

BUDGET COMMISSION

The Geauga County Budget Commission met in regular session on Monday, October 7, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. in the Auditor’s office at 215 Main Street, Chardon, Ohio. Present: Geauga County Auditor Charles E. Walder, Geauga County Prosecutor James Flaiz, Geauga County Treasurer C. P. Hitchcock, Also Present: Chief Deputy Auditor Ron Leyde, Deputy Auditor and Fiscal Office Manager Pamela McMahan, Deputy Auditors: Tammy Most, and Kristen Sinatra

Meeting advertised: Regular Business
The option of virtual viewing was offered to the public.

Prior Minutes

Motion by Charles E. Walder, seconded James Flaiz, to approve the minutes of the September 30, 2024– Special meeting.

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried

Regular Business:

2024 Amendments

Newbury Township – Amendment #4 re-sign

Newbury Township’s Official Certificate of Estimated Resources to reflects the following changes to revenue previously certified:
Formula error capturing the increase to Special Revenue Fund #2901 ODNR Cap. Imprv. Oberland Park other source revenue \$98,000.00

New Special Revenue Fund Total:	\$5,619,115.75
New 2024 Certificate Total:	\$8,308,151.04

The certificate was re-signed.

General Discussion:

Motion by James Flaiz, seconded C.P. Hitchcock, to approve the tentative 2025 Budget Commission meeting schedule subject to possible change which may be needed by the county Treasurer.

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried



Geauga County Budget Commission

Christopher P. Hitchcock, Chairman
 James R. Flaiz, Vice Chairman
 Charles E. Walder, Secretary

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Tentative meeting dates for the
 Geauga County Budget Commission Calendar Year 2025

	January 6, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	
	January 20, 2025	Holiday	Cancelled	
	*January 23, 2025	Thursday	10:00 am	
	February 3, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	
	February 17, 2025	Holiday	Cancelled	
Cardinal, Chardon, Kenston	*February 19, 2025	Wednesday	9:00 AM	2025*2026 School Budget Hearing
Berkshire West G	*February 20, 2025	Thursday	9:00 AM	2025*2026 School Budget Hearing
	March 3, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	
	*March 17, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	Levied Depts. Budget Review
	April 7, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	
	*April 21, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	Geauga Public Health Budget Hearing
	May 5, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	
	May 19, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	
	June 2, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	
	June 16, 2025	Monday	Cancelled	
	*June 30, 2025	Friday	2:00 pm	LSD Year-end Financials
	July 7, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	
	July 21, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	
	August 4, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	Annual Organizational Meeting
	*August 18, 2025	Monday	9:00 am	2026 Budget Hearing
	*August 19, 2025	Tuesday	9:00 am	2026 Budget Hearing cont.
	September 1, 2025	Holiday	Cancelled	
	*September 15, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	
	*September 30, 2025	Tuesday	10:00 am	Rate Resolutions
	October 6, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	
	October 20, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	
	November 3, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	
	November 17, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	
	December 1, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	
	December 15, 2025	Monday	10:00 am	
	*December 30, 2025	Tuesday	10:00 am	Year-end – may not be needed

*Denotes "special". Location change could also create a "special"

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Article in The Plain Dealer

Treasurer Hitchcock shared that he had recently read an article in the Plain Dealer regarding the increase in real estate property taxes (Cuyahoga County) as a result of 6-year revaluation. He noted that the person in charge of policy matters, spoke to the issue about returning money to the taxpayers. The article indicated that it was a very modest increase and implied that a return would not be consequential to the taxpayers. Treasurer Hitchcock continued by stating that taxpayers may not consider the increase to be modest. In fact, it could be substantial to some. More importantly, the article never indicated that the increase was essentially the result of an unvoted tax. Treasurer Hitchcock suggested, that perhaps, the Geauga County Budget Commission should develop a statement as to why they chose to reach out to the beneficiaries (political subdivisions) of the increase in Geauga County and ask that they consider mitigating a portion of their increase to benefit the taxpayers. He further added that this statement should be made available to Geauga County taxpayers as well as the public, in general. Auditor Walder mentioned that Cuyahoga County is a charter county, and their Auditor is not elected but appointed. He continued by sharing that when the Cuyahoga County Auditor presented the matter to Council, the recommendation was made to keep the money. Auditor Walder indicated that that the increase was a sizable amount, and he was stunned that they didn't consider appealing to the local governments to return any money. They never even posed the question. Additionally, Cuyahoga County waives the budget hearing process. Therefore, local government never has to justify need, for the levied money that they receive. The members of the Budget Commission noted that they felt bad for neighboring counties but were glad that they proceeded how they did last year. They agreed that there could still be a fallout in the coming years as the increase isn't going anywhere.

Quarterly Township Fiscal Offer Meetings:

This concept was launched to offer an informal setting for township fiscal officers to engage in a Q & A with each other as well as the members of the Budget Commission (Auditor, Prosecutor & Treasurer) and their staff. Initially, each member of the Budget Commission will separately address the group, sharing information about their role, office, and support which could be obtained to assist the fiscal officers with their duties. Going forward, the fiscal group would determine the topics, time, and location of their meetings. By creating this forum, existing and new fiscal officers will have the opportunity to be better equipped to successfully perform their duties.

Public Comment:

Representative from Geauga League of Women Voters, requested a copy of the tentative 2025 Budget Commission calendar which was discussed. Additionally, she asked a follow-up question regarding the Township Fiscal Offer meetings. Auditor Walder explained that it was an organic process on how things will move forward after each Budget Commission member addresses the group.

Being no further business to conduct, C. P. Hitchcock, adjourn the October 7, 2024 regular meeting at 10:24 a.m.



Respectfully submitted,

Charles E. Walder, Auditor
Secretary/Budget Commission

