

Commissioners' Journal
January 6, 2026

The Geauga County Board of Commissioners met in session on January 6, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. in the Commissioners' Offices located at 12611 Ravenwood Drive, Room B303, 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:

Quiet Prayer

As we close last year and start a new one, with a quiet prayer.

May those who feel broken, find healing.

May hearts weighed down on sadness, feel hope again.

May the lonely feel loved, the hungry be fed.

And may peace find its way into our world!

Amen

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one signed in on the form to comment on items on the agenda for today.

APPROVE FINANCIALS

Budget and Finance Manager Adrian Gorton asked the Board to approve the encumbrances effective January 1, 2026, so there is no break in the dates.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve the encumbrances to be considered by the Board of Commissioners to be effective January 1, 2026.

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

Mr. Gorton explained the financials for today including an appropriations transfer from the Common Pleas Court in their Targeted Community Alternatives to Prison Fund to move resources out of Other and into the Materials and Supplies and Training Expense accounts. Mr. Gorton noted that there are contracts, blankets and purchase orders from various departments for the new year including travel requests from the Clerk of Courts and the Juvenile Court.

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

**COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – ESTABLISH GAS MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT –
CURRENT INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (IRS) RATE – EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1,
2026**

Mr. Gorton asked the Board to establish the gas mileage reimbursement rate, in accordance with the rate established by the IRS.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to establish the gas mileage reimbursement at the current Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rate of 72.5 cents, to be effective January 1, 2026, for the departments under the direction of the Geauga County Board of Commissioners.

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

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COUNTY ENGINEER'S OFFICE – RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING COUNTY ENGINEER TO UNDERTAKE PROJECTS USING FORCE ACCOUNT IN CERTAIN CASES FOR YEAR 2026

County Engineer Andy Haupt briefly explained the reasoning behind allowing them to undertake projects using force account, which allows them to utilize staff to handle projects versus going out to bid. However, depending on the project, they would still do certain projects utilizing the bidding process.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute Resolution #26-002 Authorizing the County Engineer to Undertake Projects Using Force Account in Certain Cases for Year 2026.

Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio

Date: January 6, 2026

Resolution: #26-002

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY ENGINEER TO UNDERTAKE PROJECTS USING FORCE ACCOUNT IN CERTAIN CASES FOR YEAR 2026

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Geauga County desires to allow the Geauga County Engineer to improve, repair, and maintain county highways and improve, repair, and reconstruct county bridge projects in the most efficient and cost-effective manner; and

WHEREAS, the County Engineer may, when authorized by the Board of County Commissioners and not required by law to use competitive bidding, employ such laborers and vehicles, use such county employees and property, lease such implements and tools, and purchase such materials as are necessary in the construction, reconstruction, improvement, maintenance, or repair of roads by force account; and

WHEREAS, the County Engineer may, when authorized by the Board of County Commissioners and not required by law to use competitive bidding, employ such laborers and vehicles, use such county employees and property, lease such implements and tools, and purchase such materials as are necessary in the construction, reconstruction, improvement, maintenance, or repair of bridges and culverts by force account; and

WHEREAS, on the first day of July of every odd-numbered year beginning in 2021, the threshold amounts established shall increase by an amount not to exceed the lesser of three percent, or the percentage amount of any increase in the Department of Transportation's construction cost index as annualized and totaled for the prior two calendar years. The Director of Transportation has notified the County Engineer that from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, the following limits are applicable: The amount not to exceed for the estimated cost of construction or reconstruction, including widening and resurfacing, of roads is seventy-six thousand two hundred ninety-three dollars (\$76,293) per mile. The amount not to exceed for the estimated cost of construction, reconstruction, improvement, maintenance, or repair of bridges or culvert work is two hundred fifty-three thousand nine hundred forty-seven dollars (\$253,947).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners of Geauga County does hereby authorize the Geauga County Engineer to proceed with the construction or reconstruction, including widening and resurfacing, of roads by force account. In determining whether he may undertake road construction work by force account, when not required by section 5543.19 or other law to use competitive bidding, the Geauga County Engineer shall first cause to be made an estimate of the cost of such work using the force account project assessment form developed by the Auditor of State under section 117.16 of the Revised Code. When the total estimated cost of the work exceeds seventy-six thousand two hundred ninety-three dollars (\$76,293) per mile, the Board of County Commissioners shall invite and receive competitive bids for furnishing all the labor, materials, and equipment necessary to complete the work in accordance with sections 307.86 to 307.92 of the Revised Code.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners of Geauga County does hereby authorize the Geauga County Engineer to proceed with the construction, reconstruction, improvement, maintenance, or repair of bridges or culverts by force account. In determining whether he may undertake bridge and/or culvert work by force account when not required by section 5543.19 or other law to use competitive bidding, the Geauga County Engineer shall first

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cause to be made an estimate of the cost of such work using the force account project assessment form. When the total estimated cost of the work exceeds two hundred fifty-three thousand nine hundred forty-seven dollars (\$253,947), the Board of County Commissioners shall invite and receive competitive bids for furnishing all the labor, materials, and equipment necessary to complete the work, in accordance with sections 307.86 to 307.92 of the Revised Code. The County Engineer shall obtain the approval required by section 5543.02 of the Revised Code.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners of Geauga County is hereby instructed to transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the Geauga County Engineer.

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

DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES – RE-APPOINT MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE FAMILY SERVICES PLANNING COMMITTEE

Executive Director Craig Swenson asked the Board to re-appoint members to serve on the Family Services Planning Committee for the year.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to re-appoint the following members to serve on the Family Services Planning Committee for a one-year term, effective January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026: Jessica Boalt, Jennifer Felker (Alternate – Nancy Santilli), Scott Hildenbrand, Andrea Pollack, Nathan Long, Nicole Walker, Donna Brown-Barrow, Tim Kehres, Teri Malnar, Angela North and Angela Spalsbury.

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

DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES – APPOINT MARK JIMISON TO SERVE ON FAMILY SERVICES PLANNING COMMITTEE

Mr. Swenson asked the Board to consider appointing Mark Jimison to serve on the Board.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to appoint Mark Jimison to serve on the Family Services Planning Committee for a one-year term, effective January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026.

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

MAINTENANCE – GRANT WAIVER OF POLICY PROHIBITING PAYMENT OF LATE FEES AND FINANCE CHARGES – ALLOW PAYMENT TO EAST OHIO GAS COMPANY AND ILLUMINATING COMPANY

Director Rob Weigle asked the Board to approve and grant a waiver of policy and pay the late fees for the East Ohio Gas and Illuminating Company bills due to the processing of year-end and new-year financials.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and grant a waiver of the policy prohibiting the payment of late fees and finance charges and allow payment to the East Ohio Gas Company and the Illuminating Company for invoices received after the final financial session in 2025 and due prior to the first financials in January 2026 in an amount not to exceed \$500.00.

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

MAINTENANCE – SERVICE CONTRACT AGREEMENT – SHEPP ELECTRIC COMPANY

Contract Coordinator Liz Rubino asked the Board to approve the service contract with Shepp Electric Company. There was a brief discussion about a cost increase of about six percent from

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previous years, but that was mainly due to the replacement of three generators.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute the service Contract Agreement with Shepp Electric Company to perform Inspections and Maintenance Services for the Geauga County Generators per the Director for the period January 11, 2026 through January 10, 2029 (three-year period) in an amount not to exceed \$35,000.00.

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

MAINTENANCE – APPROVE REVISED JOB DESCRIPTION AND RE-GRADE – ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR (#1920)

Mr. Weigle asked the Board to approve the revised job description and re-grade of the Administrative Coordinator position. Mr. Weigle explained that the new person coming into this role will have more responsibilities.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve the revised job description and re-grade for the position of the Administrative Coordinator (#1920) from Grade 7 to Grade 9 to be effective January 6, 2026.

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

MAINTENANCE – ADVERTISE POSITION – ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR (#1920)

Mr. Weigle asked to advertise the position and keep it posted until filled.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to grant permission to advertise for the position of Administrative Coordinator (#1920). This position will remain posted until filled.

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

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES – SERVICE CONTRACT AGREEMENT – SANTEE LOCK AND MORE, LLC

Director Nicholas Gorris asked the Board to approve a service contract with Santee Lock and More for as-needed service and repairs.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute the service Contract Agreement with Santee Lock and More, LLC to perform lock-and-key-related service and repairs, as needed, at various locations within the department, effective January 6, 2026, for a one-year period in an amount not to exceed \$3,000.00.

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

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES – APPROVE REVISED ORGANIZATIONAL CHART – MOVE POSITION OF ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN (#2304) FROM CWA BARGAINING UNIT TO TECHNICAL PAY SCALE – IN ACCORDANCE WITH CWA UNION AGREEMENT

Mr. Gorris explained that he wanted to revise the organizational chart to move a position from the bargaining unit to the department's technical pay scale. He noted this change was addressed during union negotiations and that this action would officially move the position on the organizational chart.

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Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve the revised Organizational Chart to move the position of Engineering Technician (#2304) from the CWA Bargaining Unit to the Water Resources Technical Pay Scale effective December 21, 2025 (Pay Period #1 of 2026) in accordance with the CWA Union Agreement.

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

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES – APPROVE REVISED JOB DESCRIPTION AND RE-GRADE – ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN (#2304) – TECHNICAL PAY SCALE

Mr. Gorris explained that this then requires the job descriptions to be revised, and re-graded to fit within the pay scale.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve the revised job description and re-grade of the position of Engineering Technician (#2304) placing it on the Water Resources Technical Pay Scale as WR4, effective December 21, 2025 (Pay Period #1 of 2026).

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

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES – APPROVE RE-GRADE OF CURRENT EMPLOYEES IN POSITION OF ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN (#2304) – PAUL A. KUCHARSKI AND JOSHUA SMOCK – TECHNICAL PAY SCALE

Mr. Gorris explained that this affects two employees currently in those positions, so this is a re-grade and revision for Mr. Kucharski and Mr. Smock.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve the re-grade of current employees in the position of Engineering Technician (#2304) Paul A. Kucharski and Joshua Smock, on the Water Resources Technical Pay Scale, \$29.39 per hour (WR4, Step 3) effective December 21, 2025 (Pay Period #1 of 2026).

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

The Board moved into the Organizational meeting.

2026-Organization Meeting – January 6, 2026

The Board moved through the following items for organizing for the year 2026.

PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT – YEAR 2026

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to appoint James W. Dvorak as President of the Geauga County Board of Commissioners for 2026.

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

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to appoint Carolyn Brakey as Vice President of the Geauga County Board of Commissioners for 2026.

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

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MEETING SCHEDULE AND MEETING INFORMATION FOR 2026

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve the Geauga County Board of Commissioners meeting schedule and meeting information for 2026:

1. Sessions / Meetings will be held at the Geauga County Commissioners' offices located at 12611 Ravenwood Drive, Room B303, Chardon, (whether regular, special or emergency) or any alternate location as necessary, with legally required notice of changed location provided, or if permitted by law to be held virtual, with access information provided:
2. Regular Sessions / Meetings held every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. and are live streamed – available on the website at bocc.geauga.oh.gov, look for YouTube Videos – click on watch live.
3. Adjustments made to add a Thursday regular session / meeting at 9:30 a.m. due to Holidays, or to schedule any additional regular meetings as needed to meet the required number of meetings for the year.
4. Requests for reasonable advance notification of all Commissioners meetings at which any specific type of public business is to be discussed may be requested of the Commissioners' Clerk, provisions for advance notification may include, but are not limited to, emailing the agenda of meetings to all subscribers on a distribution list or by self-addressed stamped envelope provided by the person requesting the information.
5. The Board may have additional meetings, as required, at the time and place designated.
6. Any meeting called by Geauga County officeholders, department heads, County Administrator or the county's legal counsel.
7. Any meetings of the Geauga County Township Association.
8. Any meetings of the County Commissioners' Association of Ohio (CCAO).
9. Any regular or special meetings of the following Boards or Councils at which a quorum of the Board of Commissioners is or may be present:
 - a. Any township Board of Trustees meeting & City and Village Council
 - b. Geauga County Board of Health
 - c. Geauga County Health Advisory Council
 - d. Geauga-Trumbull Solid Waste Management District
 - e. Geauga Soil and Water Conservation District meetings
 - f. Planning Commission
 - g. Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)
 - h. Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments (NOC COG)
 - i. Investment Advisory Committee
 - j. Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) District 7 Integrating Committee (Issue I)
 - k. Geauga County Agricultural Society (Fair Board meetings)
 - l. Meetings to honor any invitations received by the Geauga County Commissioners to attend ground breakings, openings, celebrations, memorial services and/or parades
 - m. Meetings with any organization or other political entities to discuss items of mutual concern

The time, place and purpose of all special meetings, in addition to regularly scheduled meetings, will be given at least twenty-four hours in advance of such meeting to the news media that have requested notification except in the event of an emergency requiring immediate official action. In the event of an emergency, the Board member or Board members calling the meeting shall notify the news media that have requested notification immediately of the time, place and purpose of the meeting.

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

BOARD AND COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS FOR 2026

The following was presented to the Board for consideration:

Board President – James W. Dvorak

Board Vice President – Carolyn Brakey

* Board President required to serve as the Primary

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	<u>Primary</u>	<u>Alternate</u>
1. ADP Board	Spidalieri	Brakey
2. Board of Revision	Dvorak	Brakey
3. Community Corrections	Spidalieri	Dvorak
4. Courthouse Security Advisory Committee*	President	Spidalieri
5. Family First	Brakey	Dvorak
6. Geauga County Agricultural Society	All Three Commissioners	
7. Geauga-Trumbull Solid Waste - Policy *	President	Spidalieri
Geauga-Trumbull SW- Board of Directors	All three Commissioners	
8. Health District Advisory Board	Brakey	Dvorak
9. Investment Advisory Committee (2 commissioners)	Dvorak	Spidalieri
10. NOACA (Three Commissioners)	Dvorak	Andy Haupt
	Brakey	Shane Hajjar
	Spidalieri	Skip Claypool
11. NOC COG (Formerly GAPP)	Dvorak	Brakey
12. Planning Commission Board	All Three Commissioners	
13. Revolving Loan and Local Revolving Loan**	Dvorak	Spidalieri
(**Two-year Appointments) – expires 12/31/2027		

Ms. Brakey reiterated her concern with the proposed appointment of Skip Claypool as the NOACA alternate for Mr. Spidalieri, referencing a 2014 letter from NOACA. Ms. Brakey noted that the letter documented NOACA's concerns regarding Mr. Claypool's conduct while serving as an alternate. Ms. Brakey also expressed concern regarding the appropriateness of the proposed appointment in light of a recent lawsuit filed by Mr. Claypool against the Board of Commissioners, which has since been dismissed.

Commissioner Spidalieri responded that, other than being copied on the letter, no one has ever called him about Mr. Claypool serving as his alternate. Mr. Spidalieri expressed that they don't like Mr. Claypool because he asks the hard questions. Mr. Spidalieri expressed his views about what happened and his views on NOACA, and what they should be focusing on.

Mr. Claypool, who was in attendance, responded and disputed the allegations in the letter. Mr. Claypool stated that there was no investigation or any hearing that allowed him to provide his side. Mr. Claypool stated that he and his attorney met with Ms. Gallucci over the letter, and he understood the matter to have been dropped. He further stated that the matter occurred many years ago and that he has continued to serve as an alternate for the Board.

Following discussion, the NOACA appointments were removed from the list of Boards and Committee appointment list before the Board voted on the remaining appointments.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve the appointments of members of the Board of County Commissioners to **Boards and Committees for 2026** as follows:

Board President – James W. Dvorak

Board Vice President – Carolyn Brakey

* Board President required being the Primary

	<u>Primary</u>	<u>Alternate</u>
1. ADP Board	Spidalieri	Brakey
2. Board of Revision	Dvorak	Brakey
3. Community Corrections	Spidalieri	Dvorak
4. Courthouse Security Advisory Committee*	President	Spidalieri
5. Family First	Brakey	Dvorak
6. Geauga County Agricultural Society	All Three Commissioners	
7. Geauga-Trumbull Solid Waste - Policy *	President	Spidalieri
Geauga-Trumbull SW- Board of Directors	All three Commissioners	
8. Health District Advisory Board*	Brakey	Dvorak
9. Investment Advisory Committee (2 commissioners)	Dvorak	Spidalieri
10. NOC COG (Formerly GAPP)	Dvorak	Brakey
11. Planning Commission Board	All Three Commissioners	
12. Revolving Loan and Local Revolving Loan**	Dvorak	Spidalieri

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(**Two-year Appointments) – expires 12/31/2027

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

APPROVE APPOINTMENTS TO THE BOARD OF REVISION – YEAR 2026

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve the appointments to the Board of Revision, with James W. Dvorak as Primary, and alternates of Carolyn Brakey, Ralph Spidalieri and Mark Jimison to be in effect for the year 2026.

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

APPROVE APPOINTMENTS TO THE ADP BOARD – YEAR 2026

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve the appointments to the ADP Board, with Ralph Spidalieri as Primary, and alternates of Carolyn Brakey, James W. Dvorak and Amy Bevan to be in effect for the year 2026.

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

RE-APPOINT ADAM LITKE AS ALTERNATE FOR JAMES DVORAK – GEAUGA TRUMBULL SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT POLICY COMMITTEE – YEAR 2026

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to re-appoint Adam Litke as Alternate for James Dvorak on the Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste Management District Policy committee for the Year 2026.

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

NOACA WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE, AIR QUALITY AND BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS – YEAR 2026

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to appoint Nicholas Gorris to the NOACA, Water Quality Committee, with Alternate Carmella Shale for the Year 2026, and Nicholas Gorris to the NOACA Air Quality and Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) with Alternate James W. Dvorak for the Year 2026.

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

STAFF APPOINTMENTS

The Board moved through the following staff appointments:

Motion: by Commissioner Dvorak, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to appoint Amy S. Bevan, County Administrator.

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

Motion: by Commissioner Dvorak, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to appoint Mark Jimison, Deputy County Administrator.

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

Motion: by Commissioner Dvorak, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to appoint Christine Blair as the Clerk to Commissioners' (#1306).

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

Motion: by Commissioner Dvorak, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to approve the following staff appointments:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Appointment</u>
Director, Department on Aging	Jessica Boalt
Director, Community and Economic Development	Gina Hofstetter
Chief Building Enforcement Official	Dan Spada
Director, Emergency Management Agency (EMA)	Austin Rice
Director, Job and Family Services (124.11 (A) 22)	Craig Swenson
Director, Maintenance	Robert Weigle
Director, Water Resources	Nicholas Gorris
Sanitary Engineer, Water Resources	Nicholas Gorris
Dog Warden	Matt Granito

and acknowledge that those staff appointments are placed in the unclassified service pursuant to O.R.C. 124.11(A)(3)(b) and are provided with an Unclassified Service Explanation and Acknowledgement Form.

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

ACTING COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – ACTING CLERK – 2026

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to appoint Mark Jimison, Deputy County Administrator, to act as Acting County Administrator, in the event that Amy Bevan, County Administrator, is unable or unavailable to perform those duties at any time during the Year 2026, pursuant to O.R.C. 305.30.

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

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to appoint Deborah Ashburn to act as Acting Commissioners' Clerk in the event that Christine Blair, Commissioners' Clerk, is unable or unavailable to perform those duties at any time during the Year 2026, and further appoint the County Administrator, pursuant to O.R.C. 305.30, to act as Acting Commissioners' Clerk in the event that Deborah Ashburn is unable or unavailable to perform those duties at any time during the Year 2026.

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

DELEGATED POWERS TO COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – YEAR 2026

This resolution allows the County Administrator to act on behalf of the Board, under their direction and supervision:

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute Resolution #26-003 Authorizing the County Administrator to Exercise Powers Delegated hereby under the O.R.C. 305.30.

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Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio

Resolution: #26-003

Date: January 6, 2026

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXERCISE
POWERS DELEGATED HEREBY UNDER THE O.R.C. 305.30

WHEREAS, Ohio Revised Code 305.30 provides that the Board may delegate certain of its powers to be exercised by the County Administrator; and

WHEREAS, the Geauga County Board of Commissioners desires to delegate certain powers to the County Administrator to be performed under their direction and supervision; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Geauga County Board of Commissioners does hereby authorize the County Administrator to execute on their behalf within limitation and guidelines set forth below:

1. Certification of Determination of Subsequent Exemption for a Categorical Exclusion Project
2. Certification of Categorical Exclusion Project not subject to 58.5 (but required to comply with 24 CFR 58.6)
3. Certification of Exempt Project
4. Ohio Development Service Agency Office of Community Development Request for Release of Funds (RROF) and Certification for Federally funded State projects – CDBG Program Income
5. Office of Housing and Community Partnerships RLF Grant / Loan Review Report form
6. Housing Semi-Annual Program Income Report
7. ED RLF Semi-Annual Report
8. Office of Housing and Community Partnerships, Ohio Small Cities CDBG Program Job Certification Summary
9. Ohio Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program Status Report
10. Notice to Public of Finding of No Significant Impact on Environment (FONSI) and Notice of Intent to Request Release of Funds (NOI/RROF) Combined Notice – CDBG Program Income / RLF Loan
11. Notice to Proceed / Notice of Commencement
12. Satisfaction / Release of Mortgage
13. Approve the Hiring, Promotion, Reclassification and Rescind those actions (if necessary) of Personnel under the Commissioners Hiring Authority, excluding the Commissioners' Office
14. Approve Unpaid Leave of Absence requests for Employees (medical and personal) under the Commissioners Hiring Authority and the ability to Rescind those actions, excluding the Commissioners' Office
15. Accept Personnel Resignations, excluding the Commissioners' Office
16. Permission to approve revised job descriptions (established positions), excluding Commissioners' Office
17. Permission to approve revised organizational charts (established positions) excluding Commissioners' Office
18. Permission to advertise to fill employment positions under the Board's hiring authority, following the acceptance of a resignation, hiring, promotion or reclassification, excluding the Commissioners' Office
19. Increase current position postings and close if necessary.
20. Acknowledge new hire appointments by the Department of Job and Family Services
21. Concur with the Townships on Liquor License – Request a Hearing to be held in County Seat or Not Request a Hearing
22. Approve placing individuals on Administrative Leave pending the outcome of the disciplinary process.
23. Farm Market Agreements for the Department on Aging
24. Agreements for the use of County Parking Lots and County Property
25. Service Contract Agreements that are in the amount of \$20,000.00 per year or less, up to and including Multi-year Service Contracts that do not exceed the \$20,000.00 per year limit and with a maximum amount less than or equal to \$50,000.00.
26. Approve and issue any Addendum for Competitive Bid Solicitations, Statement of Qualifications or Requests for Proposals

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27. Application for the use of County Credit Cards, cardholder (employee) acknowledgement form, per policy effective January 1, 2025
28. 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 2026.

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

DRAINAGE ENGINEER

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute the Agreement for the County Engineer to Perform the Drainage Duties Set Forth in Chapter 6117 between the Geauga County Board of Commissioners and the Geauga County Engineer during the Year 2026.

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

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to appoint Andy Haupt as Drainage Engineer and set the compensation for 2026 at a bi-weekly rate of \$513.59 effective with pay #2 through pay #25 and \$513.74 for pay #26 in accordance with the Agreement dated January 6, 2026.

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

PREVAILING WAGE COORDINATORS

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to appoint Nicholas Gorris to serve as a Prevailing Wage Coordinator for Geauga County for 2026.

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

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to appoint Shane Hajjar to serve as a Prevailing Wage Coordinator for Geauga County for 2026.

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

APIARIST

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve the re-appointment of Mark Dinishak as County Apiarist for the Year 2026 and further approve and execute the 2026 Ohio Department of Agriculture Appointment for County Apiary Inspector Form to be effective January 1, 2026, at an hourly rate of \$15.00 per hour and a mileage reimbursement rate of 72.5 cents per mile, increasing the appropriation from \$900.00 to \$1,500.00.

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

COUNTY CREDIT CARDS – YEAR 2026

The credit card policy remains the same as approved effective in 2025, so the same process is still in place and has to be followed. There were discussions about making some adjustments to the process.

Commissioners' Journal
January 6, 2026

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute Resolution #26-004 Approving the Use of County Credit Cards for Year 2026 for Offices and Departments (per the attached, Exhibit A), pursuant to O.R.C. 301.27.

Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio

Date: January 6, 2026
Resolution: #26-004

**RESOLUTION APPROVING THE USE OF COUNTY CREDIT CARDS
FOR THE YEAR 2026 FOR AGENCIES AND CARDHOLDERS
PURSUANT TO O.R.C. 301.27**

WHEREAS, the Geauga County Board of Commissioners approves the following applications for the use of County Credit Cards submitted by Agencies for the Year 2026; and

WHEREAS, those Agencies included are the Auditor’s Office, including ADP, Common Pleas Court, including the Drug Court, Court IT and Probation; Clerk of Courts; County Engineer’s Office; and Board of Commissioners’ Office, including Community and Economic Development, Job and Family Services, Maintenance Department, and the Department of Water Resources; and

WHEREAS, the Board, pursuant to O.R.C. 301.27, requires those Agencies at the beginning of each quarter to submit estimates of work-related expenses expected to be purchased using the credit card along with the specific appropriation line items from which those expenditures will be made; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Geauga County Board of Commissioners approves the Use of County Credit Cards for Year 2026 by those Agencies that have submitted their credit card request applications along with card limits, daily spending per card, monthly spending per card, single transaction limits, daily number of transactions per card, monthly number of transactions per card and the designation of whether the credit card(s) will be issued in the Agency’s name or in the name of a specified cardholder, as designated in Exhibit A, attached; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that those Agencies are further required to submit to the Auditor’s Office and the Board of Commissioners’ Office the forms set forth in the Credit Card Policy for each employee or officer authorized to use a credit card.

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

Exhibit A - Credit Cards Year 2026

The Credit Cards shall be issued in the name of the employees or officers listed below under the Agencies/Offices of the appointing authorities or if no employees or officers are designated, in the name of the Agency/office of the appointing authority listed:

AUDITOR / ADP
Gauga Credit Union Visa – Issued to Auditor/ADP
Account # [REDACTED]-0125
Card Limit - \$5,000.00
Daily Spending Limit - \$5,000.00
Monthly Spending Limit - \$5,000.00
Single Transaction Limit - \$5,000.00
Daily Transaction Limit
Monthly Transaction Limit

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Charles E. Walder
Pam McMahan
Frank Antenucci

COMMON PLEAS COURT

Geauga Credit Union Visa – Issued to Common Pleas Court

Account # [REDACTED]-9548

Card Limit - \$6,000.00

Daily Spending Limit per card - \$2,000.00

Monthly Spending Limit per card - \$2,000.00

Single Transaction Limit - \$2,000.00

Daily Transaction Limit per card - 6

Monthly Transaction Limit per card - 2

Judge Carolyn Paschke

Judge Matthew Rambo

Dave Lubecky

Randy Taylor

Barbara Powell

Kevin Starrett

Karen Lee

Andrea Hathaway

COMMON PLEAS COURT – DRUG COURT

Geauga Credit Union Visa – Issued to Common Pleas – Drug Court

Account # [REDACTED]-7916

Card Limit - \$6,000.00

Daily Spending Limit per card - \$2,000.00

Monthly Spending Limit per card - \$2,000.00

Single Transaction Limit per card - \$2,000.00

Daily Transaction Limit per card - 6

Monthly Transaction Limit per card – 2

Maureen Maruna

Greg Potts

COMMON PLEAS COURT – COURT IT

Geauga Credit Union Visa – Issued to Common Pleas – Court IT

Account # [REDACTED]-3603

Card Limit - \$6,000.00

Daily Spending Limit per card - \$2,000.00

Monthly Spending Limit per card - \$2,000.00

Single Transaction Limit - \$2,000.00

Daily Transaction Limit per card - 6

Monthly Transaction Limit per card – 20

Velta Moisio

Jeff Maze

COMMON PLEAS COURT – PROBATION DEPARTMENT

Geauga Credit Union Visa – Issued to Common Pleas Court – Probation Department

Account # [REDACTED]-9453

Card Limit - \$6,000.00

Daily Spending Limit per card - \$2,000.00

Monthly Spending Limit per card - \$2,000.00

Single Transaction Limit - \$2,000.00

Daily Transaction Limit per card - 6

Monthly Transaction Limit per card – 2

Nicole Walker

Danielle Bokar

Matthew Zupancic

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CLERK OF COURTS

Geauga Credit Union Visa – Issued to Clerk of Courts

Account # [REDACTED]-1626

Limit - \$1,000.00 per month

Sheila M. Bevington

COUNTY ENGINEER'S OFFICE

Geauga Credit Union Visa – Issued to County Engineer's

Account # [REDACTED]-7830

Card Limit - \$15,000.00

Daily Spending Limit - \$5,000.00

Monthly Spending Limit - \$15,000.00

Single Transaction Limit - \$5,000.00

Daily Transaction Limit - 10

Monthly Transaction Limit - 25

Andrew Haupt

Steven Yaney

Traci Salkiewicz

Shane Hajjar

Jacob Scotese

Kelly Baeslach

Brittany Randles

Nicholas Lowery

Joe Rini

Aubrey Baker

Cameron Gatian

Thomas Goodridge

Lee Thomas

Rick Carlson

Tim Woodcock

Nick Goodrich

Steve Roessner

Tom Ross

Giant Eagle / PNC Bank Visa – Issued to County Engineer's

Account # [REDACTED]-7461

Limit - \$1,000.00 per month

Steven Yaney

Traci Salkiewicz

Aubrey Baker

Brittany Randles

Nicholas Lowery

Andrew Haupt

Kelly Baeslach

Home Depot Commercial Account

Account # [REDACTED]7611

Limit - \$5,000.00 per month

Joseph Rini Jr. #00038

Matthew Carver #00036

Keith Delfs #00011

Centerra Fuel Card Account - Limit \$5,000.00 per month

Andrew Haupt - #6049

Brent Buell – #6014

#6033

Matthew Carver - #6016

#6034

Brent Eldred - #6018

Eric Hawk - #6021

Kevin Shea - #6038

Luke Horwatt - #6022

Jerad Howes - #6023

Corey Keeney - #6025

Brian Kingure - #6027

Jonathan Kreuz - #6028

Christopher Villers - #6041

Evan Miner - #6031

Connor Packard -

Ronald Quercioli -

Joseph Rini - #6035

Steven Sabol - #6036

Board of Commissioners for the Offices of:

Commissioner's Office

Geauga Credit Union Visa – Issued to Board of Commissioners

Account # [REDACTED]-8127

Card limit - \$4,000.00

Daily Spending Limit - \$4,000.00

Monthly Spending Limit - \$4,000.00

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Single Transaction Limit - \$4,000.00
Daily Number Transactions – 10
Monthly Number Transactions - 50

Geauga Credit Union Visa

James W. Dvorak	Carolyn Brakey	Ralph Spidalieri	Amy Bevan
Christine Blair	Mark Jimison	Kathy Hostutler	Megan Erickson
Deborah Ashburn	Adrian Gorton	Kerry Barson	

Board of Commissioners for the Community & Economic Development
Geauga Credit Union Visa – Issued to Community & Economic Development
Account # [REDACTED]-7431
Card Limit - \$1,500.00
Daily Spending - \$1,000.00
Monthly Spending - \$1,500.00
Single Transaction Limit - \$1,000.00
Daily Number Transactions – 5
Monthly Number Transactions - 20

Gina Hofstetter
Elaine Malkamaki

Board of Commissioners for the Department of Job and Family Services

Geauga Credit Union Visa	\$7,500.00 / month
Account # [REDACTED]-7251	
PNC Giant Eagle Visa	\$1,000.00 / month
Account # [REDACTED]-5912	
Wright Express (WEX) Fleet	\$5,000.00 / month
Account # [REDACTED]465-5	
Single Transaction Limit - \$1,000.00	
Daily Limit - \$2,420.00	

Geauga Credit Union Visa

Misty Gotham	Gina Gubanyor (Schultz)	John Kravetz
Lisa Milgate	Paul Reiman	Alyssa Steinhoff
Craig Swenson		

PNC Giant Eagle
Rachael Brown (Tetlow)
Lisa DiFini
Brook Dowling (Bourdeau)
Amy Fazi (Buresch)
Misty Gotham
Gina Gubanyor (Schultz)
John Kravetz
Cassandra Kuharik
Cheryl Morgan
Alyssa Steinhoff
Kelly Thurling

Wright Express (WEX) Fleet

Leslie Abbuhl	Heidi Abrams	Lori Babik	Jillian Barath
Dawn Bates	Kelly Bidlack	James Blazey	Matthew Blevens
Scott Christopher	Michelle Cmun	Aron Cooper	Haley Cruikshank
Marleen DeMarco	Brooke Dowling (Bourdeau)		Amy Fazi (Buresch)
Todd Foreman	Alyssa Forman	Misty Gotham	Gina Gubanyor (Schultz)
Ashley Higgenbotham		Allie Hulsmann	Molly Johnson
Tim Kehres	Alex Koppel	John Kravetz	Cassandra Kuharik
Melanie Lacy (Becker)		Susan Legg	Pauline Loveland
Camryn Lutz	Kylie McCann	Heather McGhee	Peter Medved
Lisa Milgate	Jodi Miller	Kristina Miller	Casey Mills
Cheryl Morgan	Faith Peters	Amy Piotrowski	Caryn Radcliff
Paul Reiman	John Roberts	Robin Schwed	Patricia Spisak

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Alyssa Steinhoff	Craig Swenson	Angela Thielo	Josephine Thomsen
Kelly Thurling	Amy Tressler	James Zock	Colleen Simpson

Board of Commissioners for the Maintenance Department
Home Depot (Commercial) – Issued to Board of Commissioners / Maintenance
Account # [REDACTED] 1456
Card Limit – \$12,500.00
Daily Spending Per Card – Not to exceed monthly limit
Single Transaction Limit – Not to exceed monthly limit
Daily Number of Transactions – 10 per card
Monthly Number of Transactions – 50 per card
Monthly Spending Per Card -
Rik Wareham #00009 \$5,000.00
Richard Cox #00039 \$1,000.00
Ken Kovach #00020 \$1,000.00
Connor Loza #00028 \$1,000.00
John Ludlow #00024 \$1,000.00
Paul Ovark #00038 \$1,000.00
Jason Nelson (Aging) #00040 \$1,000.00
Shaun Strand (Aging) #00037 \$1,000.00

Board of Commissioners for the Department of Water Resources
Geauga Credit Union Visa (4 cards)
Account # [REDACTED] -8232
Card limit - \$5,000.00
Daily Spending per card - \$5,000.00
Monthly Spending per card - \$5,000.00
Single Transaction Limit - \$5,000.00
Daily Number Transactions – 10
Monthly Number Transactions – 50

Nicholas J. Gorris, P.E.
David Osborn II
Kathleen Miller
Linda Paranish

Home Depot (Commercial) (8 cards)
Account # [REDACTED] 1328
Card Limit - \$3,900.00
Daily Spending per card - \$3,900.00
Monthly Spending per card - \$3,900.00
Single Transaction Limit - \$3,900.00
Daily Number Transactions – 10
Monthly Number Transactions – 50

Nicholas J. Gorris, P.E. #00015
David Osborn II
Ray Farinacci #00007
Karen Peterson
Dana Maruna #00011
Brian Cain #00013
Shawn Maruna #00012
Robert Carter #00016

Tractor Supply Company – Business Account
Account # [REDACTED] 8125
Card Limit - \$4,000.00
Daily Spending - \$4,000.00
Monthly Spending - \$4,000.00
Single Transaction Limit - \$4,000.00
Daily Number Transactions – 10
Monthly Number Transactions – 50
Ray Farinacci

Commissioners' Journal
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Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and authorize the President of the Board to execute the Applications for Authorization for the use of County Credit Cards forms for the Year 2026, per O.R.C. 301.27.

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

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak 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 2026 (Quarters 1, 2, 3 and 4) for Auditor's and ADP, Common Pleas Court, including the Drug Court, Court IT, Probation, County Engineer's Office, Board of County Commissioners Office, including Community and Economic Development, Job and Family Services, and Maintenance.

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

The Board moved back into their regular meeting.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Dog Warden Matt Granito brought up discussion with the Board about a partnership with the Ashtabula County Dog Warden in the form of an agreement to assist them. Mr. Granito noted that Ashtabula currently does not have a shelter to house animals. The agreement states that Ashtabula County would be liable to cover all medical costs and any sick or aggressive dogs that would need euthanasia, and will be dependent upon us having room, so it will not affect Geauga County dogs.

Mr. Granito brought up the funding that was provided by the Board at the end of 2025 and the future direction of the shelter. There was a brief discussion regarding the Friends of the Dog Shelter potentially becoming a 501(c)(3).

Ralph Spidalieri made a statement that Walter "Skip" Claypool would be his alternate for NOACA. There was a brief discussion about whether there needs to be a Board vote for alternate positions.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Skip Claypool, Chester Township, noted that for the record he submitted a letter that was provided to NOACA in response to the allegations that were made. Mr. Claypool stated that his sole interaction with NOACA is at Board meetings, and any allegations were a lie, and there was no investigation done, and since that, now twelve years later, he has defended the people of Geauga County and worked hard to bring to light the concerns that NOACA is doing that could do harm to this county.

Gail Roussey from the League of Women Voters asked for clarification on whether the letters would be included in the public record. They would need to be scanned and included in the minutes.

The Letters discussed during the meeting – referenced the 2014 Letter sent by NOACA and the response from Mr. Claypool are being included below.

[illegible]

Mr. Walter Skip Claypool
HAND DELIVERED

Dear Mr. Claypool:

As chair of the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency ("NOACA") Governance Committee and at the direction of NOACA's Executive Committee, I am writing to you as a member of the NOACA Board of Directors as alternate to Geauga County Commissioner Ralph Spidaliari, to express serious concern over certain of your actions and conduct that the NOACA Executive Committee finds unacceptable, both in your capacity as a Board member and representative of NOACA and in your conduct toward Ms. Grace Gallucci, Executive Director of NOACA.

The Executive Committee has become aware that you have publicly issued derogatory and highly critical statements about both NOACA as an organization and about Ms. Gallucci personally. Such statements extend far beyond legitimate disagreement or criticism. This level and manner of criticism made by you as a representative of NOACA is damaging to the organization and to Ms. Gallucci as its Executive Director. It is wholly inappropriate for a Board member with the responsibility of representing the organization to engage in such damaging and unprofessional conduct.

The Executive Committee has also become aware that you have, repeatedly and without reason or foundation, accused Ms. Gallucci of dishonesty, unprofessional behavior, and failure to fulfill her job requirements, both in your public statements and in your correspondence and conversations with Ms. Gallucci. These statements are baseless and wholly inappropriate, have created a harassing and disruptive situation that has interfered with the effective operation of NOACA and its staff, and have resulted in an intimidating and hostile work environment.

The Executive Committee is also of the opinion that you have abused the privilege of access to NOACA staff time and expertise. It is inappropriate for you, as a Board member, to rely heavily or exclusively on staff members to provide you with information and resources that are readily and publicly available to all Board members, or to provide you with repeated explanations of such information and resources. This abuse has contributed to the current disruptive situation that further interferes with the effective operation of NOACA and its staff.

Mr. Walter Skip Claypool
July 11, 2014
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Finally, the Executive Committee has become aware of completely inappropriate personal statements made to Ms. Gallucci in a recent telephone conversation, which statements will in no way be tolerated.

The Executive Committee is of the opinion that the statements and conduct outlined above are intolerable, and that you have failed to act appropriately as a representative of NOACA and as a member of its Board. Please be aware that the conduct and behavior outlined above must stop immediately or the Executive Committee will consider further action, including, without limitation, calling for your resignation or recommending your removal from the NOACA Board.

Executive Committee expects that you will represent NOACA professionally and accurately at all times. In addition, your communications with NOACA and with Ms. Gallucci will be strictly monitored. The following guidelines are in place to protect NOACA staff, including Ms. Gallucci, to enable them to effectively and efficiently manage NOACA's activities, and to ensure uniform understanding among all parties of the expectations of the Executive Committee going forward.

At all times, including but not limited to all public settings, the Executive Committee expects that you, as well as all members of the Board of Directors, will express any disagreement or divergent opinions regarding NOACA or its programs or policies in a professional and civil manner, reflecting your position as a member of NOACA's governing Board of Directors, and without inflammatory, derogatory, or patently false statements directed toward NOACA or Ms. Gallucci personally.

on all communications with NOACA or with Ms. Gallucci, please note the following:

- All conversations should be strictly confined to professional matters only, and will be conducted with civility and professional courtesy that is both common and expected between Board and staff members.
- The President of the NOACA Board of Directors, the Chair of the NOACA Governance Committee, and NOACA counsel will be copied on all email or written communications.
- Phone conversations between you and Ms. Gallucci should be avoided if at all possible. Make every attempt possible to communicate via email or other written communication as described above.

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Mr. Walter Skip Claypool
July 11, 2014
Page 3

- All meetings with Ms. Gallucci or other NOACA staff members at which you are present will be conducted with a minimum of two staff persons and NOACA counsel present.

The above stated expectations will remain in place until further notice. Failure to comply with the expectations of the Executive Committee as outlined in this letter will result in further action or discussion by the NOACA Executive Committee and Board of Directors, including, without limitation, your removal from the NOACA Board.

Sincerely,


The Honorable Ted Kalo
Chair, NOACA Governance Committee

cc: Mary E. Samide, President, NOACA Board of Directors
Adam Friedrich, member, NOACA Executive Committee
Nathan J. Kelly, member, NOACA Executive Committee
Valarie J. McCall, member, NOACA Executive Committee
Daniel P. Troy, member, NOACA Executive Committee
Ralph Spidalieri, Commissioner, Geauga County
Ralph Spidalieri, Executive Director, NOACA
✓ Ms. Grace Gallucci, Esq., BauerGriffith LLC, as Counsel for NOACA

July 18, 2014

Ted Kalo
Chair, NOACA Governance Committee

Dear Mr. Kalo,

I am writing in response to the letter from the NOACA Boards that was hand delivered to me in the most recent NOACA board meeting by Nancy Griffith. I am very concerned about the tone and language used in this letter, and by the contents, which indicate that there may be some misunderstandings. I also am disturbed that there are clear exaggerations contained in the text. Let me reach out a hand in an attempt to ratchet down the rhetoric.

First, let me offer this comment. In the first paragraph of your letter, there is a statement that I am a "representative of NOACA." So we are clear, I serve on the NOACA board at the pleasure of Ralph Spidalieri, and in such function I represent the people of Geauga County on the NOACA boards and committees. My responsibility is to the people of Geauga County, NOT to NOACA.

I am confused regarding the allegation of inflammatory language. The letter creates the impression that I have had extensive contact with NOACA staff. On the contrary, all of my interaction with NOACA has been in the public setting. I have not interacted with any NOACA employees in their work place outside of a public meeting. From time to time, during my tenure on the NOACA board, I have expressed disagreement with certain policies, strategies, and direction. I have expressed my positions passionately, but professionally. These occasions were during public meetings. If my conduct was offensive, surely someone would have brought up any issues earlier. I hope the comments in your letter are not intended to imply that I do not have the right to express myself, as I cannot but interpret your language as a threat.

As is my duty, I regularly update the Geauga County commissioners in session and provide my best explanations for matters that involve NOACA based on the facts as I understand them. These meetings are public, as required by Ohio law. Often during my presentations I use NOACA presentation material and words to make my point. I can substantiate any and all claims and comments made by me.

I recall only one private meeting with Ms. Gallucci and that meeting was about two years ago in the commissioners office. I recall a 15 minutes discussion when she followed me out of a NEOSCC workshop into a parking lot to challenge some of my comments. All our other contacts have been in a public setting. While at times I have passionately disagreed with statements made by Ms. Gallucci, I have maintained a professional demeanor at all times.

I spoke to Grace twice recently on the phone: once to get clarification about my information request, and once to ask if she was attending a regional forum. I am shocked and surprised that the executive and governance committees made no effort to substantiate claims of inappropriate comments by enquiring with me. To be clear, the vast majority of my interaction with Ms. Gallucci has been in a public setting. If there has been "inappropriate" and/or "abusive" or

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“intolerable” conduct as alleged, then these statements should have been brought to my attention in a private manner.

I speak in a public setting to a variety of groups and at these times I express my opinion about a range of governmental programs, including NOACA and NEOSCC plans, policies and practices. All of this public comment is undertaken in an effort to inform the public and to foster their involvement. I always try to be as accurate as possible in these presentations and can substantiate all claims and comments. If I am in error, I will correct the record, as I have done in the recent past at a general board meeting.

Your letter also accuses me of abuse of public information requests. I have made very few information requests of NOACA. The most recent request was very simple and was made to Bill Davis. I had been instructed to contact Mr. Davis regarding this information request. That request was simply to provide a copy of the original charter/agreements with NOACA. Ms. Gallucci intercepted that request and turned it into a huge effort to create a history of NOACA. That effort was not requested nor anticipated by me, though it is portrayed as if it were.

Let me close with this: It is my duty and responsibility as the representative of the citizens of Geauga County to ask questions, to challenge misguided decisions, and to help any board, of which I am a part, to create the most responsible outcomes possible. Further, to ensure that the people are supportive and included in decisions regarding their lives and property. I intend to reach out to the public to inform them and to gather their input. It is my intent to continue to do so free from oversight of NOACA. I believe that my conduct is protected by both the Ohio and U.S. Constitutions.

Sincerely,

Walter Claypool

Cc: Mary E. Samide, President, NOACA Board of Directors
Adam Friedrich member, NOACA Executive Committee
Nathan J. Kelly, member, NOACA Executive Committee
Valarie J. McCall, member, NOACA Executive Committee
Daniel P. Troy member, NOACA Executive Committee
Ralph Spidalieri, Commissioner, Geauga County
Ms. Grace Gallucci, Executive Director, NOACA
Nancy Hancock Griffith, Esq., BauerGriffith LLC, as Counsel for NOACA

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- a) A weekly report filed by the County Dog Warden of all dogs seized, impounded, redeemed or destroyed for the weeks ending December 10, 2025, December 17, 2025, and December 24, 2025, as required by O.R.C. 955.12.

OTHER

The Board reviewed upcoming events.

MEETINGS

- Mon., 1/12 Board of Revision, 11:00 a.m. Organizational Meeting, followed by Special Meeting, Auditor’s Appraisal Conference Room
- Mon., 1/12 ADP Board (Organizational) Meeting, 2:00 p.m. Auditor’s Appraisal Conference Room
- Tue., 1/13 Planning Commission Meeting, 7:30 a.m. County Office Building, 3rd Floor Conference Room A334, Chardon
- Tue., 1/13 The Commissioners will hold session at 9:30 a.m.
- Mon., 1/19 **County Offices will be closed in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Twenty-four-hour operations will continue to operate as normal.**
- Thu., 1/22 The Commissioners will hold session at 9:30 a.m.
- Tue., 1/27 The Commissioners will hold session at 9:30 a.m.

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BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD

Motion: by Commissioner Dvorak, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to adjourn the meeting at 10:44 a.m.

Geauga County Board of Commissioners

James W. Dvorak

Carolyn Brakey, Esq.

Ralph Spidalieri

Christine Blair, Commissioners' Clerk

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