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April 25, 2022
County flags flying in front of the Ohio Statehouse.

CCAO has redesigned Counties Current. Click the hyperlinks to jump to each section. If you have feedback, please contact Research Analyst Nick Ciolli at nciolli@ccao.org.

If you are having issues viewing Counties Current in your email, click [View this email in your browser] at the top of the email.

Association and Member News | State and Federal News |
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ASSOCIATION AND MEMBER NEWS

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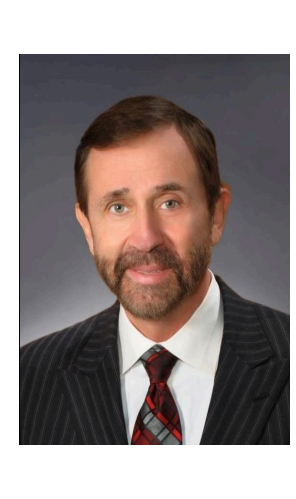
Young to retire after serving four years as Lake County Commissioner



Commissioner Ron Young will retire on May 4 after serving as Lake County Commissioner since 2019.

"This session was personally challenging for me and my family," Young said, citing the 2020 death of his wife, Kathy, and multiple health issues, including leukemia, and COVID-19, which he contracted twice.

Healthy now, Young said the events, in addition to other personal choices, have altered his life goals.

"I feel strongly that I need to dedicate the years before me to the service of my God, the Lord Jesus Christ," he explained. "The desire to preserve and promote a society where God can be honored in the private and public spheres is one of the reasons I was proud to lead the effort to have the state motto of Ohio — "With God, all things are possible" — on the wall of the commissioners' chambers."

Click here to read the full article from The News-Herald.

Join CCAO in celebrating National County Government Month!

NATIONAL COUNTY GOVERNMENT MONTH
APRIL
STRONGER COUNTIES.
STRONGER OHIO.

April 1 kicked off National County Government Month (NCGM). Held each April, NCGM is an annual celebration of county government and an excellent opportunity for counties, parishes and boroughs to highlight effective county programs and raise public awareness about services provided to the community. CCAO will be celebrating all month long. Follow us on Twitter and Facebook as we detail the many roles of county government and how it works to build a stronger Ohio.

Now is the time to spotlight your county's role in achieving successes at the local level and to educate the public about how counties provide real support, identifying challenges on the ground and pursuing solutions. Click here for the NCGM toolkit, which includes sample media releases, proclamations and social media resources.

CCAO would love to share how you are celebrating NCGM. Please send information and photos to CCAO Research Analyst Nick Ciolli at nciolli@ccao.org!

ARPA FAQs available on the CCAO website

CCAO has partnered with the Bricker and Eckler, Attorneys at Law, to create a list of "Frequently Asked Questions" related to the use of ARPA Funds.

The document is divided into six sections:

1. Eligible Uses of Funds
2. Procurement
3. Construction and Capital Improvements
4. Broadband
5. Personnel
6. Administration and Audit Costs

We hope that this document provides general guidance to members as they plan to use their ARPA funds. Members with questions about the FAQs should contact Bricker Associate Sean R. Lehman, slehman@bricker.com. Members are also encouraged to refer to Bricker and Eckler's comparison of state and federal procurement rules, available here.

On April 13, Sean and his colleague Doug Shevelow hosted a webinar discussion about procurement rules applicable to a county's use of its funding from the Local Fiscal Recovery Fund under ARPA. Counties ultimately need to comply with both state and federal law, and Bricker and Eckler attorneys will review the rules and procedures required under both sets of law, including where the processes are similar and where they diverge. To view a recording of the webinar, click here.

CCAO seeks Communications Coordinator

The County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO) is seeking to fill the position of Communications Coordinator.

Specifically, the position is responsible for the coordination of external and internal communication efforts that support the strategic direction of CCAO and its entities. The position will plan, write, design and layout communication pieces and social media; produce short videos and podcasts; maintain CCAO and its entities websites; develop and implement media outreach and educational strategies; monitor media outlets for mentions of CCAO and its entities; take and edit photographs at events.

The full job posting can be accessed here.

STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

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Division of State Fire Marshall to hold public hearing regarding fireworks

The Ohio Department of Commerce, Division of State Fire Marshal is conducting a public hearing on May 19 at 10:00 a.m. at the Division of State Fire Marshal, 8895 East Main Street, Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068.

The public hearing will concern proposed amendments to OAC 1301:7-7-56, Explosives and Fireworks. The proposed rule can be found here.

Persons may provide oral and/or written comments or testimony regarding the proposed rule changes either in person at the hearing or submitted via mail, facsimile, or email. Those wishing to submit written comments can send submit them to the following:

Division of State Fire Marshal
Attn. Code Enforcement Bureau
8895 East Main Street
Reynoldsburg, OH 43068
614.728.5460 / 888.276.0303
Fax: 614-728-5168
OhioFireCode@com.state.oh.us

OMB announces alternative audit requirements for small local governments

The U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) posted a new alternative, titled Addendum 3, to Single Audit Act requirements for certain ARPA Recovery Fund recipients. Under current guidance, recipients and subrecipients that expend more than $750,000 in federal awards during their fiscal year will be subject to an audit under the Single Audit Act and its implementing regulation at 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F regarding audit requirements. Addendum 3 changes this requirement for Recovery Fund recipients that received less than $10 million in Recovery Funds. This alternative is meant to reduce the burden of a full Single Audit by allowing the auditor to test compliance with two criteria, "allowable activities" and "allowable cost principles."

The vast majority of Ohio counties were subject to the Single Audit Act before receiving CARES Act and ARPA funds during the pandemic, and will likely remain so, but the new OMB rules may provide significant benefits to Ohio villages and townships. In order to be eligible, a recipient must meet both of the following criteria:

1. The recipient's total Recovery Fund award is at or below $10 million; and
2. Other federal award funds the recipient expended are less than $750,000 during the recipient's fiscal year.

The new alternative can only be used for fiscal year audits beginning after June 30, 2020. Single Audit requirements still apply if a recipient spends over $750,000 in other federal funds. Uniform Guidance will continue to apply to ALL expenditures of federal funds.

Members with questions should contact CCAO Senior Policy Analyst Jon Honeck at jhoneck@ccao.org.

JobsOhio releases revised American Rescue Plan Guidebook

JobsOhio's revised ARPA Guidebook is available for download at the following address: https://www.jobsohio.com/american-rescue-plan-guidebook/

The Guidebook is a resource for local leaders looking to maximize the impact of ARP funds and become better informed about ARP funds and potential investments. The Guidebook is a result of conversations with local, regional, and state leaders to learn their plans for ARP funds, share best practices, and support leaders in maximizing the potential economic impact of ARP funds. The effort had the following objectives:

- Identify investment ideas and initiatives intended to maximize long-term benefit to Ohio's economy
- Ensure Ohio's competitiveness among states in the Midwest
- Augment JobsOhio's economic development strategies

The Guidebook addresses what JobsOhio learned from the conversations, national best practices, and Treasury guidance regarding the tools and information requested by local leaders.
Ohio leaders identified three priority investment areas that are broadly aligned to Treasury Recovery Fund objectives:

- Build a more resilient workforce by investing in talent hard-hit by the pandemic (e.g., support for training for high-demand skills for individuals in qualified populations and those disproportionately impacted by the pandemic)
- Upgrade critical infrastructure to revitalize communities and support Ohio's economy (e.g., expanding digital infrastructure coverage)
- Support the small businesses and industries most negatively impacted by the pandemic (e.g., scale access to grants/loans for SMBs)

Guidebook Organization:

- About the ARP Treasury Recovery Funds and the Guidebook: Overview of funds coming to Ohio and the process conducted by JobsOhio (slides 1-9)
- Understanding and interpreting guidance on allowable uses of funds: Summary of federal guidance regarding allowable uses and timeline for Treasury Fiscal Recovery Funds (slides 10-29)
- Identifying high-level investment priorities: Potential investment areas suggested by leaders across the state (talent, infrastructure, and small business/impacted industry supports) (slides 32-39)
- Selecting specific funding ideas and identifying best practices: Example potential initiatives (slides 40-45) and case studies on select potential initiatives (slides 55-69)
- Driving an equitable process: Potential equitable process to set and implement funding priorities (slides 49-53)

NACo provides updates on ARPA funding

NACo refreshed a major update of its analysis of Treasury's Final Rule for the ARPA Fiscal Recovery Fund. The updated analysis includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Clarifying information on eligible/ineligible uses from Treasury, including capital expenditures
- Deeper dive on the provisions around revenue loss allocations
- Treatment of loans
- Reporting requirements and background information on federal Uniform Guidance/2 CFR Part 200

Additionally, NACo reminds its members of other relevant information pertaining to the upcoming Project and Expenditure (P&E) Report deadline on April 30, 2022.

- One-time revenue loss election: Counties will have the option to make a one-time decision to calculate revenue loss according to the formula outlined in the final rule OR elect the $10 million revenue loss standard allowance, not to exceed the county's award allocation. The option to make this one-time decision will be provided on the April 30 P&E Report.
- Treasury acceptance of Project & Expenditure Reports: Treasury is now only accepting Project and Expenditure Reports from Tier 1, 2 and 3 recipients. This includes:
    - Tier 1: States, U.S. territories, metropolitan cities and counties with a population that exceeds 250,000 residents
    - Tier 2: Metropolitan cities and counties with a population below 250,000 residents YET still received more than $10 million in Recovery Funds, and NEUs that are allocated more than $10 million in SLFRF funding
    - Tier 3: Tribal Governments that are allocated more than $30 million in SLFRF funding
- For Tier 4 (Tribal govts with less than $30 million) and Tier 5 counites with a population below 250,000 residents AND received less than $10 million in Recovery Funds, the first P&E Report is also due April 30, 2022, and then annually thereafter. HOWEVER, the Treasury submission portal is not yet open for recipients to submit a report. Treasury is likely to open the portal for this group by the end of the month.
- Expenditure categories: Updated reporting guidance contains an expanded set of Expenditure Categories to reflect the broader flexibility introduced by the final rule. Counties that submitted Project and Expenditure Reports in January will have the opportunity to update their previously selected Expenditure Category, if appropriate.
- Capital expenditures: Updated reporting guidance states that additional programmatic data for capital expenditures is optional in the April 2022 P&E Report and required for the July 2022 P&E Report.

Counties can access the Reporting Guidance for the Recovery Fund on Treasury's Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds website. To see a concise summary of the final rule for the Recovery Fund, please see the Overview Document.

NACo members with questions should contact Eryn Hurley, director of Government Affairs, at ehurley@naco.org.

Register today for the 2022 NACo Annual Conference

Join county elected and appointed officials from across the country in Adams County, Colo. for the National Association of Counties (NACo) 2022 Annual Conference & Exposition on July 21-24.

The Annual Conference is the premier national opportunity for counties to exchange cutting-edge practices, elect the association's leadership and shape NACo's federal policy agenda for the year ahead.

Click here to register and to get more information.

EDUCATION AND GRANTS

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Registration opens for Greater Ohio Policy Center's 2022 summit

The Greater Ohio Policy Center is hosting their biannual policy summit "Reflect & Refocus: Furthering Resilient Communities" on June 9 in Columbus. The Summit will showcase interventions for creating sustainable communities, like zoning reform, active infrastructure investments, and increasing housing options.

Attendees may earn up to 5 hours of education credits from The Supreme Court of Ohio Commission on Continuing Education and the American Planning Association Ohio Chapter.

This year's Keynote Address is Ohio Department of Development Director Lydia Mihalik. Early bird pricing ends May 6 and regular registration closes at the end of May. You can register here.

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to host webinar about brownfield funding opportunities

On May 10 at 2:00 p.m. the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency will host a webinar concerning brownfield revitalization. Speakers will include representatives from the Ohio EPA Division of Environmental Response and Revitalization, the U.S. EPA, and the Ohio Department of Development. This educational opportunity may help guide counties with determining projects for their brownfield remediation funds awarded under H.B. 110 of the 133rd General Assembly. To register for the webinar, click here.

Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District will host a webinar about workplace recycling

Are you pursuing or considering pursuing a workplace recycling program? On May 4 at 1:00 p.m. the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District will host a webinar about reducing waste in the workplace and establishing a recycling program. The webinar is designed for businesses, schools and nonprofits but counties will likely be able to learn best practices as well. Registration is free and can be completed here.

The district will host a similar, but shorter, webinar on May 18 at 12:00 p.m. Registration can be completed here.

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to host webinar about federal infrastructure bill

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency will be hosting a webinar on April 27 at 11:30 a.m. regarding the federal infrastructure bill and how the agency will administer funds through the Water Pollution Control Loan Fund and the Water Supply Revolving Loan Account.

The webinar will provide an overview of the bill, review the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's "Implementation Memo," and provide an overview of potential program enhancements. Time will be reserved for comments and a Q & A segment.

Register for the webinar by clicking here.

Law enforcement funding opportunity / grant training webinar

The Ohio Department of Public Safety's Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) is now accepting applications for the Law Enforcement Violence Reduction and Staffing Grant Program. This program makes available $50 million from the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to support communities that have experienced an increase in violent crime, more difficulty providing services to respond to or mitigate the effects of violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, or both.

Eligible applicants are law enforcement agencies and state and local government entities. For additional details see the Requests for Proposals document here.

The deadline to apply is April 25 at 5 p.m.

Resources for ARPA Reporting and Compliance

Counties and other local governments are required to submit their ARPA financial reports to the US Treasury no later than April 30. With this date fast approaching, the following resources are available help CCAO members to navigate reporting requirements:

US TREASURY WEBINAR ON REPORTING GUIDELINES FOR THE STATE AND LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDS
National Association of Counties and US Treasury
Webinar recorded April 21, 2022
Join NACo for a review of the Treasury Department's webinar on reporting guidelines and compliance requirements for the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund program. NACo staff will be available to answer questions on the upcoming deadline for the Project and Expenditure Report, which is due April 30. To view the slides and recording of the webinar, click here.

ARPA FISCAL RECOVERY FUND: OVERVIEW OF REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND UNIFORM GUIDANCE
National Association of Counties and Government Finance Officers Association
Webinar recorded April 14, 2022
With the upcoming Project and Expenditure Report deadline fast approaching on April 30, join NACo and Government Finance Officers Association for an overview of what you need to know when it comes to reporting for the American Rescue Plan Act' (ARPA) Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund. During this session, participants will hear about key requirements as they related to the U.S. Department of Treasury's guidance and the federal Uniform Guidance. To view the slides and recording of the webinar, click here.

OVERVIEW OF PROCUREMENT OF CAPITAL PROJECTS USING ARPA FUNDS
CCAO and Bricker and Eckler, Attorneys at Law
Webinar recorded April 13, 2022
This webinar discusses procurement rules applicable to a county's use of its funding from the Local Fiscal Recovery Fund under the American Rescue Plan Act. Counties ultimately need to comply with both state and federal law, and Bricker and Eckler attorneys will review the rules and procedures required under both sets of law, including where the processes are similar and where they diverge. To view a recording of the webinar, click here.

Stay competitive with OEDA/Bricker Ohio Economic Development Tools webinars

OEDA's Economic Development Tools Webinar Series, in partnership with Bricker & Eckler, will keep you up to date on the latest requirements and best practices in these programs. Ohio has some of the most effective programs that support economic and community development. But these programs are constantly changing and being refined to keep Ohio communities competitive. Below are two upcoming sessions you might find beneficial.

Tax Increment Financing
April 25, 2022
9:30 – 11 a.m.
Ohio's Tax Increment Financing Program (TIF) is an effective a popular tool to finance critical infrastructure for economic development. This webinar, presented by OEDA and Bricker & Eckler, will focus on the basics of TIF financing in Ohio, some best practices to ensure that your TIF accomplishes its purpose, and case studies of best-in-class TIFs by Ohio communities. The Webinar will also update on recent changes to the TIF program.

ARPA's Best Practices
May 9, 2022
9:30 – 11 a.m.
Ohio communities have benefited from millions of dollars in Federal ARPA dollars, designed to support recovery from the COVID recession as well as make structural investments that enhance the sustainability of communities. This Webinar, presented by OEDA and Bricker & Eckler, will update attendees on the latest ARPA requirements, provide some best practice ideas from JobsOhio and others, and present several case studies of how Ohio communities have utilized their ARPA funding.

COUNTY NEWS

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Butler County considering closing county-operated nursing home
The Journal-News, April 14, 2022
Times have changed since the Butler County Care Facility was considered the "last resort" for needy residents so now the commissioners are considering getting out of the business.

The county home has long been a drain on county finances for various reasons and now issues have been exacerbated by staff shortages and a shrinking census due to COVID-19. All three county commissioners have for years staunchly maintained they needed to keep the home afloat, that's not the case anymore.

There are 37 residents in 109-bed home and Commissioner Don Dixon, who operates a business in the extended health care industry, said "staff is still a challenge."

Commissioners ask judge for more information before considering pay hikes
Mansfield News Journal, April 20, 2022
The Richland County Commissioners have asked Juvenile Court Judge Steve McKinley for more information on the pay structure for his operations and details about how pay raises at the first of the year affected his salary line item before they will grant a request for a supplemental appropriation to raise the rate of lower-level employees.

The judge and court administrator Brian Bumpus met with the board on Tuesday to ask for more than $53,000 to raise the starting pay for deputy clerks and youth specialists in the detention area from $14 per hour to $15 per hour. The move would affect 29 of the court's 75 employees.

Bumpus said officials looked at deputy clerk wages around the county and found that they were in the $15 to $16 dollar per hour range and that those in Juvenile Court were lowest of all. He noted that a new hire worked two days and quit last week after getting a better offer somewhere else for more money.

Bumpus said the court is having the same problem keeping youth specialists.

Marion County Commissioners use ARPA funds to create non-profit grant program
Marion Star, April 22, 2022
The Marion County Board of Commissioners has established a grant program to benefit local non-profit organizations.

The commissioners voted last week to set aside $250,000 in American Rescue Plan Act-State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (ARPA-SLFRF) funds for the program. The federal government awarded Marion County $12,643,552 in ARPA funds. The funding must be spent by the end of calendar year 2024, according to the legislation.

County Commissioner Kerr Murray said the commissioners decided to create the program because they recognize the fact that non-profit organizations in Marion County have faced significant challenges throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, not the least of which is an increase in the demand for services and shifting operational needs. Those factors combined with a decrease in donations have placed a strain on many organizations.

Cuyahoga County continuing to vet Transport Road site as preferred location for new county jail
Cleveland.com, April 21, 2022
After a contentious meeting and five hours of discussion, an oversight committee guiding planning for a new Cuyahoga County jail agreed to continue pursuing a shipping container yard as its preferred location, as long as a number of other conditions are met.

The 12-member Justice Center Executive Steering Committee unanimously voted to continue vetting the property at 2700 Transport Road as the preferred site for a new 1900-bed jail, based on an amendment that requires a phase two environmental study be done first "to provide reasonable assurance that current environmental restrictions can be removed, and the property is safe for residential use."

DATES TO REMEMBER

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APRIL 28, 2022
CEBCO BOARD RETREAT

MAY 3, 2022
MAY PRIMARY ELECTION

MAY 19, 2022
GENERAL GOVERNMENT AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

MAY 20, 2022
CCAO BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

JUNE 3, 2022
NE OHIO DISTRICT DAY IN ASHTABULA COUNTY

DID YOU KNOW?

Adams, Highland, and Pike Counties

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The Serpent Mound Crater, the perimeter of which is highlighted above, is the only impact crater in Ohio. It measures nearly nine miles across and is believed to have formed from a meteorite impact 320 million years ago.

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