Commissioners' Journal
February 10, 2026

The Geauga County Board of Commissioners met in session on February 10, 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.

**Deborah Ashburn was seated as Acting Clerk for today's meeting.

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 Spidalieri was absent from today's meeting.

Commissioner Dvorak read the following prayer:
Your Word, O Lord, is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.
Dear Jesus, keep me safely in Your loving arms. Bless me with Your peace that passes all understanding. In Jesus name, I pray, Amen.

PUBLIC COMMENT
No one signed in to speak about items on today's agenda.

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE - COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT
County Administrator Amy Bevan reported on the items approved, as authorized by Resolution #26-003 under the direction and supervision of the County Commissioners that was approved January 6, 2026, pursuant to O.R.C. 305.30.

County Administrator Amy Bevan approved the following items on February 6, 2026:

Department of Water Resources:
Approved and executed the service Contract Agreement with Independent Diesel Service, Inc. to perform planned maintenance on generators for a one-year period, effective February 6, 2026, in an amount not to exceed $7,775.00 ($6,984 for wastewater and $791.00 for water.)

APPROVE FINANCIALS
Budget and Finance Manager Adrian Gorton explained the financials for today as including a supplemental increase from the General Fund for the payroll accounts of each county office and department within the General Fund to cover pay increases, excluding the Clerk of Courts, Coroner, Probate and Juvenile Court, Prosecutor, Recorder, Sheriff's Office, and Veterans, as those departments have provided pay increases within their existing budgeted appropriations; Supplemental appropriations to the various General Fund hospitalization accounts to cover the increase granted to the county's portion of health insurance; a cash transfer from the General Fund to Community Development for its fourth quarter 2025 payroll funding reimbursement and first quarter operational commitment for 2026; a payment from the Auditor's office to ISSG, Incorporated for year three of the master services agreement for the county's property management software in the amount of $246,800.00; a payment from the Commissioners' office to Infinity Construction Company for pay request #29 of the courthouse expansion project in the amount of $337,740.51; a payment from the Engineer's office to Morton Salt, Incorporated for road salt in the amount of $124,882.43; and a revenue certification from the Commissioners' office to the Senior Center Construction Fund transfer-in account.

Commissioner Brakey inquired as to the disbursement of bed tax revenue from the county to townships to which Mr. Gorton responded that the county disperses a portion of the bed tax collected by the county to townships that do not collect their own.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve and execute Resolution #26-024 itemizing the financials for the meeting of February 10, 2026.

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

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – CERTIFICATION REQUEST TO AUDITOR, BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS QUARTERLY USE OF COUNTY CREDIT CARDS – CLERK OF COURTS - QUARTER 1

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve and execute the Certification Request to County Auditor, Request to the Board of Commissioners, Quarterly Use of County Credit Cards for the Geauga Credit Union Visa, for Quarter 1, during the Year 2026.

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

PLANNING COMMISSION – LETTER OF SUPPORT – AGRICULTURE GRANT TO FUND 2008 GEAUGA COUNTY FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN UPDATE

Planning Commission Director Linda Crombie asked the commissioners for a letter of support to accompany an application to the Ohio Department of Agriculture for its Land Use Planning Grant to update the 2008 Geauga County Farmland Preservation Plan. Ms. Crombie explained that the grant allows up to $25,000.00 and is to be used exclusively for the purpose of updating the plan which will be completed by the Planning Commission staff. Ms. Crombie also stated that the Planning Commission had already received letters of support from townships and other county agencies and will be holding two public forums in townships without zoning, which is a stipulation of the grant.

Commissioner Brakey inquired as to what the grant would be used for, to which Ms. Crombie responded that the grant funds would be used for any staff hours dedicated to updating the plan, attending training conferences and the costs involved in holding the public forums.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve and execute a Letter of Support to be included with an application for the Ohio Department of Agriculture Land Use Planning Grant to update the 2008 Geauga County Farmland Preservation Plan.

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

SHERIFF'S OFFICE – EQUITABLE SHARING AGREEMENT AND CERTIFICATION – ANNUAL CERTIFICATION REPORT 2025

Deputy Tom Rowan from the Geauga County Sheriff's Office explained that the Equitable Sharing Agreement is the sharing of county seized or forfeited assets with investigating agencies such as the FBI or DEA, that were also involved with the investigations. Deputy Rowan further explained that the annual report accounts for all revenue and expenditures involved with the investigations for the designated year.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve and authorize the President of the Board to execute the Equitable Sharing Agreement and Certification, Annual Certification Report for FY ending December 31, 2025.

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

MAINTENANCE – SERVICE CONTRACT AGREEMENT – BURTON CARPET SHOPPE

Contract Coordinator Elizabeth Rubino presented the motion. Commissioner Brakey asked how the money will be spent to which Director Rob Weigle explained that the services would include any type of emergency replacements, repairs, and cleanings over a two-year period. Commissioner Brakey asked what the bid threshold is for 2026 to which Mr. Weigle and Mr. Gorton responded $77,000.00.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve and execute a service Contract Agreement with Burton Carpet Shoppe to perform installation, repairs, and replacement of carpet in various county buildings per the Maintenance Director for a two-year period, effective February 10, 2026, in an amount not to exceed $65,000.00.

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

MAINTENANCE – CONSTRUCTION AGREEMENT – JOHN F. GALLAGHER PLUMBING COMPANY – WEST GEAUGA SENIOR CENTER CONDENSER UPGRADE PROJECT

Maintenance Project Manager Charles Tkach read the motion and explained that the following three motions are all related to the West Geauga Senior Center Condenser Upgrade Project. Commissioner Brakey commented that she does not fully agree with this project but agreed to approve the contract in order to move along the process.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve and execute the Construction Agreement with The John F. Gallagher Plumbing Company for the West Geauga Senior Center Condenser Upgrade Project in the amount of $327,900.00 ($307,900.00 Base Bid, $20,000.00 Contingency Allowance).

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

MAINTENANCE – CHANGE RIDER – RETAIN BID BOND – NAME CHANGE OF PRINCIPAL

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve and authorize the President of the Board to execute the Change Rider for the Bid Bond submitted, that changes the name of the Principal from The John F. Gallagher Co. to The John F. Gallagher Plumbing Co, for the West Geauga Senior Center Condenser Upgrade Project, and further retain the Bid Bond to serve as the Performance Bond for the project.

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

MAINTENANCE – NOTICE OF COMMENCEMENT OF PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT – WEST GEAUGA SENIOR CENTER CONDENSER UPGRADE PROJECT

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve and execute the Notice of Commencement of Public Improvement, pursuant to O.R.C. 1311.252 for The John F. Gallagher Plumbing Company for the West Geauga Senior Center Condenser Upgrade Project.

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

MAINTENANCE – NOTICE TO PROCEED – WEST GEAUGA SENIOR CENTER CONDENSER UPGRADE PROJECT

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve and execute the Notice to Proceed for The John F. Gallagher Plumbing Company for the West Geauga Senior Center Condenser Upgrade Project on or before March 2, 2026.

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

MAINTENANCE – PROPOSED CONCEPT DESIGN – UPGRADING ACCESSIBILITY LIFT – PATTERSON CENTER

Maintenance Project Manager Charles Tkach explained that an engineering firm was hired to do engineering for the lift replacement at the Patterson Center for a cost of $50,000.00. The estimate was for the lift replacement only. Following the engineering assessment, several other issues were found and were added to the scope of the project with a revised construction estimate of $110,000.00. The scope of the accessibility lift upgrade project includes hoistway and exit door fixes, an interior entrance addition to basement, waterproofing and drain improvements. Director Rob Weigle added that the concrete pad at the exterior door entrance would be replaced as well to eliminate water issues as it currently slants toward the building. Commissioner Brakey inquired into grant opportunities to pay for the project and the building's worth to which Mr. Tkach and Mr. Weigle responded that they were unaware of any grant opportunities and did not have an estimate of the building's worth at that time. Commissioner Dvorak commented that the Patterson Center was built in 1984 and would cost around $600,000.00 to replace it. He also commented that waterproofing and the elevator are necessary in order to continue providing space at that location for community groups to operate.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to discuss, review and approve the proposed concept design for upgrading the accessibility lift at the Patterson Center, located at 14269 Claridon-Troy Road, Burton, as the engineering estimate of construction costs is approximately $110,000.00.

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

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES – CONTRACT MAINTENANCE FORM #1 – INCREASE CONTRACT – WORKMAN INDUSTRIAL SERVICES, INC – ADD WATER SERVICES

Water Resources Director Nick Gorris stated that the original contract was for emergencies and as-needed projects on the sewer side. He explained that the increase in services would allow for the water side to receive these services as well, with the combined services remaining below the 2026 competitive bid threshold of $79,568.00.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve and execute Contract Maintenance Form #1, increasing the service Contract Agreement with Workman Industrial Services, Incorporated to add services for the Water District locations in the amount of $25,000.00, for a new not to exceed amount of $75,000.00.

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

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY – ADDENDUM #1 – SERVICE CONTRACT AGREEMENT – DEX IMAGING - COPIER REPLACEMENT

EMA Director Austin Rice explained that due to an ordering error, DEX Imaging replaced the current copier with a new copier. The replacement has a slightly higher value but there was no change to the original contract pricing or terms.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve and execute the First Addendum to the service Contract Agreement with DEX Imaging, that will remove the Ricoh IMC300F copier from the contract and replace it with a Ricoh IMC401F copier of the same value and with no additional increase or decrease in contract pricing, and all remaining terms and conditions of the original contract shall remain in full force and effect.

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

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY – VISTRA PRESENTATION
Director Austin Rice introduced the new Vistra Perry Nuclear Power Plant Vice President, Terry Brown. Mr. Brown provided the plant progression, status and updates which included the following: March 2024 Vistra purchased the power plant; July 2025 the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) granted an additional twenty years on the current Vistra license; and January 2026 Vistra entered into a deal with Meta. Mr. Brown explained the alliance with Meta allows them to enter into a power purchase agreement which solidifies the future of the power plant, increases the power output of the plant from 1300 MW to 1500 MW which will help address issues with power demand; allows for the upgrading of equipment at the power station during outages in the spring of 2027, 2029, and 2031, with 2031 being the largest outage lasting approximately 80 – 90 days and employing an additional 1000 local union contractors during that time; and lastly allows for Vistra to apply for another twenty-year license extension to year 2066.

Commissioner Brakey asked Mr. Brown to explain how the transferals in plant ownership have led to change. Mr. Brown responded that the largest change is the long-term investment and liability that Vistra offers to secure the future of the plant. Ms. Brakey also inquired as to the possibility of legislative action to push rate payers to pay for new nuclear generation in Ohio. Mr. Brown had no opinion to offer regarding the legislation attempt but spoke positively to future options for the plant, one being the possible implementation of a second reactor.

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – 2026 CEBCO WELLNESS GRANT AGREEMENT
Benefits Specialist Megan Erickson explained that the grant would be used for on-site biometric screenings and wellness initiatives. She stated that the amount of the program portion of the grant is based on the number of enrollees and increased this year by $400.00. Commissioner Brakey stated that she would like to see the funds used in ways that actually promote employee health, thus resulting in healthier employees and reducing the burden of healthcare costs on the county and the taxpayers. Deputy County Administrator Mark Jimison added that this is a great opportunity to promote wellness for the employees and in looking at the history of the wellness initiative, it wasn't really accomplishing the mission. We are looking forward to evolving this program over a course of several years for a progression of wellness.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to accept and approve the 2026 CEBCO Wellness Grant to promote employee health and wellness lifestyles in the amount of $4,000.00 for Administrative Funds and $15,990.00 for Program Funds and further approve and authorize the President of the Board to execute the Wellness Grant Agreement.

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

BOARD DISCUSSION – METHOD OF INITIALIZING 2027 TAX BUDGET – BUDGET HEARING SCHEDULE 2027
_Budget and Finance Manager Adrian Gorton presented the commissioners with options for the initialization of the 2027 tax budget. He explained that we have initialized the budget the last couple of years using the previous year's adopted budget less 5 – 10%. The reduction is to try and eliminate unused appropriations from the budget which equated to $5,000,000.00 in the general fund in 2025. Mr. Gorton continued to explain that an alternative option is to initialize with zero-balances and allow the departments to analyze and determine their budget needs. The commissioners agreed to initialize the budget using the zero-balance method. Mr. Gorton stated that budget hearings are scheduled for May 5, 12, 19 and 28 of 2026, advertising for the tax budget presentation will be June 18, 2026, and the public hearing of the tax budget will take place on June 30, 2026, with the formal adoption of the tax budget by the commissioners on July 7, 2026.

PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE – APPROVE JOINT APPLICATION – APPOINT MEYERS ROMAN – COURTHOUSE NEWS SERVICE VS. SHEILA BEVINGTON
Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve and authorize the President of the Board to execute the Joint Application for Appointment of Counsel to employ Meyers Roman for continued representation concerning the defense of the complaint filed against the Clerk of Courts to wit: Courthouse News Service vs. Sheila Bevington, et, al., United States District

Court Case #1:25-cv-02617 pursuant to R.C. 305.14(A). This representation would be effective once the CORSA coverage has been exhausted.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chesterland resident Skip Claypool complimented the board on its decision to use zero-based budgeting. Mr. Claypool also made comment that he wanted to make a correction to an alleged false statement made at the commissioners' meeting of February 3, 2026 in which it was said that he supported the action to replace a commissioner seat at NOACA with the county engineer. He claimed instead that during his term as Geauga County commissioner, the board sent a resolution to NOACA asking for the county engineer to be added as a fourth seat, to which the request was denied by NOACA. He also stated that he was saddened to see that Article IX was approved which he believes undermines the sovereignty of Geauga County. He referenced a 2013 resolution opposing HUD-related regional initiatives and urged commissioners to push back on NOACA's progressive ideological concepts. Discussion became contentious, chair enforced decorum and ended comment.

Russell Township resident John Shipitalo expressed strong concerns over tax increases and requested substantial budget trimming as well as the return of surplus funds from the property tax re-evaluation process to the taxpayers. Mr. Shippitilo also criticized the board for its focus on NOACA initiatives and seat representation rather than fiscal action in response to tax issues.

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the employment and compensation of public employees, pursuant to O.R.C. 121.22 (G)(1).

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

The Board moved into Executive Session at 10:22 a.m. with Ms. Bevan and Mr. Jimison. The Board returned at 10:45 a.m.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve hiring Maximus Yost to the position of Part-time Communications/Media Specialist (#1333-1) to be effective February 17, 2026, at the rate of $20.81 per hour (Grade 7, Step 3) with a one-year probationary period. This offer of employment is contingent upon the successful completion of the required pre-employment conditions.

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

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to approve the revised job description for the position of Administrative/Fiscal Assistant (#1331) to be effective February 10, 2026.

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

OTHER

The Board reviewed upcoming events.

Commissioner Brakey suggested Grace Gallucci attend a board meeting and discuss the benefits that Geauga County receives from NOACA for the funds that the county contributes to the organization.

Budget and Finance Manager Adrian Gorton reiterated that initializing the budget using a zero-balance method applies to expense accounts only. The revenue accounts will remain as the prior year adopted budget amounts.

Commissioner Dvorak asked Health District Director, Adam Litke, if there was any news from the Health Department to which he replied that there is a seat open on the Health District Board with a five-year term.

MEETINGS

Tue.,	2/10	Planning Commission, 7:30 a.m., County Office Building, Room A334, Third Floor
Wed.,	2/11	Tax Incentive Review Committee meetings, 9:00 a.m. Bainbridge, 10:00 a.m. Middlefield and 1:00 p.m. Chardon, Auditor's Office, Chardon, Ohio
Mon.,	2/16	**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.,	2/19	The Commissioners will hold session at 9:30 a.m.
Mon.,	2/23	Special ADP Meeting, 9:00 a.m., Auditor's Appraisal Conference Room
Mon.,	2/23	Family First Council, 1:30 p.m., County Office Building
Tue.,	2/24	The Commissioners will hold session at 9:30 a.m.
Tue.,	2/24	Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste Management District Board of Directors meeting, 2:00 p.m. Warren, District Office
Wed.,	2/25	Board of Revision, 9:00 a.m. Auditor's Appraisal Conference Room

BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD

Motion: by Commissioner Dvorak, seconded by Commissioner Brakey to adjourn the meeting at 10:54 a.m.

Geauga County Board of Commissioners

James W. Dvorak

Carolyn Brakey, Esq.

Ralph Spidalieri

~~Deborah Ashburn, Acting Commissioners' Clerk~~
Christine Blair, Commissioners' Clerk

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