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November 6, 2023

CCAO is happy to host a webinar with Kara Wente, Director of the Department of Children and Youth, this Wednesday! The webinar, to be held at 9:00 a.m., will discuss the newly created department and offer CCAO members the opportunity to share their counties' challenges and successes with the Director.

Registration is not required! You can place the webinar on your calendar via this file.

Association and Member News | State and Federal News | Education and Grants | ARPA and BIF Resources | County News | Job Postings

Statehouse Report and Counties Current Archive | Dates to Remember

ASSOCIATION AND MEMBER NEWS

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LAST DAY of Early Bird pricing for CCAO-CEAO Winter Conference!

Register today!

The County Commissioners Association of Ohio and the County Engineers Association of Ohio invite you to the CCAO/CEAO Annual Winter Conference! The event will be held December 6 - 8 at Hilton Columbus Downtown (402 North High Street, Columbus, OH 43215).

Registration for the event itself can be completed here. ***Today is the final day*** that registration is $495; beginning tomorrow the cost increases to $595.

Sessions will cover topics such as community-based solar, broadband, cybersecurity and more! Attendees will also have the opportunity to hear from guest speaker retired Rear Admiral Peter Cressy, who will share leadership strategies used by President George Washington. You can view the entire tentative agenda here.

Additionally, for the future you imagine, you will have the opportunity to secure an appointment for a one-on-one meeting with a dedicated Empower Retirement Plan Advisor during this year's conference. Registration details for these appointments are coming soon!

If you prefer to print a copy of the registration forms for affiliate associations, click here. For the county registration and or sponsor form, click here, and for the spouse or guest registration form, click here.

Darke County receives $500,000 BroadbandOhio grant

Last week, Lt. Governor Jon Husted and Department of Development Director Lydia Mihalik joined the Darke County Board of Commissioners to announce a $500,000 grant the county received to support a broadband project.

The project, undertaken in partnership with Agile Network Builders, will expand a hybrid fiber wireless network to fixed tower sites and will expand broadband coverage to more than 20,000 households across the county.

"We are pleased that functional broadband access will be available to more than 90 percent of our county residents," said Darke County Commissioner Larry Holmes. "The benefits to our residents and businesses will be wide-ranging, from improving the quality of everyday life to the ability for a business to compete in today's worldwide marketplace."

The grant from BroadbandOhio will cover about 18% of the project's total $2.8 million cost.

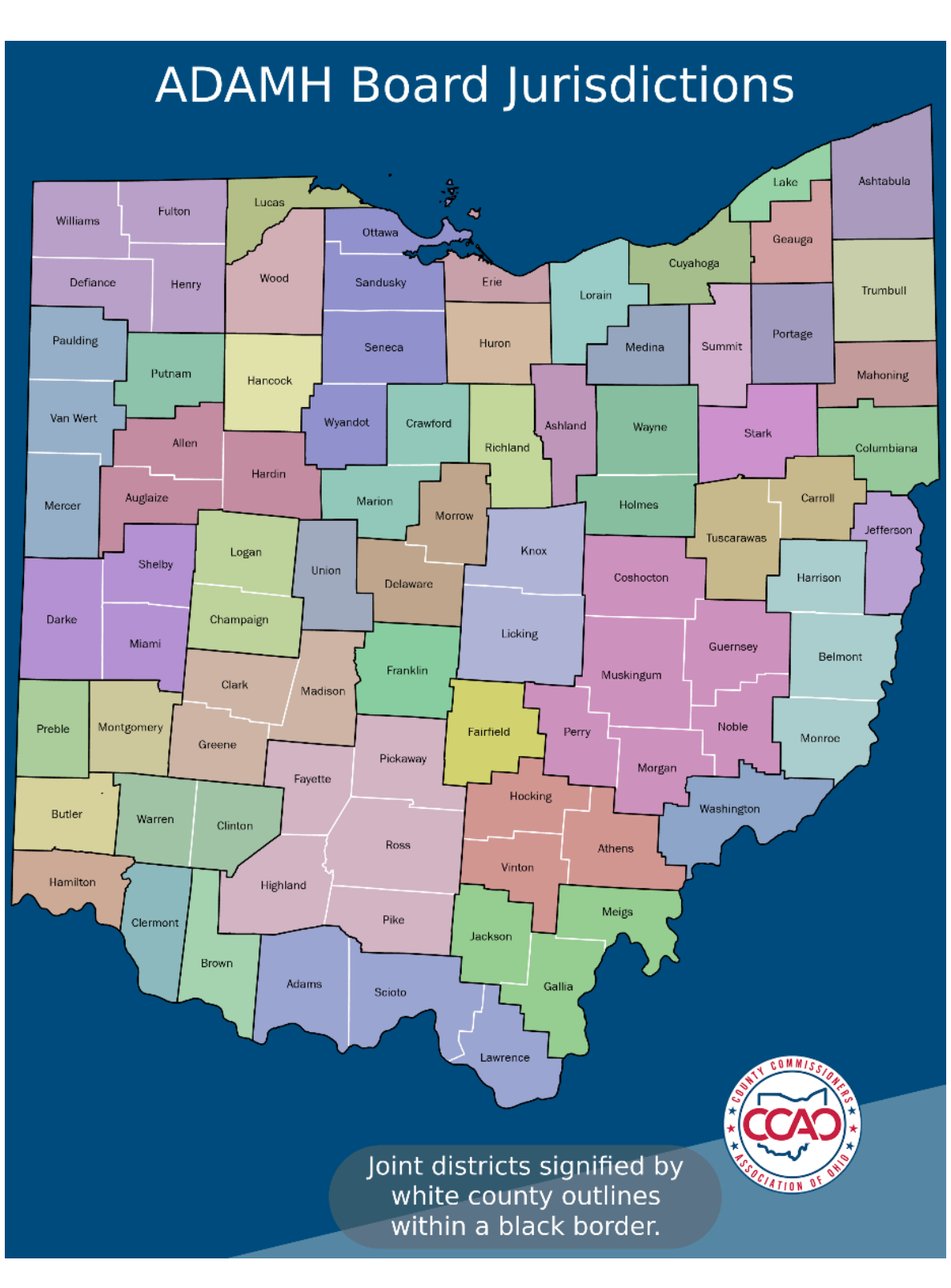
Fall 2023 issue of County Leader available!

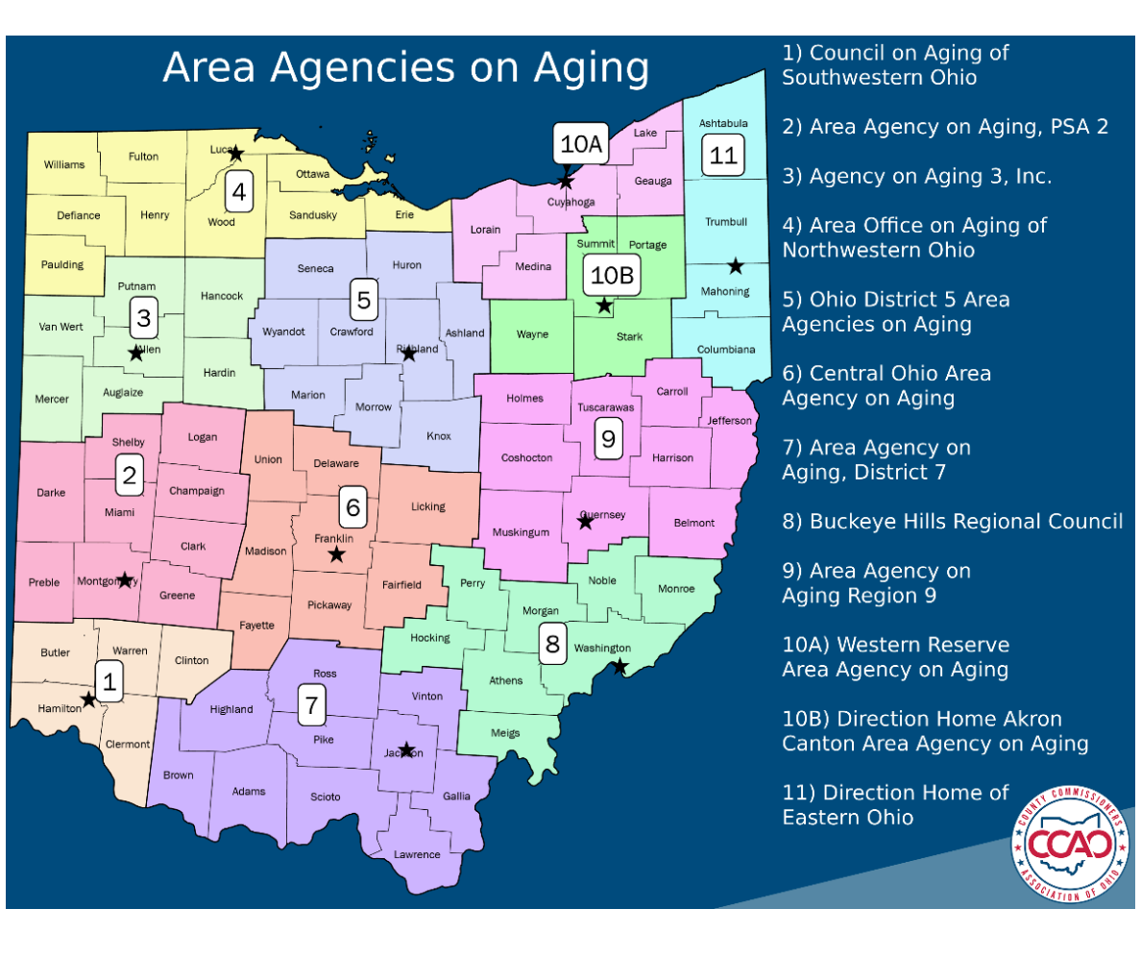
CCAO published the Fall 2023 edition of our quarterly magazine, County Leader, today! The 32-page issue features columns from CCAO President and Henry County Commissioner Glenn Miller and CCAO Executive Director Cheryl Subler, features on Ashtabula County's Storybook Trail and Logan County's new memory care unit at Logan Acres Retirement Community, a spotlight on the role of legal aid, as well as updates from CEBCO, CORSA, and the CCAO Service Corp and more!

Read it today!

CCAO posts new County Data Exchange items

Last week, CCAO posted three new County Data Exchange entries on our website! All three fall under the Health, Human Services, and Workforce heading. They provide a list of the counties with county hospitals and maps of Ohio's Area Agencies on Aging and Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health (ADAMH) districts.




Area Agencies on Aging
1) Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio
2) Area Agency on Aging, PSA 2
3) Agency on Aging 3, Inc.
4) Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio
5) Ohio District 5 Area Agencies on Aging
6) Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging
7) Area Agency on Aging, District 7
8) Buckeye Hills Regional Council
9) Area Agency on Aging Region 9
10A) Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging
10B) Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging
11) Direction Home of Eastern Ohio
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STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

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Call for NACo Board of Directors letters of interest, registration open for 2024 NACo Legislative Conference

There are two important NACo notices to share.

NACo Board of Directors Letter of Interest
First, CCAO has issued its annual Call of Letters of Interest for the NACo Board of Directors. Per NACo and CCAO bylaws, the Ohio membership of NACo elects two members of the NACo board during CCAO's annual business meeting (December 7th).

Those individuals interested in running for one of these two positions must submit a 1-2 page letter of interest with Robin Garrett (rgarrett@ccao.org) ***no later than Monday, November 20***, at noon. Letters of interest will be circulated to NACo members on November 22.

During the annual business meeting, each NACo county will receive two votes and the top two vote-getters will be elected to terms that run from July 2024 to June 2025.

PLEASE NOTE: this election does not impact any other NACo board positions, such as members who may have received a presidential appointment or who are on the NACo Board by virtue of previously having served as NACo President.

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

NACo Legislative Conference Registration
The second NACo notice to share is that registration is now open for the 2024 NACo Legislative Conference held annually in Washington, D.C. The conference will take place from February 10-13. Registration, which can be completed here, will cost member counties $520 until December 9, $575 from December 10 through January 27, and $690 after January 28. Those figures for non-member counties are, respectively, $750/$810/$960.

A tentative schedule for the event is available here.

Ohio Domestic Action Plan 2023 open to public comments until November 17

The Lake Erie Commission recently held a public meeting regarding the Ohio Domestic Action Plan 2023.

You can access the recording of the meeting here, as well as a supplemental video focusing on two-stage ditches here.

A copy of the slides and more can be found on the Lake Erie Commission's page. The Commission is accepting public comments at dap@lakeerie.ohio.gov through November 17. If you represent a county in the Lake Erie Basin, CCAO encourages you to review the Domestic Action Plan draft and share your community's thoughts.

If you have questions regarding the Domestic Action Plan, please contact Policy Analyst James Kennedy.

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 to host webinar with Department of Children and Youth Director Kara Wente this week

This Wednesday, November 8, CCAO will be hosting a webinar focusing on the newly created Department of Children and Youth. The Director of the new department, Kara Wente, will be presenting.

The new department will operate programs and services previously housed at six other cabinet agencies and serve children prenatal to age 21. During this webinar, the department will share updates on the transition, the infrastructure for the new agency, and strategies and goals for serving our youngest Ohioans. Members will also have the opportunity to ask questions of Director Wente.

The webinar will be held at 9:00 a.m. on November 8, via Microsoft Teams. Registration is not required, and the meeting can be accessed via this link.

BroadbandOhio to host grant webinar on Thursday

This Thursday, November 9, at 3:00 p.m., BroadbandOhio will be hosting a webinar regarding the second round of the Ohio Residential Broadband Expansion grant. The webinar will provide information regarding the application process, changes that have been made since the first round of the grant, and feature a Q&A segment.

Registration for the webinar is free and can be completed here.

You can learn more about the grant program, including the accessing a copy of the application, guidebook, and scoring criteria, at Broadband.Ohio.gov.

OBM announces fourth annual Grants Summit

The Office of Budget and Management (OBM) will be hosting its fourth annual Ohio Grants Summit on November 29 and 30, from 9:00 a.m. to noon each day.

The event, which is free, brings state and local officials together to discuss the federal and state intergovernmental grant process. The event is also broadcast and archived on the Ohio Channel for those unable to come to Columbus.

The sessions this year are:

- **November 29:**
    - Tips for a Successful Grant Application
    - Proposed Updates to the Federal Uniform Guidance
    - Federal Grant Update
- **November 30:**
    - Closeouts and Continuing Responsibilities
    - Maximizing Federal Funds
    - Preparing for Infrastructure Funding

Registration for each day is separate and at no cost. You can register for November 29 here and November 30 here.

Two OEPA webinars upcoming: Mosquito Control and Brownfields

On November 16, the OEPA will host a webinar focusing on its Mosquito Control Grant for summer 2024. The webinar will share information regarding allowable uses (such as mosquito surveillance, control, and source reduction) and how to apply.

In past iterations of the program, local government entities have been eligible recipients, providing they receive a letter of support from their local health department.

The webinar is free and registration can be completed here.

On December 5, the OEPA will host a webinar focusing on what local officials should know about brownfield sites, including information on land use restrictions, potential liability concerns, and provide information regarding brownfield remediation funding.

Registration for this webinar is free and can be completed here.

ARPA and BIL RESOURCES

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NACo provides analysis of new allowable uses and guidelines for ARPA funds

On August 10, the US Department of Treasury released a new Interim Final Rule (IFR) for ARPA funding in light of an amendment that recently passed which expanded the allowable usages for the funds. All of the existing allowable usages are unchanged.

NACo has provided an analysis of the new IFR, available here. Additionally, last week NACo held a membership call to discuss the IFR. The slide deck is available here and a recording is available here.

The new IFR added three new allowable uses, discussed in turn.

Emergency Relief from Natural Disasters
Counties may now use ARPA funds to provide relief from natural disasters or mitigate the negative economic effects of a natural disaster. The eligible uses are broad, as long as they are tied to the natural disaster. The NACo analysis has a lengthy, but non-exhaustive, list of allowable usages.

Additionally, ARPA funds can be used to mitigate the threat of future natural disasters. Examples of eligible usages include structure elevation, structural retrofitting, and others.

Surface Transportation Projects & Community Development Block Grant Projects
ARPA funds can now be used for surface transportation projects and CDBH projects, subject to some limitations. These limits include a limitation on contribution, a prohibition on supplanting funds, and a compliance with other laws.

Counties may only use an amount equal to the greater of $10 million or 30% of the county's total ARPA allocation for transportation and CDBG projects. For example, if a county received a total allocation of $58 million, 30% of that is $17.4 million. That is the maximum amount the county can use for these two types of projects. It can be split between the two in any proportion as long as the total does not exceed $17.4 million.

Counties must use ARPA funds to supplement, not supplant, other funds being used for the project. For example, if a county is working on a surface transportation project and has already allocated $4 million for it, it cannot withdraw that $4 million and replace it with ARPA funds. The ARPA funding can be added to it to enhance the project, but not to keep the project scope the same while withdrawing local funds.

Generally speaking, using ARPA funds for surface transportation projects and CDBG projects must comply with other applicable laws. This includes certain environmental laws, procurement laws, and more. The NACo analysis provides more detail on this issue.

Finally, funds used for surface transportation or CDBG must be expended by September 30, 2026. This is earlier than the deadline for other usages (December 31, 2026).

Please utilize the resources linked to above to help gain an understanding of the guidelines for the new allowable usages.

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

Defiance Co. Commissioners looking to raise funds for new fire station
13abc.com, October 24, 2023
The Defiance County Commissioners are working to find alternative ways to fund a new fire station in the Ney-Washington Township area.

The current fire station in the area is 125 years old and is too small for modern fire trucks.

Voters already approved a levy to fund a new building but according to township trustees, construction costs have jumped by $2,000.

The president of the Defiance County Commissioners said they are currently looking to see if state bond funding would be available to cover the gap in costs for the station.

Northeast District

500 crowd Mahoning meeting on solar farm
The Vindicator, October 31, 2023
Wayne Greier staunchly supports a proposed large-scale solar-powered-generating farm on a large chunk of his land, but the benefits he feels the project will bring extend far beyond his property.

"I'm sick and tired of people saying that only my farm will benefit from this," Greier, who lives on Washingtonville Road in Green Township, said about the massive facility that he is convinced also will benefit area unions by creating jobs, along with the area school system, struggling taxpayers and others.

"I support all energies; any way we can make us energy independent is a good thing, and if we can help the environment, how is that a bad thing?"

Greier made his feelings known about the estimated $150 million generating facility, which would be known as Matador Solar Farm, during a special hearing Monday evening that Mahoning County commissioners hosted at Greenford Christian Church, 11767 Lisbon Road, to gather people's input about the project. An estimated 500 people attended.

It was the latest in a series of meetings on the controversial topic.

Central District

Franklin County awards nearly $6 million to nonprofit service groups
The Columbus Dispatch, October 31, 2023
The Franklin County Commissioners on Tuesday unanimously approved distributing nearly $6 million in grant money to 20 different community agencies, awarding money that nonprofits can use to feed food-insecure children, provide educational opportunities, aid residents in finding work and more.

But the biggest single allocation — nearly $1 million — will go for improvements needed at the Franklin County Fairgrounds needed under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The commissioners doled out $3,704,831 in community partnership grants to local agencies and approved four federal COVID-19 grants for a total distribution of $5,834,192 through five resolutions approved during their meeting.

"Franklin County provides our community's social safety net via our health and human services agencies," John O'Grady, president of the county Board of Commissioners, said in a prepared release. "But families also rely extensively on nonprofit organizations in the community, and we rely on those agencies to support our families in need with assistance right where they're at."

Southwest District

Sewer billing changes, alley closure, legal matter among topics at county commissioners meeting
Highland County Press, November 2, 2023
Highland County commissioners Terry Britton and Brad Roades voted to implement additional changes to the county's sewer billing and to vacate an alley in Boston, while they also met with county prosecutors to discuss a pending legal issue, during their Wednesday, Nov. 1 meeting.

Commissioner David Daniels was absent, due to a death in the family, according to Britton.

Commissioners announced another sewer payment change, as the Lakeside and Rolling Acres systems will now be switched to monthly billing, effective in 2024.

As previously reported, the commission voted in June 2021 to approve revised sewer use rules for all Highland County sanitary sewers for the first time in 25 years. In addition to needing to modernize the sewer use rules, commissioners named other issues, including hundreds of thousands of dollars in outstanding debt, increased operational costs and stress on the system due to people using "banned substances" and tapping into the system without prior approval.

Daniels said that the county was planning to implement "a new billing system so that we can do a better job of keeping track of who's delinquent and who's not," as the Rocky Fork Lake system switched from a tax assessment to monthly billing.

Southeast District

Carbon storage landmen expected to visit county residents
Carroll County Messenger, October 24, 2023
Commissioner Robert Wirkner reported at the Oct. 19 commissioners meeting he met with representatives from Tenaska, Inc. to discuss carbon storage in the county.

"Mandated CO2 compliance regulations are about to be implemented and they will require CO2 to be recaptured when used," said Wirkner. "This will affect the commissioners and landowners. Emitters of CO2 will be forced to properly mitigate the CO2."

Wirkner said a big emitter for Carroll County is the power plant. Tenaska's proposal to mitigate CO2 once captured is to store it underground. Storage will be handled like pooled units for oil wells.

"A well is drilled but instead of taking a product out, the CO2 is put in," Wirkner said.

The pool unit is expected to be 10,000 to 15,000 acres. Landmen should begin contacting property owners soon. Wirkner said the CO2 is transported by pipeline, not by truck so there shouldn't be additional traffic. Commissioner Wirkner advised that as long as a pooled unit has CO2 stored, landowners in the unit will receive an annual payment.

"If somebody knocks on your door regarding carbon sequestering this is what it is about," said Wirkner.

DATES TO REMEMBER

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

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NOVEMBER 7
General Election

NOVEMBER 10
Veterans Day (observed)

NOVEMBER 11
Veterans Day

NOVEMBER 16
CCAO General Government Committee Meeting

NOVEMBER 17
CCAO Board of Directors Meeting

NOVEMBER 23
Thanksgiving

DECEMBER 6 - 8
CCAO-CEAO Annual Winter Conference

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