



Portage County Board of Commissioners
Meeting Minutes

449 South Meridian Street
Ravenna, OH 44266
<http://www.co.portage.oh.us>

Kassidy Parbel, Clerk
330-297-3600

Thursday, February 22nd, 2024

9:00 AM

Commissioners' Board Room

The following meeting minutes are summarized. Audio recordings and backup material are available in accordance with the Commissioners' Agenda and Audio Recording Retention Schedule.
Please contact the Commissioners' Office for specific details.

The Portage County Board of Commissioners' meeting came to order in the Commissioners' Boardroom located at 449 South Meridian Street, Ravenna, Ohio, with the following members present:

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Anthony J. Badalamenti	President	Present
Sabrina Christian-Bennett	Vice President	Present
Mike Tinlin	Board Member	Present

Also attending throughout the day was County Administrator, Michelle Crombie, Tami Scott, and Todd Peetz.

The Board of Commissioners motion to approve the February 13th, 2024 regular meeting minutes.

Motion: Commissioner Christian-Bennett

Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin

All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;

Motion Carries

HUMAN RESOURCES

Present: Director Tami Soltis

Journal Entries:

In accordance with Section 305.30 of the Ohio Revised Code and this Board's Resolution 21-0396, Part 9(I), the Board of Commissioners acknowledges and approves the County Administrator's approval to:

1. Authorize the three-day internal posting of the full-time Assistant Director- Fiscal for Portage County Job & Family Services with external posting if no internal appointment is made.

Motion: Commissioner Christian-Bennett

Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin

All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;

Motion Carries

2. Approve anniversary and/or step increases for the following non-bargaining employees:
 - Jennifer Hafner
 - Shawn Kelly

- Scott Lazzara

Motion: Commissioner Christian-Bennett

Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin

All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;

Motion Carries

EXECUTIVE SESSION

9:01 AM In accordance with the Ohio Revised Code 121.22(G)(1), it was moved by Sabrina Christian-Bennett, seconded by Mike Tinlin that the Board of Commissioners move into executive session to consider the compensation of a public employee. Also present: Director Tami Soltis, County Administrator, Michelle Crombie, and Director Kellijo Jeffries. Roll call vote: Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Yea; Mike Tinlin, Yea; Anthony J. Badalamenti, Yea;

9:04 AM Upon conclusion of the above referenced discussion, it was moved by Sabrina Christian-Bennett, seconded by Mike Tinlin that the Board of Commissioners move out of executive session. Roll call vote: Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Yea; Mike Tinlin, Yea; Anthony J. Badalamenti, Yea;

After exiting executive session, the Board took no action.

DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINACIAL MANAGEMENT

Present: Director Jackie Petty

Discussion:

1. FY2024 Contingency Update

Director Petty has an update on the contingency that was discussed last week. There is a new list with updated numbers.

- Throughout the week, other claims were thought of that are upcoming, roughly in the amount of \$600,000. This was added to the contingency in the "Other" line.
- The Board of Elections has also reached out in their Budget Meeting regarding equipment upgrades which may be asked for at the end of this year or beginning of next year. Last time they were funded by a grant, but that is not certain this time.

Commissioner Christian-Bennett asks what they are looking to upgrade. And she believes that there is money for Poll Books. The most expensive thing are the scanners. Director Petty states that she believes that its the voting equipment, and she can get details and confirm. The minimum to keep aside for that would be \$1 million to \$1.5 million.

- If this is kept aside then the carryover remaining is \$300,418.00, which limits what can be done with additional projects this year.

Commissioner Badalamenti states that when he first took his position with the Board, they did the Poll Books, and he believes that the Voting Equipment is at the end of life.

Commissioner Badalamenti asks if Director Petty can go over in further detail the line that is \$1 million listed under the Airport, EMA, etc.

- Director Petty states that number represents department support that may come around throughout the year. She states that Airport Director, Robert Hartigan states that at the end of 2024 he may have more expenses than revenue. They might be a little in the red

causing need for support. Any local matches for grants may have to be covered as well. It's not uncommon for there to be a 5% match that would have to be contributed to, due to the Airport's current lack of budget.

- The next line consists of "other" department needs for \$2.6 million. This is to support existing projects that may go over, as well as the Sheriff Office increases which haven't been determined yet. Whatever the increases are, that are agreed upon will also have added benefits that will apply. The line also encumbers insurance claims and transfers out, such as when a department has a grant and an advance is needed.

Commissioner Badalamenti had a question about the first Journal Entry that will be presented under DBFM. This Agreement for the Sheriffs' Office has been vetted, but for the Drug Task Force the BOC has never signed for it, and Director Petty is still researching it with the Prosecutors' Office.

Director Petty has comments on Journal Entries 2 and 3. Neighborhood Development Services had contacted Director Petty the week prior to explain that these Journal Entries are regarding Hope Town. Hope Town has an RLF mortgage, and they are applying for a line of credit with Farmers National Bank. NDS is suggesting that the County satisfy the mortgage that they have on one property, and then file a new mortgage as the second position of line of credit. That way it would be opened up to the two properties that they have, and they would have more collateral. Basically, it would be satisfying the one mortgage and then filing it again encumbering the two. That way they would have more collateral and it meets the CDBG requirements for the percentage for the line of credit.

Commissioner Christian-Bennett states that as a borrower she thinks the opposite, she would only want it encumbered on one property, so one was free. She clarifies that CDBG guidelines require that they have a certain percentage that they are allowed to borrow for an equity line, and right now only encumbering the one property does not meet the collateral requirement that they need to have. She asks how much the line of credit is. Director Petty is unaware but will check. She knows that the mortgage amount is \$153,500.

Journal Entries:

1. The Board of Commissioners authorizes Commissioner Anthony J Badalamenti, President of the Board, to sign as the Governing Body Head for the Equitable Sharing Agreement and Certification for the Portage County Sheriff's Office. Documents reviewed by the Department of Budget and Financial Management.

Motion: Commissioner Christian-Bennett

Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin

All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;

Motion Carries

2. The Board of Commissioners signed the Satisfaction of Mortgage to Hopetown, Inc. for \$153,500.00 on property at 9077 Maple Grove Road in Windham, Ohio 44288 (Instrument No. 202127142) as requested by Neighborhood Development Services. Documents reviewed by the Department of Budget and Financial Management.

Motion: Commissioner Christian-Bennett

Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin

All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;

Motion Carries

3. The Board of Commissioners approves the filing in second position the CDBG Housing Revolving Loan Fund Mortgage for Hopetown, Inc for \$153,500.00 for properties at 9077 Maple Grove Road and additional collateral of 9627 Community Road in Windham, Ohio 44288 as requested by Neighborhood Development Services. Documents reviewed by the Department of Budget and Financial Management.

Motion: Commissioner Christian-Bennett**Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin**

All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;

Motion Carries

In accordance with Section 305.30(K) of the Ohio Revised Code and this Board's Resolution 21-0396 and this Board's Resolution 21-0878, the Board of Commissioners acknowledges and approves the County Administrator's approval to:

4. Direct the Auditor's Office to pay/process the February 15, 2024 bills/ACH payments, wires, journal vouchers and then & now's, as applicable, contingent upon the verification of the reports as presented by the County Auditor and reviewed by the Department of Budget and Financial Management.

Motion: Commissioner Christian-Bennett**Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin**

All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;

Motion Carries

Expenditure Review		
County Funds: (0001 – 8399)		
Bill Payment and ACH list totaling:		
Bill Payment list	\$1,608,618.62	(Includes late fees of: \$5.17)
ACH/Neil Group of	\$20.00	
ACH Payment list totaling:	\$0	
Health Benefit Wire transfers totaling:		
Medical Mutual Admin of	\$0	
Medical Mutual Claims of	\$0	
Medical Mutual Flex Admin of	\$0	
Medical Mutual Flex Claims of	\$0	
Journal Vouchers totaling:	\$235,582.91	
Then and Now list totaling:	\$388,079.07	
Debt Service wire list:	\$0	
BWC Wires:	\$0	

5. Process the February 15, 2024 budget amendments as reviewed and recommended by the Department of Budget and Financial Management.

Motion: Commissioner Christian-Bennett

Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin

All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;

Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;

Motion Carries

WATER RESOURCES

Present: Director Daniel Blakely and John Vence, Manager of the Engineering Department

Discussion:

1. Chinn Regional Sewer Update

Director Blakely states that he and Mr. Vence are present to give the Board an update on the Chinn Project. Mr. Vence takes over and states that it is a huge milestone. The resolution being brought forward acknowledges that the construction drawings are finished and an estimate of cost has been established. This will pave the way for future resolutions. People within the assessment area will be able to attend a public meeting and voice their opinions. This is one of the first steps. Next time he will be present will be on 3/21 when Water Resources will bring forth a resolution of necessity and go through the boundary of the assessment area. It will formally adopt the cost. Part of that resolution will also set the public hearing that will be in the future. Tentatively, the hearing will be at Ravenna High School, where hearings have been held in the past. A set of drawings and an estimate will be given to the BOC Office as part of the process for today's resolution. Notices will be going out for the upcoming tentative 3-21 "next step" resolution. There will be 2 homes within the assessment area, so Mr. Vence states that there may be members of the public at the next meeting. Commissioner Christian-Bennett states that after checking her calendar, she realized that she is scheduled to be out of town that day. She suggests having a meeting on March 19th instead, and it is agreed upon.

Mr. Vence states that there were some design challenges with the project and it had to be redesigned a couple of times, working on it for several years. \$6.5 million dollars in grant monies were received for the project and total project cost is projected to be around \$11 million. The difference in the amounts falls on the 227 property owners and figures to be around \$19,000 per home. There's a contingency amount that was figured and is a fairly good amount. A public bid process will be gone through, and this will obviously affect the final numbers. He said that they always plan to be conservative early on.

Commissioner Christian-Bennett states that amount is still half of what the last design phase was. She believes that it was around \$40,000 a household. Mr. Vence states that this amount will be spread out throughout a lot of years.

Commissioner Badalamenti asks if there will be interest on the money when it is spread out. Mr. Vence states that the EPA has committed a Water Pollution Control Loan for the County. The County must pay for it up front, so this is like a re-assessment, reimbursement type of process. The loans that they are offering are very aggressive with either no interest or minimal interest.

Commissioner Christian-Bennett asks if the department has the funding to do the advance in the Enterprise Zone. Director Blakely, and Mr. Vence state that they are still working that out. They will probably end up financing it on their end and not paying it out in cash.

Commissioner Badalamenti clarified that they may be able to finance it through the government at zero. Mr. Vence clarified that it could either be zero or a minimal percentage. Commissioner Badalamenti clarifies that they are paying for it up front with minimal interest charges and then the residents pay so much a year. Director Blakely states that it is exciting, and they are finally moving forward.

Mr. Vence states that there is a lot to do in the administration process in the next few months, and they will be more and more active with it.

Commissioner Badalamenti asked if there were any other updates on the project by Geis. Director Blakely states that they are moving forward even though they have had challenges with the design. Geis is upset about the timing. Commissioner Badalamenti recalls the company stating that it wanted to be up and running in June of 2025, and asks if they need a water treatment plant to open. Mr. Vence states that there is nothing holding up their due process. They have submitted construction drawings in the office with their own engineer. It's not a water treatment plant, but they must connect to the new main lines.

Director Blakely states that he doesn't feel that the connection to Mantua is necessary yet, but when the area starts ramping up then the water main will need to be installed, but there is time. Commissioner Christian-Bennett wanted to mention that at a previous meeting with Geis Director Blakely and Mr. Vence did a great job at presenting. They were very well documented, and she was very glad that they were at the meeting. They expressed how important the Geis Project is to the County, and everyone is committed to making it happen.

MISCELLANEOUS

Journal Entries:

1. The Board of Commissioners acknowledged the receipt of the Portage County Investment Reconciliation for the Month of January 2024, received on February 14, 2024 as presented by the County Auditor and County Treasurer.
Motion: Commissioner Christian-Bennett
Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin
 All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea; Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;
Motion Carries
2. Board of Commissioners' acknowledgement of receipt of the February 13, 2024 Certificate of County Auditor that the total appropriations from each fund **do exceed** the official estimate of resources as presented by the County Auditor's office.
Motion: Commissioner Christian-Bennett
Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin
 All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea; Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;
Motion Carries

Resolutions:

1. Reappointment to the Portage County Public Defender Commission for David Sed./Resolution No. 24-0125
2. Appointment of Janice Simmons-Mortimer to the Portage Area Regional Transit Authority (PARTA) Board of Trustees Representing the Northern Section of Portage County./Resolution No. 24-0126

County Administrator, Michelle Crombie states that the Resolutions under the Department of Budget and Finance were inadvertently missed.

1. Create Fund 5247, PCS 23 OWDA 10001 for Portage County Water Resources Department./Resolution No. 24-0127
2. Create Fund 5441, PCW 22 OWDA 10005 for Portage County Water Resources Department./Resolution No. 24-0128
3. Enter into an Agreement Amendment No. 10 between the Portage County Board of Commissioners and The Portage Development Board./Resolution No. 24-0129
4. Enter into an Agreement Amendment No. 3 for social media accounts software between the Portage County Board of Commissioners and Archive Social, Inc./Resolution No. 24-0130

INTERNAL SERVICES

Present: Director Shannon Kautzman

Discussion:

1. *Project Updates*
 - The elevator kick-off meeting is on March 12th for the Administration Building and there will be a timeframe given for when they will replace each elevator. They will do one at a time.

She wanted to make the Board aware that she got a cost for the architectural services for the Administration Building. The cost estimate for the 1st floor, Building Department, the 5th floor, and the 7th floor is \$180,000 and the project cost is \$2.2 million. This cost contains the wish list of everyone. They have not received the cost for the upgrade of the Keltron System yet.

The Keltron System supersedes everything else due to it being at the end of life. They are going to see what the best option is. Commissioner Badalamenti would like to know if there is a hierarchy that was put in place for the remodel requests and what updates are priorities.

Director Kautzman states that the cost estimate is broken down by floor. She has not made a hierarchy, due to not knowing the cost of the Keltron System. The next meeting with the architect will entail going to all the locations with the Keltron System including the Engineers' Office, Juvenile Detention Center, Juvenile Court, and Microfilm Center. She believes that there are seven (7) buildings that have the system, and its upgrades

may take the whole budget. The major renovations lie with the 5th and 7th floors with the Building Department updates having minimal cost. There was a purchase order cut to investigate the issue with the leak in that department and Director Bodnar has chosen the contractor.

At the Veterans Services Department, the door fob should be completed the week of the 26th.

The culvert drains price was received at \$29,000. Director Kautzman felt that it was steep, and she is seeking another price.

- Director Kautzman is meeting with the contractor at the Annex Building sometime in March to discuss a timeline. The ADA doors should be installed in approximately three weeks. Maintenance is going to install a new vanity in the kitchen due to the current one being warped on the bottom. Also, a residential vanity will be installed in the non-ADA bathroom as well.

Director Craven was asking about the basement space in the building. Director Kautzman was under the impression that it was going to be used as storage for the Probate Court. She thinks that Director Craven is under the impression that he may be able to utilize some of the basement space. Commissioner Christian-Bennett states that the area has long been reserved for the Probate storage. Money has been put into the area to be able to utilize it as such. It's convenient to store records here versus at the Records Center which is running out of space.

Commissioner Badalamenti asks if there is a reason why we cannot use Kent Court. Director Kautzman states that the only reason why Kent Court cannot be used is that she would have to build a room and put a lock on it because everyone has access to that basement.

Commissioner Christian-Bennett clarifies that the Veterans' Office is taking the 1st and 2nd floor. She would still reserve the basement area for the Courts.

Commissioner Badalamenti states that's why he's suggesting using the basement in Kent due to it being 5,500 square feet and its dry and nice. He states that for a couple thousand dollars they could build a room. The area is dry and has been dry. It's a very nice building and if the items to be stored are associated with the courts, then it could be a good place to utilize, since it can't be used for anything else. It would still be undecided that Director Craven would be able to utilize the space in the Annex basement.

Director Kautzman states that it would probably be around \$10,000-\$15,000 for a room-build in Kent and concurs that Mr. Cooper is running out of room at the Records Center. Commissioner Christian-Bennett and Commissioner Tinlin agree that the space in Kent could be utilized.

Commissioner Christian-Bennett wants to make sure that other departments do not have a need for storage in the basement before they allow the area to be used by

Veterans' Affairs. Director Kautzman stated that she would email Judge Roubic and Nicole Jones to inform them of the Board's interest in using the space. Only Glenn Cooper and one of the Court's staff would have a key to the locked area upon completion.

Commissioner Tinlin states that there is no real access to it. The Commissioners agree that it would be a safe area to place the records. Director Kautzman will also ask Director Craven as to what he is interested in storing in the Annex Building. Director Craven also recently expressed interest in ordering furniture and asked about movers. Director Kautzman does not want any orders in the Annex Building because furniture will be in the way and could possibly be damaged. She wanted to offer him a storage area in the old lunchroom for furniture and stated that the maintenance staff could help with the move.

Commissioner Christian-Bennett asks what the project completion projection is. It's a guestimate now, and Director Kautzman will know more after she meets with the contractors. The goal was to hopefully be in by August, but that is not certain.

- The Probate Court project is at the completion phase. Life Safety is installing intercoms, and once completed the contractor will patch and paint.

Judge Giulitto's office space is complete.

- At the Riddle Block Building a cage around the bottom unit is going to be built because there has been damage to the old units in the past from ice. A heavy plate has been dropped on the new unit already as well, and it will be replaced. A cage will be welded, and it will be considered a maintenance cost.

2. Quarterly Update

- Maintenance currently has had 291 facility requests as of last week since January 1st. On average they usually complete 1,200-1,400 a year. All maintenance staff are working on projects daily. One position is still empty as well, and they have not posted it. Posting for a couple of positions has been discussed, due to the number of current employees retiring in the next 5 years.
- In purchasing, Michelle Smith has been hired and they are getting ready to make her the current buyer in the system. She has caught on very quickly and there has been a lot of positive feedback about her.
- In Mail, there have been 58,900 pieces of postage that have gone out to date currently. In a year on average, there are around 600,000 pieces of mail that go out. There have been around 500 deliveries to departments, and on average it is 2,000 a year.
- In contracts, there are 285 that have already gone out to date and on average there are 544 yearly.

- They have done approximately 2,600 Purchase Orders and 8,000 are usually completed in a year.
- At the Microfilm Center and Print Shop, new shelving units are being installed. 45-50 Print Shop jobs have been completed with an average of around 350 per year.

Journal Entry:

1. The Board of Commissioners authorizes Shannon Kautzman, Internal Services Director to sign the credit applications and County Facilities License Agreements for 2024.

Motion: Commissioner Christian-Bennett

Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin

All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;

Motion Carries

Resolutions:

1. The Board of Commissioners agrees to reject the bids for lawn care service located at the water and wastewater facilities for the Portage County Water Resources Department./Resolution No. 24-0119
2. The Board of Commissioners approves the plans, specifications, estimate of cost, tentative assessment of Project No. RV-0 (17-080) Chinn Regional Sewer Improvements Project, in the Portage County Sewer District, Ravenna Township./Resolution No. 24-0120
3. The Board of Commissioners agrees to accept the Maintenance Guarantee for street, storm sewer, drainage improvements, erosion and sediment control for the Maplecrest Parkway Extension in Brimfield Township and release of Performance Guarantee./Resolution No. 24-0121
4. The Board of Commissioners authorizes the Portage County Engineer to participate in the Ohio Department of Transportation Cooperative Purchasing Program. /Resolution No. 24-0122
5. Approving and authorizing the execution of the proposal for professional engineering services for the Hills Pond Dam Remediation Project with EMH&T./Resolution No. 24-0123

JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES

Present: Director Kellijo Jeffries and Vanessa Beard

Discussion:

1. *JFS December 2023 / January 2024 Data Report – Attached*
 - Director Jeffries did not find anything significant worth mentioning with the Public Assistance data.
 - In the Ohio Means Jobs category, Director Jeffries wanted to mention the (CCMEP) Comprehensive Case Management Program and how well it's doing. There are 147

young people aged 14-24 that are served. 90 of the young people are in high school, with the remaining being out of school. The state continues to fund this program and has since Governor Kasich was in office.

Commissioner Badalamenti asks if someone that needs help finding work could go to an Ohio Means Jobs office and receive help. He asks how it is advertised as well. Director Jeffries states that resume assistance is offered, there is access to all job postings, skills assessments can be performed, and the individual could even have access to training account funds which could be used for CDLs and STNAs. Advertisements for Ohio Means Jobs are on the Job and Family Services webpage, and on social media. There are also a lot of hiring events at the office.

Commissioner Badalamenti recently referred a young man to the organization that was in search of work.

- Director Jeffries gave some background on a young woman who is currently in the Benefit Bridge Program that is in substance abuse recovery. While in the program she has secured employment, received rent assistance, purchased a car, and is still in the program.

The Commissioners enjoy hearing how the program is actually helping, rather than just looking at the data.

- Child and Protective Services reports that there are 170 kids in custody at the end of January. Director Jeffries is very excited about the new contract relevant to the 28 kids in permanent custody that are eligible to be adopted. The department's goal is to have 14 of those kids finalized and through the court process by the end of June and with their forever homes. Director Jeffries would like to praise Judge Smith and her team for their work and making space on the docket.
- Staffing numbers are down. There have been 4 retirements in December and January with a resignation. At the end of January there were 187 employees, but since then the department has made a couple of recommendations of hire. Commissioner Christian-Bennett confirms that the goal is to have 212 employees. Director Jeffries would like to see how to reduce that number and come back with discussions with County Administrator Crombie and the Board.

2. *Upcoming Job Fair – March 2024 – Attached Flyer*

- This job fair is to recruit drivers for Portage County on March 27th at the Ohio Means Jobs Center. Director Jeffries would like to be vigilant with data to see how many recruits come from the event directly. The last two events lacked data collection in this area.

3. *Upcoming Tulip Town – March 2024 – Attached Flyer*

- Tulip Town is a poverty simulation coming up on March 12th. She would like to showcase what a month in poverty might look like.

Director Jeffries would also like to give a quick update on the Healthy Aging Grant. JFS has processed 85 applications so far since January.

- 66 Seniors applied for case management
- 64 asked for food assistance
- 17 for care coordination
- 36 for transportation help
- 8 asked for support kits for their homes
- 32 applications were received for digital inclusion which includes iPads and internet
- 26 applications for home delivered meals
- 31 asked for assistance with rent
- 24 asked for homeowner assistance
- 25 for home repair

Commissioner Christian-Bennett asks about coverage for Life Alert and briefly talks about how a resident had recently fallen and wasn't found for 2 days. This could be a qualified cost through Case Management according to Director Jeffries or they could also involve Catholic Charities.

Director Jeffries states that the funding runs out on June 30th.

Resolution:

1. Transfer from Fund 1414, Child Support Administration, to 1410 Public Assistance Fund./Resolution No. 24-0124

RECESS: 9:53 AM

RECONVENE: 10:00 AM

PUBLIC DEFENDERS' OFFICE

Present: J.P. Laczko

Discussion:

1. *Additional Staffing*
2. *Office Renovation*

Director of the Public Defender's Office, Attorney Laczko introduced himself. He has been an employee of the Public Defender's Office for 24 plus years and has been the Director for the last 6. His background includes medical malpractice, and he started criminal law when he began in Portage County as a trial lawyer. There was a learning curve when he started as Director, and he had no idea of the day-to-day operations of the office. He was asked early on by past Commissioners to cut \$100,000 from his budget, so he spent the next 4-5 months learning and coming up with ideas on how to make the cut work. He became inept with the State Public Defenders Office and the reimbursement system. At the time, the office oversaw 75% of felony cases in Portage County and they would also be representatives for 100% of misdemeanor cases, excluding any conflict. To come into compliance with the Commissioners' request in 2018, Attorney Laczko was forced to cut a Legal Assistant Position in an attempt to reduce payroll. At that time, he also made a deal with the County to take 90% of the cases, to recoup money and funds wouldn't have to be paid out in Court Appointed Fees.

Attorney Laczko would like to digress and mention the lack of office space that the Public Defenders' Office is accustomed to. He gives documentation regarding expansions or improvements to the office. In 2020 when Governor DeWine took office, he saw that there was a lack of funding for indigent defendants. He added to the budget around \$350 million dollars specifically earmarked for criminal defense and making the Director of the Ohio Public Defenders (OPD) the overseer of the funds. At that time the standard rate for court appointed counsel was raised to \$75 an hour, a change that hadn't been made since the 90's. The reimbursement rates also increased from around 40-48% to 100% for a period. This money was to reimburse the Counties for any expenses associated with the Public Defenders' Office including salaries, office supplies, rent, experts, travel expenses, etc. Attorney Laczko states that for a time his office was the only one that was self-funded. Anything that the County paid to operate the office was reimbursable. In 2022 he sent a letter to the Board requesting larger office space. There are 11 attorneys right now including himself that cover 7 courts in the county, the 2 Common Pleas Courts, Juvenile, Domestic, and 3 Municipal Courts. He has areas where he has three groups of attorneys sharing offices. This is contrary to what should be happening as far as efficiency and privacy. He states that the biggest issue that needs dealt with is that of the outgrown space. He has provided the Board with Rule 120 – 1 – 06 in his letter. This rule encompasses everything that was stated; that everything that is associated with the budget of the Public Defenders' Office is compensable through the State Public Defenders' Office. Within 2 months of drafting a letter to the Board the Legislature re-wrote Rule 120 – 1 – 06, added that any renovations that are made to the Public Defender's Office are also reimbursable, at the going state rate.

Commissioner Tinlin wanted Attorney Laczko to know that they did go and visit the office and he was appalled. He was also made aware that a letter was sent to the Board prior to his taking office. He agrees that something needs to be done and a plan is in process. He would like to applaud the Public Defenders' Office for working in the current conditions.

Attorney Laczko states that his staff doesn't complain, and they find ways to complete the tasks at hand.

Commissioner Badalamenti asks if the area that is down the hall is big enough for what is needed; for everyone to have an office space. He would also like to fix the issue of the lack of space, now. He states that by fixing this issue, it will also contribute to other solutions for spacing. He would like to get started as soon as possible and clarifies the reimbursement rate. Attorney Laczko states that he's not an architect, but he does know that one of the issues is that the offices are different sizes. He used to have a larger office but downgraded to a smaller one to accommodate those who were sharing. He states that the area is a blank slate. Attorney Laczko states that the current reimbursement rate projections are 85%, based upon the monthly fees that are submitted. If the numbers stay at \$18 million or less monthly, then the projection will stay the same. In the last few months, the numbers have been in the \$17 million range, with the approval of the October's numbers in February. He has quarterly meetings with the State Public Defenders' Office and an annual meeting where all the heads of the County Public Defenders' Office are present. It's predicted that the percentages will remain at 85% throughout the 2024 calendar year. The budget will then come out for the next two-year period.

Commissioner Christian-Bennett states that it also depends on how many other offices decide to use the funds in a similar manner. That can cut into the amount and reduce reimbursement.

Attorney Laczko states that he is glad that Commissioner Christian-Bennett mentioned that: He states that when he was down at the State Public Defenders' Office in October, they generally have representatives from different counties mention the improvements that they have made. Attorney Laczko states that 7 Counties were presented, and all stated that they have a brand-new office or a renovated office. He thinks that everyone that was going to take advantage of this opportunity, already did prior. Portage may be a little late coming to the table with this initiative so he feels that there will be less competition. That's why the reimbursement rate is not currently 100%. Other offices hired additional staff and brought themselves up to the workload standards of what they needed.

Commissioner Christian-Bennett states that it just needs to be noted for planning purposes. The rate could drop in the middle of the project. There's no guarantee at that rate. They must plan for contingency. She's on the state board for CCAO, and they are constantly advocating the state to take Indigent Defense over versus reimbursing the counties.

Attorney Laczko states that he doesn't see the rates going down, and he would enjoy discussing the status of indigent defense from a county standpoint and what is beneficial to Portage County on a different day. He states that there are benefits and detriments.

Ms. Tami Scott states that the State Public Defenders' Office asks that the County give them a projected cost, and then they take it into account so they can stay at the 85% rate. She also mentions the monthly Zoom meeting through the Ohio Public Defenders and that anyone can join to check up on rate changes.

Commissioner Badalamenti states that the first step would be to get an architect. Director Kautzman states that there is already an architect for that location. They were already in charge of the HVAC and the roof. The area is a clean slate, and there just needs to be accountability for heating and HVAC.

Commissioner Christian-Bennett asked how many total offices will be needed. Attorney Laczko asked if they are talking about their current staffing numbers, and at those numbers it would be 11 for the 11 attorneys, 1 for an investigator, and 1 for the office manager.

The architect will deliberate with the Public Defenders on what is needed. Director Kautzman states that with the process starting now, by the time it goes out to bid, it is probably going to be summer, and it might be this winter before work is completed. She will reach out to the architect today.

Attorney Laczko states that the other issue he is here to address is the cutting of the original budget along with the lack of staff, while taking on more cases. Rule 120 – 01 – 07 establishes workload standards by the OPD. This is supposed to be a guideline on how many cases a public defender is supposed to handle in a year. The standards were established in the early 2000's, and list that attorneys should not do more than 150 felony cases in any year and misdemeanor cases should be at 600 or less. He has provided spreadsheets. They are

already at 383 for the month of January 2024. In 2020 Attorney Laczko's office did 3,857 felony cases. In 2023 the office did 4,785. That is almost a 30% increase.

Commissioner Badalamenti clarifies that there are 11 attorneys including Attorney Laczko handling the case load.

- He has 6 attorneys that handle felony cases. Last year the felony cases amounted to around 1,900 divided amongst the 6, it is more than 300 felonies per attorney.
- The misdemeanor cases amounted to about 800 cases per the three attorneys.
- The remaining cases fall under Juvenile/Domestic which was about 350 cases served by 1 attorney.

He does not have the ability to split the Juvenile and Domestic cases amongst two different attorneys. The felony cases are more time consuming. He mentions that Portage is one of the busiest courts in Ohio per Judge. The Office averages 60-65 cases a month in both Judge Pittman and Judge Doherty's court. Attorney Laczko states the numbers are overwhelming. After recent research, he discovered that other attorneys are not being appointed. The Public Defenders are supposed to receive 9 out of 10 cases with the tenth case getting an appointment from the list. He's not sure why this is happening and even asked. His point is that they not only represent 90% of the cases, but 100%.

Commissioner Badalamenti asked if Attorney Laczko brought this to one of the Judges' attentions. He states that there are 2 assignment commissioners and states that's not the Commissioners' problem, he just wanted to use it as another example of how they are overworked and understaffed.

Commissioner Tinlin asked if it was Attorney Laczko's opinion that the key to the influx of defendants is the increase in police activity. He also asks what he needs to make his job easier. Attorney Laczko states that he feels that there is more of a police presence here. 40% of the cases are lower-level drug cases. It's an epidemic, which he mentions is usually tied to the employment rate, and the mean income rate. He doesn't know if there is anything that can ever be done to stop it. But with respect to cases in the Prosecutor's Office, the Public Defenders see a lot that have been put off from a few years back. Attorney Laczko is from Mahoning County where there are 5 Common Pleas Court Judges. There's a bigger population and probably more crime. There are more murders per capita. In Portage County there are 2 Judges and they have identified 400 more felony cases than Mahoning did the last two years in a row. There are a lot of cases that are being indicted. He says that he doesn't know if they are arresting more people or if there are just more drugs.

Commissioner Tinlin would go with the first answer. He asks what Attorney Laczko needs. Attorney Laczko needs staff. One of the first things he did was cut the Legal Assistant position when he became Director. The cases have increased by 30% and would like to bring the position back to help prepare the cases. Support staff is needed, and he mentions Ms. Scott and how she works on the weekends. His second request would be to add another position to take on either the Juvenile or Domestic Relations Court instead of one attorney representing both courts. He has attempted to mediate the issue with the two judges and is met with questions on why they do not have their own Public Defender.

The Commissioners state that means that he is doing a good job and that they would rather rely on him than outside attorneys. Commissioner Badalamenti states that more attorneys are needed.

Commissioner Christian-Bennett states that in the past they have worked together to bring parity to what the attorneys at the Public Defender's Office make compared to the Prosecutors' Office. There was a large turnover at that time and the Public Defenders' Office is sometimes viewed as a starting point. Attorneys would leave and go to the Prosecutors' Office. They worked to increase the caseload in Common Pleas, so they could justify adding two additional attorneys to the Public Defenders' staff in 2018.

There are still staff that are going to the Prosecutors Office, according to Attorney Laczko, and he has replaced every member of the staff since 2018. Three of the last four attorneys that have been hired started out as interns. He has gone from a self-reliant group of attorneys when he started to a young group who he is training as he goes and at least 5 on the list have gotten a majority of experience from the Public Defenders' Office. When he first started, he would have 10-12 applications when he advertised an opening and now he doesn't receive resumes. He may receive a new hire by word-of-mouth and the last three that he hired were his interns. There's no one applying. Last year he went 9 months without a full staff resulting in around \$57,000 in attorney salary funds that wasn't used. His staff still maintained the numbers without complaint, and Attorney Laczko had to be in the courtroom as well. Commissioner Badalamenti states that the two issues are the lack of space and the lack of staff. They will start working with the architect and then start researching as far as Budget and Finance goes. Director Kautzman and Director Petty will be in touch.

Ms. Scott states that they would like two attorneys at felony wages, so they are more apt to have experience. A Legal Assistant is also needed. Ms. Scott also states that one of the biggest problems she sees is that the outside attorneys are not available on the appointment list. A lot of the attorneys are gone, and since Portage had an older attorney base. She feels that is one of the reasons her office is receiving 100% of the cases. Commissioner Christian-Bennett states that everywhere is experiencing the lack of staff. Due to COVID the Baby-Boomers all left and are not here to train the next generation.

The Board has no questions for Mr. Laczko who states that his current contract is up on March 3rd.

Commissioner Christian-Bennett states that he has done a phenomenal job since being Director.

RECESS: 10:46 AM

RECONVENE: 11:00 AM

*	*	*	*	*
RESOLUTION NO. 24-0119	-	RE:	REJECTING BIDS FOR LAWN CARE SERVICE AT WATER AND WASTEWATER FACILITIES, FOR THE PORTAGE COUNTY WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT.	

It was moved by Sabrina Christian-Bennett, seconded by Mike Tinlin that the following resolution be adopted:

- WHEREAS,** Portage County Water Resources (PCWR) advertised for bids for lawn care services in the Record Courier on January 17 and 24, 2024; and
- WHEREAS,** two (2) sealed bids were received by Internal Services, tabulated and recorded on February 7, 2024; and
- WHEREAS,** upon evaluation of the bids received, PCWR determined it was more economical to continue utilizing staff to maintain the lawns; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** that all bids received shall be rejected; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that the Board of Commissioners finds and determines that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this Resolution were taking in an open meeting of this Board and that all deliberations of this Board that resulted in those formal actions were in meetings open to the public, in compliance with all legal requirements including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Roll call vote as follows:

Anthony J. Badalamenti, Yea; Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Yea; Mike Tinlin, Yea;

* * * * *

RESOLUTION NO. 24-0120 - RE: APPROVING THE PLANS, SPECIFICATIONS, ESTIMATE OF COST, TENTATIVE ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT NO. RV-0 (17-080) CHINN REGIONAL SEWER IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT, IN THE PORTAGE COUNTY SEWER DISTRICT, RAVENNA TOWNSHIP.

It was moved by Sabrina Christian-Bennett, seconded by Mike Tinlin that the following resolution be adopted:

- WHEREAS,** this Board by Resolution No. 74-78, adopted April 11, 1974, established Portage County Regional Sewer District, hereinafter called the "SEWER DISTRICT"; and
- WHEREAS,** pursuant to authorization by this Board contained in Resolution No. 17-0364, adopted May 2, 2017, the Portage County Water Resources Department has caused to be prepared plans, specifications, estimate of cost and tentative assessment for Chinn Regional Sewer Improvements Project No. RV-0 (17-080) hereinafter referred to as the "PROJECT", in the

vicinity of the Chinn Allotment located in Ravenna Township, Ohio, on information of concerns of nonperforming and nonconforming residential onsite septic systems; and

- WHEREAS,** on July 9, 2018, PCWR held an informational public gathering with residents of the Chinn Allotment area to introduce and obtain public input on the PROJECT; and
- WHEREAS,** in April of 2019, this Board received a notification of the initiation of Findings and Orders from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requiring the County to provide sewerage for the Chinn Allotment area; and
- WHEREAS,** as directed, with the assistance of engineering consultants, PCWR designed a wastewater collection system for the PROJECT consisting of over 13,000 feet of gravity sanitary sewer, 5,000 feet of sanitary force main, and 2 sanitary lift stations and all necessary appurtenances for preserving, protecting, and promoting the public health and welfare of the residents of the Chinn Allotment area; and
- WHEREAS,** the PROJECT will be financed in part by special assessments and the following grants with their respective credit amounts; Ohio Public Works Commission for \$500,000, Army Corp of Engineers 594 for \$925,000, Ohio EPA H2Ohio for \$1,000,000, and an Ohio EPA Water Pollution Control Loan Fund, principal forgiveness loan for \$4,000,000; and
- WHEREAS,** the PROJECT will be financed in part by Portage County Water Resources for extraordinary costs for the replacement of the Short Street Sanitary Pump Station for \$431,250; and
- WHEREAS,** the proposed Assessment District boundary for the PROJECT, see attached map (Exhibit C); and
- WHEREAS,** the PROJECT received a Permit-to-Install from the Ohio EPA, pursuant to Chapter 3745-42 of the Ohio Administrative Code, December 12, 2022; and
- WHEREAS,** copies of the plans, specifications, estimate of cost, and tentative assessment are on file in the office of the Clerk and Portage County Water Resources and available for examination; and
- WHEREAS,** the pre-bid total project cost estimate is \$10,825,000 and with a cost reduction supported by the mentioned grants, the resultant tentative assessment cost of \$3,968,750 for the allocated 255 benefit units for the proposed Assessment District; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** that this Board approves the said plans, specifications, estimated of cost, and tentative assessment for said PROJECT; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that said plans, specifications, estimate of cost and tentative assessments shall be filed in the office of the Clerk of this Board and in the office the

Portage County Water Resources Department and kept continuously on file for inspection by all persons interested; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Water Resources Department is directed to prepare and send on behalf of the Board the Notice required per O.R.C. 6117.06(D) for CAUV notices and publication; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of this Board is hereby directed to certify a copy of this Resolution to the County Auditor, Internal Services and the Department of Budget and Financial Management; be it further

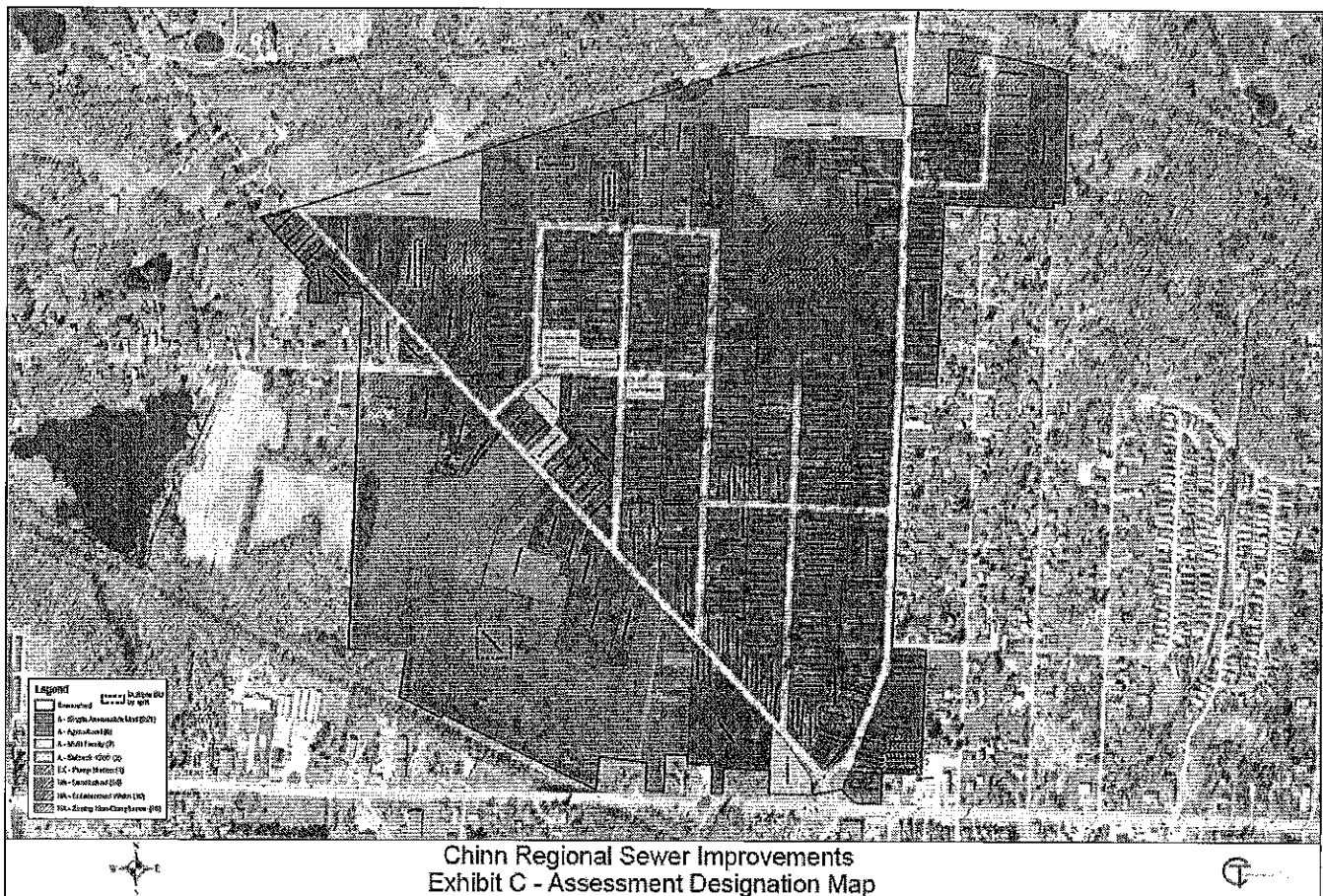
RESOLVED, it is hereby found and determined that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this resolution were adopted in an open meeting of this Board, and that all deliberations of this Board and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal action, were in meetings open to the public, in compliance with all legal requirements including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Roll call vote as follows:

Anthony J. Badalamenti, Yea;

Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Yea;

Mike Tinlin, Yea;



* * *
RESOLUTION NO. 24-0121

* * *
RE: AGREE TO ACCEPT THE MAINTENANCE
GUARANTEE FOR STREET, STORM
SEWER, DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS,
EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL FOR
THE MAPLECREST PARKWAY EXTENSION
IN BRIMFIELD TOWNSHIP AND RELEASE
OF PERFORMANCE GUARANTEE.

It was moved by Sabrina Christian-Bennett, seconded by Mike Tinlin that the following resolution be adopted:

RESOLVED, that, upon the recommendation of the Portage County Engineer and the Portage County Prosecutor's Office, the Board of Portage County Commissioners does hereby agree to accept the Maintenance Guarantee and Maintenance Bond for street, storm sewer, drainage improvements, erosion and sediment control for the Maplecrest Parkway Extension in Brimfield Township, and be it further

RESOLVED, that said Bond is between Maplecrest, LLC, (owner/developer) and Hartford Fire Insurance Company, in the full and just sum of One Hundred Fourteen Thousand Nine Hundred Seventy-Five Dollars and 11/100 dollars (\$114,975.11) for the benefit of Portage County Board of Commissioners; and be it further

RESOLVED, the Performance Guarantee of owner/developer for said Subdivision, approved under Resolution 22-0233, be released per Section 517, Portage County Subdivision Rules and Regulations, and any remaining funds of the Performance Bond Agreement disposed of pursuant to its terms; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners finds and determines that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Board and that all deliberations of this Board that resulted in those formal actions were in meeting open to the public in compliance with the law including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Roll call vote as follows:

Anthony J. Badalamenti, Yea;

Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Yea;

Mike Tinlin, Yea;

* * *
RESOLUTION NO. 24-0122

* * *
RE: AUTHORIZE THE PORTAGE COUNTY
ENGINEER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OHIO

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
COOPERATIVE PURCHASING PROGRAM**

It was moved by Sabrina Christian-Bennett, seconded by Mike Tinlin that the following resolution be adopted:

- WHEREAS,** Ohio Revised Code Section 5513.01 (B) provides the opportunity for Counties, Townships, Municipal Corporations, Conservancy Districts, Township Park Districts, Park Districts created under Chapter 1545 of the Revised Code, Port Authorities, Regional Transit Authorities, Regional Airport Authorities, Regional Water and Sewer Districts, County Transit Boards, State Universities or Colleges to participate in contracts of the Ohio Department of Transportation for the purchase of machinery, material, supplies or other articles, and
- WHEREAS,** Larry D. Jenkins Jr., Portage County Engineer, would like to participate in the Ohio Department of Transportation Cooperative Purchasing Program for the purchase of one (1) **Alamo Model Right-Hand Interstater 74" Flail Mower**, from Akron Tractor & Equipment, Inc., 1309 Collier Rd., Akron, Ohio 44320, at a cost of **\$42,592.00**, State of Ohio Alamo Contract Number 800812; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that the Board of Portage County Commissioners hereby authorizes the Portage County Engineer to participate in the Ohio Department of Transportation Cooperative Purchasing Program for the purchase of said machinery, materials, supplies, or other articles which the Department has entered into pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 5513.01 (B), and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that the Board of Portage County Commissioners does hereby authorize the Portage County Engineer to purchase
- RESOLVED,** that the Board of Portage County Commissioners hereby agree, in the name of the Portage County Engineer, to be bound by all terms and conditions as the Director of Transportation prescribes, and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that the Board of Portage County Commissioners hereby authorize the Portage County Engineer to directly pay vendors under each such contract of the Ohio Department of Transportation in which the Portage County Engineer participates, for items it receives pursuant to the contract, and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that the Portage County Engineer agrees to be responsible for resolving all claims or disputes arising out of its participation in the Ohio Department of Transportation Cooperative Purchasing program under Section 5513.01 (B) of the Ohio Revised Code. The Portage County Engineer releases

and forever discharges the Director of Transportation and the Ohio Department of Transportation from all such claims, actions, expenses, or other damages arising out of its participation in the Ohio Department of Transportation Cooperative Purchasing Program which the Portage County Engineer may have or claim to have against the Ohio Department of Transportation or its employees, unless such liability is the result of negligence on the part of the Ohio Department of Transportation or its employees, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners finds and determines that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Board and that all deliberations of this Board that resulted in those formal actions were in meetings open to the public in compliance with the law including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Roll call vote as follows:

Anthony J. Badalamenti, Yea; Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Yea; Mike Tinlin, Yea;

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RESOLUTION NO. 24-0123

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**RE: APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE
EXECUTION OF THE PROPOSAL FOR
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES
FOR THE HILLS POND DAM REMEDIATION
PROJECT WITH EMH&T**

It was moved by Sabrina Christian-Bennett, seconded by Mike Tinlin that the following resolution be adopted:

WHEREAS, the Portage County Board of Commissioners has received EMH&T's proposal for professional services for the next phase for the Hills Pond Dam Remediation Project, which covers EMH&T's services concerning final engineering and permitting, which will enable the Board to then proceed to advertise for the solicitation of bids for the project; and

WHEREAS, the Portage County Board of Commissioners has determined to proceed with EMH&T's proposal and the services described by EMH&T's in its proposal.

RESOLVED, the Portage County Board of Commissioners hereby approves and authorizes the President of the Portage County Board of Commissioners, on behalf of the Portage County Board of Commissioners, to execute EMH&T's proposal for Professional Engineering Services concerning the Hills Pond Dam Remediation Project, including final engineering and permitting for the project, and that EMH&T proceed in providing said

RESOLVED, that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Board and that all deliberations of this Board that resulted in those formal actions were in meeting open to the public in compliance with the law including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Anthony J. Badalamenti, Yea; Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Yea; Mike Tinlin, Yea;

Journal Entry, and that a certified copy of this resolution be filed with the Portage County Auditor, the Portage County Job & Family Services, and the Department of Budget and Financial Management; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners finds and determines that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Board and that all deliberations of this Board that resulted in those formal actions were in meeting open to the public in compliance with the law including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Roll call vote as follows:

Anthony J. Badalamenti, Yea; Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Yea; Mike Tinlin, Yea;

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RESOLUTION NO. 24-0125

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**RE: REAPPOINTMENT TO THE PORTAGE
COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER COMMISSION
FOR DAVID SED**

It was moved by Sabrina Christian-Bennett, seconded by Mike Tinlin that the following resolution be adopted:

WHEREAS, Ohio Revised Code 120.13 establishes the County Public Defender Commission for the purpose of providing for the defense counsel for indigent persons; and

WHEREAS, the Commission shall be comprised of five members, of whom two shall be appointed by the Common Pleas Judge and three shall be appointed the Board of Commissioners; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, the Board of Commissioners reappoints the following to serve a four (4) year term as a member of the Portage County Public Defender Commission effective February 28, 2024 and ending on February 27, 2028:

Name	Address
David Sed	4825 Forest Glen Trail Ravenna, Ohio 44266

; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners finds and determines that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Board and that all deliberations of this Board that resulted in those formal actions were in meeting open to the public in compliance with the law including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Roll call vote as follows:

Anthony J. Badalamenti, Yea;

Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Yea;

Mike Tinlin, Yea;

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RESOLUTION NO. 24-0126

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RE: APPOINTMENT OF JANICE SIMMONS-MORTIMER TO THE PORTAGE AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY (PARTA) BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPRESENTING THE NORTHERN SECTION OF PORTAGE COUNTY.

It was moved by Sabrina Christian-Bennett, seconded by Mike Tinlin that the following resolution be adopted:

WHEREAS, Members of the PARTA Board of Trustees shall be appointed by the political subdivisions creating the Authority, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 306.30; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 01-405, restates the documentation providing for PARTA and amends it to include the cities of Aurora and Streetsboro and Section 3 defines the Board of Commissioners shall have three representatives, and Resolution 07-810 re-states the residency requirements for those three appointees as being one each from the northern, middle, and southern areas of the county, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners appoints the following to represent the Northern Section of the County fulfilling a vacancy by Richard Brockett beginning immediately and expiring June 30, 2026:

Janice Simmons-Mortimer 11818 Alpha Road Hiram, Ohio 44234
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; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners finds and determines that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Board and that all deliberations of this Board that resulted in those formal actions were in meeting open to the public in compliance with the law including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Roll call vote as follows:

Anthony J. Badalamenti, Yea;

Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Yea;

Mike Tinlin, Yea;

* * *
RESOLUTION NO. 24-0127

* * *
RE: **CREATE FUND 5247, PCS 23 OWDA 10001
FOR PORTAGE COUNTY WATER
RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**

It was moved by Sabrina Christian-Bennett, seconded by Mike Tinlin that the following resolution be adopted:

- WHEREAS,** via Resolution 24-0091, the Board of Commissioners authorized Portage County to apply for, accept and enter into a Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) Agreement with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) for the construction of wastewater facilities and designate a dedicated repayment source for the Loan Project No. MV-0 (21-190), Village of Mantua Wastewater Treatment Plant Headworks & Electrical Improvements, for the Village of Mantua public sewer system in Portage County, for the Portage County Water Resources Department; and
- WHEREAS,** it is necessary to create a new debt fund for the loan receipts and repayment; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** that "**Fund 5247 PCS 23 OWDA 10001**" be created for the purposes of accounting for receipts and repayment of the OWDA loan; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that a certified copy of this resolution be filed with the Portage County Department of Budget and Financial Management and the Portage County Auditor, and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that the Board of Commissioners finds and determines that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Board and that all deliberations of this Board that resulted in those formal actions were in a meeting(s) open to the public in compliance with the law including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Roll call vote as follows:

Anthony J. Badalamenti, Yea;

Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Yea;

Mike Tinlin, Yea;

* * *
RESOLUTION NO. 24-0128

* * *
RE: **CREATE FUND 5441, PCW 22 OWDA 10005
FOR PORTAGE COUNTY WATER
RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**

It was moved by Sabrina Christian-Bennett, seconded by Mike Tinlin that the following resolution be adopted:

WHEREAS, the Portage County Board of Commissioners became the owner and operator of the Village of Mantua Water and Sewer Systems on January 4, 2021, through a utility transfer agreement with the Village of Mantua Council, Portage County Board of Commissioners Resolution 20-0809 and Village of Mantua Council Ordinances 2019-49 and 2020-54; and

WHEREAS, "Fund 5512, PCW Mantua Distrib Replcm" was created for the distribution replacement of the Village of Mantua Water and Sewer Systems project, and

WHEREAS, Portage County Water Resources applied for and received an OWDA loan to fund this distribution replacement project; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to create a new debt fund for the loan receipts and repayment; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that "**Fund 5441, PCW 22 OWDA 10005**" be created for the purposes of accounting for receipts and repayment of the OWDA loan; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be filed with the Portage County Department of Budget and Financial Management and the Portage County Auditor, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners finds and determines that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Board and that all deliberations of this Board that resulted in those formal actions were in a meeting(s) open to the public in compliance with the law including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Roll call vote as follows:

Anthony J. Badalamenti, Yea; Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Yea; Mike Tinlin, Yea;

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**RESOLUTION NO. 24-0129 - RE: ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT
AMENDMENT NO. 10 BETWEEN THE
PORTAGE COUNTY BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS AND THE PORTAGE
DEVELOPMENT BOARD.**

It was moved by Sabrina Christian-Bennett, seconded by Mike Tinlin that the following resolution be adopted:

WHEREAS, an agreement between the parties was entered into on April 17, 2014 through resolution 14-0201 and known as Portage County Contract

20140251 to implement programming for economic development by and through Portage Development; and

- WHEREAS,** an amendment no. 1 between the parties was entered into on March 31, 2015 through resolution 15-0190 and known as Portage County contract 20150227; and
- WHEREAS,** an amendment no. 2 between the parties was entered into on June 7, 2016 through resolution 16-0423 and known as Portage County contract 20160288; and
- WHEREAS,** an amendment no. 3 between the parties was entered into on April 25, 2017 through resolution 17-0273 and known as Portage County contract 20170274; and
- WHEREAS,** an amendment no. 4 between the parties was entered into on March 1, 2018 through resolution 18-0111 and known as Portage County contract 20180261; and
- WHEREAS,** an amendment no. 5 between the parties was entered into on February 7, 2019 through resolution 19-0045 and known as Portage County contract 20190226; and
- WHEREAS,** an amendment no. 6 between the parties was entered into on February 27, 2020 through resolution 20-0124 and known as Portage County contract 20200287; and
- WHEREAS,** an amendment no. 7 between the parties was entered into on January 28, 2021 through resolution 21-0066 and known as Portage County contract 20210219; and
- WHEREAS,** an amendment no. 8 between the parties was entered into on January 13, 2022 through resolution 22-0022 and known as Portage County contract 20220289; and
- WHEREAS,** an amendment no. 9 between the parties was entered into on February 9, 2023 through resolution 23-0095 and known as Portage County contract 20230252; and
- WHEREAS,** the parties wish to extend said agreement for an additional one year, to commence on January 1, 2024 and terminate on December 31, 2024; and
- WHEREAS,** in consideration of the services to be provided by Portage Development the County shall pay Portage Development the amount not to exceed Fifty thousand and 00/100 dollars (\$50,000.00) from the general fund; and

- WHEREAS,** all other terms and conditions remain the same as the previous amendment; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** that the Board of Portage County Commissioners does hereby enter into amendment no. 10 with the Portage Development Board in the amount not to exceed Fifty thousand and 00/100 dollars (\$50,000.00) for the term of January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that the Portage County Board of Commissioners finds and determines that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Board and that all deliberations of this Board that resulted in those formal actions were in a meeting opened to the public in compliance with the law including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Roll call vote as follows:

Anthony J. Badalamenti, Yea; Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Yea; Mike Tinlin, Yea;

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**RESOLUTION NO. 24-0130 - RE: ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT
AMENDMENT NO. 3 FOR SOCIAL MEDIA
ACCOUNTS SOFTWARE BETWEEN THE
PORTAGE COUNTY BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS AND ARCHIVE SOCIAL,
INC.**

It was moved by Sabrina Christian-Bennett, seconded by Mike Tinlin that the following resolution be adopted:

- WHEREAS,** Portage County has a need to capture and archive records of online social media communications and internet websites for public records law & general records retention and freedom of information act requests; and
- WHEREAS,** ArchiveSocial, Inc. has developed and licenses proprietary online software that assists governments in capturing and archiving records of online social media communications and internet websites; and
- WHEREAS,** Portage County would like to continue such services; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** that the Board of Portage County Commissioners does hereby agree to enter into a social media accounts software agreement amendment 3 between the Board and ArchiveSocial Inc. PO Box 3330, Durham NC 27702 for a term of one year beginning on November 20, 2023 through November 19, 2024; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the total software fee under this Agreement shall not exceed Seven thousand one hundred eighty-eight and 00/100 dollars (\$7,188.00) and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners finds and determines that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Board and that all deliberations of this Board that resulted in those formal actions were in meetings open to the public in compliance with the law including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Roll call vote as follows:

Anthony J. Badalamenti, Yea; Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Yea; Mike Tinlin, Yea;

* * * *

JOURNAL ENTRIES:

In accordance with Section 305.30 of the Ohio Revised Code and this Board's Resolution 21-0396, Part 9(I), the Board of Commissioners acknowledges and approves the County Administrator's approval to:

1. Authorize the three-day internal posting of the full-time Assistant Director- Fiscal for Portage County Job & Family Services with external posting if no internal appointment is made.

Motion: **Commissioner Christian-Bennett**

Seconded: **Commissioner Tinlin**

All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;

Motion Carries

2. Approve anniversary and/or step increases for the following non-bargaining employees:

- Jennifer Hafner
- Shawn Kelly
- Scott Lazzara

Motion: **Commissioner Christian-Bennett**

Seconded: **Commissioner Tinlin**

All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;

Motion Carries

3. The Board of Commissioners authorizes Commissioner Anthony J Badalamenti, President of the Board, to sign as the Governing Body Head for the Equitable Sharing Agreement and Certification for the Portage County Sheriff's Office. Documents reviewed by the Department of Budget and Financial Management.

Motion: **Commissioner Christian-Bennett**

Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin

All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;

Motion Carries

4. The Board of Commissioners signed the Satisfaction of Mortgage to Hopetown, Inc. for \$153,500.00 on property at 9077 Maple Grove Road in Windham, Ohio 44288 (Instrument No. 202127142) as requested by Neighborhood Development Services. Documents reviewed by the Department of Budget and Financial Management.

Motion: Commissioner Christian-Bennett

Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin

All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;

Motion Carries

5. The Board of Commissioners approves the filing in second position the CDBG Housing Revolving Loan Fund Mortgage for Hopetown, Inc for \$153,500.00 for properties at 9077 Maple Grove Road and additional collateral of 9627 Community Road in Windham, Ohio 44288 as requested by Neighborhood Development Services. Documents reviewed by the Department of Budget and Financial Management.

Motion: Commissioner Christian-Bennett

Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin

All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;

Motion Carries

In accordance with Section 305.30(K) of the Ohio Revised Code and this Board's Resolution 21-0396 and this Board's Resolution 21-0878, the Board of Commissioners acknowledges and approves the County Administrator's approval to:

6. Direct the Auditor's Office to pay/process the February 15, 2024 bills/ACH payments, wires, journal vouchers and then & now's, as applicable, contingent upon the verification of the reports as presented by the County Auditor and reviewed by the Department of Budget and Financial Management.

Motion: Commissioner Christian-Bennett

Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin

All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;

Motion Carries

Expenditure Review		
County Funds: (0001 – 8399)		
Bill Payment and ACH list totaling:		
Bill Payment list	\$1,608,618.62	(Includes late fees of: \$5.17)
ACH/Neil Group of	\$20.00	
ACH Payment list totaling:	\$0	
Health Benefit Wire transfers totaling:		
Medical Mutual Admin of	\$0	
Medical Mutual Claims of	\$0	
Medical Mutual Flex Admin of	\$0	
Medical Mutual Flex Claims of	\$0	
Journal Vouchers totaling:	\$235,582.91	
Then and Now list totaling:	\$388,079.07	
Debt Service wire list:	\$0	
BWC Wires:	\$0	

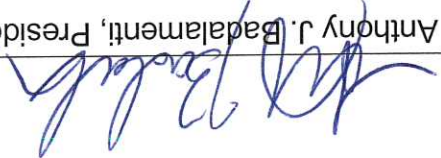
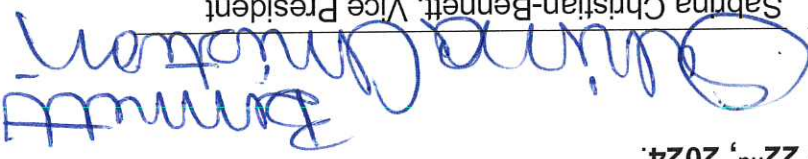


7. Process the February 15, 2024 budget amendments as reviewed and recommended by the Department of Budget and Financial Management.
Motion: Commissioner Christian-Bennett
Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin
All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;
Motion Carries
8. The Board of Commissioners authorizes Shannon Kautzman, Internal Services Director to sign the credit applications and County Facilities License Agreements for 2024.
Motion: Commissioner Christian-Bennett
Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin
All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;
Motion Carries
9. The Board of Commissioners acknowledged the receipt of the Portage County Investment Reconciliation for the Month of January 2024, received on February 14, 2024 as presented by the County Auditor and County Treasurer.
Motion: Commissioner Christian-Bennett
Seconded: Commissioner Tinlin
All in Favor: Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;
Motion Carries
10. Board of Commissioners' acknowledgement of receipt of the February 13, 2024 Certificate of County Auditor that the total appropriations from each fund **do exceed** the official estimate of resources as presented by the County Auditor's office.

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Motion:
Seconded:
All in Favor:
Commissioner Christian-Bennett
Commissioner Tinlin
Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea;
Motion Carries

Motion:
by Commissioner Badalamenti seconded by Commissioner Tinlin that the Board
adjourns the Meeting of **February 22nd, 2024 at 11:00 AM.**
All in Favor: Commissioner Badalamenti, Yea; Commissioner Tinlin, Yea;
Commissioner Christian-Bennett, Yea;
Motion Carries

We do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct record of the Portage County
Board of Commissioners' meeting of **February 22nd, 2024.**

 _____ Anthony J. Badalamenti, President	 _____ Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Vice President
 _____ Mike Tinlin, Board Member	 _____ Cassidy Parbel, Clerk