

**Commissioners' Journal**  
**March 7, 2013**

*The Geauga County Board of Commissioners met in session on March 7, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Chambers 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, Tracy A. Jemison opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. by leading the Board and audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.*

*Youth Leadership Government Day*

*Commissioner Jemison noted that there were special guests in the audience today, that it was Youth Leadership Government Day. Mr. Jemison asked the kids to introduce themselves, say what school they were from and what role they would be playing today. Kelly Poe stated she was from Kenston and would be the Administrator, Carly Kline stated she was from Notre Dame Cathedral Latin and would be the Clerk, Josh Loveland stated he was from Ledgemont and would be the President of the Board today, Joseph Cermak stated he was from Notre Dame Cathedral Latin and would be a Commissioner, and Katie Daugherty stated she was from Chardon and would be the Vice President of the Board today.*

*APPROVE MINUTES*

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Samide to approve and execute the minutes for the meeting of March 5, 2013.*

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

*APPROVE FINANCIALS*

*Budget and Finance Administrator Heidi Delaney explained the financials for today as including a Travel Request for the Recorder's Office and a payment to Buckeye Power Sales for the Maple Leaf Community Residences Generator project under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program in the amount of \$68,440.84.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Samide to approve and execute Resolution #13-057 itemizing the financials for the meeting of March 7, 2013.*

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

*OFFICE OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – TWO (2) CANCELLATIONS OF MORTGAGE CLAUSES – REVOLVING LOAN FUND*

*Program Administrator Joni Stusek explained that Prusa Construction was a Revolving Loan Fund loan client who had paid off his mortgage.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Samide to approve and execute two (2) cancellation of mortgage clauses for a Revolving Loan Fund client, Prusa Construction, a Limited Liability Company, for property being held as collateral located at 18445 Fox Road, Troy Township and 9995 Kinsman Road, Newbury for a \$75,000.00 loan, as the mortgage has been satisfied.*

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

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SHERIFF'S OFFICE – OHIO OFFICE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES (OCJS)  
SUBGRANT AWARD AGREEMENTS – STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT – 2010-WF-  
VA2-8214A AND 2012-WF-VA2-8214

*Sheriff Dan McClelland and Chief Deputy Scott Hildenbrand explained that both items today are grants for the same program, just split by the process. Sheriff McClelland stated that previously approved was the submission of the application for these grants for the Violence Against Women (VAWA). Sheriff McClelland added that recently David Joyce had testified in Washington about the value of this grant and that Geauga County had been successful and is being awarded funds and was asking the Board for approval.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Samide to approve and authorize the President of the Board to execute the Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) Subgrant Award Agreement for the Geauga County STOP Violence Against Women Act (VAWA #2010-WF-VA2-8214A) in the amount of \$11,694.30, \$8,770.73 from Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services with a local match of \$2,923.57 (\$2,435.51 from the Geauga County General Fund and \$488.06 from the Law Enforcement Trust Fund) for the period January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013.*

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

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Samide to approve and authorize the President of the Board to execute the Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) Subgrant Award Agreement for the Geauga County STOP Violence Against Women Act (VAWA #2012-WF-VA2-8214) in the amount of \$67,599.90, \$50,699.92 from Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services with a local match of \$16,899.98 (\$13,144.39 from the Geauga County General Fund and \$3,755.59 from the Law Enforcement Trust Fund) for the period January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013.*

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

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE – ADJUST WAGE SCALE AND COMPENSATION – NON-  
BARGAINING UNIT EMPLOYEES – INCREASE TWO PERCENT ( 2%)

*County Administrator David Lair explained that the Commissioners hiring authority is on a wage scale and most of those departments share a common wage scale, except for the Department of Job and Family services and the bargaining unit of the Department of Water Resources. Mr. Lair stated that the Board approved in the budget an overall guideline for the county departments of 2% and the various hiring authorities have been implementing increases. Mr. Lair stated that he was asking the Board to adjust the pay range for the Commissioners hiring authority by 2%, with each employee staying in the same step, just up the rate by 2% for each step to be effective with payroll number six, which is the current pay period we are in.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Samide to adjust the wage scale and compensation of non-bargaining unit employees under the hiring authority of the Board of Geauga County Commissioners, with the exception of the Department of Job and Family Services, effective with 2013 payroll number six (#6) by an increase of two percent (2%). This increase does not currently apply to employees serving a probationary period, until the earlier of such time that either their probationary period ends or their position is advertised at the revised wage scale rate, to be effective on the hiring date of the new employee. Postings for current job openings will be revised to reflect this change.*

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

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DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES – APPROVE NEW TECHNICAL EMPLOYEE PAY SCALE – SUBJECTED TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

*Mr. Lair explained the new Technical Employee Pay Scale by stating that anyone who has followed the activity over the last few years would have seen a high amount of resignations come through before the Board, as those highly trained or currently being trained are finding employment with other entities having similar needs for quite a bit more money than what was had in our current wage scale. Mr. Lair stated he was asking the Board to approve a new technical employee pay scale that is based on a wage study that was done by the Archer Company, noting that study compares other counties and positions throughout the state. Mr. Lair added that if approved it will enable the county to enter into negotiations with the bargaining unit to see if they will accept, noting that this is being done to keep the wage rates competitive to try and reduce turnover.*

*Motion: by Commissioner Spidalieri, seconded by Commissioner Samide to approve the new Technical Employee Pay Scale, subject to the collective bargaining obligation.*

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

COUNTY TREASURER – REAL ESTATE TAX COLLECTION REPORT

*Treasurer Christopher Hitchcock explained that most often he presents the board with the investment report, but today he was going to give them good news. Mr. Hitchcock stated that what started out as a means to refute a claim from a Township Trustee in 2008 that said because the economy stinks so too does the real estate tax collection. Mr. Hitchcock stated that from a real estate tax perspective, basically claimed that his office wasn't doing their job to which he took affront and as a result started doing a history on the tax district and found that their collections had gone up. Mr. Hitchcock stated that as long as he was doing it for one tax district he decided to do all the districts, adding the school districts and the entire county, adding that what began as a small project turned into a five year effort. Mr. Hitchcock presented the Board with a Geauga County Real Estate Tax Collection Report. This report is available at the Treasurer's office if anyone is interested in a copy. Mr. Hitchcock stated that it is an amazing thing that Geauga County from a real estate tax collection perspective is incredibly strong and he would put us up against any county in Ohio. Mr. Hitchcock stated that our tax collections for last year were over 100%, that doesn't happen. The economy is still extremely soft, but because of our economic vitality and not being a transient county we have stable economic growth, noting 100.5% in total tax collections including current and delinquent, a perfect storm in a good way, we collected more than what was really due. Mr. Hitchcock began referencing charts in the report, noting that in 2006 \$148 Million was collected and five years later \$163 Million was collected. Mr. Hitchcock noted (chart 2) that total delinquencies are going down in our county, total collections are up and total delinquency collections are also up. Mr. Hitchcock then explained that (Chart 3) takes a look at total collections versus total delinquencies and that Chart 5 through Chart 26 are a breakdown of all the Townships and Chart 27 through Chart 34 are a breakdown of the each School District. Mr. Hitchcock stated that the schools are sensitive because they get so much of their funding from real estate taxes, adding that Geauga doesn't have any schools getting less than 97%. Mr. Hitchcock stated that Geauga County has success in tax collections, that anything under 98% gets a red flag from him, anything over 100% is pink and that is good, that you will see more pink than yellow, that we don't like yellow, referring to the breakdown charts of the Townships and School Districts. Mr. Jemison stated that yellow is still not bad, figuring 3.5 to 4.5% as a threshold, it's still good news. Mr. Hitchcock stated that there are mistakes in the report, that having never done it before, he has found some since printing it, and assured the Board that he will find more. Mr. Jemison stated that this is good, that besides the taxpayers and residents, other government officials, trustees and school board members should be encouraged to look at the process. In conclusion Mr. Hitchcock stated that Geauga County is doing extremely well, from a Real Estate Tax Collection perspective. Commissioner Samide asked if there was a breakdown of Geauga County against the other counties in the State. Mr. Hitchcock noted that in the back of the report there is a list by rank from the State of Ohio, being Highest Delinquency to Lowest. Mr. Hitchcock noted that Geauga County is 6.8%, adding that he disagreed, but that is what the state uses so it's equal. If you compare Lake who is at 7.8% delinquent and Cuyahoga at 18%, with the lowest being Mercer at 3.6%, it's a small county down in southern Ohio, adding that he felt Geauga was at 4.5% from its records.*

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*A brief discussion took place with Mr. Jemison and Mr. Hitchcock regarding utilities and whether they were included in the percentages. Mr. Hitchcock stated that we think Geauga County is ok, this proves we're great and is another reason Geauga is such a good place to live.*

*OHIO STATE REPRESENTATIVE JOHN PATTERSON*

*Mr. Patterson thanked the Board for allowing him to be here and stated that he wanted to give an update on what was happening in Columbus. Mr. Patterson expressed his excitement for the Leadership Youth; noting that he had retired last year after twenty-nine years as a teacher. Mr. Patterson joked about taking grief in Columbus for having the longest ride of 190 miles and the most snow, but added that he tells them we have the greatest people.*

*Mr. Patterson explained that he has introduced legislation to re-name streets in honor of the young people killed in the Chardon incident a year ago, adding that on that day, his office made red/black ribbons that the Senate and House wore in the Governor's office, and that his maiden speech in the house concerned the Chardon Anniversary and that everyone here was held in prayer. (The speech can be viewed on the Ohio Channel)*

*Mr. Patterson went on to explain some of the things he has been working on, including a local VOR movement, to grow and raise more local agriculture products, to bring in consumers and processors into Geauga and Ashtabula counties. Mr. Patterson explained that he had met with representatives from Ohio State about opportunities to get in on the ground floor, that the world population is expected to be 9 billion by 2050 and places like Smuckers and Shearers potato chips have done good things for the areas they're in. Mr. Patterson noted that he had been working with the milk producers in Geauga County by promoting Geauga County cheese in Columbus, and promoting maple syrup, noting that Nate Bissell was a former student. Mr. Patterson expressed that this area has the best of both worlds, with Geauga County cheese and the wineries in Ashtabula being in the district, adding that it is a lot to be excited about in the future. Mr. Patterson spoke about an experiment in Geneva called "PARINS" stating that chefs we're going to use local grown food and wine for visitors to come and dine on, with expected numbers of about 45,000 to 90,000. Mr. Patterson noted that there is one other location that they're doing this and that it was in Geneva, New York.*

*Mr. Patterson spoke about "hoop houses" or greenhouses that are used to raise crops eleven months out of the year, about trying to get apples and other goods into schools and in the Conneaut prison; citing it is an added benefit of having food locally grown and produced. Mr. Patterson stated that he is looking to the long term about having two international ports in the district in Ashtabula and Conneaut Harbors as being an evolving market, that Ohio State is on the cutting edge of food security with the threat of food deserts and scarcity that will cause conflict in the world unless we can feed people. Mr. Patterson added that part of it ties to the availability of cheap shale gas to use as fuel in the hoop houses. Mr. Patterson clarified that he has been working diligently to make sure that it is done environmentally safe, working to tighten down restrictions and to make sure the injection wells are safe. Mr. Patterson stated that it needs to be done safe, but being done safe it can provide opportunity.*

*Mr. Patterson explained that he was working on a push in education, not just college but work force education. He asked the Youth Leadership group if they would turn down a job making \$100,000.00 a year and could get it tomorrow. The kids replied no, and he asked them how they felt about welding. Mr. Patterson stated that there will be jobs as people retire that we won't be able to fill, like pipefitters, they are honorable, noble professions. Mr. Patterson stated that we need to bring back the programs and re-tool the need coming down, that he believes in career technology, and that all work has value. Ms. Samide added that Auburn Career Center is doing that. Mr. Patterson went on to say that he was concerned about School funding, especially with Ledgemont, noting that he had been working with the Superintendent and County Superintendent adding that the districts are flat lined due to cuts from two years ago and high fuel costs. The transportation budget is not out yet and depending on the results could see additional cuts, so there is a concern about Ledgemont.*

*Mr. Patterson expressed that even though its not in Geauga County that he had concern with the Conneaut prison, stated that they had called for a surprise inspection and have begun having dialogue with the prison, that the difficulties there ultimately affect the people in the area. Mr. Patterson explained that he represents five townships and Chardon City, in Geauga and is in the area a lot.*

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*Last week the Transportation Bill was voted on that included the Ohio Turnpike and explained that he wanted everyone to know why he voted no, adding that the Bill included an increase to the amount a truck can haul from 80,000 lbs. to 90,000 lbs. and shared his concern about the safety and infrastructure damage. Mr. Jemison inquired if the increase was just on the turnpike, to which Mr. Patterson added that it wasn't, it was 150 miles with a permit and does not depict the route traveled, that it increased within two miles of the turnpike. Along with that also came a length of the triple trailer extending from forty feet to fifty feet, that from a safety aspect driving next to them in wind can be problematic. Mr. Jemison inquired about engineering studies being done to check the bridges before they posed the increase. Mr. Patterson stated that in the subcommittee hearing it came out late and just appeared on the floor and didn't get a chance for debate on it. Ms. Samide expressed concern about the change coming to the secondary roads and discussion took place about the state and county roads, but uncertainty of townships roads being traveled on with the same load. Mr. Patterson expressed concern about safety in infrastructure, in a time when local government funds are being cut and are scrambling. Mr. Patterson noted that it was HB 35 and that another component included pulling personnel from the rest stops, adding that while not a problem here in Geauga County in Conneaut it's a gateway, that tourism is a \$380 million business in Ashtabula County, and while Geauga County is doing great and he's glad, he showed concern over losing the person, that while volunteers are great, you need continuity. In answer to a statement from Ms. Samide about the rest stops being turned over to private business, Mr. Patterson stated that would be to run a kiosk, that the rest stops would not be manned with employees, and feels a human being needs to be there in order to take the time and add value to tourism. Mr. Patterson added that his other concern was over the length of the bond, that thirty years was way too long, ten or fifteen maybe but thirty is a long time.*

*Mr. Patterson mentioned he was working on another area for tourism with the making of wine barrels and corks by Amish craftsmanship, that currently the barrels coming are in imported from Missouri. Mr. Patterson also stated that we are a victim of our success with more energy efficient vehicles reducing the revenue of the motor vehicle tax, with some discussion of a new piston within a piston technology that could be on the horizon that will reduce the amount of fuel being used, with a comment about the tax becoming on the miles driven. Mr. Patterson presented the Board with a copy of his newsletter, noting a survey in the back, stating that he liked transparency and communication. Ms. Samide noted that Mr. Patterson had not mentioned anything about the expansion of Medicaid. Mr. Patterson explained that he had received notes, email, mail and groups of visitors in support of the expansion, noting that it was \$13 Billion that will be lost out of the state that will go to Washington and not come back unless we take advantage of it. Mr. Patterson stated that the Governor was in support of it and would have some issues within his party, noting that it says Obama-care and was enough of a reason for some to vote no. However, on the other side of the argument is this reality that healthcare providers are saying that individuals use the emergency room as a first choice, as opposed to a doctor's office call that will be a savings and will see better care. Mr. Patterson noted that he had received a visit from Planned Parenthood and Right to Life on the same day and noted that the lady from Right to Life expressed that the expansion will offer different choices because people who have access to healthcare that they wouldn't have otherwise might make different decisions. Mr. Patterson noted that it was covered for the first three years at 100% by the Federal government and that it would then drop to 90% but noted that it needed to include an option of opting out, that it looked stable until about 2022 but after that raised questions. Mr. Patterson thanked the Board for having him and added that as things came up that he would keep them posted.*

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- a) *A weekly report filed by the County Dog Warden of all dogs seized, impounded, redeemed or destroyed for the week ending February 27, 2013 as required by O.R.C. 955.12.*
- b) *The Monthly Financial Report from the County Building Department for the month of February, 2013.*

**OTHER**

*The Board reviewed upcoming events. Mr. Jemison added that today at 11:45 a.m. they would have lunch with the Youth Leadership at Joey's and then at 2:00 p.m. here in Chambers the*

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*kids would take seat and hold a session to here information about a project. Christine Blair, Commissioners' Clerk noted that the project was on the thirty five acres of land owned on State Route 44 and what to do with it.*

MEETINGS

*Fri., 3/8 NOACA meeting, 10:00 a.m. in Cleveland*

*Tues., 3/12 The Commissioners will hold regular session.*

*Tues., 3/12 The Commissioners will hold Public Hearing #1 at 10:15 a.m. for the FY 2013 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs*

*Tues., 3/12 The Commissioners will hold Public Hearing #2 at 10:20 a.m. for the FY2012 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Amendment to #B-F-12-1AZ-1 to decrease Activity #1 Maple Leaf Community Residences and add Activity #5 City of Chardon Clearance Project*

*Tues., 3/12 Planning Commission meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Planning Commission meeting room, Bldg. #1C, 470 Center Street, Chardon*

*Thu., 3/14 The Commissioners will hold regular session.*

*Mon., 3/18 Board of Revision, 9:00 a.m., Auditor's Office*

*Mon., 3/18 Family First Council, 2:00 p.m., Job and Family Services*

*Tues., 3/19 The Commissioners will hold regular session.*

*Tues., 3/19 ADP meeting, 2:00 p.m.*

*Thu., 3/21 The Commissioners will hold regular session.*

*Mr. Lair inquired if the any of the Board would be attending the CCAO legislative briefing on Monday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Lair offered to attend and noted that on Wednesday, March 13<sup>th</sup> he and Ms. Delaney would be attending the CCAO discussion on the budget.*

**BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, COMMISSIONER SPIDALIERI ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 10:44 A.M.**

*Geauga County Board of Commissioners*

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*Tracy A. Jemison*

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*Mary E. Samide*

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*Ralph Spidalieri*

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*Christine Blair, Commissioners' Clerk*