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**May 12, 2025**

**The Carroll County Commissioners adopted a proclamation this morning recognizing the Light-Ohio Blue campaign running from May 7 through May 17. Representatives from the Carroll County Sheriff's Office Ohio, the Ohio State Highway Patrol New Philadelphia Post, the Village of Carrollton Police Department, and the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District Rangers were present for the proclamation.**

***Pictured, from left to right –***

***Seated: Commissioner Donald E. Leggett II, Commissioner Christopher R. Wodarski; and Commissioner Robert E. Wirkner, a 21-year veteran of the Carroll County Sheriff's Office. Standing: Lieutenant Johnnie Maxx; Post Commander at the New Philadelphia Patrol Post; Ranger Eggen, MWCD Ranger; Sergeant William Bower, Assistant Post Commander at the New Philadelphia Patrol Post; Officer Bolmont of the Carrollton Police Department; and Carroll County Sheriff Calvin Golvin.***

***Photo courtesy of Melissa Schaar, Clerk to the Carroll County Board of Commissioners***

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

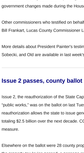
Statehouse Report and Counties Current Archive | Dates to Remember

## ASSOCIATION AND MEMBER NEWS

Back to Top

### Pflug joins CCAO as new Communications Coordinator

CCAO recently hired Stephen Pflug as the Association's new Communications Coordinator. We are excited to have him join the Association! Here is Stephen in his own words:



I grew up in Columbus, Ohio, and graduated from Delaware Hayes High School in the '90s before earning my degree in Graphic Design from Columbus State Community College. Since then, I've spent over 20 years building a career as an art director and brand designer, working across a wide range of industries — from B2B and tech to non-profit, retail, tourism, and government.

My creative approach has been shaped by incredible collaborators, design pioneers, and a deep personal love of books, live music, art, and the natural world. I believe great design is rooted in curiosity and connection — and I bring that perspective to every project I take on.

Outside of work, I'm an avid reader, music lover, and podcast enthusiast with a passion for travel. I recharge through exercise, a good cup of coffee, and time spent outdoors. I live in Westerville, just south of Uptown, with my two teenage sons — who I love deeply and enjoy who they are.

### President Painter testifies for CCAO, other commissioners testify for their counties

Last week, CCAO President and Clermont County Commissioner David Painter provided testimony for the Association regarding House Bill 96, the state operating budget, to the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee.

President Painter's testimony discussed the Association's five areas of emphasis during the budget process: bolstering the child welfare system, reforming and robustly funding indigent defense, continuing the state-county partnership on county jail projects and seeking an 1115 Medicaid Waiver to alleviate county costs of detainee medical costs, strengthening the Next Generation 9-1-1 system, and improving access to child care. He also discussed local government changes made during the House of Representatives' passage of the budget process.

Other commissioners who testified on behalf of their counties were Seneca County Commissioner Bill Frankart, Lucas County Commissioner Lisa Sobecki, and Erie County Commissioner Matt Old.

More details about President Painter's testimony and the testimonies of Commissioners Frankart, Sobecki, and Old are available in last week's Statehouse Report.

### Issue 2 passes, county ballot issues fare well

Issue 2, the reauthorization of the State Capital Improvement Program, commonly referred to as "public works," was on the ballot on last Tuesday and passed by a vote of 68% - 32%. The reauthorization allows the state to issue general obligation bonds for infrastructure projects totaling $2.5 billion over the next decade. CCAO was part of the coalition supporting the ballot measure.

Elsewhere on the ballot were 28 county property tax levies and one sales tax levy. Twenty-five of the property tax levies passed, a passage rate of 89%. The three that did not pass were a children services renewal levy in Coshocton County, a mental health and addiction services replacement and increase levy in Huron County, and a 9-1-1 additional levy in Meigs County.

The Meigs County vote margin was within the automatic recount threshold, so that outcome may change by the date when results are officially certified.

The lone sales tax levy was a renewal of Columbiana County's 1.00% levy. It passed, so the county's rate will remain at 1.50% and there will remain 52 counties at the maximum 1.50% rate.

The outcomes of all the county issues can be found here and on CCAO's Data Exchange.

*A Special Thanks to our Pinnacle Partner*

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## STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

Back to Top

### OneOhio Foundation releases toolkit for local governments

The OneOhio Foundation recently a second edition of Regional Board Volunteer Toolkit. The first edition, released in early 2022, focused on helping local appointing authorities establish their regional boards and recruiting volunteers to serve on them.

Since the regional boards are now fully established, the second edition of the toolkit instead focuses on providing updated guidance on grant reviews, best practices for membership and community involvement, and provides additional resources for regional boards and local governments.

## EDUCATION AND GRANTS

Back to Top

*Visit the Grants and Funding Opportunities page on the CCAO website for a detailed listing of open grant programs.*

### Two remaining BroadbandOhio and OSU Extension broadband information sessions

BroadbandOhio and OSU Extension are partnering to host information sessions across the state to discuss the availability of federal funds to connect unserved areas and how to advocate for your area.

The organizations will host two more sessions across the state during May. The remaining schedule is below.

**May 19, 2:00 p.m.**
Paulding County
Paulding County OSU Extension Building
503 Fairground Drive,
Paulding, OH 45879

**May 20, 2:00 p.m.**
Athens County
Athens Public Library
30 Home St.,
Athens, OH 45701

## COUNTY NEWS

Back to Top

*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 an occasion other stories may be highlighted as well.*

#### Northwest District

Allen County Administration building construction on schedule
**Hometown Stations, May 8, 2025**
If you've been near the Allen County Courthouse lately, you've likely noticed the visible progress on the new County Administration Building.

The basement walls are in place, and the stairwell towers have risen well above ground level. Construction remains on schedule, with the elevator shaft up next and floor installation to follow. The building is designed to be three stories tall with a basement housing just under 20,000 square feet. Once completed, it will house several county offices that are currently located inside the courthouse.

"There is progression every day," said Allen County Commissioner Brian Winegardner. "As we look out the window from our building, you can see it — and it's pretty exciting to see. We're roughly still on schedule for August of 2026."

The new administration building marks the first phase of a broader effort to reconfigure the locations of county offices and courtrooms. Once county departments have moved into the new facility, interior renovations to the historic courthouse will begin. Those upgrades will allow all county courts to be consolidated into one location. Commissioners say they are encouraged by the progress and optimistic about the timeline ahead.

#### Northeast District

County officials pleased with passage of levies
**Morning Journal, May 8, 2025**
The atmosphere at the Columbiana County commissioners meeting Wednesday morning was one of gratitude and congratulations, one day after voters approved renewal of the 1% sales tax with 63% of the vote.

"Congratulations on the sales tax passing. I was excited to see that," county Department of Job and Family Services Director Rachel Ketterman told commissioners.

She received congratulations also for passage of the Children Services .75-mill levy renewal with 65% of the vote.

"I want to thank the voters of Columbiana County for voting for the sales tax that will allow us to provide good government services," Commissioner Tim Ginter said after the meeting, adding it was a team effort. "We're thankful for those who helped to promote the message to do this, the fairest tax of all."

Commissioner Roy Papariello also commented on the success of the sales tax on the ballot.

"Very pleased for all the hours that passed, especially the county sales tax, keeping our county whole. Congratulations to all the winning candidates on their elections," he said.

#### Central District

Delaware County officials partially resolve dueling lawsuits
**Columbus Dispatch, May 8, 2025**
The Delaware County Board of Commissioners has agreed to restore investment authority to the county treasurer after removing it a month ago and assigning it to the county's finance director.

The agreement is a partial settlement to dueling lawsuits between County Commissioners Jeff Benton, Barb Lewis and Gary Merrell and County Treasurer Donald Rankey, and was approved and ordered by visiting Franklin County Common Pleas Judge Guy Reece on May 6. Commissioners were expected to vote on the details at a May 8 meeting.

The commissioners announced the settlement May 7, stating in part that it "does not address the validity and enforceability of a Delaware County Investment Advisory Committee policy that has been at the crux of the conflict between the two offices."

On March 6, the commissioners sued Rankey in Delaware County Common Pleas Court, seeking to compel him to obtain unanimous approval by the Advisory Committee before purchasing any private-placement bonds, a policy the board alleged he violated three times in 2024.

#### Southwest District

Miami County JFS's latest social services on the road with new mobile unit
**Dayton Daily News, May 5, 2025**
Miami County's Job and Family Services Department is hitting the road to assist county residents in a new mobile unit.

The unit was unveiled April 29 outside the county Courthouse in downtown Troy. It is a project by the JFS staff and the county commissioners office.

The unit was created more than two years ago to help connect residents with community partners, nonprofits and employers, said Sara Bowers, director, Miami County JFS.

The vehicle was bought from the Miami County Educational Services Center, received interior modifications to accommodate discussions between staff and residents and was covered with a wrap identifying the mobile unit. The money, totaling close to $84,000, came from county American Rescue Plan Act, or ARPA, allocations.

Bowers said the ways the mobile unit can benefit the community might include:

- *Someone in West Milton is looking for a job.* JFS would be able to sit down with them to create a resume, help them apply for jobs that fit their skill set and do mock interviews. If transportation to work is an issue, JFS would refer and guide to the appropriate outside partners.
- *A company is doing a mass layoff . . .* JFS would be able to provide rapid response services to the employees being affected by the layoff. This would include resume building, mock interviews, or provide opportunities for further education and training.
- If a person does not have the ability to come to the agency for services, the mobile unit allows them to meet with a caseworker one on one for assistance. If the assistance needed is outside of JFS programs, the department will make the appropriate referrals on behalf of that individual.
- *Disaster relief.* When the tornadoes hit West Milton several years back, JFS set up caseworkers and staff in the community. Having the bus will allow them to be present and assist the communities affected as they navigate through the disaster.

#### Southeast District

Jefferson County commissioners discuss parking issues at the courthouse
**Herald Star, May 9, 2025**
Jefferson County commissioners are looking into what they can do to address parking issues in the courthouse lot.

Commissioners voiced concern Thursday that members of the general public, particularly those with physical infirmities, have to park and walk because the spaces in the lot behind the courthouse are being filled by employees–especially since the county just spent several hundred thousand dollars expanding, paving and upgrading a parking lot up the street, opposite the Tower building.

"It's continually coming up," Commissioner Tony Morelli said. "I don't want to become a 'parking nabi', not does this board, but we have to come up with a resolution to have some parking spaces for the public."

Morelli said earlier this week he encountered a woman laboriously making her way up the courthouse steps with a walker.

"She told me, 'I can walk up the steps but it would be nice if I'd had a parking space (here)'," he said, adding, "My understanding was that once the parking lot was finished at the Tower building, employees who'd been parking here were supposed to (go there)."

## DATES TO REMEMBER

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

Back to Top

**MAY 15 - 16**
**CCAO Board Retreat**
**CCAO Board of Directors Meeting (May 16)**

**MAY 19**
**Portage County Regional Legislative Briefing**

**MAY 26**
**Memorial Day - Holiday**

**MAY 30**
**Montgomery County Regional Legislative Briefing**

**JUNE 6**
**Central District Meeting**

**JUNE 19**
**Juneteenth - Holiday**

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