the Bronze Award, the girls must complete a Junior Journey along with their Bronze Award project, which is done in a local community, as set forth from the National Girl Scouts of the United States of America organization to inspire leadership and contribution to the community; and*

*WHEREAS, the Girl Scout Bronze Award was earned by Kenston Junior Girl Scout Troop #71432; and*

*WHEREAS, Junior Girl Scout Troop #71432 completed the Agent of Change Journey and earned their Bronze Award by running a donation drive at their schools for Rescue Village. The Troop created posters, distributed fliers and made announcements. The Troop organized the donations, delivered them to Rescue Village and learned about the shelter and helping animals. Junior Girl Scout Troop #71432 Award recipients are Bella Bobnar, Isabelle Brace, Evie Laupan, Josephine Lesner, Arden Ljubi, Lily Oliver, Cassidy Prather, Mianna Thomas, Cora Waldinger, Aria Yokiel, Erin Zydyk and is led by Aprille Laupan and Laurel Ljubi; and*

*NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Geauga County Board of Commissioners honor and salute Junior Girl Scout Troop #71432 for service to their community and to the Girl Scouts of the United States of America.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution becomes part of the permanent record of the Board of Commissioners of Geauga County, Ohio.*

|                        |                                |            |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

**COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – RESOLUTION HONORING GIRL SCOUT CADETTE TROOP #71409 ACHIEVING THE SILVER AWARD**

*Ms. Blair explained that Cadette Troop #71409 has seven girls who earned their Silver Award for their project at the Memory Care facility Arden Courts.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve and execute Resolution #25-031 Honoring Girl Scout Cadette Troop #71409 for Achieving the Silver Award, the Highest Honor for a Cadette Girl Scout.*

*Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio*

*Resolution: #25-031*

*Date: February 20, 2025*

**RESOLUTION HONORING GIRL SCOUT CADETTE TROOP #71409 FOR ACHIEVING THE SILVER AWARD, THE HIGHEST HONOR FOR A CADETTE GIRL SCOUT**

*WHEREAS, the Girl Scouts are a nationally acclaimed organization known for training young women to build character, citizenship and leadership. The Girl Scout Silver Award is earned by Cadette Girl Scouts, who are in sixth, seventh or eighth grade (Ages 12-14). In order to achieve the Silver Award, the girls must complete a Cadette Journey along with their Silver Award project, which is done in a local community, as set forth from the National Girl Scouts of*

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*the United States of America organization to inspire leadership and contribution to the community; and*

*WHEREAS, the Silver Award was earned by Girl Scout Cadette Troop #71409, Kenston Service Unit, Geauga County, and has excelled in leadership, demonstrating strong organizational skills and a sense of community and commitment; and*

*WHEREAS, Cadette Scout Troop #71409 earned their Silver Award by completing a Gifting Garden project at Arden Court, a memory care facility in Bainbridge Township. The Troop visited the facility where they learned about the needs and capabilities of the residents. The Troop secured materials and completed four (4) gardens, that included an herb garden, a vegetable garden, a tea garden and a flower garden. The Troop worked with residents on the project, learning and gained a rewarding experience. Cadette Scout Troop #71409 award recipients are Amelia Argo, Lily Bates, Lila Fink, Calla Haar, Maren Hill, Alden Peterson and Lexie Yingling and are led by Amanda Yingling and Casey Haar; and*

*NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Geauga County Board of Commissioners honor and salute Cadette Scout Troop #71409 for service to its community and to the Girl Scouts of the United States of America.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution become part of the permanent record of the Board of Commissioners of Geauga County, Ohio.*

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|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

**COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – APPROVE HIRING KERRY BARSON TO THE POSITION OF ADMINISTRATIVE / FISCAL ASSISTANT (#1331)**

*Human Resources Administrator Kathy Hostutler asked the Board to approve hiring Kerry Barson to the position of Administrative / Fiscal Assistant in the Commissioners' Office. Ms. Hostutler noted that she comes to us with some Township government experience.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to approve hiring Kerry Barson to the position of Administrative / Fiscal Assistant (#1331) to be effective March 10, 2025, at the rate of \$22.58 per hour (Grade 9, Step 2) with a one-year probationary period. This offer of employment is contingent upon the successful completion of the required pre-employment conditions.*

|                        |                                |            |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

**COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – EXECUTIVE SESSION**

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the discipline of a public employee, pursuant to O.R.C. 121.22 (G)(1).*

|                        |                                |            |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

*The Board moved into Executive Session at 10:11 a.m. with Ms. Burhenne. The Board returned at 10:18 a.m. and the following action was taken:*

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve the disciplinary recommendation and to suspend Matt Granito, Dog Warden for twenty-four (24) hours, three working days, without pay for violations relating to employee conduct within the Geauga County Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual, and further approve and authorize the Acting County Administrator and employee to execute the Notice of Employee Discipline.*

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|------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Abstain</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i>     |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i>     |

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – EXECUTIVE SESSION

*Motion:* by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the employment of a public employee, pursuant to O.R.C. 121.22 (G)(1).

|                        |                                |            |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

*The Board moved into Executive Session at 10:20 a.m. with Ms. Burhenne and Ms. Hostutler. The Board returned at 10:36 a.m. with no action was taken.*

BOARD DISCUSSION

*Ms. Burhenne explained that she wanted to discuss the change orders that have been requested. Ms. Burhenne added that she has provided the Board with information on them, gone back with changes, and now they are just looking for an answer to move forward.*

*Regarding the Courthouse Shower, Ms. Brakey expressed that it was a no for her. Originally she thought it was for inmates, but learned it was for employees to use if their power goes out. Mr. Dvorak explained that there was a bathroom there before, and to replace that bathroom is included in the base bid but says no on the shower.*

*Motion:* by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to deny the change order regarding the Courthouse Shower.

|                        |                                |            |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

*The other item was the IT Wiring Redundancy, and while Ms. Burhenne doesn't fully understand what it is, the cost is \$9,100.00. Ms. Burhenne stated that the sense she got was that it wasn't necessarily needed, like a belt and suspenders. Ms. Brakey expressed that based on what she knows now, it is a no for her, but they can come back and explain it further. Mr. Dvorak expressed he was okay with waiting for more information. Mr. Spidalieri expressed that he was ready to vote, that with not enough information, we deny it. If it's something that is not necessary, then we deny it. As it just adds on to the thousands of dollars we have already added on to the project.*

*Motion:* by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to deny the change order regarding the IT Wiring Redundancy for Court Technology.

|                        |                                |            |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

Dog Warden / Sheriff's Office / Rescue Village

*Ms. Brakey explained that she and Ms. Burhenne met with the Dog Warden, the Sheriff's Office, the Prosecutor's Office and representatives from Rescue Village last week. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and clarify roles and responsibilities of animal control within the County. The Prosecutor emphasized the Dog Warden must be available 24 / 7 – 365 days a year for certain cases and that failure to perform statutory duties could lead to prosecution for dereliction of duty. Rescue Village clarified that as a non-pro-fit they are not obligated to act as a first responder and no longer will assist the Dog Warden unless a formal contract was put into place. The Rescue Village Humane Officer will meet with local police chiefs at their next meeting to explain the role of humane officers as there seemed to be a misunderstanding about when they can help and when they can't. Ms. Brakey noted that law enforcement requested off-hour kennel space for dogs when there is no one available and they have to detain a dog. Ms. Brakey explained that an MOU will be drafted to explain the humane officer duties.*

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*Ms. Brakey explained that the biggest thing she took away from the meeting is that the Dog Warden's Office is understaffed to respond to the 24-hour calls that are part of the statutory duties. Mr. Dvorak added that within a short period of time, we will have a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) which will outline what everyone will need to do for different scenarios and will be agreed upon by all parties. Ms. Burhenne added that she will follow up with the Attorney from Rescue Village about the draft MOU. Ms. Brakey added that we need to have that in place because there are occasionally times when we will need to be able to transfer dogs to Rescue Village.*

*Dormant Sick and Vacation Time Fund*

*Mr. Gorton explained that the Dormant Sick and Vacation Time Fund was enacted prior to him arriving at the Commissioners' Office, during a time when funds were tight in the county and the allowable accumulation of sick and vacation time was significantly higher, which caused payouts at a retirement that could be six figures. At the time it became necessary to set aside a fund that could be used in the event they had a large payout. Mr. Gorton continued by stating that since then the Commissioners took action to reduce the number of allowable hours of vacation time to mitigate some of the large retirement payouts. Over the course of time funds have become more available and the necessity for this fund lessened. The original amount set aside was \$400,000.00 and no money has been used or put back into the fund. Since it was designed for sick and vacation accrual mitigation, the Board could move the funds out of it and back into the General Fund and the process to close the fund could begin, as it is a lengthy process that involves the Court. Ms. Brakey asked if a department is paying out sick and vacation time at a retirement, how it is handled. Mr. Gorton noted that it comes from the Budget, adding that if there was large payout, they would have pulled the funds as needed and when able, to replenish it back into the fund. Mr. Gorton added that with the actions taken over the years, it was no longer used and became dormant and made a suggestion to the Board to transfer the balance back into the General Fund.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve transferring the current balance (\$400,000.00) in the Sick and Vacation Accrual Fund to the General Fund.*

|                        |                                |            |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

*COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – MOVE THE REGULAR MEETING FROM TUESDAY TO THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2025*

*Ms. Blair explained that Ms. Brakey will be attending new Commissioner training at the beginning of next week and that she was made aware of a commitment that would not allow us to have a quorum on Tuesday, so she is asking the Board to consider moving the regular meeting from Tuesday to Thursday the 27th at the same time of 9:30 a.m.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to move the regular meeting from Tuesday, February 25, 2025 to Thursday, February 27, 2025 at 9:30 a.m.*

|                        |                                |            |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| <i>Roll Call Vote:</i> | <i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i> | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Brakey</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |
|                        | <i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>     | <i>Aye</i> |

*PUBLIC COMMENT*

*Newell Howard from South Russell Village asked the Board what the Dog Warden did wrong that the Board chose to vote on today to dock him for three days' pay and was it documented in writing. Mr. Dvorak stated that the Dog Warden wasn't following policy and procedures. Ms. Brakey explained that the Dog Warden is aware of it, agreed to it and yes, it is in writing. Mr. Howard asked where things stood with the Airport. It was noted that an agreement was being worked on by the Prosecutor's Office.*

*Mary Heitzman, Observer for the League of Women Voters inquired if the meeting that was held with the Dog Warden and Rescue Village was going to be ongoing. Ms. Brakey added that there needs to be a Memorandum of Understanding between with Humane Officer/ Rescue Village and*

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*the County, but the rest is set at this point, but the staffing of the Dog Warden's office will be an ongoing discussion.*

*Anastashia Nicholas, Chagrin Valley Times asked why Mr. Spidalieri didn't have enough information to vote. Mr. Spidalieri responded that he didn't physically see what was on the write up and didn't feel comfortable voting, that he didn't see any of the evidence. Ms. Nicholas then asked Ms. Brakey and Mr. Dvorak why they did vote. Ms. Brakey stated that her job is to make decisions and come prepared to vote at meetings. Mr. Dvorak added that Mr. Granito was sent the write up to review and agreed to what was in it.*

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- a) The Court of Common Pleas - Probate Division accepted the resignation of Christopher Hare, Park Board Member from the Russell Township Park District, effective February 3, 2025.*
- b) A weekly report filed by the County Dog Warden of all dogs seized, impounded, redeemed or destroyed for the week ending February 5, 2025 as required by O.R.C. 955.12.*
- c) A monthly report filed by the Geauga County Sheriff's Office of an account of expenses for the Inmate meals for the month ending December 2024.*

**OTHER**

*The Board reviewed upcoming events.*

**MEETINGS**

*Fri., 2/21 NOACA Advisory Councils: Transit 9:00 a.m., Bicycle & Pedestrian 10:30 a.m., Safety and Operations 1:00 p.m., Cleveland*

*Mon – Wed 2/24 – 2/26 - New Commissioner Training, Columbus*

*Mon., 2/24 Family First Council, 1:30 p.m. County Office Building, Room B167/168, Chardon*

*Tue., 2/25 The Commissioners will hold session at 9:30 a.m. –  
**The Board voted to move this regular meeting to February 27, 2025 at 9:30 a.m.***

*Wed., 2/26 Board of Revision, Auditor's Appraisal Conference Room*

*Tue., 3/4 The Commissioners will hold session at 9:30 a.m.*

*Tue., 3/11 Planning Commission*

*Tue., 3/11 The Commissioners will hold session at 9:30 a.m. that will include Public Hearings*

*Wed., 3/12 Board of Revision, Auditor's Office*

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***BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD***

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to adjourn the meeting at 10:56 a.m.*

*Geauga County Board of Commissioners*

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*James W. Dvorak*

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*Carolyn Brakey, Esq.*

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*Ralph Spidalieri*

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*Christine Blair, Commissioners' Clerk*

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