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**January 21, 2025**

**Congratulations to the Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management for being recognized as a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Weather-Ready Nation Ambassador! This designation reflects the agency's commitment to improving its ability to respond to extreme weather, water, and climate events.**

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## ASSOCIATION AND MEMBER NEWS

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### Reminder: New Elected Official and New Staff Fraud Reporting Training

The Auditor of State implemented a new training on fraud reporting last year. The training consists of an 8-minute video that is available on demand on the Auditor of State's website. All elected officials must take the training within 30 days of taking office, and then once every four years thereafter. County employees, and other public employees, must also take the training withing 30 days of their hire date and once every four years thereafter.

**For new commissioners or council members who took office on January 2, 2025, the deadline to complete the training is February 1, 2025.**

**For new commissioners or council members who took office on January 3, 2025, the deadline to complete the training is February 2, 2025.**

***Elected officials are unable to delegate*** this training to another employee and must complete the training themselves.

Each elected official or public employee will register, watch the video, and then receive a CPE certificate of completion. Counties are responsible for collecting all certificates and retaining them for audit. Completion of training will be part of each county's audit for compliance. Counties may have multiple elected officials and/or employees watch the video at one time in a shared room if they choose to do so.

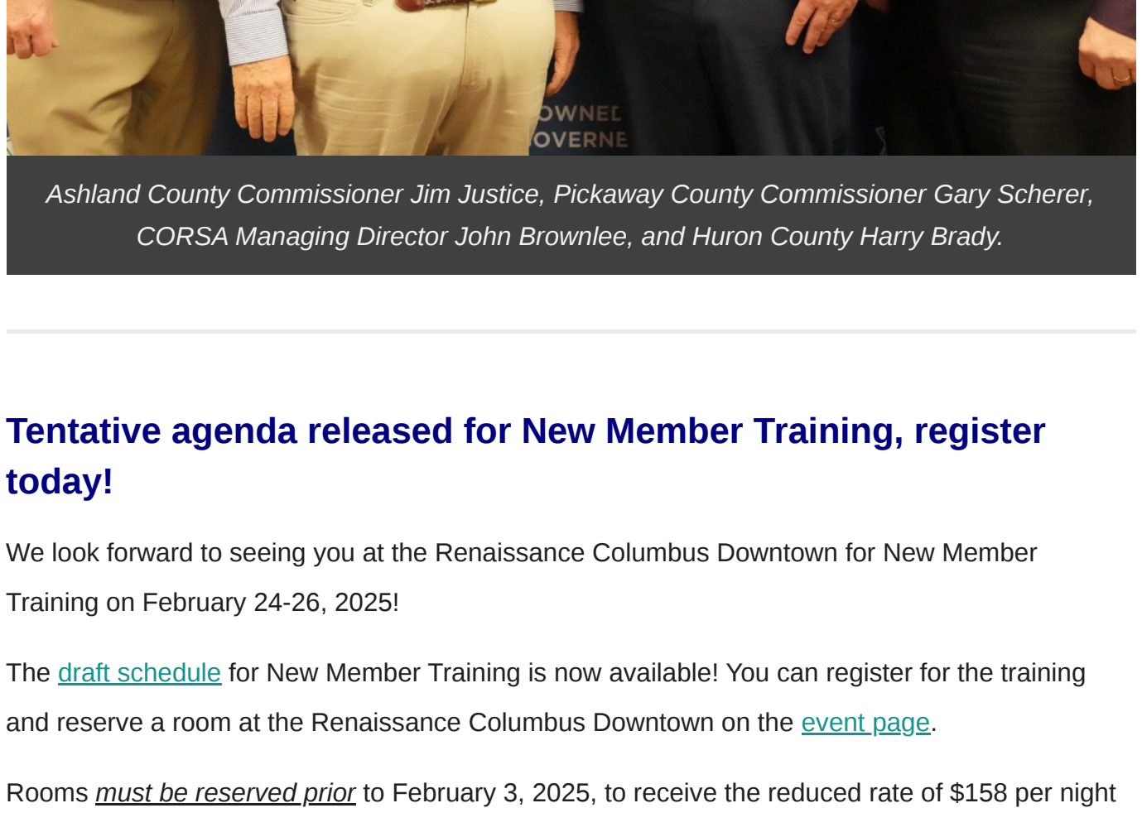
CCAO released a County Advisory Bulletin explaining the requirement. The Auditor of State Bulletin 2024-005 details the training and fraud reporting requirements.

If you have questions, please contact the AOS's Special Investigations Unit at (800) 282-0370 or by using this form online.

### CORSA Board of Directors appoints new members

Congratulations to Commissioners Harry Brady (Huron County), Jim Justice (Ashland County) and Gary Scherer (Pickaway County)!

The CORSA Board of Directors appointed three new directors during their meeting on January 10, 2025. They will fulfill the unexpired terms of Dan Dean, Diane Ward and Teresa Bemiller, who retired at the end of 2024.



*Ashland County Commissioner Jim Justice, Pickaway County Commissioner Gary Scherer, CORSA Managing Director John Brownlee, and Huron County Harry Brady.*

### Tentative agenda released for New Member Training, register today!

We look forward to seeing you at the Renaissance Columbus Downtown for New Member Training on February 24-26, 2025!

The draft schedule for New Member Training is now available! You can register for the training and reserve a room at the Renaissance Columbus Downtown on the event page.

Rooms *must be reserved prior* to February 3, 2025, to receive the reduced rate of $158 per night (before tax).

Early Bird registration pricing ends February 8th.

If you have questions regarding the training, please contact Robin Garrett at rgarrett@ccao.org.

*A Special Thanks to our Pinnacle Partner*

RUMPKE

## STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

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### Governor DeWine appoints Lt. Governor Husted to U.S. Senate

Governor Mike DeWine announced today that he appointed Lt. Governor Jon Husted to serve as Ohio's next United States senator.

Husted will replace JD Vance, who resigned from the Senate last week and took office as the 50th Vice President of the United States on Monday. Husted will remain lieutenant governor until he is sworn in at the U.S. Senate; his swearing in day has not been announced.

Husted will serve until December 15, 2026. A special election for the final two years of the term will be held in November 2026.

Governor DeWine stated during the press conference that he has not yet chosen a lieutenant governor to succeed Husted. His selection will need to receive a majority confirmation vote from both chambers of the General Assembly before they can take office. In the event that DeWine is incapacitated before his selection is confirmed, Senate President Rob McColley would assume the responsibilities to serve as governor, followed by Speaker of the House Matt Huffman.

## 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.*

### ODRC Jail Funding Application Question and Answer Webinar

House Bill 2, passed by the 135th General Assembly and signed by Governor DeWine, created capital appropriations for local county jails. The bill authorizes the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (DRC) to adopt guidelines to accept and review applications, require counties to justify the need for the capital project, and comply with timelines for submitting documentation for the project. The application period opened on December 9, 2024, at 8:00 a.m. and will close at 8:00 a.m. on March 3, 2025.

Please join CCAO and DRC for a question-and-answer webinar regarding the grant opportunity on Friday, January 31st, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. The webinar will be recorded and posted on CCAO's website for members who cannot attend.

CCAO members are highly encouraged to submit questions before the webinar. All questions should be submitted by the close of business on January 28th.

During the webinar, DRC staff will answer the questions submitted by counties regarding the application and grant opportunity. If you have a question to submit, please send it to CCAO Managing Director of Policy Kyle Petty at kpetty@ccao.org. Members will also have an opportunity to ask questions of ODRC staff on the webinar.

A link to register for the webinar can be found here.

*Note: We experienced technical difficulties setting up the registration link during emails sent on Friday. If you are uncertain if your registration was logged, please contact it@ccao.org and we will ensure you are registered.*

### AARP accepting applications for grant program to enhance liveability for older residents

AARP has opened its 2025 Community Challenge, a "quick-action" grant program open to nonprofit organizations and government entities. The program is intended to serve the needs of people age 50+, with particular prioritization for projects that make permanent physical improvements to the community, temporary demonstrations that can lead to long-term change, and innovative pilot and service programs.

Applications close on March 5, and funded projects must be completed by December 15.

The program has three constituent grant opportunities:

**Flagship Grants**
Capped at $25,000, these grants are intended for projects that enhance public places, increase transportation and mobility options, support housing options, enhance digital connections and literacy, and community resilience.

**Capacity-Building Microgrants**
Capped at $2,500 and paired with additional resources, these grants are intended for projects that train people aged 50+ for disaster preparedness, enhance the safety, walkability, and bikeability of communities, and support "lifelong homes."

**Demonstration Grants**
Capped at $25,000, these grants are intended for projects that enhance pedestrian safety, expand internet access, reconnect communities divided by infrastructure, and increasing housing choice for people aged 50+.

Since the program was started in 2017, local governments in Ohio that have received funding include the cities of Findlay, Lorain, Chillicothe, Cincinnati, and Cleveland Heights, multiple villages, and other local governments including the Colerain Township Fire and EMS District, the Cuyahoga County Metropolitan Housing Authority, and multiple county health departments.

## COUNTY NEWS

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*Each week Counties Current highlights the happenings in our counties in the words of their local media. One story from each of the CCAO's five districts is highlighted, and on occasion other stories may be highlighted as well.*

### Northwest District

Allen County commissioners considering move for child support enforcement

**LimaOhio, January 14, 2025**

Mention building plans to the Allen County Board of Commissioners and the first thing that comes to mind may be the new county administration building across from the Allen County Courthouse. During a Tuesday afternoon meeting, however, the conversation turned to a different project.

The board met with Building and Grounds Superintendent Jason Patchet and Allen County Child Support Enforcement Agency Director Vicki Tarr about efforts to renovate their existing office space. Going into this project, the original thought was to renovate their current space on the lower floors of the Savings Building at 200 W. Market St., but a recent proposal has the board thinking of going in a different direction, specifically the Chase Tower at 121 W. High St.

"We're kicking a lot of things around, whether to do the current location as a remodel or move," Commissioner Brian Winegardner said. "So this opportunity came up after the landowner called us and said they may have an opportunity for us."

The board had toured the building in September, originally considering the space as a temporary home for the agency while its current space was renovated. Since then, the thought has shifted to making this space the agency's permanent home.

Tuesday's meeting involved discussions of a preliminary renovation plan for the building's first two floors and part of the third floor in order to accommodate the agency's more than 30 employees.

### Northeast District

Trumbull begins cutting into 2025's budget requests

**Vindicator, January 15, 2025**

Trumbull County commissioners will begin the process of squeezing more than $81.5 million in budget requests from 28 county departments and other entities into a $66 million 2025 general fund budget projection.

The county has until March 1 to complete this year's budget. However, at Tuesday's weekly workshop meeting, Commissioner Denny Malloy suggested the county may complete its budget process over the next two weeks.

After completion of the commissioners' regular agenda during today's meeting, they will begin determining budget priorities to be sent to county departments. With these priorities in hand, department heads will be able to go through the requests provided to commissioners last year and prioritize what is more important for the operation of their departments.

With an appropriation request of $20.8 million, Trumbull County Sheriff Mike Wilson is seeking the largest amount. The request represents 31.29% of all requests.

The commissioners — which includes funds for maintenance, human resources and building inspections — is seeking more than $15.6 million, the next highest percentage of county funds, representing 23.5% of the budget requests

Domestic and juvenile courts are requesting more than $7.5 million, or 11.4%, and Common Pleas courts are requesting more than $5.1 million, or 7.75% of the budget.

The total requests represent 122% of the county's budget. Commissioners will have to trim approximately $14.94 million to balance the budget.

### Central District

Anduril coming to Ohio: What it means for the community

**10TV, January 6, 2025**

Defense technology company Anduril Industries is making its way to Pickaway County.

County Commissioners Gary Scherer and Jay Wippel said the project will diversity the workforce in the area. Wippel said the county used to be known for manufacturing, but that industry left and a new one is here.

"The exciting part of what to expect is the job opportunities for families. We like to keep our graduates in Pickaway County. This gives them opportunities to have good paying jobs," said Wippel. "Working on workforce development for our students in high school, here in the county to work with this company. And our educators to have some pathways forward for them."

On top of bringing over 4,000 jobs, the development will also bring in more tax revenue helping schools and roads in the area. However, what is now known as a rural county could change.

"It's not a question of doing away with our farmland. I think, you know, preserving our farmland is one of our objectives but so is growing jobs in Ohio. These are not incompatible," said Gov. Mike DeWine.

### Southwest District

ARPA spending: Miami County says $20M in projects helped residents in many ways

**Dayton Daily News, January 13, 2025**

Miami County spent more than $20 million in American Rescue Plan Act, or ARPA, funds for betterment of residents, said county Commissioner Greg Simmons.

An accounting of the $20,781,971 in funding received in two payments was provided by the county in December before a year-end deadline for commitment of the money.

"We were able to help out our county in a great way," Simmons said. "We didn't want to just put it (the money) into salaries or in an overflow account. We wanted to use it for the community."

Per federal rules, all ARPA funds had to be allocated by the end of 2024 and they have to be fully spent by the end of 2026.

The $20.7 million funded dozens of projects ranging from $3.5 million for a Casstown water line project and $2.7 million for renovations of the more than 100-year-old fairgrounds grandstand, to as little as $625 for a landscape architect for a Jackson Cemetery project near Piqua. Another grant of $75,000 later was approved from the funding for the cemetery revitalization project.

Among projects approved by the commissioners, with recommendations from a review committee, were a project to improve childcare offerings in the county, dollars to support a memorial to Medal of Honor recipient William H. Pitsenbarger at his burial location in Miami Memorial Cemetery in Covington, and funds to buy a vehicle for the Community Rides program offering rides to work for those in need, among many others.

### Southeast District

County to buy former prison that's becoming a women's jail/treatment center

**Logan Daily, January 15, 2025**

At their 2025 organizational meeting Monday, the Hocking County commissioners reported that the state of Ohio is ready to sell the old Hocking Correctional Facility site near Nelsonville to the county for $1. In a project begun in 2018, the county has been repurposing the facility for use as a women-only jail and drug treatment center.

At their previous regular meeting the prior week, the commissioners had gone into executive session at one point to discuss the matter. The state Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (DRC) has funded the multi-million-dollar project, which has multiple partners in addition to the county.

On Monday Commissioner Jason D'Onofrio announced that "In reference to the state of jail facilities that the county is in the process of rehabbing and refurbishing, the state has agreed to give an additional round of funding. However, the state cannot give funding to themselves, so we have to purchase that property, and then they can award us the money to finish the construction. The state is selling us that for $1."

After the commissioners voted to approve the purchase, Commissioner Michael Linton provided some more background on the project.

"Kudos to (Hocking County Sheriff's) Chief Deputy Leif Bickel, who's just done a yeoman's effort over the last several years on working with the state, working with existing jails in the region," Linton said. "And the intent is to convert that, what previously was a state institution, to a regional jail that will house women."

## DATES TO REMEMBER

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

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**JANUARY 24**
**CCAO Board of Directors Meeting**

**JANUARY 31**
**CEBCO Board of Directors Meeting**

**FEBRUARY 7**
**CORSA Board of Directors Meeting**

**FEBRUARY 17**
**Presidents Day**

**FEBRUARY 24 - 27**
**CCAO New Member Training**
**CCAO Board of Directors Meeting (February 25)**

**FEBRUARY 28**
**CEBCO Board of Directors Meeting**

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