

**Commissioners' Journal**  
**February 4, 2025**

*The Geauga County Board of Commissioners met in session on February 4, 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 9:31 a.m. by leading the Board and audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.*

*Commissioner Dvorak read the following prayer:*

*A Prayer for Today*

*Father God, your word promises that you will guide me if I seek you.*

*Show me how to order my time and arrange my schedule to accomplish your will.*

*In Jesus name,*

*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.*

**January 30, 2025**

*Department on Aging:*

*Accepted the resignation of Jaclyn Pavlick, Recreation and Education Assistant, to be effective February 7, 2025.*

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

**February 3, 2025**

*Department on Aging:*

*Approved hiring Natalie Schoonover to the position of Full-time Driver (#1020) to be effective February 18, 2025, at the rate of \$17.35 per hour with a one-year probationary period. This offer of employment is contingent upon the successful completion of the required pre-employment conditions.*

*Building:*

*Approved hiring Zoran Anicic to the position of Multi-Certified Inspector IV (#1112) to be effective March 3, 2025, at the rate of \$41.22 per hour (Grade 15, Step 11) with a one-year probationary period. This offer employment is contingent upon the successful completion of the required pre-employment conditions.*

**APPROVE FINANCIALS**

*Mr. Gorton explained the financials for today as including Supplemental Appropriations for the Juvenile Probate Court in the General Fund, Indigent Drivers, CASA, Special Projects, Conduct of Business and Computerization Funds to establish their court ordered appropriations for their 2025 budget submission; Supplemental Appropriations from Community Development in their Demo and Site Revitalization; Brownfield Remediation Grant and Block Grant funds to reestablish contracts and continue projects into this year; Supplemental Appropriation for the Treasurer's Office in their General Fund repair services account to provide funds for the increased costs associated with the Microsoft 365 licenses this year; Travel request for ADP; a Then and Now for the Common Pleas Court to Forensic Psychological Center of Northeast Ohio for evaluations from 2024 that were not previously encumbered; a Formal contract from Maintenance to CT Consultants Inc. / Verdantas Architecture, Inc for professional design and contract administration services related to the Annex Basement project, a payment for the Commissioners' Office to the Trumbull County Auditor for Geauga County's pro rata share of the 11th District Court of Appeals budgeted costs for 2025 offset by a credit from 2024 in the amount of \$44,475.80 and a payment for Job and Family Services for Great Lakes Truck Driving*

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*School for Workforce Investment expenses related to their CDL driver training program in the amount of \$7,680.00.*

*Commissioner Spidalieri asked about the amount for the engineering on the annex basement project, to which it was noted it was \$36,000.00. Mr. Spidalieri asked about the size of the project, to which it was noted that it is for 1160 square foot of renovation. Mr. Spidalieri expressed concern over \$31.00 a square foot, of a 45x30 size area, and that size area is like a small space within a house or a garage, and this is just for engineering. Mr. Spidalieri stated that this is an exuberant amount, and that he would vote for the financials but no on this agreement. Mr. Gorton added that the Annex basement is a unique environment and may be additional costs associated with that. Program Manager Charles Tkach added that it includes a bathroom, reworking the HVAC, the alarm system for fire suppression, and the ceiling has to be raised per code for a conference room, so it has significant structural, plumbing and HVAC issues that have to be addressed. Mr. Spidalieri noted that when the evaluations of the buildings were done, a lot failed and yet a lot of people wanted to remain, and yet here we are throwing good money at bad.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve and execute Resolution #25-016 itemizing the financials for the meeting of February 4, 2025. \**

<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 no to the CT Consultants, Incorporated / Verdantas Architecture contract for the design services on the Annex basement project, included in the financials, and noted his vote next to the item in the financial journal.*

**SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT – ISSUE A FINDING OF VIOLATION – 11425 AQUILLA ROAD, CLARIDON TOWNSHIP**

*Conservation Technician Lisa Berkheimer asked the Board to issue a Finding of Violation on the property located on Aquilla Road. Commissioner Brakey asked who the owners are of the property, to which Ms. Berkheimer stated that Ms. Vencl is the owner but the only point of contact since last year has been Mr. Crute. Ms. Brakey noted the need to address a concern over whom should be issued the violation.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to Issue a “Finding of Violation” against Stacy Crute, IV and Nicolina Vencl regarding construction activities occurring at 11425 Aquilla Road, (Parcel #13-007100) in Claridon Township for failure to comply with Geauga County Water Management and Sediment Control Regulations, Sections 3.01 and 7.02 by not submitting or obtaining an approved Water Management and Sediment Control Plan and failure to prevent excessive sediment from leaving the property, as identified in the 1<sup>st</sup> (November 25, 2024) and 2<sup>nd</sup> (December 30, 2024) Notice of Violation as indicated and further forward the “Finding of Violation” to the Geauga County Prosecutor’s Office for further action as necessary to secure required compliance.*

<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 ON AGING – ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF CERTIFICATE OF ESTIMATED PROPERTY TAX REVENUE AND RESOLUTION DECLARING IT NECESSARY TO LEVY A TAX IN EXCESS OF THE TEN MILL LIMITATION – FOR PROVIDING OR MAINTAINING SENIOR CITIZENS SERVICES OR FACILITIES – 1 MILL RENEWAL**

*Director Jessica Boalt explained that the Board approved the resolution for the certificate of need for the renewal of the 1 Mill levy for senior citizens services and she is asking the Board to acknowledge the certificate of estimated property tax revenue from the Auditor, noting that the generated revenue estimated to be received is \$3,330,000.00 and the cost per \$1.00 of taxable value is \$21.00 for each \$100,000.00 of the Auditor’s appraised value. Ms. Brakey inquired about the total percentage of collection, to which Ms. Boalt replied that the value is at*

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*100% collection, but that she did not know the percentage of collection for the county.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to acknowledge receipt of the Certificate of Estimated Property Tax Revenue regarding the renewal of 1.0 Mill levy for the purpose of providing or maintaining senior citizens services or facilities.*

<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>

*Ms. Boalt asked the Board to approve the resolution to declare it necessary to levy a tax.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to approve and execute Resolution #25-017 Declaring it Necessary to Levy a Tax in Excess of the Ten-Mill Limitation, as authorized by Revised Code 5705.03, .19, .25, .26 for the purpose of providing or maintaining senior citizens services or facilities.*

*Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio*

*Date: February 4, 2025*

*Resolution: # 25-017*

**DECLARING IT NECESSARY**  
**TO LEVY A TAX IN EXCESS OF THE TEN-MILL LIMITATION**  
*Rev. Code Sec. 5705.03, .19, .25, .26*

**GEAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

*The Board of Commissioners of Geauga County, Ohio met in regular session on February 4, 2025, at Chardon, Ohio, with the following Commissioners present:*

*Carolyn Brakey, Esq.                  James W. Dvorak.                  Ralph Spidalieri*

*Commissioner Spidalieri moved for the adoption of the following Resolution:*

*WHEREAS, the Board has received the certification from the County Auditor pursuant to R.C. 5705.03(B)(2), and the amount of taxes which may be raised within the ten-mill limitation will be insufficient to provide an adequate amount for the necessary requirements of said Geauga County, Ohio;*

*BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Commissioners of Geauga County, Ohio, has determined the amount of taxes which may be raised within the ten-mill limitation by levies on the current tax duplicate will be insufficient to provide an adequate amount for the necessary requirements of Geauga County and it is necessary to levy a tax in excess of such limitation for the purpose of: providing or maintaining senior citizens services or facilities as authorized by section 307.694, 307.85, 505.70, or 505.706 or division (EE) of section 717.01 of the Revised Code in Geauga County as provided and authorized in Ohio Revised Code § 5705.19(Y); and*

*The levy is at a rate of 1.0 mills for each one dollar of taxable value, which amounts to \$ 21.00 for each one hundred thousand dollars of the County Auditor's appraised value, for a period of five years and is a renewal levy which is a renewal of an existing 1.0 mill levy first voted on in 2009; and*

*The ballot measure shall be submitted to the entire territory of Geauga County and the tax shall be levied on the entire territory of Geauga County and within Geauga County; and*

*The levy is to be placed on the ballot at the election held on May 6, 2025, and shall first be levied in tax year 2025 and begin collection in 2026.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Board of Commissioners of Geauga County, be and she is hereby directed to certify a copy of this Resolution, along with Resolution #25-013 and the certification from the County Auditor received pursuant to R.C. 5705.03(B)(2)*

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*to the Board of Elections, Geauga County, Ohio, on or before February 5, 2025 by 4:00 p.m. local time and notify said Board of Elections to cause notice of election on the question of levying said tax to be given as required by law.*

*Commissioner Brakey seconded the Motion and the roll being called upon its adoption resulted as follows:*

<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 JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES – ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF CERTIFICATE OF ESTIMATED PROPERTY TAX REVENUE AND RESOLUTION DECLARING IT NECESSARY TO LEVY A TAX IN EXCESS OF THE TEN MILL LIMITATION – SUPPORT OF CHILDREN SERVICES AND CARE AND PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN - .5 MILL RENEWAL**

*Director Craig Swenson explained that this levy is a .5 mill renewal for children services and is about \$1.6 million in collection, at \$12.00 per \$100,000.00 in valuation. This renewal is for five years and we ask the Board to acknowledge the certificate of the estimated revenue and then the resolution to place the levy on the ballot.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to acknowledge receipt of the Certificate of Estimated Property Tax Revenue regarding the renewal of 0.5 Mill levy for any operations or capital improvement expenditure necessary for the support of children services and care and placement of children.*

<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 Resolution #25-018 Declaring it Necessary to Levy a Tax in Excess of the Ten Mill Limitation and to Provide for the Necessary Requirements of the Geauga County Department of Job and Family Services, per O.R.C. 5705.07 and 5705.24.*

*Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio*

*Resolution: #25-018*  
*Date: February 4, 2025*

**RESOLUTION NO. 25-018**

**A RESOLUTION DECLARING IT NECESSARY TO LEVY A TAX IN EXCESS OF THE TEN MILL LIMITATION AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE NECESSARY REQUIREMENTS OF THE GEAUGA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES PER O.R.C. 5705.07 and 5705.24**

*The Board of County Commissioners of the County of Geauga, State of Ohio, met in regular session on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of February 2025, commencing at 9:30 o'clock a.m. at the Commissioners' Meeting Room, 12611 Ravenwood Drive, Room B303, Chardon, Ohio, 44024, with the following members present:*

<i>Carolyn Brakey, Esq.</i>	<i>James W. Dvorak</i>	<i>Ralph Spidalieri</i>
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*The Clerk advised the Board of County Commissioners that the notice requirements of Ohio Revised Code §121.22 and the implementing rules adopted by the Board thereto were complied with for the meeting.*

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*Commissioner Spidalieri moved for the adoption of the following resolution:*

*WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners has received the certification from the County Auditor pursuant to R.C. 5705.03(B)(2) and the amount of taxes which may be raised within the ten-mill limitation will be insufficient to provide an adequate amount for the necessary requirements of said Geauga County, Ohio;*

*BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of County Commissioners, after providing the normal and customary percentage of the total general fund appropriations for the support of children services and the care and placement of children, has determined the amount of taxes which may be raised within the ten-mill limitation by levies on the current tax duplicate will be insufficient to provide an adequate amount for the support of such children services, and that it is necessary to levy a tax in excess of such limitation for the purpose of any operating or capital improvement expenditure necessary for the support of children services and the care and placement of children as provided and authorized in Ohio Revised Code §5705.24;*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the levy is at a rate of 0.5 mill for each one dollar (\$1.00) of taxable value, which amounts to twelve dollars and no cents (\$12.00) for each one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00) of the County Auditor's appraised value, for a period of five (5) years and which levy is a renewal of an existing 0.5 mill levy first voted on in 2015. The tax shall be levied in tax year 2025 and begin collection in year 2026.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the ballot measure shall be submitted to the entire territory of Geauga County and the tax shall be levied on the entire territory of Geauga County and within Geauga County.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the levy is to be placed on the ballot at the election held on May 6, 2025, and shall first be levied in tax year 2025 and begin collection in 2026.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Commissioner's Clerk of the Geauga County Board of Commissioners is hereby directed to certify a copy of this Resolution, along with Resolution #2025-014 and the certification from the County Auditor received pursuant to Ohio Revised Code §5705.03(B)(2) to the Board of Elections, Geauga County, Ohio on or before February 5, 2025 by 4:00 p.m. local time and notify said Board of Elections to cause notice of election on the question of levying said tax to be given as required by law.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this Board finds and determines that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Board and that all deliberations of this Board and of any committees that resulted*

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*in those formal actions were in meetings open to the public, in compliance with the law, including Ohio Revised Code §121.22.*

*Commissioner Brakey seconded the motion.*

*Upon roll call on the adoption of the resolution, the vote was as follows:*

<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 – ACCEPT PERFORMANCE BOND – AIR FORCE ONE, INCORPORATED – 2025-2028 “HILL” HVAC MAINTENANCE SERVICES – FURTHER RELEASE THE BID BOND*

*Contract Coordinator Matt Sieracki asked the Board to accept the Performance Bond from Air Force One, Incorporated and release the bid bond.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to accept the Performance Bond from Air Force One, Incorporated for the 2025-2028 “Hill” HVAC Maintenance Services and further release the Bid Bond.*

<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 – NORTH BAY CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, INCORPORATED -GEAUGA COUNTY ANNEX GENERATOR UPGRADE*

*Mr. Sieracki asked the Board to execute the contract agreement with North Bay Construction for the Annex Generator upgrade.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute the Contract Agreement with North Bay Construction Company, Incorporated for the Geauga County Annex Generator Upgrade in the amount of \$146,500.00. The Bid Bond submitted shall be held to serve as the Performance Bond on this project.*

<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 – AGREEMENT – PROFESSIONAL DESIGN SERVICES – R.E.. WARNER AND ASSOCIATES, INCORPORATED – SAFETY CENTER ROOF UPGRADES*

*Program Manager Charles Tkach asked the Board to approve the agreement for professional design services for the upgrade for the Safety Center Roof. Ms. Brakey asked about the cost to replace the roof, to which Mr. Tkach replied it is about \$1.2-\$1.5 million. The roof is a big roof, that it is flat and it is twenty years old and will be a complete replacement.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to approve and execute the Agreement for Professional Design Services with R. E. Warner and Associates, Incorporated to provide professional design and contract administration services related to upgrading the roof on the Geauga County Safety Center in an amount not to exceed \$98,653.00.*

<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>

*COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – AMENDED - RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES COMMUNITY CAPITAL PROJECT – DESIGNATE COMMISSIONER JAMES W. DVORAK AND COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE DOCUMENTS – YOUTH CENTER*

*Ms. Burhenne explained that this is associated with the reimbursement grant from the state for*

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*funding for the new youth center project. The original resolution was done last year and designated Mr. Dvorak and Mr. Morgan and so we are redoing that resolution to just state Mr. Dvorak and the County Administrator so whomever occupies that position can then execute the documents. Ms. Burhenne added that she had provided some documentation to Ms. LaChapelle over some questions about a mortgage that needs to be executed as part of the award, and that is a mortgage that is forgiven over a twenty-year period and monitored by the Mental Health Board and for now, we need to update the resolution.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute Resolution #25-019 Amended – Resolution of Support for the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services Community Capital Project and Hereby Designates and Authorizes James W. Dvorak, Commissioner and the County Administrator to execute the Necessary Documents related to the Application / Contract for State Assistance in Construction, Purchase or Renovation of the Geauga Youth Center.*

*Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio*

*Date: February 4, 2025*

*Resolution: #25-019*

**AMENDED**

**RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES COMMUNITY CAPITAL PROJECT AND HEREBY DESIGNATES AND AUTHORIZES JAMES W. DVORAK, COMMISSIONER AND THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE THE NECESSARY DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THE APPLICATION / CONTRACT FOR STATE ASSISTANCE IN CONSTRUCTION, PURCHASE OR RENOVATION OF THE GEAUGA YOUTH CENTER**

*WHEREAS, the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) Community Capital Project Funds are available to be used for purchase, construction, professional design services, furnishings/equipment; and*

*WHEREAS, the OhioMHAS Community Capital Assistance funding will be provided as reimbursement and requires substantial local matching funds; and*

*WHEREAS, the Geauga County Department of Job and Family Services in conjunction with Ravenwood Health are working together to construct a new Geauga Youth Center; and*

*WHEREAS, the Geauga County Department of Job and Family Services will be providing the local match requirements along with other funding on this project; and*

*WHEREAS, the Geauga County Board of Commissioners supports this construction project and will provide the property for construction of the new facility, in Geauga County, Ohio; and*

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of County Commissioners of Geauga County, Ohio approves this project with an assurance of intent to support and to fund the applicant's program consistent with the application.*

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board designates and authorizes James W. Dvorak, Commissioner, and the County Administrator to execute all necessary documents related to the application / contract for the Community Capital Project for the Geauga Youth Center.*

*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>

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COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – CURRENT AGRICULTURE USE VALUATION RENEWAL APPLICATION – PARCEL #13-015313

*Ms. Burhenne noted that this parcel is located by the old County Home, and that it is currently being farmed.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to approve and authorize the President of the Board to execute the Current Agriculture Use Valuation Renewal Application form (DTE 109(A) for Parcel #13-015313.*

<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 – CERTIFICATION – QUARTERLY USE OF COUNTY CREDIT CARDS FOR YEAR 2025 – QUARTERS 1, 2, 3 AND 4

*Ms. Burhenne explained this is part of the new credit card policy for predictions of what is to be spent quarterly and must be sent to the Auditor's Office.*

*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 Auditor /ADP, Clerk of Courts, Commissioners, Sheriff, Department on Aging, Community and Economic Development, Job and Family Services, Maintenance and Water Resources.*

<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 – DESIGNATE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR AS BOARD'S REPRESENTATIVE - EXECUTE CREDIT CARD PROGRAM EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORMS – YEAR 2025

*Ms. Burhenne asked the Board to designate the County Administrator as the Board's representative to execute the employee acknowledgment forms.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to designate the County Administrator as the Board's Representative and further authorize the execution of the Applications for Geauga County Credit Card Program Employee Acknowledgement Forms for all Agencies, Offices and Departments utilizing Credit Cards for Year 2025.*

<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>

*Mr. Swenson asked a question about the unforeseen circumstances allowance and asked for clarification on what is considered to be unforeseeable or emergency expense. It was noted that Ms. Burhenne would look into it so they could provide a response.*

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – REVIEW AND DISCUSS 2025 UNFUNDED BUDGET REQUESTS FOR SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

*Mr. Gorton explained that he wanted to review and discuss the 2025 unfunded budget requests with the Board before they are put through as supplemental appropriations on next Tuesdays Financials. Mr. Gorton explained that at the end of last year and during the tax budget, several reductions were made to departments for the 2025 budget, many of which were expected to be revisited once they knew what was going to be available for supplementals. Mr. Gorton expressed that he wanted to have discussion with the Board and provide the opportunity to ask questions before it gets presented in the financials for approval.*

*Mr. Gorton provided the list (below) and went down through each department's requests.*

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*Mr. Gorton started with ADP, noting that they had just about \$731,000.00 of budget adjustments, of which about \$235,000.00 was for payroll. The reduction included the removal of a maintenance position. Discussion continued about payroll, vacant positions, raises above three percent, the shift of Archives and Records and an increase in staffing. Mr. Spidalieri did not agree with returning the amount of funding for payroll, to which Ms. Brakey agreed minus the maintenance position, to which Mr. Dvorak agreed to as well. Mr. Gorton noted that there was a reduction for replacement vehicles of about \$80,000.00. ADP Administrator Frank Antenucci explained that the request was for two vehicles, including one for Archives. Mr. Gorton noted that the last reduction of \$416,000.00 was for equipment that included stock items and replacement technology.*

*Mr. Gorton went to the Auditor section. The first line was for \$119,000.00 for Contract Services, for expenses for an office remodel. Mr. Dvorak expressed that he prefers it be handled through the Building Improvement Fund and working with the Maintenance Department. The Auditor's Equipment request was also reduced \$26,300.00 for replacement computers, monitors, a copier and printer. There was also a reduction for a maintenance worker outside the maintenance department and that will not be replaced. Mr. Gorton explained that this is an odd fund, REAF, and we did remove the funds for a maintenance worker, but the Auditor has control over this fund. Mr. Gorton continued with a reduction of \$75,000.00 in contract services for renovation of offices. Pam McMahan explained that this is to move the five employees on the third floor of the Opera House to another location. It was noted that they are looking to do three different renovations, the basement, the fiscal area and the opera house space. Mr. Gorton*

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*asked for clarification on removing the maintenance worker payroll from the GIS department. Mr. Gorton moved on to the reduction for Board of Elections, that was just over \$89,000.00 that included a rolling ladder, a mail opener / extractor and a minivan. There was discussion about not needing the minivan but instead do a rental vehicle during election period or using a vehicle from Maintenance, but the rolling ladder is essential for downstairs as is the mail opener and extractor, \$40,000.00 for a vehicle was removed. Mr. Gorton skipped over the Commissioners' section and skipped down to the Common Pleas Court – Court Technology, which was a reduction to equipment of around \$50,000.00 that included computers, monitors, displays and kiosks. This amount is included in the Commissioners' section and will be done through a cash transfer.*

*Mr. Gorton explained that next up was Maintenance for a total of over \$809,000.00. First up was equipment that included transit vans, tractors, mowers and floor scrubbers of \$180,000.00. Mr. Gorton explained that the Budget Commission reduced the JFS levy collection and in order to balance out the budget we reduced several items in Maintenance, and this would be to replace those deductions that included grounds services, building maintenance services, software services, electrical services (utilities) and in payroll for vacant positions and summer help. It was noted that if they advertise for those positions, some adjustments can be made.*

*Mr. Gorton explained the deduction for Planning Commission that was for \$3,800.00 for equipment requests of a planning table and travel and dues expenses. There was no opposition to returning those funds. Mr. Gorton continued to Public Defender, which was a reduction of payroll for an additional full-time employee and will be returned.*

*Mr. Gorton went on to the Sheriff, which had reductions of over \$653,000.00, that included equipment requests for blankets, computers, servers, monitors and cameras of about \$114,000.00, vehicle replacement of six patrol vehicles of over \$422,000.00, funding for upgrading Microsoft 365 of \$42,000.00. There was discussion about the cost of the vehicles including additional equipment, and moving ahead with replacement vehicles since the time frame of getting vehicles is taking so long. The next two items are for equipment in 911 for computers, servers and monitors and in 800 Communications for equipment related to lightning and truck upgrades. These are also listed in the Commissioners sections above. The additional items in the Commissioners section are in Miscellaneous that includes contract services, other expenses and the postage account.*

*Mr. Gorton will get some answers to some of the questions that were discussed today and give the Board updated amounts that were not approved to be put back. Mr. Gorton noted that we still have about a \$8.7 Million unappropriated balance in the General Fund, but there are some other building needs that are coming up, which we should be able to handle without any issues.*

**DOG WARDEN – UPDATE ON SHELTER**

*Mr. Dvorak wanted Matt Granito to discuss the public announcement about the Dog Shelter.*

*Mr. Dvorak read the announcement:*

*Temporary Closure due to Canine Distemper Case*

*A stray dog at our shelter has tested positive for canine distemper, a contagious virus spread through saliva and other secretions. To protect the health and safety of our animals, we are placing four dogs under a two-week observation period to monitor for any signs of infection.*

*Following veterinary guidance, the Shelter will be temporarily closed for the next two weeks as a precaution. During this time:*

*We will continue to respond to complaints and fulfill all our statutory obligations*

*Stray dogs will be housed at an alternate location, which is currently being arranged*

*We strongly urge all pet owners to be extra vigilant in keeping their dogs contained and preventing them from running loose, as our ability to take additional animals is currently limited.*

*Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.*

*Matt Granito, Dog Warden explained that a dog came in about two weeks ago, that appeared healthy, however it started to show signs of sickness. Burton Veterinary began running tests which came back Friday positive for distemper, which is fatal in dogs. Unfortunately, due to the*

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*severity of it, the dog was put down. There are four dogs that were around the dog, and are currently under quarantine, three are due to be adopted. We are cleaning everything that the Veterinary is instructing us to do. Mr. Granito reached out to the health department and feel that the dog was infected by a raccoon that may have been carrying the virus. Mr. Granito explained that he was working with Maintenance Director, Glen Vernick for a location to house strays that may need to be picked up, as well as reaching out to the surrounding area shelters. Mr. Granito expressed that this is the longest we have ever shut down, but we are taking precautions to make sure no other dogs get sick. Mr. Granito explained that the virus is air borne, on surfaces it will die within hours, however everything needs to be cleaned and disinfected. Investigations, Dog Bites and Strays will continue; however, the shelter is currently shut down for the next weeks. Mr. Vernick has an area in the heated barn that they can put cages in and house as necessary. Mr. Granito stated that vaccination is the only way to protect your pet, and that somewhere in the county, a raccoon was infected with the virus.*

**BOARD DISCUSSION**

*Board of Elections: Building 8 for Polling Location*

*Ms. Burhenne explained that a request had been received about Board of Elections using Building 8 at 470 Center Street, as a polling location for the next two elections, in May and November. Board of Elections Board member Joan Windnagle explained that the Senior Center is displaced for about three days the week of the election. Ms. Windnagle explained that they have been searching for an alternate location but keep running up against issues. Mr. Dvorak expressed that he was okay with Building 8 for voting, however he wants Board of Elections to move into the new building in June. Ms. Brakey asked about a long-term plan for the polling location. Ms. Windnagle hopes the courthouse may be an option.*

*Airport: UH Lease - \$1.33 Million in funding for new T Hangar*

*Ms. Burhenne explained that they secured an opinion from outside counsel since they were having trouble getting things to the finish line. Ms. Burhenne explained about the lease with University Hospitals for medevac and an ambulance. The agreement with the Airport Authority and the Commissioners does not require the Commissioners to be part of the agreement, and we were able to finally get an insurance certificate that the Airport Attorney was satisfied with. Ms. Burhenne expressed that she feels the Commissioners are not required to be part of the lease and so therefore feel the Board is done. The Board agreed.*

*Ms. Burhenne brought up the motion that was approved in December 2024 for the \$1.33 Million for the new T-Hangar. The agreement has never been finalized, and January is over, so she is asking what the next steps would be. Ms. Burhenne noted last year the Board did a resolution to provide funding to the airport, so asked if we need an agreement, or if a resolution might suffice, since the elements of the motion have passed. Ms. Brakey expressed that \$20,000.00 is different than \$1.33 million, she doesn't personally feel that is a responsible decision for the taxpayers. Mr. Dvorak expressed that just about every year we have improvements at the airport, and congratulated Mr. Blamer on the FAA grant for \$3.1 million, with a local match from the County of \$176,000.00. The upgrade of the Air Med Hangar was also needed, and the Board contributed the \$390,000.00 towards that. In the last six weeks he has been more involved with construction projects, noting the Youth Center project, mentioned the Senior Center and that these projects have been discussed for over six years. Mr. Dvorak stated that before today's meeting, he received a call from an Airport Board member expressing that the Airport Authority wanted to renegotiate the funding agreement. Mr. Spidalieri asked if the funding was appropriated, as the Board committed those dollars. Mr. Gorton explained that there were financials that happened to do it, however the mechanism under which the money would be transferred was never finalized. Mr. Gorton stated that there was never an agreement or contract finalized, as the stipulations were still being worked out, and that the money was never transferred or sent to the Airport. Mr. Spidalieri expressed that the money was to be transferred, they were to use the money and the FAA funds towards that project which would allow the airport to keep the funds provided to use towards other projects at the Airport.*

*Ms. Burhenne noted that the motion read: approve an encumbrance and expenditure for January 2025 in the amount of \$1,330,000.00 for the construction of a new T-Hangar facility and upgrades to existing facilities at the Airport pending the execution of the Agreement for Capital Improvement Funding. Ms. Burhenne explained that an agreement that outlined what was agreed to in session was sent to the Prosecutor's Office, it came back with a lot of changes, including information regarding the first loan that is in place with the Airport for the first T-Hangar. Ms. Burhenne remarked that the process came to a halt, and sparked a look back at the*

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law, how the airport was created and then the matter was sent to outside counsel for an opinion. The motion indicated that there would be an agreement. If there should be an agreement, the Prosecutor would have something to say about what is included in the agreement. Mr. Dvorak expressed that the property and the buildings are in the Commissioners' names. He would like to continue to negotiate as the deadline for the grant is the end of April. Mr. Spidalieri expressed that there is a surplus of funding, and it was agreed to make an investment in the airport, and help them work towards being self-sufficient, and the airport does have an economic impact on the businesses in the county. What we are doing is to make it more appealing to business, who don't want to deal with delays in commercial air traffic. Mr. Dvorak wants to work on the negotiation and come up with a better agreement.

There was discussion on the next steps, Mr. Spidalieri supports providing the funding to the Airport, and that there was lot of time, effort and money that went into this. Ms. Brakey added that an agreement needs to be in place to protect the taxpayers. Mr. Spidalieri brought up getting rid of the Airport Board if we can't trust them. Ms. Burhenne added that once this motion was done, the agreement came back from the Prosecutor, and she reached out to outside counsel for another opinion. Ms. Brakey expressed concern over a potential fraud issue. If the airport has county money for the project and are then applying for the funding, she just wants to make sure we are protected on this.

If we want to change the term of the deal, we need to rescind the original motion and then re-negotiate.

*Motion:* by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to rescind the motion from December 17, 2024 that approved the \$1,330,000.00 funding for the Airport Authority T Hangar project.

<i>Roll Call Vote:</i>	<i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i>	<i>No</i>
	<i>Commissioner Brakey</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>	<i>Aye</i>

Clerk Christine Blair asked for a motion, regarding the Board not being part of the Lease with University Hospitals.

*Motion:* by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak that the Board of Commissioners will not acknowledge the Lease Agreement between the Airport Authority and University Hospitals Medical Transport.

<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 – PLANNING COMMISSION APPOINTMENT**

*Motion:* by Commissioner Dvorak, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to appoint Philip C. Miller to the Planning Commission for a three-year term, ending December 31, 2027.

<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 ANNOUNCEMENT – GEAUGA TRUMBULL SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT PLAN – PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

Ms. Burhenne brought attention to the Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste Management District which has to update the district plan every five years, and as part of the update, they invite public participation, so the public is invited to provide comments on the plan. The period is open for thirty days.

***Board Discussion –***

***Courthouse Shower Change Order***

Mr. Spidalieri brought up the Courthouse Shower Change Order to which Ms. Burhenne noted that they wanted to get additional information from the Judges on why they needed to have a shower. Mr. Spidalieri asked if it was on the original plan. It is not, it is a change order. Ms.

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*Burhenne added that they hoped the Sheriff would be here next week to discuss the Silent Alarm system that he would like to have installed. That would be a change order for an additional \$200,000.00.*

*Additional items of discussion –*

*Board of Developmental Disabilities property*

*Mr. Spidalieri asked about the developmental disabilities' property tax situation, to which Ms. Burhenne noted that she had emailed the gentleman she had been talking to and asked for an update.*

*Mr. Spidalieri asked about the investigation that took place on Ms. Burhenne and whether we were going to make a public statement or release the report. Ms. Burhenne expressed that it was up to the Board, however the report is covered by attorney client privilege. Ms. Burhenne stated that she was completely exonerated.*

*Ms. Brakey felt like it was airing dirty laundry, that we don't need to, there was an investigation conducted, and Ms. Burhenne was found at no fault. Mr. Spidalieri continued to express his concern of the questions being asked of him, and that he does not like not being able to respond.*

*Mr. Dvorak expressed that a simple statement is all that is needed and to not release the attorney client privilege of the report.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Local resident Howard Newell expressed his opinion about leaving the airport alone. Reporter Anastashia Nicholas, from the Chagrin Valley Times, asked Mr. Spidalieri about his comment that the Airport should bring litigation against the Commissioners about the funding. Mr. Spidalieri stated that his position was to provide the funding to the Airport to improve the airport, and the goal would be to get them the funding they need. Gail Roussey, Observer from the League of Women's Voters asked about Mental Health and Addiction Project and the county not being able to accept the grant, what was the amount of the grant, to which Ms. Burhenne stated \$1 Million dollars for the Youth Center Project. Ms. Roussey asked if there was an indictment or criminal action, to which it was noted that it was an internal investigation.*

**OTHER**

*The Board reviewed upcoming events.*

**MEETINGS**

*Wed., 2/5      Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste Management District, Policy Committee 1:00 p.m., Warren, District Office*

*Tue., 2/11      Planning Commission, 7:30 a.m. County Office Building, 12611 Ravenwood Drive, Room A334*

*Tue., 2/11      The Commissioners will hold session at 9:30 a.m.*

*Tue. 2/11      Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste Management District Board meeting, 2:00 p.m. Warren, District Office*

*Fri., 2/14      NOACA Standing Committees: Finance & Audit 8:30 a.m., Governance 10:00 a.m., Executive 11:30 a.m., Cleveland*

*Mon., 2/17      **County offices will be closed for general business due to the President's Day holiday. Twenty-four-hour operations will continue to operate as usual.***

*Thu., 2/20      The Commissioners will hold session at 9:30 a.m.*

*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*

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*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.*

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

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

*Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to adjourn the  
meeting at 11:49 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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