

**BUDGET COMMISSION**

The Geauga County Budget Commission met in special session on Friday June 30, 2025 at 10:00 p.m. in the Auditor’s office at 215 Main Street, Chardon, Ohio. Present: Geauga County Auditor Charles E. Walder, Geauga County Prosecutor James Flaiz, and Geauga County Treasurer C. P. Hitchcock. Also Present: Chief Operations Officer, Pam McMahan, and Deputy Auditors, Tammy Most, and Kristen Sinatra

Meeting Advertised: Local School Districts year-end financials & Regular Business  
Virtual attendance was offered for public viewing.

**Prior Minutes**

Motion by Charles Walder, seconded by James Flaiz, to approve the minutes of June 2, 2025 - regular session.

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried.

**2024/2025 School Amendments**

**Berkshire Local School District 2024/2025 - Amendment #8 Final**

Motion by James Flaiz, seconded by Christopher Hitchcock, to amend the Berkshire LSD Official Certificate of Estimated Resources to reflect the following changes to revenue previously certified:

	Berkshire LSD	FY25	Net Change	GCA-015 #7		GCA-015 #8 Final
General	General	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	249,974.75	25,551,150.21	to	25,801,124.96
Special	018 Public School Supt.	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	6,888.67	51,315.31	to	58,203.98
Special	019 Martha Holden Jennings	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	223,343.21	to	223,343.21
Special	020 Latchkey	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(3,517.13)	45,402.22	to	41,885.09
Special	29 Education Foundation	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	135,050.51	282,563.05	to	417,613.56
Special	34 Classroom Facillites	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	1,157,503.00	to	1,157,503.00
Special	035 Termination Benefits	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	321,430.11	to	321,430.11
Special	300 Student Activities	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	33,489.59	657,218.81	to	690,708.40
Special	401 Auxiliary Funds	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	56,604.14	to	56,604.14
Special	451 Data Communications	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	573.42	5,400.00	to	5,973.42
Special	464 School Model Report Card	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	24.42	to	24.42
Special	499 School Safety Grant	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	10,003.71	961,747.54	to	971,751.25
Special	516 Idea Part B	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(784.53)	335,858.71	to	335,074.18
Special	524 Equity for Each	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	200,000.00	to	200,000.00
Special	572 Title I	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	231,518.09	to	231,518.09
Special	584 Title IV	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	15,188.96	to	15,188.96
Special	587 ARP Earlychildhood	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(3.64)	7,945.47	to	7,941.83
Special	590 Title IIA	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	1,032.76	48,319.00	to	49,351.76
Debt	599 Safety	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	945.69	to	945.69
Debt	02 Bond Retirement	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(24,305.20)	1,613,391.28	to	1,589,086.08
Capital	03 Permanent Improvement	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(43,935.16)	481,770.02	to	437,834.86
Capital	04 Construction Fund	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	12,087.42	819,091.69	to	831,179.11
Capital	070 Capital Projects	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	1,230,645.50	to	1,230,645.50
Capital	010 Classroom Facilities	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	15,586.95	32,914.25	to	48,501.20
Enterprise	006 Lunchroom Supplies	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	137,813.48	875,247.54	to	1,013,061.02
Enterprise	009 Uniform Supplies	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	4,290.00	7,571.75	to	11,861.75
Internal	014 Rotary	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	10,612.36	6,095.46	to	16,707.82
Internal	022 Pop Accounts	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	3,300.00	44,574.20	to	47,874.20
Internal	023 Device Insurance	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(785.66)	32,527.07	to	31,741.41
Internal	024 Insurance Fund	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	13,940.28	582,038.29	to	595,978.57
Fiduciary	007 Trust Funds	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	4,631.00	50,825.36	to	55,456.36
Fiduciary	200 Activity Clubs	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(3,796.31)	140,348.30	to	136,551.99
		<b>Total Certificate(s)</b>	<b>562,147.27</b>	<b>36,070,518.65</b>		<b>36,632,665.92</b>
		<b>New General Fund Total</b>		<b>25,801,124.96</b>		
		<b>New Special Revenue Fund Total</b>		<b>4,785,061.09</b>		
		<b>New Debt Service Fund Total</b>		<b>1,589,086.08</b>		
		<b>New Capital Projects Funds Total</b>		<b>2,548,160.67</b>		
		<b>New Enterprise Funds Total</b>		<b>1,024,922.77</b>		
		<b>New Internal Service Fund Total</b>		<b>692,302.00</b>		
		<b>New Fiduciary Funds Total</b>		<b>192,008.35</b>		
		<b>Grand Total New Certificate - All Funds</b>		<b>36,632,665.92</b>		
		<b>General Fund changes</b>	<b>249,974.75</b>			
		<b>Special Revenue net change</b>	<b>182,733.36</b>			
		<b>Debt Service net change</b>	<b>-24,305.20</b>			
		<b>Capital Projects net change</b>	<b>-16,260.79</b>			
		<b>Enterprise Funds net change</b>	<b>142,103.48</b>			
		<b>Internal Service net change</b>	<b>27,066.98</b>			
		<b>Fiduciary net change</b>	<b>834.69</b>			
		<b>Total Net Changes</b>	<b>562,147.27</b>			

*\*Appropriation form GCA-006 dated 6-30-25 does not exceed estimated revenue.*

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried.

**Cardinal Local School District 2024/2025 - Amendment # 5 Final**

Motion by Christopher Hitchcock, seconded by Charles Walder, to amend the Cardinal LSD Official Certificate of Estimated Resources to reflect the following changes to revenue previously certified:

	Cardinal LSD	FY25	Net Change	GCA-015 #4		GCA-015 #5 Final
General	General	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	20,704,857.43	to	20,704,857.43
Special	018 Public School Support	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	116,327.54	to	116,327.54
Special	019 Other Local Grants	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	3,504.20	to	3,504.20
Special	035 Termination Benefits	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	40,000.00	to	40,000.00
Special	200 Activity Clubs	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	73,382.74	to	73,382.74
Special	300 Student Activities	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	261,828.66	to	261,828.66
Special	451 Data Communications	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	9,579.31	to	9,579.31
Special	459 Ohio Reads	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	-	to	0.00
Special	499 Safety Grant	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	352,732.10	to	352,732.10
Special	507 ESSER CARES Fund	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	279,028.46	to	279,028.46
Special	510 Coronavirus Relief Fund	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	107.64	to	107.64
Special	516 Idea Part B	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	361,890.85	to	361,890.85
Special	572 Title I	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	584,989.42	to	584,989.42
Special	584 Student Support and Academic	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	395.00	84,760.87	to	85,155.87
Special	590 Title IIA Teacher Quality	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	3,300.00	179,368.66	to	182,668.66
Debt	02 Bond Retirement	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	2,023,464.50	to	2,023,464.50
Capital	003 Permanent Improvement	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	(804,386.32)	1,469,868.38	to	665,482.06
Capital	070-0000 Roof	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	506,577.00	to	506,577.00
Capital	070-9225 Science lab	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	90,400.00	to	90,400.00
Capital	070-9226 roof paving 2026	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	(1,150,000.00)	1,150,000.00	to	0.00
Enterprise	006 Food Service	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	556,624.39	to	556,624.39
Enterprise	009 Uniform Supplies	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	47,889.32	to	47,889.32
Enterprise	013 Recreation Program	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	71,471.31	to	71,471.31
Internal	014 Rotary ACE Charter	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	11,545.01	49,793.04	to	61,338.05
Fiduciary	007 Trust Funds	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	-	49,244.46	to	49,244.46
Fiduciary	022 Safety/Sectionals	Change the 7/1/24 revenue total	4,150.00	1,600.00	to	5,750.00
<b>Total Certificate(s)</b>			<b>(1,934,996.31)</b>	<b>29,069,290.28</b>		<b>27,134,293.97</b>
New General Fund Total				20,704,857.43		
New Special Revenue Fund Total				2,351,195.45		
New Debt Service Fund Total				2,023,464.50		
New Enterprise Funds Total				1,262,459.06		
New Capital Projects Funds Total				675,985.02		
New Internal Service Fund Total				61,338.05		
New Trust and Agency Funds Total				54,994.46		
<b>Grand Total New Certificate - All Funds</b>				<b>27,134,293.97</b>		
General Fund changes				0.00		
Special Revenue net change				3,695.00		
Debt Service net change				0.00		
Enterprise Funds net change				0.00		
Capital Projects net change				-1,954,386.32		
Internal Service net change				11,545.01		
Trust and Agency net change				4,150.00		
<b>Total Net Changes</b>				<b>-1,934,996.31</b>		

*\*Appropriation form GCA-006 dated 6-30-2025 does not exceed estimated revenue.*

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried.

**Chardon Local School District 2024/2025 - Amendment # 6 Final**

Motion by Charles Walder, seconded by James Flaiz to amend the Chardon LSD Official Certificate of Estimated Resources to reflect the following changes to revenue previously certified:

	Chardon LSD	FY25	Net Change	GCA-015 #5		GCA-015 #6 Final
General	General	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	62,665,685.61	to	62,665,685.61
Special	006 Lunchroom Supplies	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	1,791,786.77		1,791,786.77
Special	007 Expendable Trusts	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	17,433.93		17,433.93
Special	008 Endowment Funds	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	76,408.69		76,408.69
Special	009 Uniform Supplies	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(20,000.00)	105,049.95		85,049.95
Special	018 Public School Supt.	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(24,000.00)	422,285.40	to	398,285.40
Special	019 Other Grants	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(9,500.00)	96,598.19	to	87,098.19
Special	020 Latchkey	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(4,000.00)	193,818.51	to	189,818.51
Special	031 Underground Storage	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	11,000.00	to	11,000.00
Special	200 Activity Clubs	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	230,240.31		230,240.31
Special	300 Student Activities	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	500,000.00	1,093,737.00	to	1,593,737.00
Special	401 Auxiliary Funds	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	136,032.53	to	136,032.53
Special	451 Data Communications	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	27,587.65	to	27,587.65
Special	499 School Safety Grant	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	11,400.00	79,908.69	to	91,308.69
Special	507 ESSER	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	20,697.65		20,697.65
Special	516 Idea Part B	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(192,000.03)	1,383,706.72	to	1,191,706.69
Special	551 Title III/LEP	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(2,000.00)	20,807.63		18,807.63
Special	572 Title I	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(80,000.00)	371,463.13	to	291,463.13
Special	584 Student Support & Acdem. En	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(16,000.00)	64,475.38		48,475.38
Special	587 IDEA Part B Preschool	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	33,752.08	to	33,752.08
Special	590 Title IIA	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(11,000.00)	130,905.54	to	119,905.54
Special	599 Title IV-A	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(118,000.00)	520,637.80	to	402,637.80
Debt	02 Bond Retirement TAN	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	446,668.68	to	446,668.68
Capital	03 Permanent Improvement	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	150,000.00	2,832,397.76	to	2,982,397.76
Capital	070 Transportation Bus. Compoun	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	1,400,000.00		1,400,000.00
Internal	023 Chromebook Self Ins.	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	219,260.18	to	219,260.18
Internal	024 Insurance Fund	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	8,336,960.87	to	8,336,960.87
Internal	035 Severance Pay	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	1,359,192.25	to	1,359,192.25
Fiduciary	022 District Agency	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(53,000.00)	174,703.73	to	121,703.73
		Total Certificate(s)	131,899.97	84,263,202.63		84,395,102.60
		New General Fund Total		62,665,685.61		
		New Special Revenue Fund Total		6,863,233.52		
		New Debt Service Fund Total		446,668.68		
		New Capital Projects Funds Total		4,382,397.76		
		New Enterprise Funds Total		0.00		
		New Internal Service Fund Total		9,915,413.30		
		New Fiduciary Funds Total		121,703.73		
		Grand Total New Certificate - All Funds		84,395,102.60		
		General Fund changes		0.00		
		Special Revenue net change		34,899.97		
		Debt Service net change		0.00		
		Capital Projects net change		150,000.00		
		Enterprise Funds net change		0.00		
		Internal Service net change		0.00		
		Fiduciary net change		-53,000.00		
		Total Net Changes		131,899.97		

*\*Appropriation form GCA-006 dated 6/30/2025 does not exceed estimated revenue.*

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried.

**West Geauga Local School District 2024/2025 - Amendment # 6 Final**

Motion by James Flaiz, seconded by Christopher Hitchcock, to amend the West Geauga LSD Official Certificate of Estimated Resources to reflect the following changes to revenue previously certified:

General	West G LSD	FY25	Net Change	GCA-015 #5		GCA-015 #6 Final
	General	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	1,147,426.26	58,437,192.10	to	59,584,618.36
EM Levies	016 Levies	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	103,716.66	4,216,552.10	to	4,320,268.76
Special	007 Spec. Trust	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(43,187.56)	205,876.50	to	162,688.94
Special	018 Public School Support	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	4,144.67	33,358.90	to	37,503.57
Special	019 Local Grants	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	250.00	9,595.35	to	9,845.35
Special	029 Education Foundation	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(8,347.07)	17,947.01	to	9,599.94
Special	035 Stermination Benefits	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	1,376,318.57	to	1,376,318.57
Special	200 Student Activities	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	556.93	125,038.49	to	125,595.42
Special	300 Student Act. Dist Man	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	24,314.48	334,074.88	to	358,389.36
Special	401 Auxiliary Services	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	8,927.17	293,008.43	to	301,935.60
Special	451 Data Communications	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(35.44)	8,000.00	to	7,964.56
Special	452 School Net Prof Dev	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	21.10	to	21.10
Special	455 Textbook Subsidy	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	-	to	0.00
Special	458 IVDL	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	-	to	0.00
Special	460 Summer School Subsidy	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	-	to	0.00
Special	466 Straight A Fund	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	-	to	0.00
Special	467 Student Willness	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	-	to	0.00
Special	499 Misc State Grant	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(938.13)	35,516.22	to	34,578.09
Special	507 CARES	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	4,295.72	to	4,295.72
Special	510 Coronavirus Relief	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	0.00	to	0.00
Special	514 Title II	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	-	to	0.00
Special	516 Title VIB	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(269,211.19)	821,813.78	to	552,602.59
Special	533 Title II D Technology	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	-	to	0.00
Special	551 Title III	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(4,500.00)	12,649.17	to	8,149.17
Special	572 Title I	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(66,182.04)	248,908.07	to	182,726.03
Special	573 Title VI	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	-	to	0.00
Special	584 Title IV	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(7,800.56)	23,155.63	to	15,355.07
Special	587 ECSE	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	-	to	0.00
Special	590 Class Size Reduction	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(11,126.45)	75,000.00	to	63,873.55
Special	599 Misc Fed Grants	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	-	to	0.00
Debt	02 Bond Retirement	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	-	to	0.00
Debt	02 Bond Retirement (2017 Tax	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	-	to	0.00
Debt	HB64 Energy Conservation Note	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	-	to	0.00
Capital	03 Permanent Improvement	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	33,151.84	3,698,507.80	to	3,731,659.64
Capital	04 Construction Fund	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	-	to	0.00
Capital	450 School Net	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	1,062.40	to	1,062.40
Capital	070 Special Construction Fund	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(1,000,000.00)	22,500,000.00	to	21,500,000.00
enterprise	006 Lunchroom Supplies	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	15,705.05	1,167,206.90	to	1,182,911.95
enterprise	009 Uniform Supplies	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(15,581.35)	430,398.91	to	414,817.56
enterprise	011 Consumer Services	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(10,727.00)	13,364.93	to	2,637.93
enterprise	012 Adult Education	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	11.68	to	11.68
Internal	014 Rotary	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	13,110.27	54,297.30	to	67,407.57
Internal	021 Rotary/Unclaimed Funds	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	-	12,179.83	to	12,179.83
Internal	024 Rate Stabilization	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	9,077.29	215,809.20	to	224,886.49
Fiduciary	022 Agency Funds	Change 7/1/24 revenue total	(742.00)	2,300.00	to	1,558.00
			-	-	to	0.00
			-	-	to	0.00
Total Certificate(s)			(77,998.17)	94,373,460.97		94,295,462.80
New General Fund Total				59,584,618.36		
New Special Revenue Fund Total				7,571,711.39		
New Debt Service Fund Total				0.00		
New Capital Projects Funds Total				25,232,722.04		
New Enterprise Funds Total				1,600,379.12		
New Internal Service Fund Total				304,473.89		
New Fiduciary Funds Total				1,558.00		
Grand Total New Certificate - All Funds				<u>94,295,462.80</u>		
General Fund changes				1,147,426.26		
Special Revenue net change				-269,418.53		
Debt Service net change				0.00		
Capital Projects net change				-966,848.16		
Enterprise Funds net change				-10,603.30		
Internal Service net change				22,187.56		
Fiduciary net change				-742.00		
Total Net Changes				<u>-77,998.17</u>		

\*Appropriation form GCA-006 dated 6-30-2025 does not exceed estimated revenue.

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried.

**2025 Certificate Amendments**

**Montville Township – Amendment #4**

Motion by Charles Walder, seconded by James Flaiz, to approve the Montville Township’s Official Certificate of Estimated Resources to reflect the following changes to revenue previously certified:

**Capital Project Funds**

Decrease fund #4901 General Fund Reserve Fund other source revenue (10,000.00) from 50,000.00 to 40,000.00.  
 Decrease fund #4902 Road Reserve Fund other source revenue (75,000.00) from 240,000.00 to 165,000.00  
*Net Adjustment \$(85,000.00)*

<b><u>New Capital Project Funds Total:</u></b>	<b>\$ 1,660,000.00</b>
<b><u>New 2025 Certificate Total:</u></b>	<b>\$ 3,593,036.36</b>

*\*Appropriation form GCA-006 dated 3/20/2025 does not exceed estimated revenue.*

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried.

**South Russell Village – Amendment #3**

Motion by James Flaiz, seconded by Christopher Hitchcock, to amend the South Russell Village’s Official Certificate of Estimated Resources to reflect the following changes to revenue previously certified:

**Special Revenue Fund**

Increase Income Tax other source revenue 100,000, from 2,645,000.00 to 2,745,000.00

**Capital Project Fund**

Increase D03 Special Building and Land other source revenue 230,000 from 220,000.00 to 450,000.00  
 Increase D01 Special Road Fund other source revenue 92,400.00 from 0.00 to 92,400.00.  
 Decrease D15 Bell Road East other source revenue 1,269,769.00 from 1,341,624.63 to 71,855.63  
*Net Adjustment: (947,369.00)*

<b><u>New Special Revenue Fund Total:</u></b>	<b>\$ 7,449,840.68</b>
<b><u>New Capital Fund Total:</u></b>	<b>\$ 1,646,058.25</b>
<b><u>New 2025 Certificate Total:</u></b>	<b>\$11,245,980.28</b>

*\*Appropriation form GCA-006 dated 6-30-2025 does not exceed estimated revenue.*

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried.

**Russell Township – Amendment #5**

Motion by Christopher Hitchcock, seconded by James Flaiz, to approve the Russell Township’s Official Certificate of Estimated Resources to reflect the following changes to revenue previously certified due to a fund balance adjustment as a result of a prior year warrant being voided:

**Special Revenue Funds**

Increase fund #2111 Fire District Fund Beginning Balance revenue 775.00 from 593,264.03 to 594,039.03.

<b><u>New Special Revenue Funds Total:</u></b>	<b>\$ 9,819,241.94</b>
<b><u>New 2025 Certificate Total:</u></b>	<b>\$ 15,062,054.05</b>

*\*Appropriation form GCA-006 dated 6/27/25 does not exceed estimated revenue.*

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried.

**Other Business:****Geauga Public Health Cash Transfer request:**

Motion by Charles Walder, seconded by James Flaiz, to acknowledge the financials as presented:

**Cash Transfer:**

From: #6002 BOH	\$430.00
To: #6040 Injury Prevention	\$(430.00)

(Employee left; expenses are no longer allowable by grant)

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried.

Note\* There are seven (7) additional cash transfers from a prior year awaiting instruction from the State Auditor as to how to properly execute these transfers, whether it is a transfer or journal entry (fund balance adjustments). Once the determination is made those transactions will be entered. Mr. Walder went on to explain that there were a series of Then and Now purchase orders submitted that did not have sufficient funds in the “then” account selected. The only fund that had sufficient funds was the General Fund. Mr. Litke advised that going forward, each fund will be charged for the corresponding costs instead of transferring the cost to the General Fund.

**General Discussion**

Mr. Adam Litke of Geauga Public Health (GPH), requested that GPH to be placed on the agenda. Ron Graham, Mark Henderson M.D. and Bryan Kostura from McDonald Hopkins representing Geauga Public Health were also in attendance.

Mr. Litke began by apologizing for issues related to 2024 which stemmed from a single employee who is no longer with the organization. He went on to say that he plans to restructure the finance team to build back the relationship with the Auditor’s Office. Also implement new timelines and procedures to ensure compliance with the Auditor’s Office. Creation of the Water Pollution Control Loan Fund WPCL in order to absorb the additional revenue in the other funds not being used in the amount of approximately \$500k. This should be ready for the GPH Board to vote on in August. \$0.00 permit fee for pools. Lowering pool, food, and other fees by approximately \$69k for 2026. Grant reductions of \$25k for the Public Health Emergency Grant fund. Ohio Dept of Health contribution of \$50k will not occur in 2026. Workforce Development grant of \$100k will not be renewed in 2027. GPH Nursing wages are lower than current rates across the area. Mr. Litke would like to increase those wages but is not sure if that is possible. The plan to purchase vehicles is still a work in process. Fund 6030 Emergency Response Fund also needs additional funds. The purpose of this fund is unclear. Mr. Walder requested that all funds be listed on the GPH worksheet going forward. Mr. Litke continued saying that the balances of the funds not currently being used would be transferred into the new WPCL fund which would be used to help needy Geauga residents with septic system repairs or replacement. The Operation and Maintenance Fund fees may be reduced for residents who keep up with their system’s maintenance.

These measures will reduce the cash balances. Mr. Litke assured everyone that the transfers would occur within the same year if this is the route forward.

Mr. Walder began by questioning if, as stated by Mr. Litke, the problem was a result of one employee who is no longer with the organization, how is the problem still occurring? Mr. Litke said because they were behind from 2024 it has carried over into 2025. Mr. Walder continued, pointing out that there is not a single entity within Geauga County where the “vendor” is also in charge of expenses. This is typically a conflict of interest. This causes him great concern. There needs to be checks and balances in place, from Geauga County outside of the Auditor’s office. The other issue is, the cash balances were likely so high due to the outstanding obligations of \$1.5million not being reflected in the budget. The best way to address this issue is to encumber the expense in the same year it occurred and carry it over if need be. That way the expense is accounted for and the cash balances are more accurate.

Mr. Hitchcock went on to propose a scenario where his septic system failed, and asked if this new fund would loan him money to replace or repair his system. Mr. Litke clarified that although it is called a “Loan” fund, no repayment is expected. The recipient’s income level determines the amount of money disbursed. Mr. Flaiz said the issue is this is not driven by the sale of a property, so there is no cash on hand. Mr. Litke said if a resident pumps their traditional leech field system every 5 years and the service provider says the system is in good working order there won’t be a problem. The aeration systems are much more expensive to both maintain and repair. Mr. Hitchcock questioned whether the money would be taxable to the recipient and assumed it would be. Mr. Walder said this is a vicious circle of taxpayers paying and benefits only going to some taxpayers. According to Mr. Litke, this is

currently done with grant money from the State. The program would work similarly in the county. Mr. Litke the funding would work something like this: the Operation and Maintenance program costs approximately \$100k to run each year. If they bring in \$110k in fees, the excess \$10k would be transferred to the WPCL fund. Every fund in the GPH budget would do the same. Discussion ensued over how much money the WPCL fund may have and how fast that money will be distributed. Mr. Hitchcock continued asking how long it may take to inspect all these systems. It was clear with 30 to 40 thousand systems in the county and 6-8 inspectors, this would take some time. He speculated if the fund accumulated \$1million, even that would be spent in a short time. The additional information was not sufficient for him to approve this budget.

Mr. Kostura, representing GPH, said it is clear there are issues, but GPH is trying to implement measures to correct the issues. Strides forward are apparent based upon the steps the Auditor's office has taken and where GPH is today versus previous. The plans are in place to move from doing things after the fact to timely actions to assure compliance. There is a vested interest on the part of GPH to make this right.

Mr. Flaiz said he believes that they are moving toward making corrections.

Motion by James Flaiz, seconded by Christopher Hitchcock to approve the 2026 Geauga Public Health budget.

Mr. Flaiz and Mr. Walder suggested there should be someone representing Geauga County in a fiscal capacity to assure there is a check and a balance. Mr. Kostura agreed that the cross jurisdictional contract may be amended to create such a position. He requested a time of grace from the Budget Commission in order to get that in place. Ron Graham, Health Commissioner for Lake and Geauga County, wanted to let the board know that he is aware of the value of this relationship between the two counties, and is committed to doing whatever is necessary to get this right.

Voice vote: James Flaiz – yes, Christopher Hitchcock – no, Charles Walder – yes.

Mr. Walder voted yes reluctantly and largely due to the fact that if the budget is not approved, he felt GPH could not receive levied money. He encouraged accountability at all levels on behalf of both counties. Mr. Walder also questioned whether this arrangement between the counties is saving money for anyone in Geauga County? He continued, if this does not move in a different direction with fiscal accountability by next year, he will vote no. Mr. Walder acknowledged that his office played a large role in securing the grant funds for the Health District. Mr. Hitchcock requested employee expenses be included in the budget reporting for next year. Ms. Sinatra questioned whether the previous motion from June 2nd to deny the budget needed to be rescinded. Mr. Flaiz said no. An updated GCA-014 certificate will be issued to the county.

**Other Business (continued):**

Motion by Charles Walder, seconded by Christopher Hitchcock to cancel the regular meeting scheduled for July 7th.

Voice vote: Three ayes. Motion carried.

Mr. Walder wanted to comment that he is working with the State Senate on the current budget bill. He is hoping to have something to present to the Commission at the next meeting detailing the changes.

**Public Comment:**

Sarah McGlone asked for clarification regarding a statement from Mr. Litke at a recent GPH board meeting saying that the cross jurisdictional agreement needed to be re-done. Mr. Litke clarified, it is not necessary to re-do the contract but rather to amend it from time to time. Mr. Walder said he felt the issue may have stemmed from specific employees being listed with rates in the contract, but at one point those changed and he had an issue with that. Ms. McGlone understood the clarification request was actually from the Auditor's office not the Budget Commission. She requested all certificates to be sent to her and confirmed who was at the meeting.

Mr. Gorton, Geauga County Budget and Finance Manager, wanted to let the group know that the public hearing of the 2026 Geauga County budget will occur tomorrow and invited anyone interested to attend. He said there were little changes from what was submitted. He asked about the possible re-distribution of Local Government funds. Mr. Walder answered that any changes at this point would not take effect until 2027. Mr. Flaiz clarified that if there were any changes to the County's distribution and it was ever decided to take it back, that may be difficult as the City of Chardon would have veto power. Mr. Walder added that this pending bill also has language to require entities receiving inside millage to publicly accept it. If this passes, the county will have the ability to distribute the inside millage as they choose to help alleviate the problem of unvoted increases. Mr. Flaiz asked about wage increases in the budget and whether they are included in the budget or not. Mr. Gorton said they are not included currently. The Commissioners have not made any decisions on wage adjustments for 2026 yet. Mr. Flaiz only asked that the Commissioners not wait until 2026 to make that decision but rather decide that before 2026. Final adoption of the 2026 budget by the County Commissioners will occur next Tuesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>.

There being no further business to conduct, a motion was made by Christopher Hitchcock, to adjourn the June 30, 2025 special meeting at 11:34 am.

Respectfully submitted,



Charles E. Walder, Auditor  
Secretary/Budget Commission

