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November 27, 2023

CCAO Secretary and Ashtabula County Commissioner Casey Kozlowski, Chair of the CCAO Human Services Committee and Ashtabula County Commissioner Kathryn Whittington, and Ashtabula County Auditor David Thomas at the Ashtabula County Whitetails Unlimited Sportsman Banquet.

Photo courtesy of Casey Kozlowski

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A letter from CCAO President Glenn Miller regarding Giving Tuesday

Thank you for everything that you do to lead in your communities throughout Ohio. This year, the CCAO Research and Educational Foundation launched an effort to invest in our greatest asset: Ohio's students. With your help, we were able to award $10,000 in scholarships to high school seniors from every corner of Ohio.

For 2024, we will once again award five scholarships, one student in each CCAO region. Simply put, the foundation cannot exist without the support of our members. On this #GivingTuesday, please consider a small gift to the foundation, so that all of us can continue supporting the scholarship program.

The foundation will continue to grow and offer education to our members and the people of Ohio while investing in our young people. Thanks for sharing our vision of Stronger Counties, Stronger Ohio.

Sincerely,

Glenn Miller
CCAO President
Henry County Commissioner

Contribute by clicking here: https://givebutter.com/M1pRh8

CCAO Nominating Committee issues report with recommendations for the 2024 Board of Directors

The CCAO Nominating Committee met on Friday, November 17, 2023, at 12:30 p.m., Members present included: Tim Bubb, Chair (Licking), Ron Amstutz (Wayne) Judy Dodge (Montgomery), John O'Grady (Franklin), Beth Siebert (Allen). The committee issued a report (the full text can be found here) that made the following recommendations for the 2024 CCAO Board of Directors. The recommendations will be voted on during the CCAO Annual Business Meeting during the Winter Conference.

CCAO OFFICERS
For President – Chris Abbuhl (Tuscarawas)
For 1st Vice President – David Painter (Clermont)
For Secretary – Ilene Shapiro (Summit)
For Treasurer – Casey Kozlowski (Ashtabula)

ELIGIBLE CANDIDATES WHO HAVE REQUESTED TO BE NOMINATED TO THE OFFICE OF 2nd VICE PRESIDENT

Denise Driehaus (Hamilton)

PAST PRESIDENTS WHO HAVE ELECTED TO SERVE ON THE BOARD

1. Mike Halleck, Columbiana County Commissioner
2. Lenny Eliason, Athens County Commissioner
3. Julie Ehemann, Shelby County Commissioner
4. Tim Bubb, Licking County Commissioner
5. Deborah Lieberman, Montgomery County Commissioner
6. Glenn Miller, Henry County Commissioner

FOR TWO-YEAR TERMS ON BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1. Tony Anderson (Fayette)
2. Jeff Fix (Fairfield)
3. Stephen Hambley (Medina)
4. Shannon Jones (Warren)
5. Gary Merrell (Delaware)
6. Chris Ronayne (Cuyahoga)
7. Gary Scherer (Pickaway)
8. Donnie Willis (Jackson)

The 2023 CCAO-CEAO Winter Conference is just 10 days away!

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.

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.

New Conference Feature: The Ohio County Employees Retirement Plan (OCERP) is offering 1 on 1 appointments during conference. Start building the future you imagine by scheduling an appointment here: https://ccao-winter-conference.empowermytime.com

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.

STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

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Senate Committee on Housing to hold hearings in Washington County on December 4, Allen County on December 11

On Monday, December 4, the Senate Select Committee on Housing will hold its second field hearing, this time in Marietta. The following Monday (December 11), the committee will meet in Lima.

Both hearings will start at 10:00 a.m. The Marietta hearing will be held on the campus of Washington State Community College in Graham Auditorium (710 Colegate Dr. Marietta, OH 45750) while the Lima hearing will be on the campus of Rhodes College at the Borra Center for Health Sciences (8 Towne Square, Lima, OH 45801).

If you would like to testify at either hearing, you must complete this document and submit both it and your testimony to Senator Michele Reynolds' senior legislative aide Chloe Green by the Friday before the hearing you will be testifying at. You can reach Green at chloe.green@ohiosenate.gov or 614-466-8064.

Administrative rules proposed for All Ohio Future Fund

Last week, the Office of Budget and Management (OBM) filed administrative rules regarding the All Ohio Future Fund with the Register of Ohio. This is one of the early steps in the process that programs must undergo before the state can start utilizing funds.

The proposed rules, visible here, are not final but do offer insight into how the state anticipates it will use the funding allocated to the fund.

As stated by the proposed rule, the All Ohio Future Fund will be used to make loans or grants (as determined by the agency responsible for securing Controlling Board release of funds, likely to be either OBM itself or the Department of Development) to "eligible applicants" for the purpose of site development. Eligible applicants include counties and other local governments and government entities, as well as nonprofit and for-profit organizations. Funds can be used for public roadwork, water and wastewater design and engineering, demolition, wetland mitigation, utility connectivity, and other "one-time" enhancements.

For all projects, the applicant must provide proof to the state agency that the county in which the project is located supports the project. If a project is located in multiple counties, it is likely that all counties will have to provide proof of support before funds can be awarded, but it is not explicitly stated in the proposed rule.

Recipients of funds will be required to submit periodic reports describing the status of the project, but the frequency and nature of these reports are not enumerated in the proposed rule.

The agency issuing the awards is also permitted to "recapture" funds if the entity or business the funds are being used to facilitate is not under an agreement to use the site within five years of the award's issuance.

OBM will be hosting a public hearing regarding the proposed rule on December 11. CCAO's Jobs, Economic Development, and Infrastructure (JEDI) Committee will be meeting on December 1 to discuss CCAO's comments on the proposed rules. If you have thoughts on potential changes, please send them to Senior Policy Analyst Jon Honeck.

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 Issue 2 webinar on Wednesday, November 29

Following the passage of Issue 2 in the November General Election, cannabis will be legal for recreational adult use in Ohio starting December 7. To help members understand the potential impacts the legalization of adult use cannabis will have on their role as employers, CCAO is hosting a webinar with attorney David Riepenhoff, who will discuss the implementation of Issue 2 as an initiated statute, as well as the potential impact in the workplace for employers.

The webinar will provide employers/appointing authorities with information relating to enforcement of their employment policies, as well as drug testing, training and sample information that can be shared with their employees pertaining to the implementation of the initiated statute. The webinar will also include a question and answer period.

The webinar will be held on this Wednesday, November 29, beginning at 9:30 a.m. You can register for the free webinar here.

Fourth annual Ohio Grants Summit begins on Wednesday

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.

Appalachian Community Grant Program open for second round of applications

Applications are now being accepted for the second round of Appalachian Community Grants! There is $420 million remaining after the first round of planning and development grants were awarded earlier this year.

The grants are available only to projects in one or more of Ohio's 32 Appalachian counties. The program is intended for projects that will make a lasting significant impact on Appalachian communities by revitalizing downtowns, enhancing quality of life, and helping to rebuild local economies.

More information is available on the Department of Development's website. Additionally, the Governor's Office of Appalachia will be hosting a question-and-answer session on December 1 (registration is not open yet, please watch *Counties Current* in future weeks for the registration link).

Grant applications must be submitted by Friday, December 8.

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to host webinar on brownfields

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

Health dept. nabs $135K grant

Sandusky Register, November 12, 2023

The Erie County Health Department recently received a $135,000 federal grant to improve rural housing in Erie County.

The grant will fit in well with existing larger grants to combat lead in local housing and to make local housing safe, said Bob England, the county's chief lead hazard control and healthy homes officer.

The new Rural Housing Preservation Grant is from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and applies to housing outside of Sandusky occupied by people who have a modest income.

In its grant application, the health department has promised to upgrade 10 homes.

If the health department meets that goal, and maybe stretches the funding to upgrade one or two additional homes, then it's likely the department will continue to receive future grants, England said.

The homes must be identified by the end of 2023, and then all of the work must be done in the next two years, England said.

Northeast District

Cuyahoga County Council proposes cut to ADAMHS board funding

Cleveland.com, November 20, 2023

Cuyahoga County Council has proposed cutting $2.5 million in funding for the Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services board, citing the organization's expected multimillion-dollar surplus.

Rather than sending that money to the ADAMHS board, County Council proposes giving $2.5 million more to MetroHealth.

The safety-net hospital saw its annual county funding reduced in 2015 from $40 million to $32.5 million, a number at which it has remained ever since, according to county documents and a budget amendment that passed a council committee on Monday.

If the full council agrees to the change, the ADAMHS board would receive $41 million annually from the county's health and human services levy in both 2024 and 2025. That's opposed to the $43 million in annual funding that county Executive Chris Ronayne originally proposed, which would've maintained the same level of county funding the board has received since at least 2021.

The budget cuts, if approved, would not result in any ADAMHS program reductions for 2024, but that could change in 2025, CEO Scott Osiecki told cleveland.com.

Central District

Friendly House gets $108K in ARPA funding from commissioners

Mansfield News Journal, November 18, 2023

The Friendly House Preschool and Daycare in Mansfield will be safer and more secure as a result of action Thursday by the Richland County Commissioners. The board awarded $108,614 from the county's American Rescue Plan allocation to pay for a generator and concrete work at the North Mulberry Street community facility.

Friendly House officials asked commissioners for the funds in June saying while Friendly House has battery backup for emergency lights and some door security, an emergency generator will allow the facility to conduct normal operations during power outages. "When we do close, we do have to call parents. They have nowhere else to send their children to day care. They may not get fed that day. It's just a real pain, obviously," Friendly House executive director Terry Conard said at that time.

The dollars also will pay for a new front sidewalk, installation of a sidewalk from a new parking lot to a side entrance and correcting drainage problems at the apron of the facility's garage.

"When you think about what Friendly House does in our community and how long they have been present — it's been over a century — the types of programming that they offer range from after school to recreational to educational. The list goes on," said county administrator Andrew Keller just before the award was approved.

Southwest District

MC Commissioners OK zoning amendments - Miami Valley Today

Miami Valley Today, November 22, 2023

Jackson Bennett, of the Miami County Department of Development, requested two zoning amendments during the Miami County Commissioners meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 21.

First, Buckneck Farms LLC filed, requesting permission to rezone 3.5 acres from agricultural to residential land located at 5669 Buckneck Road in Bradford.

"Staff recommend approval of the proposed rezoning pending final review by the County Engineers Office. For the record, this was reviewed and approved by both Miami County Planning and Zoning Commissions," Bennett said.

The second was a zoning amendment filed by Keith Fisher requesting permission to rezone 5.776 acres from agricultural to residential land located at 8775 Lauver Road in Pleasant Hill.

Bennett said that The Miami County Public Health Department approved the lot on Aug. 18. 2023, and stated that it met the requirements of the Ohio Administrative Code.

The commissioners unanimously approved both zoning measures.

Southeast District

Gallia County Commission votes on paving projects, food service at jail

WV News, November 12, 2023

The Gallia County Commission met in regular session Thursday. The Commission voted on several matters, including an important paving project, and food service at the new jail.

Commission President David Smith, Vice President Jay Stapleton and Commissioner Leslie Henry attended. Also present were County Administrator Brian Rutherford, Commission Clerk Amanda Phillips, Grant Administrator Karen Sprague, and Special Projects Manager Tom White.

Smith opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a prayer from Rutherford.

Minutes of the previous meeting, appropriations and transfers, and bills were all approved. Henry recused herself from voting on a bill for lawn care on county property due to a conflict of interest.

There are 22 dogs at the animal shelter, according to the K9 report.

The commissioners said that it has been determined that due to sinking, concrete, not asphalt, must be used for the paving project at Deenie Drive, Deenie Extension, and Kristy Drive. Smith said that Shelly Materials had been awarded the project because they submitted the only bid that accounted for either asphalt or concrete.

DATES TO REMEMBER

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

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DECEMBER 1
CCAO JEDI Committee Meeting

DECEMBER 6 - 8
CCAO-CEAO Annual Winter Conference

DECEMBER 7 - 15
Chanukah

DECEMBER 25
Christmas

JANUARY 1
New Years Day

DID YOU KNOW?

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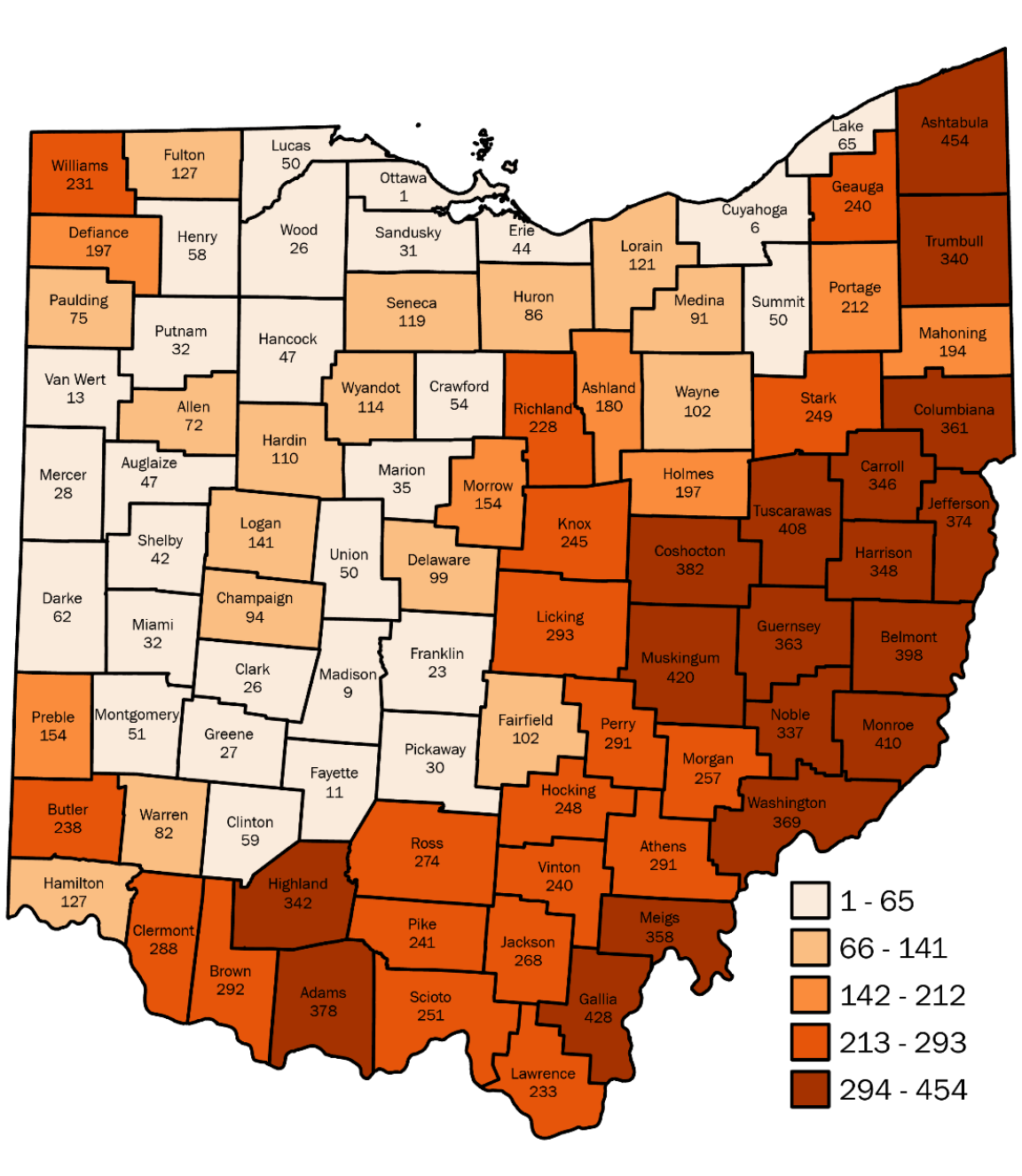
Ohio Turkeys

According to data from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, during the Spring 2023 hunting season (generally spanning mid-April to late-May), every county recorded at least one "harvested" turkey. The county totals ranged from Ottawa's single turkey to Ashtabula's 454 turkeys. The map below shows each county's total, adding up to 15,673 turkeys.



County totals, Spring 2023 turkey hunting season. Data from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

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