

Commissioners' Journal
March 3, 2009

The Geauga County Board of Commissioners met in session on March 3, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. in the County Offices, Building #8 located at 470 Center Street in Chardon, Ohio.

It is declared and determined that all formal actions of the Board of County Commissioners concerning and relating to the adoption of all resolutions that were adopted in this meeting, and that all deliberations of the Board of County Commissioners that resulted in such formal action were open to the public and were in compliance with all legal requirements, including section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

The President of the Board, William S. Young opened the meeting at 10:04 a.m. by leading the Board and audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion: by Commissioner Jemison, seconded by Commissioner Samide to approve and execute the minutes for the meeting of February 19, 2009.

<i>Roll Call Vote:</i>	<i>Commissioner Jemison</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Samide</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Young</i>	<i>Aye</i>

APPROVE MINUTES

Motion: by Commissioner Jemison, seconded by Commissioner Samide to approve and execute the minutes for the meeting of February 26, 2009.

<i>Roll Call Vote:</i>	<i>Commissioner Jemison</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Samide</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Young</i>	<i>Aye</i>

APPROVE FINANCIALS

Fiscal Specialist Heidi Delaney explained the financials as including supplemental appropriations for the Juvenile Probate Court to appropriate for a transfer to the Court Technology Fund for a server purchase; supplemental appropriations for the Auditor's REAF fund, the Sheriff Departments Concealed Handgun Fund and the Juvenile Court Care and Custody Fund to appropriate funds where necessary; cash transfers for medical, dental and life insurance for the month of March, 2009; purchase orders for Geauga County Tourism and the Geauga County Historical Society in the amount of \$35,000.00 each; and one travel request.

Motion: by Commissioner Jemison, seconded by Commissioner Samide to approve and execute Resolution 09-030 itemizing the financials for the meeting of March 3, 2009.

<i>Roll Call Vote:</i>	<i>Commissioner Jemison</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Samide</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Young</i>	<i>Aye</i>

DEPARTMENT OF JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES – APPROVE REVISIONS – POLICY & PROCEDURES MANUAL

The motion “by Commissioner Jemison, seconded by Commissioner Samide to approve revisions to the following sections of the Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual: Code of Ethics, Outside Employment, Confidentiality, Smoking Policy, Hours of Work, Awards Program, Health Care Coverage, Job Post” was tabled as some members of the Board still did not have time to read the revisions through as they have been out of town. Commissioner Young questioned the item of smoking in county vehicles to which Mr. Taylor responded that he believed it is covered in “Use of county vehicle” section. This item will be on a future agenda.

<i>Roll Call Vote:</i>	<i>Commissioner Jemison</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Samide</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Young</i>	<i>Aye</i>

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DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES – BID OPENING – 2009 LAWN MAINTENANCE – SOUTHERN PROJECTS

Motion: by Commissioner Jemison, seconded by Commissioner Samide to advertise for bids for the 2009 Lawn Maintenance Program Project –Southern Locations with a bid opening on Wednesday, March 25, 2009 at 2:45 p.m. Notice of this bid opening will be published on March 6, 2009 and the county web site.

<i>Roll Call Vote:</i>	<i>Commissioner Jemison</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Samide</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Young</i>	<i>Aye</i>

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – ED REVOLVING LOAN FUND SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

Motion: by Commissioner Jemison, seconded by Commissioner Samide to approve and authorize the President of the Board to execute the ED Revolving Loan Fund Semi-Annual Report and the CDBG Funded List of Loans for the period of July 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008.

<i>Roll Call Vote:</i>	<i>Commissioner Jemison</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Samide</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Young</i>	<i>Aye</i>

BUILDING DEPARTMENT – ADOPT UPDATE – FLOOD PLAIN MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS – SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD

Commissioner Young commented that public hearings were held regarding the updates and the new maps. Director Mike Mihalisin commented that this is a step forward in getting updated maps.

Motion: by Commissioner Jemison, seconded by Commissioner Samide to adopt and execute the update to the Flood Plain Management Regulations for areas of special flood hazard, necessary to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program for the citizens of Geauga County.

<i>Roll Call Vote:</i>	<i>Commissioner Jemison</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Samide</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Young</i>	<i>Aye</i>

PLEASANT HILL COUNTY HOME – RESIGNATION OF STACIA GILBERT – SEASONAL HELP

Motion: by Commissioner Jemison, seconded by Commissioner Samide to accept the resignation of Stacia Gilbert as Seasonal Help (#0101) in the County Home to be effective February 23, 2009.

<i>Roll Call Vote:</i>	<i>Commissioner Jemison</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Samide</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Young</i>	<i>Aye</i>

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – DISSOLVE BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION BOARD OF MANAGERS

Commissioners' Clerk Claudine Kozenko reported this motion is house cleaning for insurance purposes.

Motion: by Commissioner Jemison, seconded by Commissioner Samide to approve of dissolving the Geauga County Bicentennial Celebration Board of Managers in accordance with the motion of August 7, 2001 to end the Bicentennial Board on June 30, 2007.

<i>Roll Call Vote:</i>	<i>Commissioner Jemison</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Samide</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Young</i>	<i>Aye</i>

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COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – CONCUR WITH MUNSON TRUSTEES - REQUEST A HEARING – CROATION CENTER

Ms. Kozenko reported that she called Munson Township to inquire why they are requesting a hearing to which the response received was that the current license is for current members only and want more information why they are opening it up.

Motion: by Commissioner Jemison, seconded by Commissioner Samide to concur with the Munson Township Trustees in requesting a hearing on the liquor license requested by Croatian Center Incorporated (located 10022 Mulberry Road, Munson Township (C NEW 1821414-0010).

<i>Roll Call Vote:</i>	<i>Commissioner Jemison</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Samide</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Young</i>	<i>Aye</i>

OTHER

The Board reviewed calendars and a few future agenda items presented by Ms. Kozenko. Ms. Kozenko inquired if the Board is going to continue the monthly economic development meetings. Commissioner Jemison suggested a focus on companies and groups in Geauga County and what they are doing and give them the opportunity to discuss their business. It was suggested to begin these possible “work sessions” at the end of April. The Board will discuss this idea further at a later date.

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – STATE OF GEAUGA COUNTY

The Board of Commissioners invited all elected officials and department heads to be present for the presentation on The Economic State of Geauga County at 10:30 a.m. The presentation was to review the financial status of the county for previous years and included present and future years. With current national economic challenges the Board wanted to inform all of the current financial situation as well as the future's outlook. Commissioner Young stated that Commissioner Jemison put this package together but includes items that the board has dealt with and understood for some time. Commissioner Jemison stated that this is not all gloom and doom as there are a lot of good things that have happened in Geauga County that have postured ourselves much better than some surrounding counties. Commissioner Jemison added that no one person in this room created the financial situation we are in today. This is probably the worst economic crisis this county has seen since the depression. We all will weather this together and continue services to our residents in the manner they are accustomed to. The population of Geauga County is 95,029 with a work force of 51,589. The unemployment for December 2007 was 5.3% and 6.2% for December 2008 while the country was at 7% and Ohio was at about 7.5%. In 2000 the percentage of the population with college degrees was at 31.7% which ranks third in Ohio. Geauga has a very employable workforce. Commissioner Jemison briefly reviewed the budget process. After some analysis it is shown that Geauga usually spends between 90% and 94% of the revenue appropriated. This year it came in at 87%, and one of the reasons why is that in Geauga County we do not spend the money just because we have it. Budget professionals tell you that if your expenses are less than your expected revenue you are financially structurally sound. You are not structurally sound if you use your carryover to get by. Commissioner Jemison stated that the big box stores have been very helpful to Geauga County. Every Wal-Mart brings in about \$35,000.00 a month for the county (1% from sales tax), although the Wal-Mart parking lots are looking empty. Commissioner Jemison discussed trending in sales in Geauga County. The trending shows we are down 6.39% percent in 2009 sales tax from a year ago in the first two months. The property transfer tax (charged at the Auditor's office at 0.04% per \$100,000.00) was doing well in 2005 and this year (January and February) we are down from last year by 56% which is a cause for concern. Investment income is down 48% from last year but we are on target with the certification. Commissioner Young commented that the revenue will be down in 2010 as well, as interest rates have decreased. Commissioner Samide stated that the county has not used investment interest as a staple in running the county. Commissioner Jemison continued that Recorder fees are down year to date 9.6% and commented that banks need to start to get cash to loan money so people can buy houses again. Building fees are down 27.6%. The Sheriff's Office turned the county jail from a liability into an asset with inmate housing, however less people are being housed right now and this revenue is down 29.6% year to date. The jail is efficient but they could use more inmates as the expenses usually stay the same. Commissioner Jemison stated that the county is stressed in all of the revenue income streams with the current economy. The General Fund Salary / Benefits spiked up this year but it was due to the extra pay period this year – salary and benefits are all in

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line. The good thing is the county had the money but did not spend it. The county has been very conservative on how they allocated these resources. 55% of the budget is salary and benefits, 27% is operations (supplies, insurance and expenses) and 18% is transferred out to pay outside agencies of funds to run other programs. The General Fund Debt has \$4 million left on the Safety Center debt incurred in 2005, with the plan to pay down \$2 million this year and \$2 million next year. The general fund always had some inside millage shifted to pay down debt. At the time the jail project started more inside millage was shifted from the general fund to debt retirement and then the general fund was able to put in an additional \$500,000.00 with the goal to pay off debt on the jail in 2010. If the trend continues, the jail debt may not be paid off in 2010 and the county may have to issue debt for projects that are up for consideration such as the 800 Mhz upgrading (\$4.6 million) and the upgrade to the Infirmarium Creek waste water treatment plant (\$3 million). The keys to the future are sales tax (as this is 41% of the general fund revenue), inmate housing, debt retirement (a key to stability), continued conservative spending, mitigation monies, carryover (important that it does not shrink next year), housing related revenues (recorder fees and auditor transfer tax) and investment income. Commissioner Jemison concluded that all of these things are good revenue sources and we must keep an eye on them and their trends. Commissioner Samide commented that due to the county's good financial posturing, debt reduction, and how the departments and directors have operated their departments have put us in the position we are in today. Other counties around us are not faring as well as they are having to do layoffs or they are in the hole financially. Commissioner Samide added that the county is not doing as badly as surrounding counties and added that it is due to the departments and directors and the Board wishes to continue this relationship. Commissioner Young stated that in Geauga County we are fortunate to do as well as we have. The county workforce is efficient, works harder, smarter and has good leaders. The sales tax keeps the county alive even though the rate is lower than many counties in the state. The sales tax has allowed for improved technology for the courts and the Sheriff's Office. Commissioner Young stated that we need to continue working as a team and understand the needs of the county. Commissioner Young commented that 2009 will be a challenge and 2010 will be even more of a challenge. Commissioner Samide asked the departments and directors to come forth and offer suggestions on ways to make it over 2009, 2010 and 2011 and to help the county move forward, it is a concerted effort, it will be all of us together. County Engineer R.L. Phillips commented that he believes 2010 will be the toughest year, even if the economy turns around by the second half of 2009. 2010 will be the year to watch the carryover and spending. Judge Forrest Burt commented on the need for supplementals to the budget as the economy is terrible and they must provide service for what the people need. Commissioner Young responded that he understands and is willing to sit down and discuss the needs, publicly, but they may not agree with every request. Judge Burt added that because the shape of the economy there are offices where the workload increased. Commissioner Samide stated that each department should decide if they really need an increase. It would be better to have a modest increase in pay and to hold on to the staff we have. Lake and Ashtabula and other surrounding counties are cutting their budgets. Commissioner Jemison reported hearing at the recent Commissioners' Conference that many commissioners are cutting budgets. It is the Board's intention to leave the budgets as appropriated. County Administrator Dave Lair mentioned that government needs to stop throwing bodies at increased need and to use technology and work smarter. Commissioner Young added that in the past they have raised some issues and had discussions with departments to tighten their operations and they had reduced their budgets. The Board will have discussions with departments if needed. Commissioner Young thanked everyone for their attendance and reported the Board looks forward to working with them all in the future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- a) Receipt of Parkman Board of Trustees Resolution #09-48 of Convenience and Necessity for the Vacation of the Unused Portion of Edwards Street, received February 23, 2009.

- b) Receipt of Parkman Board of Trustees Resolution #09-49 of Convenience and Necessity for the Vacation of the Unused Portions of so-called Burton Road, received February 23, 2009.

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MEETINGS

- Thu., 3/5 The Commissioners will hold regular session.*
- Tue., 3/10 The Commissioners will hold regular session.*
- Tue., 3/10 Planning Commission meeting at 7:30 p.m.*
- Thu., 3/12 The Commissioners will hold regular session.*
- Fri., 3/13 NOACA meeting at 10:00 a.m.*
- Tue., 3/17 The Commissioners will hold regular session.*
- Thu., 3/19 The Commissioners will hold regular session.*
- Fri., 3/20 NOACA Transportation Advisory Committee at 10:00 a.m.*
- Tue., 3/24 The Commissioners will hold regular session.*
- Tue., 3/24 Public Hearing on the petition for Ditch Improvement under Kenston Lake Drive at 6:30 p.m. at the Bainbridge Township Hall.*
- Thu., 3/26 The Commissioners will hold regular session.*
- Thu., 3/26 Board of Revision meeting at*
- Tue., 3/31 The Commissioners will hold regular session.*
- Tue., 3/31 Connect Ohio meeting at 2:00 p.m.*

BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, COMMISSIONER YOUNG ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 11:06 A.M.

Geauga County Board of Commissioners

Tracy A. Jemison

Mary E. Samide

William S. Young

Claudine Kozenko, Commissioners' Clerk