

Commissioners' Journal
February 27, 2025

The Geauga County Board of Commissioners met in session on February 27, 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 9:30 a.m. by leading the Board and audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Dvorak read the following prayer:

Lord,

We ask you to lift up all those that are suffering today

We ask you to bring healing, comfort and peace to their Body, Mind and Soul

Calm their fears and let them experience the healing power of your love.

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 approved January 7, 2025, pursuant to O.R.C. 305.30.

February 25, 2025

Department on Aging:

Approved hiring Christopher Mackar to the position of Full-time Recreation and Education Assistant (#1005) to be effective March 25, 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.

MAINTENANCE:

Accepted the resignation of Robert Hausen, Senior Maintenance Technician (#1905) to be effective February 5, 2025.

Approved increasing the current posting for the position of Senior Maintenance Technician (#1905) from two to three positions. These positions will remain posted until filled.

FINANCIALS

Acting County Administrator Linda Burhenne reported on financials from February 25, 2025. She noted that Resolution #25-032 included Supplemental Appropriation in the Sick and Vacation Accrual transfers out expense account; Supplemental Appropriation in the Commissioner Capital Reserve Fund Phase II Contract Services account for additional encumbrances and increases as needed; Cash transfer out of the General Fund to the County Agricultural Society Fund to fund the building of new buildings on the Fairgrounds in accordance with Commissioners' resolution #25-022; Travel request for the Common Pleas Court; a payment for the Engineer's Office to Cargill Incorporated Salt Division for road salt for the 2024-2025 snow plowing season in the amount of \$114,363.01 and a payment for Maintenance to E Technologies Incorporated for the uninterruptable power supply upgrades at the Safety Center in the amount of \$49,248.00.

Acting County Administrator approved the financials from January 15, 2025 pursuant to Resolution #25-004 approved January 7, 2025 to authorize the County Administrator to execute, in the case of a lack of quorum of Commissioners and / or if session is cancelled on a regular financial day or on a day when financials need to be approved, the required approvals for county financials on behalf of the Board during the Year 2025, as authorized by O.R.C. 305.30.

MEETING MINUTES

Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to approve and execute the minutes for the meeting of February 11, 2025.

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Roll Call Vote: Commissioner Spidalieri Aye
 Commissioner Brakey Aye
 Commissioner Dvorak Aye

BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES – RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MARCH 2025 AS DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH

Superintendent Don Rice asked the Board to recognize March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month and brought along with him some staff members and littlest clients today.

Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to approve and execute Resolution #25-033 Recognizing March 2025 as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month.

Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio

Date: February 27, 2025
Resolution: #25-033

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MARCH 2025 AS DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS, The Geauga County Board of Developmental Disabilities, also known as The Metzenbaum Center, is dedicated to providing vital support, services, and resources to over 1,100 individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. It is the local government agency in Geauga County for individuals with developmental disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Individuals with developmental disabilities, along with their families, friends, neighbors, and coworkers, encourage everyone to focus on the abilities of all people, and to create opportunities for individuals to function as independently and productively as possible within our community; and

WHEREAS, Raising public awareness and fostering understanding are powerful tools in addressing the challenges faced by individuals with developmental disabilities as they seek full inclusion in society; and

WHEREAS, Disabilities do not hinder individuals from being fully included in schools, workplaces, homes, or as valued members of their families and communities; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the Geauga County Board of Commissioners recognizes the importance of promoting and protecting the human rights of all individuals with disabilities, and hereby proclaims March 2025 as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Geauga County Board of Commissioners calls on all residents to support individuals with developmental disabilities as they live, learn, and work in our community. We are committed to building a compassionate county where individuals of all ages are integrated, accepted, and empowered to achieve their full potential in education, employment, and community life. We encourage all citizens to recognize that our communities are stronger when we work together toward equality, opportunity, and inclusion.

Roll Call Vote: Commissioner Spidalieri Aye
 Commissioner Brakey Aye
 Commissioner Dvorak Aye

The Board presented the resolution and posed for a few pictures with all the littles.

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COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – ADVERTISE TO HOLD PUBLIC HEARING #1 – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) SMALL CITIES PROGRAM

Project Coordinator Elaine Malkamaki asked the Board to grant permission to advertise for Public Hearing #1 for the FY2025 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Small Cities Program.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to grant permission to advertise to hold Public Hearing #1 for the FY2025 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Small Cities Program, to be held on Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at 9:45 a.m. Notice of this Public Hearing will be advertised on March 6, 2025, and on the County website.

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

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES – AUTHORIZE DIRECTOR ROGER PETERSON TO EXECUTE GO GREEN COMMUNITY GRANT – GEAUGA TRUMBULL SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Deputy Director Austin Rice asked the Board to authorize Director Roger Peterson to execute the Go Green Community Grant from the Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste Management District. Mr. Rice thanked Ms. Jones for assisting them with the grant for \$3,500.00, adding that there is no match on the grant. Ms. Brakey expressed that she was pleased to have some of the grant funds coming to Geauga County.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and authorize Director, Roger Peterson to execute the Go Green Community Grant Agreement between the Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste Management District and Geauga County Emergency Services in the amount of \$3,500.00 as the Geauga County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) applied for funding that will be used to update Hazardous Materials Detection Equipment used by the Geauga County Haz-Mat team as needed throughout the county.

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

MAINTENANCE – SERVICE CONTRACT AGREEMENT – GARLAND DBS INCORPORATED

Contract Coordinator Matt Sieracki asked the Board to approve the service contract with Garland DBS Incorporated for roof repairs at various locations, which is being put into place in case anything happens, and they need to handle it quickly.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute the service Contract Agreement with Garland DBS Incorporated to perform roof repairs at various County buildings per the Director for a one-year period, effective February 27, 2025, in an amount not to exceed \$50,000.00.

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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>

MAINTENANCE – SERVICE CONTRACT AGREEMENT – DAN PECK PAINTING SOLUTIONS, LLC

Mr. Sieracki asked the Board to approve the service contract agreement with Dan Peck Painting Solutions for painting at various locations as needed. Ms. Brakey noted that there were quotes within the contract for up to \$4,000.00 and asked if they anticipated use for some specific projects. Mr. Sieracki explained that he has obtained several other quotes that add up to about \$12,000.00, but that there are several locations that need to be painted. Mr. Dvorak added that they have installed new doors in multiple locations that also need to be painted.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute the service Contract Agreement with Dan Peck Painting Solutions, LLC to provide painting services at various County locations per the Director for a three-year period, effective February 27, 2025, in an amount not to exceed \$30,000.00.

<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 – CONTRACT AGREEMENT – CABLE COMMUNICATIONS, INCORPORATED

Mr. Sieracki asked ADP Administrator Frank Antenucci to explain this contract. Mr. Antenucci complimented Mr. Sieracki for the great job he has been doing. He explained that they have been working jointly on an upgrade to the Recorder's Office. Currently, the Recorder is the only Elected Official on the square that does not have security in her office. This contract is to install cameras, access controls and network cabling. Ms. Brakey inquired about how many cameras and key card access. Mr. Antenucci stated that it was roughly 4-6 cameras and just the essential locations for employees to have key card access.

Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to approve and execute the Contract Agreement with Cable Communications, Incorporated to install cameras and access controls at the Recorder's Office (located within the Courthouse Annex) with work completed within sixty (60) days of February 27, 2025, in an amount not to exceed \$39,997.75.

<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 – AUTHORIZE RALPH SPIDALIERI TO EXECUTE THE WATER POLLUTION CONTROL LOAN FUND AGREEMENT AND EXHIBIT 1 – MCFARLAND WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT RENOVATION AND UPGRADE PROJECT

Director Nicholas Gorris explained that this is the next step for the McFarland project, which authorizes Commissioner Spidalieri to execute the Water Pollution Control Loan Fund Agreement and Exhibit 1. Mr. Gorris stated that there have already been previous actions that included the grant, the application and an extension on the project. Mr. Gorris noted that the EPA will be having a public meeting today where they will announce that the loan will be approved. Ms. Brakey inquired about contingency line item. Mr. Gorris stated that it is over \$3 million, that is for contingency in construction and an allowance for overruns. Mr. Gorris added that Exhibit 1 includes construction managers costs, adding that they also have ARPA funds, which will reduce that \$28 million. They are continuing to seek funding with grants, including currently finishing paperwork for \$2.7 million from Senator Brown's office under the Consolidated Appropriations Act (CDS – Congressionally Directed Spending) for FY24. Mr. Gorris noted that they identified a septage receiving station that is not being used and will be getting a quote to remove it so they can repurpose that part of the plant. Ms. Brakey asked if they are trying to get Federal money. Mr. Gorris replied that they have \$800,000.00 for the plant headworks through Congressman Dave Joyce's Office under the Consolidated Appropriations Act (CDS) for FY22 that is not included here.

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Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to approve and authorize Ralph Spidalieri to execute the Water Pollution Control Loan Fund Agreement and Exhibit 1, between Geauga County, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and the Ohio Water Development Authority for the McFarland Wastewater Treatment Plant Renovation and Upgrade Project in the total loan amount of \$28,040,930.59. (Previous actions by the Board included the original application on May 2, 2023, and updated application on December 17, 2024).

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Spidalieri	Aye
Commissioner Brakey	Aye
Commissioner Dvorak	Aye

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – AUTHORIZE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD TO EXECUTE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT, NORTHERN DISTRICT, OHIO EASTERN DIVISION, NOTICE OF VOLUNTARY DISMISSAL OF DEFENDANT – OPIATE LITIGATION

Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to approve and authorize the President of the Board to execute the United States District Court, Northern District, Ohio Eastern Division, Notice of Voluntary Dismissal of Defendant Miami-Luken, Incorporated in Re: National Prescription Opiate Litigation.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Spidalieri	Aye
Commissioner Brakey	Aye
Commissioner Dvorak	Aye

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to move into Executive Session for the purpose of considering the purchase of property for public purposes, if premature disclosure of information would give an unfair competitive or bargaining advantage to a person whose personal, private interest is adverse to the general public interest, pursuant to O.R.C. 121.11 (G)(2).

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Spidalieri	Aye
Commissioner Brakey	Aye
Commissioner Dvorak	Aye

The Board moved into Executive Session at 9:47 a.m. with Ms. Burhenne. The Board returned at 10:16 a.m. and no action was taken.

BOARD DISCUSSION

2026 Budget and Hearing Schedule:

Mr. Gorton explained that last week he discussed with the Board options to initialize the budget for 2026, and several options were provided. Mr. Gorton suggested that the Board initialize using the adopted budget from 2025 and maybe look at reducing that initialized budget by a certain percentage just to encourage departments to analyze what their request is going to be and be able to justify those numbers. Mr. Gorton asked the Board what they thought that percentage would be, that it has been reduced by 10%, 5% over the last few years, but the problem remains that between 10-15% of the appropriations remain unused at the end of each year. He feels that 10% would be reasonable. Mr. Gorton stated that ARPA won't affect the adopted budgeted numbers. Ms. Brakey stated that 10% seemed reasonable to her, and both Mr. Dvorak and Mr. Spidalieri agreed.

Mr. Gorton explained that with Budget Hearings being held prior to Tax Budget approval, we did those hearings primarily on the afternoons of session days. Mr. Gorton stated that makes the time frame tight, so hearings included primarily larger departments or those that didn't have much fluctuation from year to year. Would the Board want to consider doing the same or with a new Commissioner coming in, want to bring in all the departments. Are they open to an all-day Thursday budget meeting session. Ms. Brakey liked the idea of all-day Thursday. Mr. Gorton stated that they were held last year during the month of May and mentioned a scheduled vacation for Mr. Dvorak. Mr. Dvorak noted the day he was leaving but that he was also doing the Special Needs Fishing Day on May 8th. Ms. Burhenne asked if that meant we would be looking at all the departments. Ms. Brakey expressed that being new, she wanted to see them all.

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PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments or questions today.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- a) *A weekly report filed by the County Dog Warden of all dogs seized, impounded, redeemed or destroyed for the weeks ending February 5, 2025 (Corrected), February 12, 2025, and February 19, 2025, as required by O.R.C. 955.12.*

- b) *Geauga County Board of Developmental Disabilities Board Meeting Minutes from January 15, 2025*

OTHER

The Board reviewed upcoming events.

MEETINGS

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

- Tue., 3/4 ADP Meeting, 2:00 p.m. Auditor's Appraisal Conference Room*

- Tue., 3/11 Planning Commission, 7:30 a.m., Geauga County Offices, Room A334 (Third Floor)*

- Tue., 3/11 The Commissioners will hold session at 9:30 a.m. that will include a Public Hearing for the Proposed Rehiring of Retirant at 10:00 a.m.*

- Wed., 3/12 Board of Revision, 9:00 a.m. Auditor's Appraisal Conference Room*

- Mon., 3/17 Family First Council, 1:30 p.m. County Office Building, B167-168 (First Floor)*

- Tue., 3/18 The Commissioners will hold session at 9:30 a.m.*

- Wed., 3/19 NOC COG Board Meeting, 11:00 a.m., County Office Building, Room A334*

- Tue., 3/25 The Commissioners will hold session at 9:30 a.m.*

BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to adjourn the meeting at 10:22 a.m.

Geauga County Board of Commissioners

James W. Dvorak

Carolyn Brakey, Esq.

Ralph Spidalieri

Christine Blair, Commissioners' Clerk

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