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June 20, 2023

Cuyahoga County Council President Pernel Jones, Jr., Cuyahoga County District Six Councilwoman Meredith Turner, and Cuyahoga County Executive Chris Ronayne marked the Juneteenth holiday by unveiling the latest Ohio Historical Marker. The newest marker commemorates the African American Cultural Garden in Cleveland, a part of the city's wider Cultural Gardens.

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ASSOCIATION AND MEMBER NEWS

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Washington County Commissioner Schilling appointed to CORSA board of directors

The County Risk Sharing Authority (CORSA) recently announced that Washington County Commissioner Charlie Schilling has been selected to serve on the CORSA board of directors. Charlie was recommended by the selection committee and was unanimously appointed by the Board of Directors to fill the unexpired term of Commissioner Paul Haller.

"I'm honored to be selected to be on the CORSA board of directors. CORSA has a longstanding reputation of serving Washington County and the best interests of each county it represents. I look forward to the opportunity to collaborate with the Board and work on behalf of our member counties to provide the best property and liability coverage along with risk management services," said Commissioner Charlie Schilling.

"I welcome Commissioner Schilling to the board. Charlie's experience and knowledge will be invaluable to the CORSA Board and membership. I am excited that he agreed to share his expertise with CORSA and appreciate his dedication not only to Washington County but to CORSA as well. Charlie will be a great asset as we look to the future to continue to offer superior services that will help counties protect their resources," said CORSA Managing Director John Brownlee.

Commissioners from CORSA member counties are eligible to serve on the board and are elected by the Board and the membership at the Annual Meeting held in September. Board members may serve four consecutive, three-year terms.

CORSA, established in 1987 by the County Commissioners Association of Ohio as a service program, is a self-insured property and liability pool for county government. Currently, 72 of the 88 counties are members.

CCAO First VP and Tuscarawas County Commissioner Chris Abbuhl attends leadership institute in D.C.

CCAO First Vice President and Tuscarawas County Commissioner Chris Abbuhl is currently attending the National Association of Counties County Leadership Institute (CLI) in Washington D.C. CLI is designed for elected or appointed officials at the policy-making level with at least three years' experience that demonstrate an interest in innovative approaches to governance.

CCAO is able to nominate at least one leader for consideration each year for this class. NACo works with CLI faculty to consider each application and accept one nomination per state, based on applications that reflect the diversity of NACo's membership.

The curriculum provides a basis for the application of adaptive leadership as a strategy for addressing challenging issues in public service. It was developed specifically for NACo by Marty Linsky, co-founder of Cambridge Leadership Associates and faculty at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, in collaboration with Dr. Ellen Schall, Dean, Robert F. Wagner School of Public Policy at the New York University.

The CLI curriculum is built for immediate application to the most pressing - and daunting - challenges. This leadership development offering is provocative, high energy and immersive.

In a setting built to interrogate one's own assumptions and cast a larger footprint, Commissioner Abbuhl will leave with:

- A cohesive framework for diagnosing the most entrenched challenges.
- Deepened understanding of self and the systems worked in.
- A strategy to navigate the politics — considering what happens when the rules aren't clear - at play in one's own organization and build diverse allies and partners.
- A tested approach for consulting with others.
- A practical action plan for next steps personally and related to one's own challenges.

You can learn more about the County Leadership Institute here.

SAVE THE DATE!
CCAO
Summer Symposium
August 16–18, 2023
Economic Development Strategies: Ohio Counties Reaching Forward
For County Commissioners, County Executives and County Council Members and Their Key Staff
Early Bird Registration Opens Early June
AREAS OF INTEREST
Economic Development Practices
Workforce Development Case Studies
Successful Landbank Practices
Expanding Broadband Services

Register today for CCAO's 2023 Summer Symposium!

Registration for CCAO's 2023 Summer Symposium is now open! Taking place at Cherry Valley Hotel in Newark from August 16 to August 18, the symposium is titled Economic Development Strategies: Ohio Counties Reaching Forward and will feature sessions on broadband, landbanks, case studies of economic development successes in counties around the state, and more.

Registration for the event can be completed on CCAO's site and reservations at Cherry Valley Hotel can be made here.

Also taking place on Wednesday, August 16, is the County Classic, a golf outing to benefit the CCAO Research & Education Foundation. The Classic will take place at the Clover Valley Golf Club in Johnstown. Transportation to the course from the Cherry Valley Hotel will be provided. You can register for the County Classic here.

DeWine-Husted Administration awards latest water quality grants

Governor Mike DeWine, Lt. Governor Jon Husted, and Director of the Department of Development Ludia Mihalik announced funding for 70 water infrastructure projects last week. The projects are located in 58 counties and total $114 million. The awards are the latest under the Ohio BUILDS program, which has provided more than $360 million to support 253 water projects across the state.

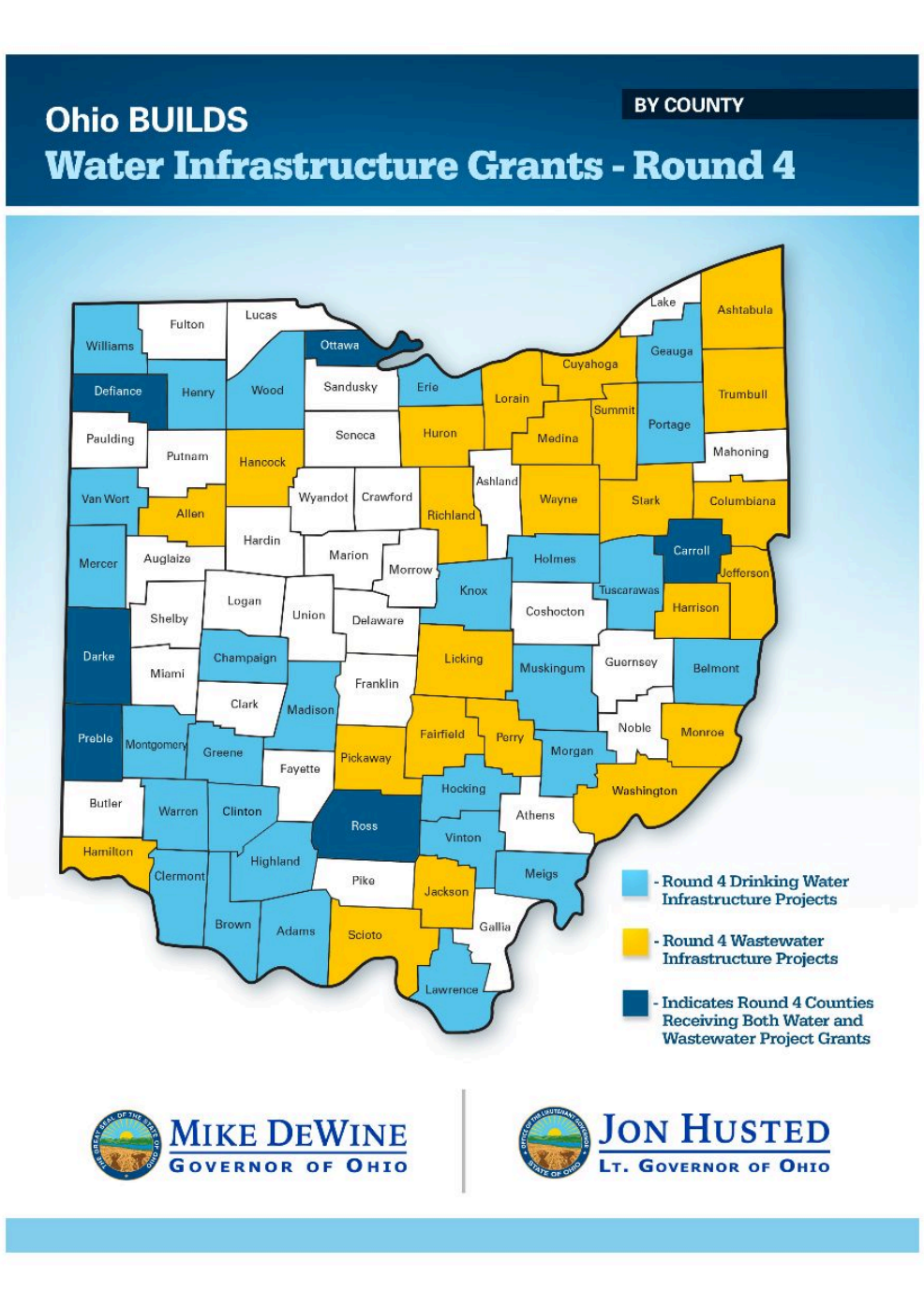
Four boards of county commissioners will receive funding as part of the latest round:

- **Holmes County**: $4.35 million to extend a waterline to the Tuscarawas County line. Will benefit 132 people.
- **Lawrence County**: $3.62 million to extend a waterline to a community that largely relies on cisterns and wells. Will benefit 127 people.
- **Madison County**: $5.00 million to construct a new water distribution system in an area lacking one. Will benefit 600 people.
- **Vinton County**: $5.85 million for an improvement project to extend services to households served by contaminated or insufficient wells. Will benefit 130 people.

The grants announced last week will help reduce or eliminate the local financial burden associated with critical infrastructure needs such as new water distribution systems, waterline extensions, water tower replacements, and new pipes and water mains. Grants will also fund projects to replace sanitary sewer systems, prevent sewer system backups, and extend sewer lines to allow for economic growth.

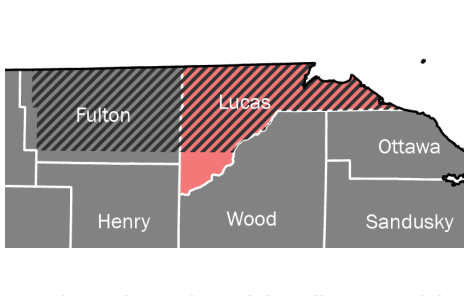
The DeWine-Husted Administration launched the Ohio BUILDS water infrastructure program in 2021 as a continuation of Governor DeWine's H2Ohio initiative, which launched in 2019 to focus on ensuring plentiful, clean, and safe water for communities across the state. In total, $500 million has been dedicated to the program, and a fifth round awarding additional funding will be announced later this summer.

A map showing the projects funded in the latest rounds is below, and you can read summaries of the projects here.



Happy birthday to Lucas County!

Today is Lucas County's 188th birthday! Established in 1835, Lucas County was formed out of land formerly belonging to Henry County and Wood County, as well as, famously, land that the Michigan Territory claimed. The "Toledo War" was largely a posturing battle between Ohio and the Michigan Territory, with only a few shots fired and only one wound (a minor stabbing wound). It ended with Ohio receiving the "Toledo Strip" and the Michigan Territory receiving the Upper Peninsula. The county was named after Robert Lucas, the Governor of Ohio during the "war."



Years before the bloodless Toledo War, one of the most important battles in American history took place in modern-day Lucas County. The 1794 Battle of Fallen Timbers pitted the Legion of the United States (the then-name of the federal army) against a confederacy of Native American tribes. The American victory forced the tribes out of the area and secured American control over the Northwest Territory. The states of Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, and Wisconsin would later be carved out of the territory.

STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

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Update on OneOhio opioid settlements and structure

The last two weeks has brought three new developments on related to the OneOhio opioid settlement arrangement and structure. First, as was reported in last week's *Counties Current*, Ohio recently reached a settlement with two developers (Teva and Allergan) and two pharmacies (CVS and Walgreens) that will bring nearly $680 million to Ohio over the next 15 years. Under the OneOhio agreement, 55% of opioid-related settlements the state receives goes to the OneOhio Recovery Foundation for use at regional and statewide levels, 30% goes directly to local governments participating in the lawsuits (with some stipulations), and 15% goes to directly to the state.

Second, last week, the OneOhio Recovery Foundation received official designation from the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. This designation exempts the Foundation from federal income taxes and allows donors to the foundation to deduct contributions they make \under IRC Section 170 and qualifies the Foundation also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts.

Finally, during the budget process, the Senate included a provision that specifies the OneOhio Recovery Foundation is not a state agency, executive agency, public office, state entity, public employer, or a department, office, or institution and exempts the Foundation from requirements of those entities. It requires that full board meetings be open to the public, with the exception of executive sessions. The budget process is still ongoing so this language is not law.

Attorney General Dave Yost releases AG Opinion regarding county jail admission

Recently, Attorney General Dave Yost released AGO 2023-007, a response to a request from the Scioto County Prosecutor's office. The opinion concerns the ability of county sheriffs to deny an arrestee admission to the county jail if the jail physician determines that off-site treatment is a medical necessity.

As a summary, the opinion states that:

1. A county sheriff may create rules and policies to deny arrestees admission to the county jail if the jail physician determines that off-site treatment is a medical necessity. These rules must be approved by the county court of common pleas.
    1. It is not immediately clear how this procedure would work in the case of a multi-county jail.
2. The medical costs of an arrestee so denied admission are the responsibility of the law enforcement agency that has custody of the arrestee.
3. If an arrestee is denied admission based on a medical necessity, the arrestee remains in the custody of the outside law-enforcement officer and said officer is responsible for transporting the arrestee to the appropriate medical facility.

Secretary of State issues updated directive on voter registration cancellations

Last week, Secretary of State Frank LaRose issued Directive 2023-10, updated instructions on data collection and cancellation procedures due to the August 8, 2023, special election that was scheduled after the previous directive (2023-05) was issued.

The main updated instruction is that boards of elections are prohibited from cancelling any voter registration under the 2019 National Change of Address (NCOA) process prior to the August 8 election. Once the election concludes, normal procedures under the NCOA Process can continue.

Please review and ensure that your county board of elections reviews the new directive.

NACo partners with Homeland Security on cyber protections

With an increase in cyber threats, ranging from phishing attempts to ransomware attacks, NACo has partnered with the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center, a body within the US Department of Homeland Security, to promote county cybersecurity practices.

NACo members can learn more about the partnership here.

CCAO, the CCAO Service Corporation, and CORSA will highlight more cybersecurity opportunities in the coming weeks.

Two weeks remain to utilize the children services workforce recruitment and retention grant

The window for spending a one-time $15 million grant awarded by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to county public children services agencies (PCSAs) last year will **close June 30**.

The workforce recruitment and retention grant, which is managed by the Public Children Services Association of Ohio, was allocated to counties by formula in June 2022 to improve recruitment and retention of frontline workers. ODJFS offered counties a number of options for spending the grant, including various types of incentives and bonuses, tuition payment and loan reimbursement, culture and climate initiatives, flexible/hybrid work options, and more. Many of these options were identified in an OSU report on the children services workforce released by PCSAO in February 2022. The grant provided a rare opportunity to offer bonuses and make purchases outside the normal course of business.

Some county agencies have spent their entire allotment, while others have scheduled retention bonuses to be paid by the end of June. According to PCSAO, grant funds **must be entirely expended by June 30**, with final reports and grant closeout due September 10.

PCSAO added that one-time funding presents unique challenges, particularly when in the form of a grant. JFS and Children Services Board directors worked closely with commissioners last year to identify the most feasible, flexible and sometimes creative spending options for the county, but given the ongoing workforce crisis, plans evolved.

With a hard deadline of June 30, commissioners can help ensure that the entire local allocation is expended by working with PCSA directors to shift unspent funds to other allowable grant expenses or to relinquish unspent funds to other counties that can use them.

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.

CCAO and Huntington National Bank to host commercial card webinar ***tomorrow***

CCAO and Huntington National Bank are hosting a webinar tomorrow, June 21, at 10:00 a.m. regarding the new Ohio County Commercial Card Consortium program.

The webinar, featuring presenters Peggy Bronson and Lisa Evans of Huntington National Bank, will discuss the benefits of joining the consortium, an overview of all the available Huntington Commercial Card product features that can be tailored to meet your county's needs, and what it takes to set up a program with Huntington Bank.

Registration is free and can be completed here.

NACo offering cyberattack simulation training to NACo members

CCAO is highlighting three NACo cybersecurity offerings that it will host this year, all of which are cyberattack simulations. The simulations are designed and presented in partnership with the Professional Development Academy, risk managers, chief information security officers, chief information officers, and more.

Registration is open only to NACo members and a single event registration costs $150 per individual. You can register for all three events at one time for $450 per individual.

The second, scheduled for September 11 to Spetember 15, is a simulation of a ransomware attack. Ransomware attacks involve a virus typically disguised as a harmless file that prohibits access to vital and sensitive files until the owner pays a ransom to regain access. If the ransom is not paid, the files may be permanent erased or released to malicious third parties.

The third simulation is scheduled for December 4 to December 8 and will focus on the employee management aspect of cyberattacks and how an aware and conscious workforce can help prevent cyberattacks.

If you are interested in joining NACo to gain access to useful trainings such as these, please contact CCAO Assistant Director John Leutz, CCAO Service Corporation Manager Steve Caraway, or CCAO Boards Liaison and Events Manager Robin Garrett.

SAM.gov, federal grant portal, walkthrough available; grant writing resources 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.

Grants are a valuable resource for counties to utilize, but knowing how best to develop competitive applications can be difficult and the learning curve cause counties to lose out on grants. Luckily, federal agencies and nonprofits offer resources to assist in developing competitive applications. Federal agency websites point to internal and external sources and many conduct free training and targeted one on one or small group technical assistance. Here are some current resources to explore:

- Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse
- Great Lakes Community Action Partnership
- Local Infrastructure Hub
- National Wildlife Federation
- Rural Community Assistance Partnership
- State and Community Energy Programs-Tools and Resources
- US Department of Transportation
- USDA Rural Development
- 10,000 Communities Initiative

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.

Updated comparison of state and federal procurement law available

Bricker Graydon has shared a revised comparison of Ohio procurement law and federal uniform guidance. The document is intended to provide a comparison of the procurement rules and regulations prescribed by both federal law and state law, as they relate to Ohio counties using ARPA funds. Counties must comply with both state and federal law, where possible. Where federal requirements are more restrictive than state law, federal law must be followed. Where state law is more restrictive than federal requirements, state law must be followed.

The key revision regards state term contracts (page 8), which counties may participate in but Bricker Graydon suggests exercising caution and reviewing Auditor of State training materials before doing so.

The information presented in the chart was prepared by Bricker Graydon LLP as a service to CCAO. This information is intended solely for informational purposes of CCAO and its members and is not intended to constitute legal advice to, and may not be relied upon by, any party. Readers should engage legal counsel to provide legal advice related to any specific transaction.

Federal legislation increases ARPA flexibility for infrastructure, disaster response, and CDBG projects

The federal Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 was signed into law on December 29, 2022. The legislation contains important updates to how counties and other local governments may use their ARPA funds. First, the Act codifies the standard allowance included in the US Department of the Treasury's Final Rule that permits counties to use up to $10 million for the provision of government services under the "revenue loss" eligibility category without having to demonstrate losses through a complicated formula. This codification means that the Treasury Department cannot alter the standard allowance in any subsequent rulemaking.

The Act also permits counties to use the greater of $10 million or 30 percent of their total ARPA allocation for federal infrastructure projects, responding to natural disasters, or Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) projects. Counties must expend these funds no later than September 30, 2026, rather than the standard date of December 31, 2026. Eligible natural disaster responses include emergency relief and the negative economic impacts of natural disasters, including temporary emergency housing, food assistance, financial assistance for lost wages, or other immediate needs. CDBG projects must meet the requirements of Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.

Some of the federal infrastructure programs eligible for ARPA match include the National Highway Performance Program; Bridge Investment Program; Surface Transportation Block Grant Program; and, the Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program. More information, and a complete list of eligible transportation programs, is available from NACo at this link.

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

Seneca County Commissioners support new 2-1-1 program

TiffinOhio.net, June 9, 2023

The Seneca County Board of Commissioners showed their support on Thursday morning for a new program proposed by the Tiffin-Seneca United Way. The program, known as "2-1-1," aims to provide a countywide information hotline to assist residents with various needs.

Chris Lewis, Executive Director of the United Way, presented the proposal to the commissioners, highlighting the benefits of the "2-1-1" system. Lewis described it as a free and confidential phone line that serves as a comprehensive resource for individuals seeking assistance. The program aims to offer a one-stop shop for people facing utility disconnections or eviction.

Once implemented, the "2-1-1" system will enable residents to dial the number at any time, connecting them to local resources tailored to their specific needs. Lewis emphasized that the service would provide assistance in areas such as housing, utilities, employment, finance, transportation, and education.

Northeast District

Cuyahoga County to consider purchasing Garfield Heights jail property for $38.7-million

Cleveland.com, June 15, 2023

Cuyahoga County Executive Chris Ronayne's preferred site for a new jail in Garfield Heights comes with a higher sticker price than other options the county has considered, but it's not the most expensive currently under review, records show.

Ronayne submitted legislation to County Council this week to purchase three parcels totaling 72.1 acres at Granger Road and Transportation Boulevard for $38.7 million.

The proposed purchase will be formally introduced at Council's regular meeting at 5 p.m. on Tuesday and referred to committee for discussion.

"The primary goal of the agreement is to purchase land to be used for construction of the Cuyahoga County Central Campus," a copy of the resolution obtained by cleveland.com and The Plain Dealer reads.

Central District

County Commissioners open to banning solar farms in Etna if requested

Newark Advocate, June 11, 2023

As Etna Township explores whether to prohibit large solar farms within its boundaries, the Licking County Commissioners say they are open to the request.

Etna Township Trustees held an open forum June 6 about designating the entire township as an exclusionary zone for utility-scale solar and wind energy facilities. The trustees heard from State Representative Kevin Miller, Licking County Soil and Water Conservation District Program Administrator Kristy Hawthorne, Etna residents, and a member of Save Hartford Township, a grassroots organization fighting against a 350-megawatt solar project in northwest Licking County.

Etna doesn't have the authority to prohibit them on their own. But through Senate Bill 52, which was enacted in 2021, counties have the authority to bar or limit development of wind farms larger than 5 megawatts and solar farms larger than 50 megawatts. Etna Township would need to pass a resolution asking the commissioners to prohibit the large energy farms on their behalf.

Southwest District

What tax hike will Hamilton County consider for the Cincinnati Zoo?

Cincinnati Enquirer, June 13, 2023

If Hamilton County voters approve a property tax increase for the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, county residents should get a discount on zoo tickets and memberships, a report presented to county commissioners Tuesday concluded.

The Hamilton County Tax Levy Review Committee recommended the three Hamilton County commissioners put a zoo levy increase on the November ballot. If approved by voters, it would increase the tax property owners pay for the zoo by almost $4 per $100,000 of property value, raising the zoo levy from $9.01 to $12.86 per $100,000, according to the zoo's calculations.

That would be a 43% increase, although the zoo tax is one of the smaller county levies.

Southeast District

County looking to increase vehicle registration fee by $10

Daily Jeffersonian, June 12, 2023

The Guernsey County commissioners recently held a public hearings in regards to a proposed license plate tax increase for county residents. A second public hearing is scheduled for 7 p.m. Thursday, at the County Administration building, 627 Wheeling Ave.

The proposed increase is an additional $10 per vehicle. The increase would provide additional funding of $470,000 for road and bridge maintenance throughout the county. Ohio Revised Code Sections 4504.16 and 4504.24 allow a county board of commissioners to increase the vehicle registration permissive tax, better known simply as the permissive tax, by $5.

The hearings are required by law for the Guernsey County Commissioners to consider the increase per the Ohio Revised Code. The increase is to provide additional funding for maintenance and repairs to county roads and bridges. A portion of the money will go to townships based on the number of vehicle registrations.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Please view the CCAO Calendar for a comprehensive list of events to note.

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JUNE 21
CCAO-Huntington Bank webinar

JUNE 30
CEBCO Board Meeting

JULY 4
Independence Day

JULY 6
Joint CCAO Agriculture Committee and Water Quality Task Force Meeting

JULY 21 - 24
NACo Annual Conference (Austin, Texas)

County Fair Dates:
You can access a full schedule here.

DID YOU KNOW?

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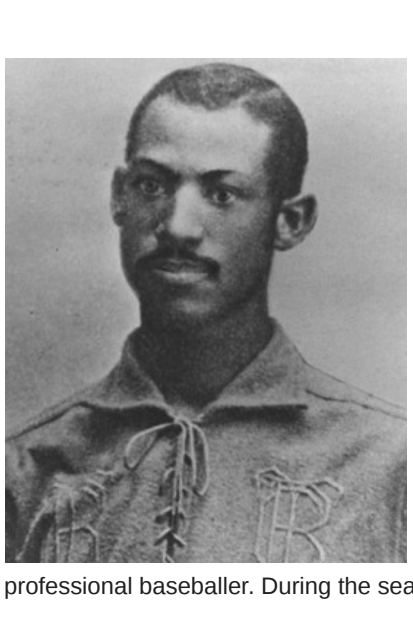
Lucas County



The Toledo Blue Stockings, an early baseball team, is known for employing the first professional black baseball player. Moses Fleetwood Walker, a native of Mount Pleasant, Ohio, was a standout at the integrated Oberlin College. In 1883, he signed a contract with the Toledo Blue Stockings, a team in the Northwestern League. Walker was a catcher during an era when catchers wore little to no gear; he often caught games barehanded.

The team transferred to the American Association, a major league, in 1884, making Walker the first black professional baseballer. During the season, Toledo signed Walker's brother, Weldy Walker, making the brothers the first two black professional baseball players. Baseball would wait 63 years for the third, Jackie Robinson.

You can read more about Moses Fleetwood Walker here.

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