Commissioners' Journal
April 14, 2026

The Geauga County Board of Commissioners met in session on April 14, 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:
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.

PUBLIC COMMENT
Newell Howard, Village of South Russell, asked how much money came from NOACA this year to take care of roads and bridges in the county. Nobody knows, noting that Shane Hajjar doesn't know either. Mr. Howard asked if Adrian Gorton knows how much money came from NOACA this year. Mr. Gorton replied that he was not aware. Mr. Howard asked who was aware of the county finances for the Engineer's Office, who takes care of paying their bills. Mr. Gorton explained that the Engineer's Office handles their bills through financials in session, but that they have their own finance people that handle that in their office. Discussion continued between Mr. Howard and Mr. Gorton regarding how the bills are paid through the financials and when and who handles the audit.

FINANCIALS
County Administrator Amy Bevan reported on financials approved on April 9, 2026, Resolution #26-052.

The County Administrator approved the financials on April 9, 2026, pursuant to Resolution #26-003 approved January 6, 2026, to authorize the County Administrator to execute, in the case of a lack of quorum of Commissioners and / or if session is cancelled on a regular financial day or on a day when financials need to be approved, the required approvals for county financials on behalf of the Board during the Year 2026, as authorized by O.R.C. 305.30.

Ms. Bevan explained that it included a payment for Job and Family Services to Xerox Corporation for copier lease payments from February and March in the amount of $1,121.20.

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.

Ms. Bevan explained that the County Administrator approved the following items:
April 9, 2026:

Liquor License:
Concurred with the Newbury Township Trustees in not requesting a hearing on the Liquor License being requested by Station Convenient Stores LLC located at 11253 Kinsman Road, Newbury, Ohio (OCT TRFO 10011303-1).

April 13, 2026:
Department on Aging:
Approved the promotion of Josh Burton to the position of Full-time Maintenance Supervisor (#1043), at the rate of $28.98 per hour (Grade 12, Step 3) to be effective April 13, 2026, with a one-hundred eighty-day probationary period.

Department of Water Resources:
Approved the promotion of Jacob Pitchler to the position of Wastewater Plant Operator I (#2326) at the rate of $27.76 per hour to be effective April 12, 2026, with a thirty-day determination period, followed by a ninety-day probationary period.

APPROVE FINANCIALS

Budget and Finance Manager Adrian Gorton explained the financials for today as including Supplemental Appropriations from the Commissioners in the miscellaneous insurance expense account in preparation for paying the County's insurance bill; Cash transfer out of the General Fund to Family First Council for the April – May 2026 commitment; Cash transfer from the General Fund Capital Transfers Out account to the Building Improvements Fund for 2026 projects; Cash transfer from the General Fund Commissioners miscellaneous Levy Reimbursement account to the Job and Family Services Children's Services transfers in revenue account for the 1st half Children's Services Levy reduction payment; Cash transfer from the Juvenile Court General Fund Hospitalization and OPERS accounts to the Care and Custody Fund for payments that were made in error from Care and Custody; Travel requests for the Common Pleas Court, County Engineer's Office, Job and Family Services, Juvenile Court, and Treasurer's Office; Then and Now encumbrances from the Sheriff's Office to Lake Geauga Recovery Centers for program expenses from January 2026 and to FSP America LLP for doorless lockers both of which were not previously encumbered; a payment for Community Development to 7145 Pine LLC for a Brownfield Remediation Grant project in the amount of $317,618.85; and a Revenue Certification from the Commissioners in the Building and Improvement fund for additional unbudgeted revenue received in 2026.

Commissioner Brakey noted that there have been a lot of travel requests on the financials this month, and wanted to encourage offices and departments to be mindful about discretionary travel expenses.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute Resolution #26-053 itemizing the financials for the meeting of April 14, 2026.

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

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – CERTIFICATION REQUEST – QUARTERLY USE OF COUNTY CREDIT CARDS – GEAUGA CREDIT UNION VISA

Mr. Gorton explained that this was an increase to the quarterly use amounts of $1,000.00 each quarter and adding another GL account number to allow Ms. Erickson to attend a seminar that will be paid using grant funds.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri 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) to increase the quarterly use of the Geauga Credit Union Visa cards in the amount of $1,000.00 each per quarter.

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

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – AWARD COMPETITIVE SEALED PROPOSAL – MAXIMUS, US SERVICES, INCORPORATED

Mr. Gorton asked the Board to award the competitively sealed proposal to Maximus US Services for the preparation of the County Cost Allocation Plan as they represent and offer the most advantageous proposal to the county based on rankings performed by the county pursuant to O.R.C. 307.862. Mr. Gorton explained that by law the county is required to have a cost allocation plan in order to receive federal funds, particularly for Job and Family Services. This allows the county to recoup some of the expenses of the general fund from accounts and departments that are outside of the general fund. Each year reports are provided to the company, who then plugs the information into their formula and spreadsheets and then prepares the cost allocation for all the departments, and then certain departments are billed for that cost allocation.

Mr. Gorton explained that three companies submitted proposals, and working with another County, he developed a method that then was used to judge the proposals, which included responsiveness and clarity of the proposal, the cost, the background and experience of the bidder, technical capability, project approach and past performance. Mr. Gorton briefly explained why Maximus was chosen and the difference in costs of the proposals submitted.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to award the Competitive Sealed Proposal to Maximus, US Services, Incorporated for the Preparation of a Geauga County Cost Allocation Plan as they represent the offeror with the most advantageous proposal to the County, based on rankings performed by the County, pursuant to O.R.C. 307.862 (A)(2) and (E).

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

COUNTY ENGINEER'S OFFICE – AWARD BID – FECHKO EXCAVATING, LLC – REPLACEMENT OF PETTIBONE ROAD BRIDGE – BAINBRIDGE TOWNSHIP

Deputy Engineer Shane Hajjar briefly explained the types of funding available for road projects and that this project does not have any NOACA funding, but believes that there is County Engineers Association of Ohio (CEAO) funding, which is a federal funding program for eligible bridges. There is also no Ohio Public Works funding on this project. Mr. Hajjar noted that there are OPWC funds on the Bascom Road Bridge project that will be coming through later in the construction season.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to award the Bid to Fechko Excavating, LLC for the Replacement of the Pettibone Road Bridge (Structure #BR-0607-C-01.250-2026) in Bainbridge Township, in the amount of $1,209,979.23 as they represented the lowest and best bid. The Bid Bond submitted shall be held to serve as the Performance Bond for this project.

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

RECORDER'S OFFICE – AGREEMENT – FIDLAR TECHNOLOGIES

Recorder Celesta Mullins explained that she had come before the Board requesting funding for the scanning of images in collaboration with Archives. The scanning portion is complete, and this is the next step; the vendor will convert and upload them into the system. This is part of the requirement of Senate Bill 94. There was discussion about the number of images being estimated, so the total amount does include some additional funding to cover any extra images if necessary so they then do not have to come back to request additional funds. The hope is that the funds are not needed.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute the Geauga County, OH Media Conversion Agreement with Fidlar Technologies to provide image processing and importing to comply with Senate Bill 94 (SB 94). Completion of the project is to be within sixty (60) days of the date of execution of the agreement, in an amount not to exceed $45,000.00.

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

SHERIFF'S OFFICE – RESOLUTION DECLARING COUNTY PROPERTY AS SURPLUS AND DIRECTING ITS SALE TO ASHTABULA CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT – 2017 FORD POLICE UTILITY INTERCEPTOR – VIN ENDING #4207

Sheriff Scott Hildenbrand asked the Board to allow the sale of patrol cars so that they are no longer use; this includes two 2017 and one 2018 Ford Explorers. After doing some research and the average price of what they are going for on GovDeals, they included some additional for the equipment that is being included and came up with a fair price of $9,600.00 per vehicle. Sheriff Hildenbrand noted that they came out, looked over everything, and it would help them out, making it a win for both of us. Sheriff Hildenbrand added that Trumbull County is also

coming out to look at a couple more.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute Resolution #26-054 Declaring County Property as Surplus and Directing its Sale to Ashtabula City Police Department, Ashtabula, Ohio, as authorized by O.R.C. 307.12 for a 2017 Ford Police Utility Interceptor, Vin #4207 in the amount of $9,600.00.

Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio

Date: April 14, 2026
Resolution: #26-054

RESOLUTION DECLARING COUNTY PROPERTY AS SURPLUS
AND DIRECTING ITS SALE TO ASHTABULA CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT,
ASHTABULA, OHIO, AS AUTHORIZED BY O.R.C. 307.12

WHEREAS, The County of Geauga has equipment that has served the intended use for the County and is hereby declared "not needed" by the County; and

WHEREAS, Ashtabula City Police Department, Ashtabula, Ohio has a current need for a police vehicle to conduct county business that has been declared by Geauga County as "not needed" can be put to productive use by Ashtabula City Police Department; and

WHEREAS, The Office of the Board of Geauga County Commissioners has identified a specific vehicle suitable for sale to Ashtabula City Police Department, Ashtabula, Ohio, namely a 2017 Ford Police Utility Interceptor VIN# 1FM5K8AR5HGA24207 with 135,368 miles with the sale price being $9,600.00; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Geauga County Board of Commissioners hereby sell the above-specified equipment to Ashtabula City Police Department, Ashtabula, Ohio for use in the handling of county business; and

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

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

SHERIFF'S OFFICE – RESOLUTION DECLARING COUNTY PROPERTY AS SURPLUS AND DIRECTING ITS SALE TO ASHTABULA CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT – 2017 FORD POLICE UTILITY INTERCEPTOR – VIN ENDING #4210

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute Resolution #26-055 Declaring County Property as Surplus and Directing its Sale to Ashtabula City Police Department, Ashtabula, Ohio, as authorized by O.R.C. 307.12 for a 2017 Ford Police Utility Interceptor, Vin #4210 in the amount of $9,600.00.

Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio

Date: April 14, 2026
Resolution: #26-055

RESOLUTION DECLARING COUNTY PROPERTY AS SURPLUS
AND DIRECTING ITS SALE TO ASHTABULA CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT,
ASHTABULA, OHIO, AS AUTHORIZED BY O.R.C. 307.12

WHEREAS, The County of Geauga has equipment that has served the intended use for the County and is hereby declared "not needed" by the County; and

WHEREAS, Ashtabula City Police Department, Ashtabula, Ohio has a current need for a police vehicle to conduct county business that has been declared by Geauga County as "not

needed" can be put to productive use by Ashtabula City Police Department; and

WHEREAS, The Office of the Board of Geauga County Commissioners has identified a specific vehicle suitable for sale to Ashtabula City Police Department, Ashtabula, Ohio, namely a 2017 Ford Police Utility Interceptor VIN# 1FM5K8AR5HGA24210 with 135,901 miles with the sale price being $9,600.00; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Geauga County Board of Commissioners hereby sell the above-specified equipment to Ashtabula City Police Department, Ashtabula, Ohio for use in the handling of county business; and

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

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

SHERIFF'S OFFICE – RESOLUTION DECLARING COUNTY PROPERTY AS SURPLUS AND DIRECTING ITS SALE TO ASHTABULA CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT – 2018 FORD POLICE UTILITY INTERCEPTOR – VIN ENDING #8873

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute Resolution #26-056 Declaring County Property as Surplus and Directing its Sale to Ashtabula City Police Department, Ashtabula, Ohio, as authorized by O.R.C. 307.12 for a 2018 Ford Police Utility Interceptor, Vin#8873 in the amount of $9,600.00.

Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio

Date: April 14, 2026
Resolution: #26-056

RESOLUTION DECLARING COUNTY PROPERTY AS SURPLUS
AND DIRECTING ITS SALE TO ASHTABULA CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT,
ASHTABULA, OHIO, AS AUTHORIZED BY O.R.C. 307.12

WHEREAS, The County of Geauga has equipment that has served the intended use for the County and is hereby declared "not needed" by the County; and

WHEREAS, Ashtabula City Police Department, Ashtabula, Ohio has a current need for a police vehicle to conduct county business that has been declared by Geauga County as "not needed" can be put to productive use by Ashtabula City Police Department; and

WHEREAS, The Office of the Board of Geauga County Commissioners has identified a specific vehicle suitable for sale to Ashtabula City Police Department, Ashtabula, Ohio, namely a 2018 Ford Police Utility Interceptor VIN# 1FM5K8AR8JGB68873 with 141,800 miles with the sale price being $9,600.00; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Geauga County Board of Commissioners hereby sell the above-specified equipment to Ashtabula City Police Department, Ashtabula, Ohio for use in the handling of county business; and

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

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

DEPARTMENT ON AGING – CERTIFICATION REQUEST TO AUDITOR TO COMMISSIONERS – QUARTERLY USE OF CREDIT CARDS – INCREASE QUARTERLY USE OF COUNTY CREDIT CARDS – GEAUGA CREDIT UNION VISA

Director Jessica Boalt explained that this was to increase the quarterly use of the Home Depot

and Geauga Credit Union cards each quarter.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri 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) to increase the quarterly use of the Home Depot and Geauga Credit Union Visa cards in the amount of $1,500.00 each per quarter.

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

MAINTENANCE – SERVICE CONTRACT AGREEMENT – PLUNKETT'S PEST CONTROL

Contract Coordinator Liz Rubino asked the Board to approve the service Contract Agreement with Plunkett's Pest Control to do interior and exterior pest control services. There was a brief discussion about the length of the contracts being multiple years, which locks the price in at a lower rate for a longer period.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute the service Contract Agreement with Plunkett's Pest Control to perform interior and exterior Pest Control Services on County Buildings and Safety Center per the Director for a three-year period, effective April 14, 2026, in an amount not to exceed $40,000.00 ($31,500.00 County Buildings, $5,700 Safety Center and $2,800.00 for unforeseen or additional pest control services that may arise).

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

MAINTENANCE – SERVICE CONTRACT AGREEMENT – VINECOURT LANDSCAPING, INCORPORATED

Ms. Rubino asked the Board to approve the service Contract Agreement with Vinecourt Landscaping to provide weed control at various locations and tower sites. Ms. Rubino noted that this was for two years and includes additional locations.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute the service Contract Agreement with Vinecourt Landscaping, Incorporated to provide semi-annual and as-needed weed control at various County locations and Tower sites as well as needed fertilization services per the Director for the period April 15, 2026 through October 31, 2027, in an amount not to exceed $49,870.00.

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

MAINTENANCE – APPROVE MERIT INCREASE – RIK WAREHAM, OPERATIONS MANAGER #1909

Director Rob Weigle asked the Board to approve a merit increase for Rik Wareham, explaining that when Mr. Wareham was handling the Director position, he had been given a temporary wage increase that expired after six months. Mr. Weigle expressed that Mr. Wareham is a very valuable resource and as he works on the organizational chart, he feels that Mr. Wareham needs to be lifted to align with the rest of the system. Mr. Wareham is also directly under the Director position, as the operations manager.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve a merit increase for Rik Wareham, Operations Manager (#1909) from $32.30 (Grade 14, Step 3) to $35.48 per hour (Grade 14, Step 6) to be effective April 12, 2026 (Payroll #9).

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

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES – AUTHORIZE RALPH SPIDALIERI, REPRESENTATIVE, EXECUTE REQUEST FOR PARTIAL PAYMENT #9 – SHOOK CONSTRUCTION COMPANY – MCFARLAND WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT IMPROVEMENTS

Director Nicholas Gorris asked the Board to approve Ralph Spidalieri, authorized representative, to execute the partial pay request #9 for Shook Construction Company for the McFarland Wastewater Treatment Plant improvements. Mr. Gorris noted that it has been reviewed and approved, adding that unfortunately this request exceeded the file size and was stuck in the server, which is why there is a second request today.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and authorize Ralph Spidalieri, authorized representative, to execute the Request for Partial Payment #9 for Shook Construction Company for the McFarland Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements Project in the amount of $1,335,003.52, and the Ohio Water Development Authority (OWDA) Contractor's Estimate, and the OWDA Fund Payment Request #9 (loan #11217) in the amount of $1,082,026.27. This remaining $252,977.25 will be paid using the remaining balance of ARPA funds allocated for this project.

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

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES – AUTHORIZE RALPH SPIDALIERI, REPRESENTATIVE, EXECUTE REQUEST FOR PARTIAL PAYMENT #10 – SHOOK CONSTRUCTION COMPANY – MCFARLAND WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT IMPROVEMENTS

Mr. Gorris explained that this will all be paid through the OWDA Agreement. It has been reviewed by the department and approved. This will put the project at about forty percent complete, which is a little ahead of the calendar schedule. Most of the structural work is done; they are now waiting on vendors to supply actual equipment but are still on track to complete it as scheduled.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and authorize Ralph Spidalieri, authorized representative, to execute the Request for Partial Payment #10 for Shook Construction Company for the McFarland Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements Project in the amount of $1,412,755.86, and the Ohio Water Development Authority (OWDA) Contractor's Estimate, and the OWDA Fund Payment Request #10 (loan #11217) in the amount of $1,412,755.86.

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

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES – ACKNOWLEDGE NO BIDS RECEIVED – SERVICES CENTER WATER TREATMENT FACILITY – GRANT PERMISSION TO RE-ADVERTISE FOR BIDS – SERVICES CENTER WATER TREATMENT FACILITY UPGRADE

Mr. Gorris asked the Board to acknowledge that no bids were received for the Services Center Water Treatment Facility project. The next item is a request to re-advertise with a plan to try and reach a more national area due to the nature of the project.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to acknowledge that there were no bids received for the Services Center Water Treatment Facility Upgrade.

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

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to grant permission to re-advertise for Bids for the Services Center Water Treatment Facility Upgrade to be held on May 20, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. Notice of this Bid Opening will be advertised on April 17, 2026, April 24, 2026, and on the County website.

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

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES – AWARD BID – GRADE LINE, INCORPORATED – MERRITT ROAD SANITARY EXTENSION

Mr. Gorris asked the Board to award the bid to Grade Line, Incorporated for the Merritt Road sanitary extension because the bid was below the engineer's estimate. Mr. Gorris added that Grade Line is reputable. There were five bids received so it was good to see so much interest in the project. Mr. Gorris stated that we were eager to do this project, since it is a steppingstone for the new youth home.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to award the Bid to Grade Line, Incorporated for the Merritt Road Sanitary Extension in the amount of $130,960.00 as they represented the lowest and best bid.

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

GEAUGA COUNTY FAIR BOARD – AUTHORIZE FAIR BOARD – SUBLEASE MAINTENANCE SHOP BUILDING – NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

Agricultural Society Secretary Meg Noah explained that the maintenance shop is no longer being used by the maintenance department, as they moved to the administrative building. In reviewing the lease agreement with the county, it looks as if the Board can allow them to sublease that building. Ms. Noah stated that they wanted to find out if the Board was comfortable with them subleasing out the space. Ms. Noah stated that they usually do a short-term rental; the only long term rental agreements they have are the Kiwanis that has the food booths that happen during the fair, another example is one with the Grange. There was some discussion about the sublease being with a non-profit versus a for-profit that could jeopardize tax-exempt status, and if the agricultural society should be in the business of running for-profit businesses. Another concern expressed was insurance, and if something happened and their insurance lapsed, or with taxes, using the Board of Developmental Disabilities as an example. A recommendation was made to only sublease to non-profit organizations.

The actual lease between the Agricultural Society and the County came up for discussion and the need for it to be reviewed and updated. The original agreement from 1980 was done on a typewriter, and that they should look at re-negotiating to make it more in line with the way the parties operate. There is an original agreement and an amendment that extended the lease out to sixty-five years. Mr. Dvorak expressed he was in favor of the sublease to non-profits and helping the community if they need space.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to authorize the Fair Board to sublease the Maintenance Shop Building to a Non-Profit Organization.

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

Ms. Noah explained that the next item was electrical upgrades. They have applied for capital budget money and are hoping to be awarded funding that would help with the replacement of the midway panels and poles, as they learned last year they are rotting, creating an unexpected

expense. The panels and the poles are estimated to cost about $131,000.00. They are hoping and willing to apply for grants, if anyone knows of any, they would love to apply for them.

Ms. Noah explained that they are trying to upgrade the security cameras to be able to get gate two back open; it will be about $5,000.00 to get the appropriate camera and securely allow traffic in and out. It will include the license plate reader and night vision. Ms. Noah explained that they have the same system at gate four right now. This will give the OSU Extension traffic flow back, as well as the Secretary, Concessions, and Treasurer are moving down with Maintenance into the building and will become the main gate.

Ms. Noah explained that several years ago, around 2021 or 2022, the thought process was to develop a multi-purpose building on the fairgrounds. They applied for a couple of state grants and received two that totaled $750,000.00, and are now working on getting some preliminary drawings and cost estimates. Ms. Noah explained that what they want to build they don't have enough funding for, so the idea is to do it in two phases, possibly three. The first phase is merchant hall two and would include redoing the restrooms and adding showers to that restroom area. Currently there are no showers at that end of the fairgrounds; right now they are only in the bathrooms near Cook Street. The idea is to have family showers and four showers in both the men's and women's restrooms, with twelve women's restrooms and eight men's restrooms with urinals on the other side. Ms. Noah stated that this will be about $800,681.00 to complete phase one, with a contingency since it was built in 1950. The hope is to get it out to bid in the next few weeks and try and have it completed by August 1 so it can be used for the fair.

Ms. Noah explained that the second phase would include raising the roof and putting new lighting in, adding that the architect loved the steel structure and has come up with some good ideas on how to utilize what is there and try to save some money. There was some discussion on the funding that they have received and the time constraints on getting it used.

The Commissioners' contribution last year was to the poultry building and sale barn. Ms. Noah didn't know if the electrical upgrades would fall under anything through Community Development Block Grant. Commissioner Spidalieri added that it's an investment not just for today but for tomorrow and for the kids that participate in it, that it just keeps our county strong, it is a super need and a long time coming.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (EMA) – EXTEND TERM OF CONTRACT – INSPIRON LOGISTICS, LLC

Director Austin Rice explained that after talking with the Assistant Prosecutor about the agreement and addendum, she wanted to update the motion language. This motion uses revised language and all other terms and financial information remain the same.

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to extend the term of the original Contract with Inspiron Logistics, LLC up to and including April 23, 2028, to furnish the Geauga County EMA Mass Notification System, in accordance with the First Addendum previously executed by the parties. This term extension shall be $23,650.00 annually with one third being paid by the Emergency Management Agency ($7,883.34), one third being paid by the Sheriff's Office ($7,883.34) and one third being paid by the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) ($7,883.34). All of the remaining terms and conditions of the original contract and First Addendum shall remain in full force and effect.

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

BOARD DISCUSSION

Ms. Bevan introduced Austin Rice, Director of the Emergency Management Agency, noting that he had quite a robust strategic plan when he became Director, having a definitive vision for the department.

Mr. Rice explained that he has been the Director for about eight months. While EMA is a smaller Department, they do have an important role in the county. EMA has roles and responsibilities relating to numerous federal and state regulations and laws. Like most things in government, in

the United States, there is a tiered system among the Federal, State, and Local levels. FEMA, Federal Emergency Management Agency, States need to have an EMA, which is OEMA, or Ohio Emergency Management Agency, and per the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) all eighty-eight counties in the state need to have an emergency management agency or program. They are the county or local EMA branch.

A quick reference to what the responsibilities of the EMA are, which is that the agency is responsible for preparedness, planning, mitigation, response and recovery related to natural and man-made disasters as well as civil defense. Civil defense is what originally emergency management came from. You had civil defense in the United States. And then through new laws, regulations, updates and technology in industry, 9/11, Hurricane Katrina and eventually evolved into the modern field of emergency management. Specific to Geauga County, unlike most other counties, we also must deal with the Nuclear, Regulatory Commission or the NRC, because there's only six nuclear counties in the state of Ohio and Geauga County is one of them. We also must participate in the state's nuclear program working closely with these six other counties, including the state, FEMA and power plant utilities as well.

Mr. Rice explained that in the general description of emergency management, you saw some keywords: planning and training and mitigation. There are four phases of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery. You might have preparation or prevention. You might have training or exercise. There are other words that are sometimes used, but it basically boils down to these four phases. Sometimes you will have somebody talking about the before, during, and after phases of the disaster or an incident. Mr. Rice noted that it boils down to what you need to know is that there is a non-emergency duty and an emergency duty for the EMA. Most people think of an emergency management agency as a response organization. You're either responding to that tornado or you're waiting for the call to go respond to that tornado. And while it's true that we do respond to things, that's not the majority of what we do. That's a small amount of what we do.

Probably about eighty to ninety percent of what we do is in this preparation and mitigation, this non-emergency duty phase. That's more of what you could say is a day-to-day or a bread-and-butter type of thing we do. It is the preparedness mitigation element. The preparedness generally covers plans and regulations, training, exercises, and drills. Some examples of what we've been working on or things that we do in that regard would be plans and regulations we must maintain for the county. There's the R.E.R.P., which is the radiological emergency response plan. And that comes along with dozens and dozens of SOGs as well. There's a hazard mitigation plan. There's the emergency operations plan, and that's the multi hundred-page big plan for the county. There's a hazmat chemical spill response plan, and we must review lots of school plans and other safety plans as well. They are all different cycles, some are done every year, some every two years, and others every three or five.

Mr. Rice stated that they are managing all the cycles of the regulations of all these plans. With all these plans, we're required to then also drill or exercise all these plans. We have what everyone thinks of EMA who knows anything about Geauga County EMA, which is some people know that we deal with the nuclear power plant in Perry. There are big drills for Perry that are done every year or every other year, but there is also smaller Perry or other nuclear drills throughout the year that nobody knows about that we must do. Mr. Rice noted that they must participate in the state's nuclear program, so they must help with the other drills. There are three nuclear power plants in the state program, so we must help with those other plants as well. In essence, we are doing big nuclear drills every year and many of them some years, just not always Perry. In addition to these regular drills, they also must do specific drills that include working with community partners, including schools, churches or the hospital, that might also include other specific drills upon request or where a need might arise. Mr. Rice mentioned that they recently did an active threat drill with Notre Dame Cathedral Latin (NDCL) school, which was very successful and involved lots of partners. Mr. Rice explained that sometimes another entity might put on a drill and need representation from Geauga County, a specific subject matter, using an example of the health department, who recently had an epidemic exercise that they participated in.

Mr. Rice explained that besides plans, regulations and drills, we also have training. When I say training, I don't mean the staff are getting trained; while we do, it is often that we go out and do training for other people and do presentations for other people. This is what we refer to as the

comprehensive training program, specifically means that every year we are doing training for dozens and dozens of first responders, that includes fire, police, bus drivers for schools, and nursing homes. Mr. Rice stated that they also do training every year regarding pandemics, hurricanes, and other such disasters, these are regular routine annual training sessions. Mr. Rice added that they do specific training upon request and recently have been doing more peer support training in coordination with the Geauga County Sheriff's Office and developing a regional first responder wellness conference.

Mr. Rice added that they also have response or emergency themed activities, which is what everyone thinks is more exciting. Mr. Rice stated that EMA responds to complex, rapidly evolving and large-scale incidents. Large scale is the key word here because we are not actually a response agency, they are not responding to the car wreck or that heart attack. We're not the first people there doing that. That's considered a smaller scale emergency. What the EMA looks like at a larger scale incident might be a multi-jurisdictional incident that's affecting a larger region of the county, or it might be a local incident that has gotten very large and is expending a lot of resources or they need additional support, in which case we can try to support them in that regard. We work with part of the incident command structure focused on response coordination, resource allocation, situational analysis and inter-agency communication. That is what happens in a large incident you need more help with communication or resources or problem solving, and that is how they come into play. The EMA, at least here historically, has been a lot more reactive, and we are attempting a much more proactive approach.

Mr. Rice explained that they have MDTs now, which are mobile data terminals, and radios, which means that they can see and hear what the first responders are seeing and hearing or what the dispatchers are seeing or hearing. Not just in our physical office, but we can be mobile. We can be on the road, we can be on the scene, we can be in the car or a different location now. This allows us to have the same situational awareness. In Geauga County, the typical hazards that you might expect are natural hazards, that are more routine, like winter weather conditions. Everyone knows we have winter weather storms, anything with wind, severe storms, tornadoes, power outages. These are the big things that could be considered more routine for our region or our area. If these things work together and cause power outages, like with windstorms or winter storms, it can start getting more complicated. Mr. Rice provided examples of these recently, noting that we've had two tornadoes in eight months since he has been here. One ironically was on the day I became Director, adding that tornadoes themselves are not the worst necessarily, we are going to have wind issues that aren't even related to tornadoes. Mr. Rice expressed that they have been supporting the county offices and administration during severe weather. Briefly mentioning a winter weather event in March, and school threats that have involved multiple schools.

Mr. Rice explained that they also work with special teams in the county. They include fire investigation, hazmat, and drone teams. Lastly, the recovery element, they work to try and get things back to normal after a large incident, this includes sheltering, the warming and cooling centers, working with the utility companies on restoration and specific issues.

Mr. Rice explained that they are a small department, not quite four hundred thousand dollars for our funding sources, explaining that about ninety-one percent of our funding is grants, primarily sixty-five percent from the Perry nuclear power plant because we must participate in that nuclear program for the state. There is about eighteen percent of our funding from federal grants, about five percent from state grants and three percent from the LEPC. which is a local emergency planning committee, and then the remaining percentage from the general fund.

Besides all those things that we do and must maintain regularly, we're a new team and a new agency. We are also trying to look forward to and assess the team itself, who is EMA, asking, are we efficient, can we be better, how can we move forward? We have identified about six areas that we want to look at and that we're working on ideas for trying to do better for the citizens, for the other departments, just to be better as an EMA in general. This includes the organizational structure and staffing. Trying to improve any of the preparedness response recovery or mitigation functions, communication systems modernization. We're trying to implement a multi-layer emergency communication system and strategy that increases reach, accessibility, and public trust.

The Emergency Operations Center, I haven't even mentioned. That's your Emergency Operations Center for the county. That's at our physical location. It's the big room; you think

stereotypically where everyone sits at all these tables and makes decisions and tries to solve problems during large incidents. What we want to make sure is that the EOC remains operationally ready with modern tools, clear activation procedures, and well trained personnel.

Strengthened recovery and resilience planning. We're looking to build a county recovery framework and resilience pipeline that accelerates restorations, supports survivors, and integrates mitigation. And the training and exercise program, that they would like to expand to better enable Geauga County citizens and first responders to prepare for, respond to, and better recover from emergencies. And finally is public facing visibility and branding. I may have mentioned at the beginning of this that when you say, "Oh, I work for the Emergency Management Agency," most people say to me, "Oh, okay. Whatever that is." Because they don't know what EMA is. They think you must be EMS; we want to increase public awareness and trust through consistent branding, clear messaging, and accessible preparedness resources. People should know what EMA is, and we should be a source that you go to if you have questions or needs, if you want to learn about severe weather in the county, or what to do in situations. We want to be more available to more people.

Mr. Rice explained that every other year we do a big drill for the Perry Nuclear Power Plant, and this year is going to be a bit bigger than usual. Typically, a dry run drill is done a month before an actual practice drill or evaluated drill, as it involves a lot of people in multiple counties that each have a role, fire, law enforcement, hospitals, school services, different industries, engineers and all this is a performance in a way that shows FEMA how we perform and handle the emergency, that we can meet all the regulations. There is a five-way phone that is used for communication between the counties, the state and the plant. FEMA wants to see and evaluate how the counties respond live to different issues all at the same time a simulated event is happening at the power plant. It is practice in preparation for an actual event if one should ever occur.

Mr. Rice explained that they are really working to get a better relationship with the public, building up their social media page and relaying information out, updating the website and using that as a better resource to provide information, including putting together a hazard mitigation outreach website with interactive hazard maps for the county. We are working to get more outreach and information to people. We do presentations upon request for groups, rotaries, churches, or any organization who requests one.

Jim MacNeal, Troy Township, explained that he was a 15-year veteran of Troy Township Fire Department, Captain, EMT, first I believe director of the Geauga County Hazmat team. I wrote the original SOPs, did the original training, gathered the original equipment from donations from the community, and we put together a team that during our observed trial by the state finished number one in the state. Mr. MacNeal stated he had a complicated question, one that I'm sure you've wrestled with who and how do you assure compliance with 29 C F R 1910.120, that's the SOP that relates to medical records, training records, and how you keep that team trained, safe, ready and alive.

Mr. Rice explained that the person who is in charge of the HazMat team does a great job with the training and maintenance of the team. Like the drone team, these teams have a team leader and they run their teams. Mr. Rice stated that he would have to refer to them for further information before he could really respond.

Ms. Bevan thanked Mr. Rice for the information and said that they felt it was good business for the directors to come and share with the Board some of their successes, their plans. A lot of them have internal, plans, strategies and goals of their own that align with the strategic guidance that Mr. Jimison and I put forward with direction from the Board.

Ms. Bevan stated that she has been having discussions with different elected officials who might be possible tenants for the old courthouse. We need to have a working session to talk about who would be a good tenant for the old courthouse before we proceed with planning renovations because it makes sense to design a space that's built for whoever the occupant would be. In talking with some of these elected officials, we feel that waiting until after the primary election is a good way forward. Ms. Bevan stated that they were looking at sometime in May if they could work it around the budget hearing schedule.

Melanie Blasko from Lake Geauga Recovery Centers and Christine Lakomiak from Mental Health Recovery Services were here to follow up on the request for more information regarding the recovery house and if there was communication about the house going into that location. Ms. Lakomiak explained that Ms. Blasko had held a meeting with Father Scott regarding what the old rectory would be, so that they could understand exactly what a recovery house is and the messaging would go to the parishioners and the neighbors. Ms. Blasko explained that they met with St. Mary's communication coordinator, attorney and Father Scott, so they could get educated on the concept of a recovery house and what exactly it is, to get ahead of questions from the community. There was discussion about recovery houses or group homes in the county, Sheriff Hildenbrand noted that he knew of one in Chardon and one in Hambden. Ms. Brakey asked about communication with the school, adding that the City of Chardon didn't know anything about this, to which Ms. Blasko expressed that they do communicate as a courtesy, however people in recovery are protected by the ADA and Federal Fair Housing and feels they have a right to privacy. Ms. Blasko stated that this is still considered a single-family home. Ms. Brakey stated that the City is stating that they could need to get a zoning permit.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Newell Howard, South Russell Village, held up a document and stated that this is what NOACA gave us, and the information on this is incorrect, no one is coming to explain it, adding that we need to figure out what is going on, bringing up the gas tax and wanting to know where it is being spent. The question is, when is Grace coming to talk to us?

Jim MacNeal, Troy Township, explained that he has been a specialty gas chemist, who has fifteen patents and has spent his career analyzing emissions from fossil fuel burning plants, designing equipment to analyze this, actually making EPA protocol calibration gases so that people who run the facilities can daily calibrate their instrumentation, according to strict EPA records. I caution you on NOACA's climate action plan, providing history on action plans and climate change, and expressed that what they are doing to Geauga County is being done on fabrication and that they don't know anything about carbon dioxide, cautioning the Board that CO2 is not an evil climate killer.

Rich Princic, Hambden Township, asked if we are sending Geauga County money to Cuyahoga County, adding that we don't owe them a dime, because all they do is waste their money. They destroyed his football. Mr. Princic continued that all this about global warming was needed to have a grip on it. Mr. Princic mentioned something about a drone flying over his house and seeing a deck in his yard that needed to be taxed and his taxes went up. Mr. Princic explained that he was from the generation that doesn't go to the internet and liked when you could pick up a paper and read about plans and events, that he loved our parks, and thanked the Board for letting him speak.

Ellen Naylor, Russell Township, explained that she has been to meetings where there have been a large group of citizens that have valid concerns and complaints about NOACA and would like answers to the questions raised about NOACA and what it does for Geauga County. Ms. Naylor mentioned getting out of NOACA, merging with Lake and Cuyahoga with all their votes doesn't give us a vote at the table, and we want to hear from our Commissioners about what they are going to do about NOACA.

Mr. Dvorak explained that Lake County does not want to merge and has no intention of leaving NOACA, thanking them for voicing their concerns.

Skip Claypool, Chester Township, mentioned a document from Newell "Dick" Howard, mentioning an old saying "figures don't lie but liars figure." That's typical of NOACA. Mr. Claypool talked about a safety study that was done by ODOT, the County Engineer and Middlefield, that NOACA had no part of, but wanted to claim credit for it. Mr. Claypool expressed that we used to get funding from NOACA, but since Ms. Gallucci arrived, it has all changed significantly. Mr. Claypool mentioned a cost model that was approved by ODOT that shows if we were formed with Lake County, we would share about seven million dollars a year.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

a) A weekly report filed by the County Dog Warden of all dogs seized, impounded, redeemed or destroyed for the weeks ending April 8, 2026, as required by O.R.C. 955.12.

b) Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Division of Surface Water NPDES Small MS4 General Permit Annual Report, as submitted by the Soil and Conservation District and the Geauga County Engineer on March 27, 2026.

c) A monthly report filed by the Geauga County Sheriff's Office of an account of expenses for the Inmate meals for the month ending March 2026.

d) A monthly report filed by the Geauga County Sheriff's Office of an account of expenses for Prisoner Transport for the month ending March 2026, as required by O.R.C. 325.07.

OTHER
The Board reviewed upcoming events.

MEETINGS

Tue,	4/14	Planning Commission, 7:30 a.m. County Office Building, Room A334, Chardon
Tue.,	4/14	Investment Advisory Committee, 9:00 a.m. County Office Building, Room B303
Tue.,	4/14	The Commissioners will hold session at 9:30 a.m.
Mon.,	4/20	Family First Council, 1:30 p.m. County Office Building, Suite B168
Tue.,	4/21	The Commissioners will hold session at 9:30 a.m.
Tue.,	4/21	Geauga Trumbull Solid Waste Management District, Directors Meeting, 3:00 p.m. County Office Building, Room B168
Wed.,	4/22	Board of Revision, 9:00 a.m. Auditor's Appraisal Conference Room
Thu.,	4/23	The Commissioners will hold a Work Session at 9:00 a.m.
Tue.,	4/28	The Commissioners will hold session at 9:30 a.m.

BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD

Motion: by Commissioner Brakey, seconded by Commissioner Dvorak to adjourn the meeting at 11:04 a.m.

Geauga County Board of Commissioners

_____
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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