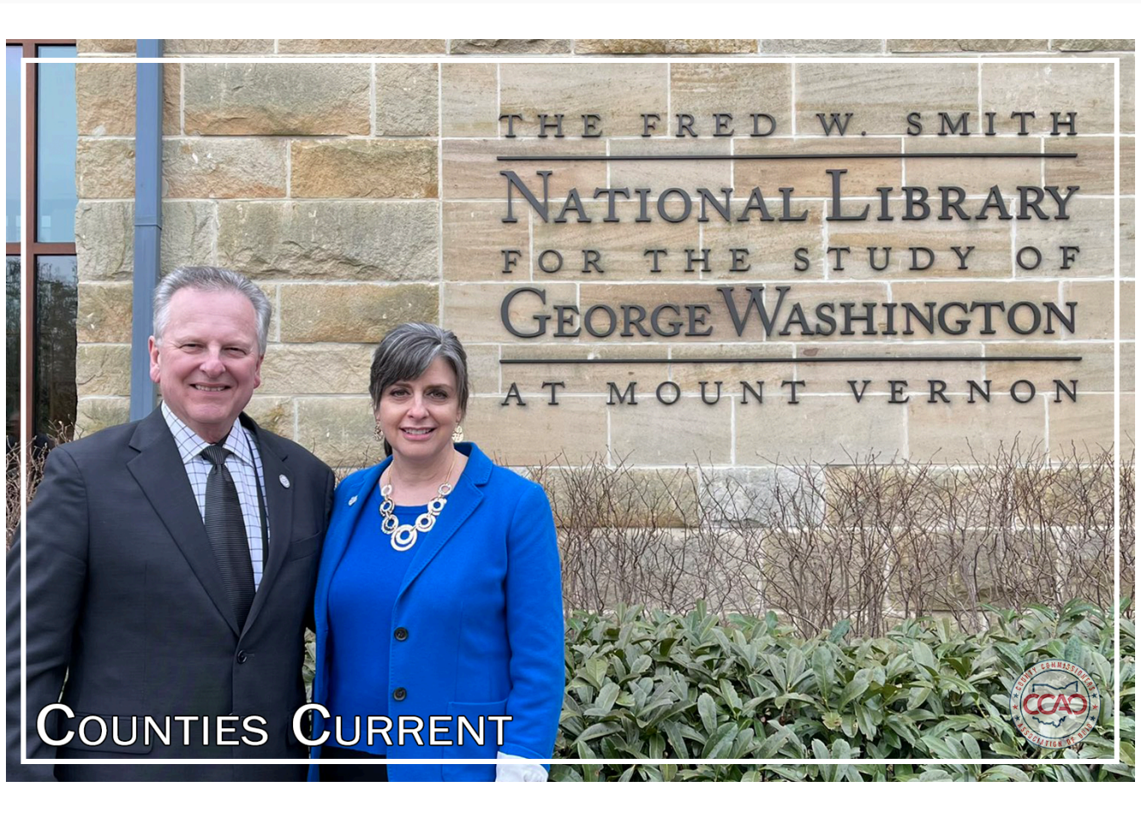

January 17, 2023

CCAO President and Henry County Commissioner Glenn Miller and CCAO Executive Director Cheryl Subler took part in a NACo event with state association presidents and executives at Mount Vernon last week.

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

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ASSOCIATION AND MEMBER NEWS

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Save the Date! New Member Training to be held February 27 - March 1

New Member Training is coming February 27, 28 and March 1 at the DoubleTree in Columbus! All members, new and experienced, are encouraged and invited to attend.

Early-bird registration pricing is available until February 19! Register by February 19 for the full training at a price of $250 and for single-day (any of the three days are eligible for single-day registration) for $150. After February 19 these prices will increase to $300 and $200, respectively.

You can reserve rooms at the DoubleTree for a reduced price through the CCAO's event portal, accessible here. Reduced rates are only available until February 13.

Registration can be completed here or through the link on the event page on CCAO's website.

A draft agenda for the training has also been released. Please note that time slots and sessions are subject to change.

We hope to see you in Columbus for the event! If you have questions, please contact Robin Garrett at rgarrett@ccao.org.

CCAO Survey: County broadband projects

CCAO is conducting a brief survey of county-led broadband projects to provide information to BroadbandOhio regarding counties that have, currently are, or will be pursuing broadband projects.

As a result of numerous conversations with BroadbandOhio and other broadband groups, CCAO would like to gather some information about broadband projects in Ohio's counties. The results of this survey will be shared with BroadbandOhio to enhance their understanding of the broadband landscape in Ohio's counties. The information will assist CCAO with our advocacy work surrounding broadband and hopefully lead to increased opportunities for technical and financial assistance moving forward.

You can access the survey here. Commissioners, county executives, and county council members, as well as county clerks and administrators will also be receiving a link to the survey in a direct email early this week.

Thank you for your help!

Reimbursement for psychotropic drug reimbursement must be submitted by February 15

The Psychotropic Drug Reimbursement Program for County Jails will continue in SFY 2023 (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023). OhioMHAS will provide reimbursement to counties for the cost of certain drugs dispensed to inmates of county jails in Ohio. Reimbursement for SFY 2023 shall be submitted by the county sheriff's office for the following periods identified below. Failure to submit reimbursement requests by the identified dates will result in the request being denied.

- July 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022 – submitted by February 15, 2023

The total reimbursement amount available for SFY 2023 is $3 million. Of the total amount, $1,500,000 is available for each reporting period. A county jail will receive reimbursement based on their jail's percentage of the total amount of reimbursement requested across all jails participating in the program. For example, if a county jail accounts for 1% of the total amount requested for the reporting period, the jail would receive $15,000.00.

Attached is the Guidelines and Assurances and the Entry Form. Both documents must be submitted to jailreimbursement@mha.ohio.gov by the deadline to be eligible for reimbursement. More information about the Psychotropic Drug Reimbursement Program can be found on the OhioMHAS website.

OhioMHAS will upload payment amounts for each jail in the Grants and Funding Management System. Once processed, the ADAMH Board will receive the funds. For jails that are in multiple ADAMH Board counties, the payment upload will be processed to the Board in the county where the jail is located.

Please reach out to Chris Nicastro, Chief of the Bureau of Criminal Justice Services in the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, with questions. You can contact him at 614-466-9969 or christopher.nicastro@mha.ohio.gov.

STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

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SNAP emergency allotment to end in February

On January 5, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services sent a letter to county JFS directors regarding the end of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) emergency allotments. You can read the full letter here. A summary is provided below.

As part of the federal response to the COVID-19 pandemic, states were allowed to request emergency allotments for households participating in SNAP. These allotments would end either at the conclusion of the federal public health emergency or until the state ended the program. Ohio has been providing the emergency allotments since March 2020.

Under the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, states are no longer permitted to issue emergency allotments after February 2023, meaning households receiving SNAP benefits will receive only their normal allotments.

In many cases this will cause a dramatic decrease in the SNAP allotment individuals and households will receive. For example, the minimum allotment for an individual under SNAP is $23 per month. During the period of emergency allotments, such an individual has been receiving an additional $258 per month, for a total of $281 per month. Beginning in March, this individual will receive only the original $25, an approximately 91% decrease.

For those households on SNAP, particularly those who had not been receiving SNAP before the pandemic, the cessation of emergency allotments will have a substantial effect on their monthly budgets.

This will be a difficult time for residents of your counties and for your job and family services staff. We encourage our members to read the letter attached above and begin coordinating with the applicable county departments to help inform your community about the impending change to minimize the surprise that this may have on Ohioans.

NACo is accepting applications for 2023 Achievement Awards

On December 19, NACo officially put out the call for applications for NACo Achievement Awards. The award program, entering its 53rd year, celebrates outstanding county government programs and services.

Achievement Award winners will be featured in County News, NACo's primary newsletter, and will be honored at NACo's Annual Conference. The recognition is also useful for highlighting important projects to your local community.

The awards cover 18 program categories, such as Children and Youth, Criminal Justice and Public Safety, Health, Human Services, Planning, Transportation, and more.

In 2022, Ohio counties received 28 Achievement Awards. You can view a full list of NACo Achievement Award winners dating back to 2009 at NACo's award database.

The deadline to submit applications is April 7, 2023, with applications received before March 3 receiving $25 off the application fee.

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.

Public water system equipment grant program accepting applications

The H2Ohio Public Water System Equipment Grant is now accepting applications. The program is open only to community public water systems and is intended to assist these water systems with purchasing vital equipment.

Equipment the funds may be used for include valve exercising equipment, pressure loggers, metal pipe locators, listening devices to detect leaks, and clamp-on flow meters to ensure the meters are accurate. Training costs for the above equipment is also an eligible expense.

Other equipment may be requested and may be approved on a case-by-case basis.

Applications must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. January 25. Award determinations will be issued by the Ohio EPA within 90 days of the close date. If you have questions regarding the program, please contact DDAGW.Grants@epa.ohio.gov.

SAM.gov, federal grant portal, walkthrough available

Last month, the US General Services Administration hosted an online forum to help walk state and local officials through how to use SAM.gov. The website is the primary portal for intergovernmental assistance from the federal government to state and local governments.

The Administration has made the presentation slide deck and the recording of the session available for download, as well as a one-page guide.

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

Ditch projects underway in Allen County

LimaOhio, January 12, 2023

State funding will lessen the cost for property owners in the completion of a long-planned drainage project north of Lima.

Allen County Commissioners approved the grant funding from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources for the Baughman Ditch Project on Thursday.

"It is a drainage project that was petitioned over 20 years ago that has not gotten anywhere because it is a very expensive project," said Beth Seibert, Allen County Commissioner. "The County Engineer obtained grants of now a total of over $2.5 million dollars. The Engineer's office was able to obtain state and federal monies and brought it in to create some wetland pockets for detention to help with the drainage. When we go to the final hearing on this we are hoping to reduce the cost to citizens."

Northeast District

Lorain County Commissioners to loan $13.9M to port authority to purchase Midway Mall

Morning Journal, January 10, 2023

In a move to make the Midway Mall in Elyria more attractive to potential developers, Lorain County commissioners will loan the Lorain County Port Authority $13.9 million to purchase the property and bring it under one ownership group.

"It's easier to get a developer to come in when just one person owns the mall," Commissioner Dave Moore said in an interview. "Right now, there are a couple of owners and developers who don't like dealing with multiple owners."

The County Port Authority would purchase the portion of the mall which is owned by Namdar and Industrial Commercial Properties, Moore said.

Central District

County commissioners look to transportation, housing and more for 2023

Lancaster Eagle Gazette, January 12, 2022

Fairfield County commissioner Steve Davis has studied the county's public transportation access for the past year or so. He learned even more about the county's transportation issues working as an Uber driver. Now as commission president, he said he'll continue to evaluate local transportation in 2023.

"The transit system (Lancaster-Fairfield Public Transit) is a city department and not a county department," Davis said. "So I've had some conversations with the mayor of Lancaster (David Scheffler) and some members of Lancaster City Council to just make sure they understand my desire to look at the transit system and see if it's where it should be or could be.

"It's not meant to be disrespectful in any way to what they've done so far. I just think there's a possibility that it could be better resourced and perhaps leaning into the connection between the workforce and employers."

Southwest District

Greene County shows $6 million surplus in operating budget with capital projects coming

Dayton Daily News, January 9, 2023

Greene County has a $6 million surplus in its 2023 budget, a necessary cushion for major planned construction projects, officials say.

The county budgeted expenses of $59.2 million, up from about $56.5 million last year, and the projected revenue is about $65.4 million.

The county is undertaking a massive project in the new $60 million Greene County Jail this year. Construction is expected to start in June or July, and most of the expenses associated with the jail will come in 2024 and 2025, County Administrator Brandon Huddleson said.

Last April, the county issued $30 million in sales tax-funded bonds to partially fund the jail, which the county must repay at $1.7 million annually, including in 2023. Additional funds come from $10 million in revenue replacement from the American Rescue Plan Act, and the rest from the county's cash reserves.

Southeast District

County looking to move dispatch center

Coshocton Tribune, January 14, 2023

Coshocton County Commissioners are proceeding with a contract between the Coshocton County Sheriff's Office and Central Square for installing equipment and establishing a call center at the new Coshocton Justice Center once completed.

This includes Central Square's technology, wiring and servers. The breakdown is $72,000 for hardware, $55,000 for management services and $6,000 for travel. Funding will come from the 911 services levy. Other items needed will include leasing a new console and a new communications tower.

Sheriff Jim Crawford said he wanted Central Square involved with the project soon as possible to guarantee a smooth switch when dispatch goes to the facility, which is about two years off. Crawford said he was also worried about supply chain issues delaying equipment.

DATES TO REMEMBER

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JANAURY 20
CCAO BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

FEBRUARY 27 - MARCH 1
NEW MEMBER TRANINING

DID YOU KNOW?

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Hardin County

On January 11, 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., gave a speech at Ohio Northern University, located in Hardin County. King and Dr. James Udy, ONU's chaplain at the time, had been doctoral students together at the University of Boston. After a few false starts in arranging for King to speak on campus, the January 11, 1968, date was finally set.

King was assassinated less than three months after delivering the speech to students at ONU.

You can access a transcript of King's speech here and listen to a recording of the speech here. A short exert is below (line breaks added to increase ease of reading).

> *I haven't lost faith in the future. I still feel that we can develop a kind of coalition of conscience, and with this coalition move on into a brighter tomorrow. With this faith we will be able to do it.*
>
> *here is something in this universe that justifies Carlyle in saying, "No lie can live forever."*
>
> *There is something in this universe that justifies William Cullen Bryant in saying, "Truth, crushed to earth, will rise again."*
>
> *There is something in this universe which justifies James Russell Lowell in saying, "Truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne, yet that scaffold sways the future."*
>
> *With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. We will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood.*

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