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November 21, 2022

On November 18, CCAO said goodbye to External Affairs Manager Adam Schwiebert. Adam started with CCAO in 2018 and took the lead on agriculture and rural affairs issues, as well as a wide variety of other important issues to the Association. Two of CCAO's greatest recent legislative victories (jail funding in the last two capital budgets and full reimbursement of indigent defense) would not have been possible without Adam's hard work and dedication to advancing county government issues at the Ohio Statehouse.

Over the past five years, Adam has been a consummate professional, a great teammate, and a fantastic boss to CCAO interns.

Thank you for all you've done for counties and best of luck with your future endeavors, Adam!

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ASSOCIATION AND MEMBER NEWS

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CCAO Nominating Committee issues Report; form for presidential appointment available

Last week, the CCAO Nominating Committee issued its report regarding the 2023 CCAO Board of Directors.

The Nominating Committee was chaired by Athens County Commissioner Lenny Eliason and was comprised of commissioners Judy Dodge (Montgomery County), Shannon Jones (Warren County), Tom Whiston (Morrow County), and Kathryn Whittington (Ashtabula County). The report can be read here.

Additionally, the second page of the report (available as a standalone file here) is the Request for Consideration for a presidential appointment to the CCAO board. The president receives nine appointments to the board and selects among those who have expressed interest via the form. If you applied for a board position with the Nominating Committee and were not chosen, you do not need to complete this form. Please submit the form to Robin Garrett no later than December 3.

CCAO publishes Fall edition of County Leader

CCAO recently published the Fall 2022 edition of its quarterly magazine, *County Leader*. The 27-page issue features columns from CCAO President and Montgomery County Commissioner Debbie Lieberman and CCAO Executive Director Cheryl Subler, features on Fairfield County Commissioner Steve Davis's Uber driving and the Drone Program Pilot in Noble County, and updates from CEBCO, CORSA, and the CCAO Service Corp.

Read it today!

Call for Letters of Interest to NACo board of directors representative positions

As part of the upcoming CCAO/CEAO Winter Conference, CCAO will be electing two members to the National Association of Counties (NACo) board of directors, per NACo bylaws.

We ask that individuals interested in running for these two positions submit a 1-2-page letter of interest to Robin Garrett at rgarrett@ccao.org by 12:00 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 30th. CCAO will distribute these letters to Ohio NACo members on Monday, December 5th.

On Thursday, Dec. 8th during the annual meeting, CCAO will conduct an election for these two positions. This vote will be by paper ballot. Each NACo county will receive two votes, and the top two vote-getters will be the new representatives to the NACo board of directors. The elected board members would begin their terms in July 2023. This election will not impact any other NACo board positions Ohio members may hold, such as those receiving board appointments from the NACo president or due to previous service as NACo president.

Should there be a two-way tie for first place, both individuals will receive board seats. If there is a three-way tie for first place, there will be a runoff election. If there is a tie for second place, there will be a runoff election. If a tie remains after two elections, a coin toss will be conducted to determine the winner.

If you have any questions about the election process, please contact Cheryl Subler or Robin Garrett.

Registration open for the 2022 CCAO/CEAO Winter Conference

Registration is now open for this year's CCAO/CEAO Winter Conference, held December 7 to 9. The theme for this year's conference is Innovation and Inspiration to Shape Ohio's Future.

You can view the current draft of the schedule here! Please keep in mind that some sessions may change between now and the timeslot.

Advance parking can be reserved through the Columbus Convention Center site, accessible here.

More information about the conference and links to register and reserve hotel rooms are available on the CCAO website.

STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

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Mansfield formally selected as site of the first Air National Guard cyberspace wing

Last Friday, the Department of the Air Force announced that it has selected the 179th Airlift Wing, based out of Mansfield, to be the home of the Air National Guard's first cyberspace wing.

The wing had previously been designated as the Air Force's preferred site in August 2021. The successful completion of a year-long site assessment made the designation official.

The new mission will bring an additional 175 positions focused on STEM and IT and further solidifies Ohio's important place in the United States' aviation history.

You can read Governor Mike DeWine's statement on the announcement here.

NACo launches Housing Task Force; Boyce to co-chair

On November 10, NACo announced the creation of the NACo Housing Task Force to bring county government officials from across the nation together to illuminate the most critical housing challenges and opportunities from the county government perspective.

The Task Force is co-chaired by Franklin County Commissioner Kevin Boyce, along with Commissioner Sherry Maupin of Valley County, Idaho.

The Task Force wil work to develop detailed analyses regarding the challenges communities face regarding housing. The Task Force will present its final analysis at the NACo Annual Conference in July 2023.

You can read more about the Task Force at its NACo webpage.

Bureau of Workers Compensation makes reclassification of certain public employees

The BWC has issued guidance on a new manual classification for public employers effective 1/1/2023 – ***Public Employer Clerical & Clerical Telecommuter Employees***. The premium rate for this classification of employees is significantly lower than the general rate for county employees: the 2023 rate will be $0.15 per $100 payroll compared to $0.71 for other county employees. Classifying employees in the new manual could represent a significant premium savings for counties.

This BWC bulletin provides specific direction and the requirements for the new manual classification.

Ohio Department of Medicaid releases COVID-19 Unwinding Toolkit

During the federal public health emergency (PHE) put in place during the COVID-19 pandemic, states have been prohibited from disenrolling Medicaid members. The PHE is set to expire on January 11, 2023, and the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) **does not** anticipate that it will be renewed.

The Department has published a COVID-19 Unwinding Partner Toolkit for helping to guide members on important steps they can take now to be ready for the return to eligibility renewals. The partner packet is available in six languages and includes items such as flyers, social media templates and newsletter content. ODM encourages everyone to use this info and the formatting, so the message is consistent and the materials recognizable.

EDUCATION AND GRANTS

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Visit the Grants and Funding Opportunities page on the CCAO website for a detailed listing of open grant programs.

Ohio Grants Summit registration open

On November 30 and December 1, the Ohio Office of Budget and Management will host the 2022 Ohio Grants Summit, an online, free event intended to help local governments and non-profits which apply for funding from the State of Ohio.

The event runs from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. both days and each day features four sessions.

The Day One sessions will discuss emerging issues in federal funding, preparing for audits, a discussion regarding American Rescue Plan Act funds, and water and wastewater funding in the recent federal infrastructure bill.

The Day Two sessions will discuss "Buy America" provisions of grant opportunities, how to best prepare competitive grant applications, how to leverage census data when preparing an application, and information sessions with executive agencies.

Registration for the event is free but the number of slots is limited. Registration is separate for each day and can be completed through the links above. If you are unable to register in time, the event will be livestreamed on The Ohio Channel.

Application window for $50 million in jail project funding is open

The Department of Rehabilitation & Correction (DRC) has opened the application window for $50 million in jail project funding that was included in the most recent capital appropriations bill.

Applications will be evaluated through a process similar to that used for projects funded under the prior capital budget, with one notable change. The question regarding cost per bed will no longer be a "scored question" but it will still be considered for projects intending to expand a jail's housing capacity.

The application can be found here, as well as the announcement letter and an OBM guide on allowable capital expenditures.

CCAO recommends that all counties apply for funds through the program. Even if you consider it unlikely your county will receive funding through the program, applying shows the Dewine-Husted Administration the overwhelming need for jail funding and will help the Association lobby for more funding in the future.

The application deadline for the $50 million pool is November 30, 2022.

NOTE: the application PDF states that the deadline is October 30, 2022. This is an error; the deadline is November 30.

If you have any questions about the grant program or would like to discuss issues with your county jail that may not be covered by these funds, please contact Managing Director of Policy Kyle Petty at kpetty@ccao.org or 614-220-7977.

ARPA and BIL RESOURCES

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This section of Counties Current will be a permanent fixture for the foreseeable future to help counties with the ins and outs of the American Rescue Plan Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. These two laws provide a once-in-a-generation investment.

Resources for ARPA Reporting and Compliance

The most recent version of the US Treasury Reporting Guidance was published September 20, 2022. Counties and other local governments with populations greater than 250,000 or ARPA distributions greater than $10 million are required to file Project and Expenditure Reports no later than 30 days after the end of each quarter throughout the grant period. Other recipients will file Project and Expenditure Reports annually by April 30.

Members are urged to consult resources from US Treasury, NACo, and the Ohio Office of Budget and Management for more information about reporting and how to use ARPA funds. CCAO maintains a list of ARPA links and resources, including a comparison of state and federal procurement laws, at the ARPA Resources page.

Ohio Ethics Commission issues statement regarding stimulus funds

Last week the Ohio Ethics Commission released a statement ensuring that public officials are aware that stimulus funds, such as those received under the federal American Rescue Plan Act and the funds that communities will receive under Governor Mike DeWine's Appalachian investment program, are public funds and that conflict of interest laws must be observed.

To that effect, the Commission also recirculated its Advisory Opinion No. 2009-006, issued in 2009 regarding stimulus funds made available to governments under the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. It provides a more in-depth examination of potential conflicts of interest with stimulus funds, including a discussing regarding vendors.

CCAO encourages members refamiliarize themselves with this Advisory Opinion and conflict of interest laws to ensure good stewardship of ARPA and Appalachia funds.

Guidance and overview of available BIL funding available from NACo and the Ohio Department of Transportation

NACo and ODOT each host a resource page providing information to counties about the Bipartican Infrastructure Law. The pages are rich with information including multiple tables providing overviews and links to funding opportunities, a timeline of upcoming grant programs, and much more.

The NACo website can be found here and the ODOT website can be found here.

CCAO strongly encourages counties to frequently visit the sites and apply for funding through the myriad of programs to bring valuable federal funds to Ohio communities.

COUNTY NEWS

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Each week Counties Current highlights the happenings in our counties in the words of their local media. One county from each of the CCAO's five districts is highlighted.

Northwest District

Commissioners talk holiday lighting at fairgrounds, consider budgetary matters

TiffinOhio.net, November 17, 2022

The Seneca County Board of Commissioners learned Thursday morning about a drive-through holiday lighting display to be hosted at the Seneca County Fairgrounds.

Emily Gilliland, Seneca County Junior Fair Coordinator, visited the commissioners' meeting to thank them for allowing organizers to use the fairgrounds and to inform the public of the display. The lights will be open to the public from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Friday-Sunday over the next four weekends (starting tomorrow). She also said the lights will be open on Dec. 22 and Dec. 23.

Gilliland said those wishing to view the display can drive to the Seneca County Fairgrounds and enter through Gate 2. For a $5 donation, viewers will experience a 20-minute lighting experience with more than 60 different displays.

Northeast District

Ashland County Soil and Water district seeks funding for personnel

Times Gazette, November 17, 2022

KEY ITEM: Ashland County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Program Director Jane Houin asked commissioners for a $5,000 budget increase to $85,000 for next year "to help cover those rising personnel costs," and help retain staff. No action was taken.

DISCUSSION: Houin outlined the benefits of the program and highlighted the fact the county returned an additional $3.28 per dollar allotted in additional state funding and grants.

The total local funding request is $112,000 plus subdivision fees. With an additional estimate of $100,800 from state funding matching grants and another $62,092 in outside grant funding would give SWCD a budget of $253,940.

Central District

Franklin County's 2023 budget proposal: What you need to know

Columbus Dispatch, November 14, 2022

Starting Monday, Franklin County officials will hold a series of hearings on the 2023 budget proposal, which outlines planned expenditures and anticipated income for next year.

The Dispatch recently sat down with County Administrator Kenneth Wilson and Zak Talarek, director of the county Office of Management and Budget, to review the proposed spending plan.

Budget hearings will be broadcast live on the commissioners' website, commissioners.franklincountyohio.gov, and that of City of Columbus Government Television.

A copy of the budget proposal will be available on the commissioners' website.

Southwest District

Commissioners discuss liberty, justice, and mail

Daily Advocate, November 17, 2022

The Darke County Board of Commissioners met Thursday to discuss Lady Liberty Justice and the mailman. Commissioners Matt Aultman, Mike Stegall, and Larry Holmes were present.

Dale Musser advised the commissioners, following the meeting, that Lady Liberty Justice will be taken down off the courthouse for a winter cleaning.

"I got confirmation this morning. We are going to take down Lady Liberty Justice from on top of the Courthouse. Midstate out of Marion, Ohio will take Lady Liberty, and they are going to take the mailman from the airport," Musser said.

He said the company will take the statues over to their facility and spend the winter cleaning them up, and they will bring them back in the spring. The statues will be taken down in the morning of Dec. 1.

"It'll be interesting. There will be a big crane," Musser said.

Southeast District

Commissioners donate $30K to Imagination Library

Harrison News-Herald, November 18, 2022

When the idea was first shared with Harrison County to implement the Ohio Governor's Imagination Library in 2019 as part of Fran DeWine's focus, library and county officials initially wondered how the county could afford a program like this. It costs $25.00 per child to provide 12 books per year sent to the child's home.

The Puskarich Public Library became the local affiliate and currently administers the program. Due to the generosity of local donors, including Ascent Resources, the project had a very successful start. Harrison County's enrollment is now at 536 and among the top 15 counties in Ohio, with 57% of eligible children enrolled.

The Ohio Legislature provided funding to help launch each county. The Harrison County Commissioners' recent donation of $30,000 will ensure that this county-wide project will send age-appropriate books for preschool children to their homes for another three years. This commitment shows that the Harrison County Commissioners realize the value of early literacy and its importance in improving Kindergarten readiness of our youngest county residents.

DATES TO REMEMBER

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NOVEMBER 24, 2022
THANKSGIVING

DECEMBER 7 - DECEMBER 9, 2022
CCAO-CEAO WINTER CONFERENCE (Register here)

DID YOU KNOW?

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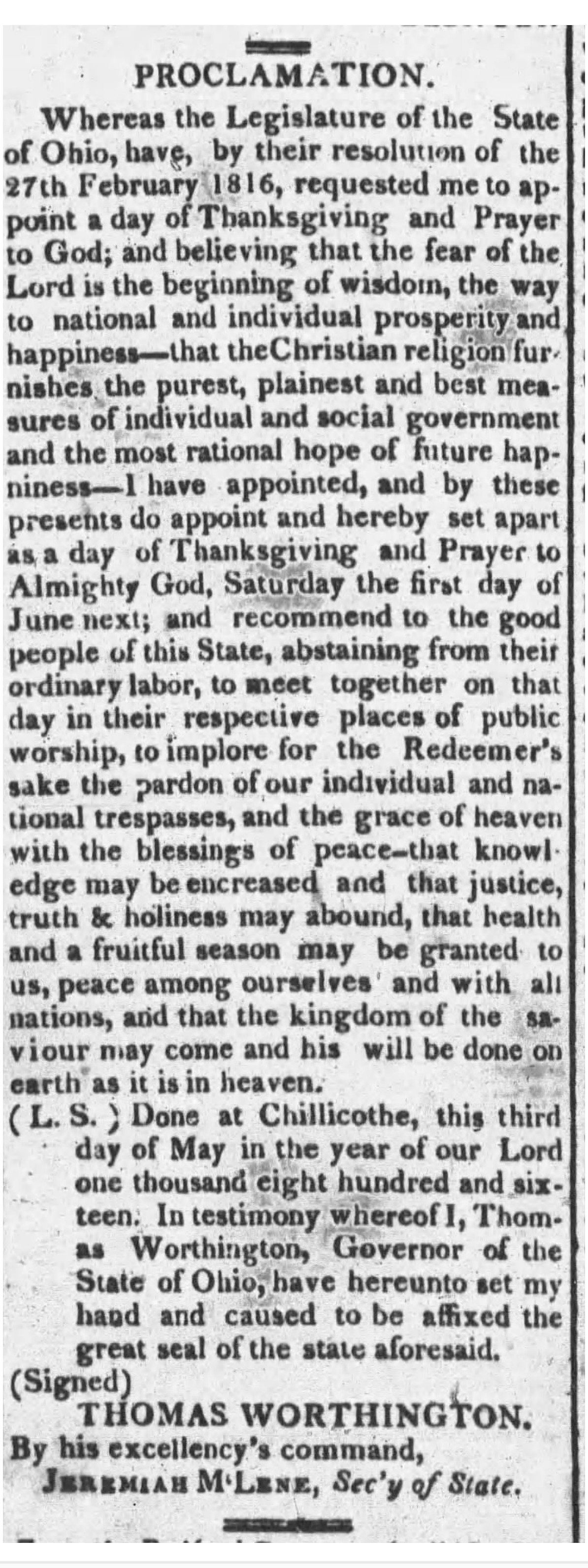
Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is one of the most malleable holidays celebrated in the United States. "Day[s] of thanks giving" date back almost as far as English settlement, with the holiday's establishment on the fourth Thursday of November occurring in 1941 after Ohio native and department store founder Fred Lazarus, Jr. convinced President Franklin Delano Roosevelt to set it at that date.

In the early days of Ohio's statehood, a statewide "day of thanksgiving" would be authorized by the General Assembly and then the governor would pick a date for its recognition. The date of Ohio's Thanksgiving varied considerably. Some occurred in November, similar to contemporary Thanksgiving, but other years saw the observation occur in May, June, July (in conjunction with Independence Day), and December.

Below: The 1816 proclamation from Governor Thomas Worthington establishing June 1 as that year's day of Thanksgiving.



PROCLAMATION.

Whereas the Legislature of the State of Ohio, have, by their resolution of the 27th February 1816, requested me to appoint a day of Thanksgiving and Prayer to God; and believing that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, the way to national and individual prosperity and happiness—that the Christian religion furnishes the purest, plainest and best measures of individual and social government and the most rational hope of future happiness—I have appointed, and by these presents do appoint and hereby set apart as a day of Thanksgiving and Prayer to Almighty God, Saturday the first day of June next; and recommend to the good people of this State, abstaining from their ordinary labor, to meet together on that day in their respective places of public worship, to implore for the Redeemer's sake the pardon of our individual and national trespasses, and the grace of heaven with the blessings of peace—that knowledge may be encreased and that justice, truth & holiness may abound, that health and a fruitful season may be granted to us, peace among ourselves and with all nations, and that the kingdom of the saviour may come and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

(L. S.) Done at Chillicothe, this third day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixteen. In testimony whereof I, Thomas Worthington, Governor of the State of Ohio, have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the great seal of the state aforesaid.

(Signed)
THOMAS WORTHINGTON.
By his excellency's command,
JEREMIAH M'LENE, *Sec'y of State.*

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