View this email in your browser

November 24, 2025

Washington County Commissioners Charlie Schilling (right) and Eddie Place (center) welcomed Greg Nohe (left) to their ranks on Thursday night. Nohe was selected by the county Republican Party Central Committee to fill the vacancy created by Jamie Booth's resignation last month.

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

New commissioner named in Washington County

On Thursday, Greg Nohe was selected by the Washington County Republican Party Central Committee to fill the county commissioner seat vacated by Jamie Booth's resignation last month.

Commissioner Nohe served for 29 years with the Marietta Police Department, including time as a jail administrator. He also served as an Army MP officer and an airborne jumpmaster, receiving induction into the Washington County Veterans Hall of Fame last month.

Commissioner Nohe will serve until a permanent replacement is elected in November 2026. He indicated that he will run at the election.

Welcome to CCAO, Commissioner Nohe!

FRIDAY: Deadline to request consideration for a 2026 CCAO Board of Directors Presidential Appointment

The 2026 CCAO Board of Directors President will make nine one-year appointments to the Board. If you would like to be considered for such an appointment, please complete and return the form and questionnaire linked below to Robin Garrett (rgarrett@ccao.org) no later than ***THIS FRIDAY***, November 28, 2025.

In the event you previously expressed an interest to the Nominating Committee for a position and were not selected, you do ***NOT*** need submit your name again, as the next president will automatically receive names previously submitted.

Copies of the nominating report and the presidential appointment request form are available as a Word Document and a PDF.

CEBCO hiring new Benefits Specialist

The County Employee Benefits Consortium of Ohio (CEBCO) is fielding applications for a new Benefits Specialist position.

The position will be required to respond to inquiries regarding CEBCO programs, assist member counties for benefits service, gather and collate data from member counties, and prepare reports for actuarial consultants.

The position will also involve travel by participating in member county health fairs and conducting regional meeting for brokers and prospective clients.

Applicants for the position must have a Life, Health Annuity Sales License, and 3-5 years experience in health insurance industry is preferred.

The full job description and application portal is available on Indeed. Applications will be accepted through December 12.

The 2025 CCAO/CEAO Winter Conference is next week, registration still open!

Click Here to Register!

Registration Fees:

Full Conference $625

One Day Only $480

Spouse or Guest Flat Fee for Full Conference or One Day Only $300

Affiliate Groups Have Option to Choose Meetings Only + Coffee Breaks $175

Sessions at this year's conference will include best practices for energy and economic development, information on data centers, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and changes to the children services landscape.

There will also be five sessions focusing on different aspects of property taxation and the potential ramifications of if property taxation is eliminated. These include hearing from proponents of a potential constitutional amendment to eliminate property taxation, learning how levy-funded agencies manage their budgets, and a legislative update on property tax reforms.

The final agenda can be viewed here.

There will also be a reception to congratulate CCAO Assistant Director John Leutz on his retirement and thank him for his 25 years of service to the Association. CCAO will also be hosting a separate event to honor John (see flier below).

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, JOHN LEUTZ!
CCAO
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION OF OHIO

🎉 Celebrating John R. Leutz 🎉

Assistant Director, County Commissioners Association of Ohio
Retiring After 25 Years of Service

After 25 years with CCAO, John Leutz is stepping away from his full-time role — leaving behind a legacy of leadership, laughter, and insight.

From a staffer for Ohio Senate to CCAO, John has been a trusted voice on county government issues. His thoughtful approach, dry wit, and deep knowledge have made him a beloved colleague and a steady guide for county officials across the state.

Join us as we celebrate John's remarkable career — and wish him well as he begins his next chapter (with fewer meetings and more tee times).

📅 Wednesday, December 17, 2025
🕦 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Lunch at Noon
🗣 Remarks at 12:30 p.m.
📍 CCAO Office – 209 East State Street, Columbus, Ohio

Here's to John — for 25 years of service, humor, and heart.

Please RSVP to CCAO's Karla Dunbar at kdunbar@ccao.org to let us know you'll be attending.

**If you cannot attend, there will also be a reception for John at the 2025 Winter Conference, Thursday, December 4, 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. during the Ice Cream Social at the Trade Show.*

A Special Thanks to our Pinnacle Partner

sedgwick®

STATE AND FEDERAL

Back to Top

NACo, other national associations send letter on Continuum-of-Care program

The Trump Administration, through the Department of Housing and Urban Development, recently released a notice of funding opportunity for the Department's Continuum of Care program. The CoC grants are a primary source for homelessness reduction organizations across the country and especially in Ohio.

Two weeks ago, NACo, joined by the National League of Cities and the United States Conference of Mayors, sent a letter to the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development expressing concerns with the proposed changes.

You can view the letter here.

More information about the changes can be found on NACo's website and the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO)'s website.

REVIEW: Auditor of State bulletin on payment re-direct schemes

Last year, Auditor of State (AOS) Keith Faber released a bulletin to provide guidance to governments regarding payment re-direct schemes and business email compromise schemes. As cyber scams continue to increase in frequency, counties need to be vigilant to safeguard taxpayer funds.

NOTE: Failure to follow the guidance may result in an AOS finding if a loss occurs , and the employee is considered liable as a result of negligence or performing duties without reasonable care.

The bulletin gives four real examples of successful or attempted scams on local governments:

- **Spear phishing:** More than $700,000 was stolen from a recreation district because of a payment re-direct scheme. Emails were received by the district, from an email account slightly different than the original vendor email account, which contained erroneous payment instructions to the "vendor." The district followed the instructions and transferred $713,094 to the fraudulent account, without independently verifying the identity of the requester or the new banking account.
- **Spear phishing:** A city fell victim to a "spear phishing" scheme resulting in theft of nearly $219,000 when the finance department received emails from someone pretending to be an existing vendor. The email persuaded the employee to change the bank account routing information the city had for the vendor. Vendor verification protocols were not followed, which could have prevented this fraud.
- **Investment account change request:** A college fell victim to a spear phishing attack that included convincing branding and logos of a financial institution causing the college to change account information on a $6 million account. Realizing a day later due to Daily Cash Monitoring protection that the money was not in its account the college was able to recover the funds through the activation of the Financial Fraud Kill Chain.
- **Fraudulent check and Electronic Funds Transfer/ACH scheme:** A city reported three instances of fraudulent checks submitted for payment to their bank and two instances of attempted ACH fraud. Though none of these instances were successful and the city did not experience a loss, this is another example of attempted fraud.

The rest of the bulletin discusses ways to identify and prevent these scams.

Counties are tasked with safeguarding millions in taxpayer dollars, so it is vital that county fiscal staff familiarize themselves with the bulletin.

If you have any questions regarding the information in the bulletin, send an email to the AOS Special Investigations Unit at PaymentSchemeQuestions@ohioauditor.gov.

EDUCATION AND GRANTS

Back to Top

Lake Erie Protection Grants open for applications

The Ohio Lake Erie Commission is now accepting applications for the 2026 Lake Erie Protection Fund (LEPF) grants. LEPF grants help finance research and on-the-ground projects aimed at protecting, preserving, and restoring Lake Erie and its watershed, fulfilling the intent of the Lake Erie Protection and Restoration Plan. This includes reducing harmful algal blooms, controlling nutrient runoff, restoring and improving wetlands, and more.

Grants are limited to $50,000 per award and are open to local governments, among others. Grants in prior rounds have been used to support assessments to convert a former golf course to wetlands, design plans for nature-based solutions to shoreline erosion, and other shoreline protection projects.

The deadline to apply is January 9, 2026.

Ohio Grants Summit now open for registration

Registration for the 2025 Ohio Grants Summit is now open. The three-day virtual event requires separate registration for each day. The event recordings have traditionally been available on the Ohio Channel as well.

The event will be held from December 9 to December 11 and is hosted by the Office of Budget and Management. Registration for each day is free. Links and brief descriptions of the day's events are below.

Day One: Grant writing strategies and how to utilize AI tools in grant applications

Day Two: Fraud prevention, how to close out grants, and insight into the future of federal funding.

Day Three: Burn rate monitoring, transformational grant making, and proper oversight of indirect costs.

Ohio Office of Budget and Management

6th ANNUAL
Ohio Grants Summit
SAVE THE DATE!
Dec. 9 - 11, 2025 | 9 a.m. - Noon
Grants.Ohio.gov

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 on occasion other stories may be highlighted as well.

Northwest District

Lucas County Commissioners spotlight youth homelessness, celebrate animal welfare and hear citizen concerns about data centers

WTOL, November 18, 2025

Lucas County Commissioners held a meeting Tuesday that touched on youth homelessness, animal welfare and the future of data centers.

The board proclaimed November as "Youth HOPE Month," a designation meant to highlight the struggles of vulnerable children. Officials cited national estimates that 4.2 million young people experience homelessness each year in the United States.

Commissioner Pete Gerken praised the Zeph Center, which operates the region's only 24-hour crisis shelter for youth.

"You can walk in there if you're a runaway or homeless, below 17," Gerken said. "They'll give you a hot meal, they'll give you some clothes, they'll give you some company — just some safe human interaction."

The proclamation underscored the county's ongoing partnership with local organizations that provide shelter, food and counseling to young people in crisis.

The meeting also drew a large contingent of residents concerned about the potential development of data centers in rural parts of Lucas County. The Anthony Wayne Community Response Awareness Group, formed just a month ago, has already grown to nearly 2,000 members.

Organizer Lyn Cox said the group is not opposed to data centers in principle but objects to their placement near farmland and residential areas.

"We're not interested in living next to, seeing data centers, having our farmland destroyed for a data center," Cox said. "We understand the need for data centers, it just seems like there are better places to put them."

Northeast District

Hubbard residents voice concern to council, commissioners over potential data center

WFMJ, November 18, 2025

Back in May, we were hearing reports of a potential technology project that was getting underway near the Deer Creek Golf Course in Hubbard but we haven't heard much else since then.

In the months leading to November, the silence has been cause for concern for residents who say they don't want a data center in their backyards.

"We're concerned that this is not really the direction that we want Hubbard to go in and we're asking for you to pass an ordinance to exclude data centers from the city," Melisa Wade, Hubbard resident said.

The residents brought a petition to council members Monday night presenting these concerns and asked Trumbull County Commissioners to attend the meeting and lend an ear.

"We are becoming a dumping ground for these things, just like Virginia," Margie Johnson, Hubbard resident said. "If you look at their economics, it has driven up their tax base so high that people cannot afford to live in those towns," she said.

Commissioners were understanding of the resident's concerns.

"What we're hearing is that they come into a community and if they are built, that they put a strain on your electric and the water, which in turn increases your rates and I think the citizens have a valid point in that," Tony Bernard, Trumbull County Commissioner said. "We need to know more about data centers and actually why they all of a sudden wanna come into Trumbull County," he said.

"As commissioners, we are all about economic development but we are here to answer to the concerns of the people and hear their concerns and they have very valid concerns," Rick Hernandez, Trumbull County Commissioner said. "As a commissioner on a county level, we really don't have, at this point in time, any type of power to keep them out other than the local municipality or township," he said.

Hubbard Mayor, Benjamin Kyle said as of right now, there's nothing to worry about because nothing has been set in motion.

Central District

Crunching numbers: Richland County 2026 budget must be cut by $3.9 million

Richland Source, November 18, 2025

It is unlikely the Richland County Sheriff's Office will have all its budget requests granted for 2026.

When RCSO officials met with the Richland County Board of Commissioners for a budget hearing earlier this month, they proposed a $22.3 million budget for next year — up $1.2 million over what was proposed in 2025.

On Tuesday, the three-member board — minus absent Commissioner Cliff Mears — began the first of several work sessions it will conduct before the end of the year in order to establish a balanced general fund budget.

The board previously adopted a policy that requires them to balance the budget each year, i.e. not appropriating more than they and other county officials expect to generate in revenue.

The moves made by commissioners Tuesday are essentially working with a working draft of the final budget. No decisions are made firm until the board votes on a final budget.

Richland County Auditor Pat Dropsey and Andrew Keller, the county's administrator, also participated in the work session.

Last week, Commissioner Tony Vero said department requests total about $52 million — which will need to be trimmed by about 8.1 percent (or around $3.9 million), he said Tuesday morning.

Southwest District

Montgomery County approves 5% annual water and sewer rate increase to fund infrastructure

Dayton247Now, November 18, 2025

An increase has been approved for annual water and sewer rates for the next half decade as a way to fund millions in infrastructure improvements.

According to the Montgomery County Administrator, a combined 5% annual water and sewer rate increase has been approved as the county works to support more than $248 million in planned improvements, starting on Jan. 1.

The Montgomery County Board of County Commissioners approving $139 million dedicated to water infrastructure and $109 million will be set aside for sewer, ensuring that water will be a safe and reliable service for those who live in the county.

It is reported that the increase comes amid ongoing litigation of the City of Dayton for the direct violation of the 2018 Water Services Agreement negotiation.

The administrator said that there has been a significant cost increase over the last several years as efforts have been made to ensure county customers are shielded.

The Montgomery County Administrator, Michael Colbert, explained why the rate increase is necessary.

"We have protected our residents from rising costs for years, but aging infrastructure and overcharges from the city of Dayton mean we can no longer absorb these expenses," said Michael Colbert, Montgomery County Administrator. "We are investing in infrastructure, paying employees competitively and making upgrades where needed. These improvements are critical to ensure families and businesses continue to have the high-quality service they depend on while assuring cost affordability."

Southeast District

Harrison County opens new $23 million jail

YourOhioNews, November 21, 2025

The long-awaited $23 million Harrison County Jail is officially open. Sheriff Mark Touville announced the milestone at the end of the Harrison County Commissioners' meeting Nov. 12, reporting that the new facility had already received 12 inmates, with more expected in the coming days.

Touville reflected on the challenges leading up to the opening, describing the process as "coming into the third quarter with my team down two touchdowns."

"And I had to put my team on the field to finish the ballgame, and I feel like we're winning," he said. "We're now 10 points ahead."

Touville said inmates were being transferred back from Monroe County and others were being added through new arrests and warrants. He praised his staff for their dedication, saying they accomplished "the impossible" in expanding capacity from eight beds to 80 in a short time.

"Everybody's hard work and dedication is appreciated," Touville said, noting that while the facility is operational, "it's still a work in progress — brand new to everybody."

Jail Administrator Mark Smith echoed those sentiments, describing how the department had to build a full team from the ground up. When he began, there were just six corrections officers and no maintenance staff. Since then, the department has hired 12 additional officers, a nurse practitioner and a maintenance worker. Smith also credited Tommy Smith for his hands-on assistance in getting the facility ready.

DATES TO REMEMBER

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

Back to Top

NOVEMBER 27
Thanksgiving - Holiday

DECEMBER 3
CCAO Board of Directors Meeting

DECEMBER 3 - 5
CCAO / CEAO Winter Conference

DECEMBER 25
Christmas - Holiday

Copyright © 2025 CCAO, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.