

ERIE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

REGULAR SESSION

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2024

ALL PRESENT

President Shenigo called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. at the Services Center and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board approves the **November 25, December 5, and December 9, 2024 Erie County Commission Meeting Minutes**; Roll Call: All Aye

County Administrator Hank Solowiej re Various Issues

Gas Tax - Final gas tax collections for December totaled \$349,000, compared to \$332,000 last year. Erie County budgeted for about \$3.8 million and actual collections totaled \$3.871 million. These collections are considered revenue in the Motor Vehicle License & Gas Tax fund.

Lodging Tax - All four percent bed tax collections totaled \$8.2 million, with Erie County receiving a little over \$2 million. This is collections from January through December. In comparison, before Sports Force opened for business, Erie County received \$1.2 million in 2014.

SCIP and LTIP Grants & Loans - Hank received the final report for the OPWC District 5 SCIP and LTIP grant awards. The four Erie County projects that were approved for funding include: Margaretta Township for repaving Bardwell Road (\$111,250); City of Huron Emergency Water intake and Pump Station (grant - \$275,000 and loan - \$137,500); Haley Street Reconstruction in City of Vermilion (grant \$325,000 and loan - \$162,500); and the Highbridge Road Reconstruction Phase 3 in the City of Vermilion (\$275,000 - grant and \$118,000 loan. Hank thanked the committee for taking the time to score these projects.

Adopt a Resident - Hank thanked Human Resources Director Matt Wilson and many of the Erie County Employees who donated a gift to the Adopt a Resident program at The Meadows at Osborn Park. Over 140 gifts were donated and will be opened on Monday, December 23rd at 2:00 p.m.

2025 Budget - The 2025 budget is ready for approval at today's meeting. Hank thanked the Finance Department for their work in accomplishing the goal of passing the budget by the end of the year.

Pete Daniel - Hank noted that December 24th, will be the two year anniversary of the passing of our previous County Administrator Pete Daniel. He stated his family has been in his prayers.

Hank wished everyone Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Public Comment.

Erie County Probate Magistrate/Court Administrator Tom Dusza was present. He thanked the Board for supporting his office and the efforts made to purchase and install new carpeting.

Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) Program - The Erie County Sheriff Paul Sigsworth was present and stated that he appreciates Mr. Dusza and his office working in collaboration with the Sheriff's Office to provide the Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) Prevention Program. The Sheriff stated that the Alcohol, Drug Addiction, Mental Health Services Board (ADAMHS) applied for and received a \$500,000 grant for four years to fund this program.

Mr. Dusza stated that the AOT program provides a case management employee to ride along with a Sheriff Deputy to check on Erie County citizens that struggle with mental health concerns and that are considered high risk. The goal is to keep these citizens out of jail and out of harms' way. He noted that people who are in crisis are more impaired when they are incarcerated and without proper support and assistance. This program provides a more professional approach to dealing with citizens that are in crisis. Mr. Dusza stated that the grant received, works in conjunction with Adult Probation, Serving Our Seniors, Firelands Regional Medical Center, the Erie County Sheriff's Department and the Erie County Courts. Sheriff Sigsworth stated the AOT Program involves the court, which helps provide an easier approach for consequences to be given to the citizens that do not comply and follow the rules of the program.

Mr. Old held a meeting with Alcohol, Drug Addiction, Mental Health Services' (ADAMHS) Executive Director Diane Taylor regarding the position the Board had denied the week prior. Mr. Old explained to Ms. Taylor the Commissioners denied the position because they did not have any information about why this position was being created. Ms. Taylor shared that the positions are requirements of a Federal Grant and funded by the grant. The ADAMHS Board is aware that if the grant funding expires, the positions will no longer be funded. If the Federal Grant can sustain the position for four years, State funding will become available to continue to fund the positions.

Axon Contract - The Sheriff thanked the Board for approving the Axon contract. He understands it is a substantial amount of money and he stated he truly appreciates the working relationship his department has with the Commissioners.

Galloway Road Speeding - Erie County Resident Rick Scheel was present and has expressed his concern for cars speeding on Galloway Road at several Commission Meetings. The Sheriff mentioned that the deputies have been patrolling on Galloway Road and they have not witnessed any drivers speeding on that street while they have been on duty. The Sheriff did note that, the NorthPoint Educational Services Center does not have school zone signs posted on Galloway Road. The Sheriff is working on getting that issue resolved.

Docket - Mr. Old noted that, in the docket, the Judges are requesting reimbursement for their association fees. Mr. Old mentioned that the Ohio Judge's Association fees are \$400, which he believes to be reasonable. The Ohio Judge's Association provides updates to legislative changes, continuing education for Judge's and other meaningful services. Mr. Old stated, whereas, the Auditor's Association costs \$3,500, and he believes the main priority of the Auditor's Association is to advocate for pay raises for County Auditor's. Mr. Old asked Hank if the Auditor responded to his request of more information on what the citizens of Erie County are getting for the \$3,500 dues from the Auditor's Association. Hank stated he has not had a return response from the Auditor on what the dues provide.

Mr. Old mentioned that every attorney employed by the Public Defender's Office is asking for reimbursement for dues to be in the Ohio State Bar Association (\$125 each). Mr. Old asked Mr. Dusza if he was a member of the Ohio State Bar Association. Mr. Old would like to know what benefit the Public Defender's Office receives from being a member of the State Bar Association and he would like the dues stricken from the docket at this time.

Citizen Complaint - Mr. Old received a complaint from a citizen who went to the Title Office at 4:02 p.m. and could not get into the office because the doors were locked. The citizen observed employees and other citizens inside the office, but no one opened the door. Mr. Old stated this is not professional and suggests informing the Clerk of Courts-Elect Craig Hecht. Mr. Shenigo believes the hours of the Title Office should be expanded and even include Saturday hours. Mr. Old reiterated that the county government exists to serve the citizens of Erie County.

Blue Ribbon Efficiency Commission - Mr. Old stated he would like to create a Blue Ribbon Efficiency Commission, to assist with cost savings measures throughout Erie County. He stated that the committee's objective is to investigate inefficiencies in Erie County including: the Cities, Townships, Villages, and School Districts. The goal of the Commission is to find ways to lower the property tax burden on the citizens of Erie County. He emphasized that this should be done without reducing any services to our citizens.

He stated the Erie County Commissioners have done well managing the budget and found a way to suspend the County's portion of the property tax. After investigating ways to lower the tax burden, the challenge of the Commission will be to generate a report that local elected officials can utilize to lower property taxes in their community. Mr. Old added that, this Commission will not impose any strategies onto the other elected officials, but the hope is to provide ways to increase efficiency and lower taxes without a reduction in services. Mr. Old has spoken with the local government and private sector officials who are all willing to serve on this Commission.

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board authorizes the **creation of a Blue Ribbon Efficiency Commission** to study options to reducing taxes and cost-saving measures for citizens in Erie County; Roll Call: All Aye (Jeff Krabill, Co-Chair; Mike Parker, Co-Chair; Lisa Crescimano, Kelley Moon, Tom Tucker, Karen Balconi Ghezzi and Tom Forrester)

Erie County Resident Rick Scheel asked if the Blue Ribbon Efficiency Commission is a paid position and asked how the Commission was created. Mr. Old stated that the Commission members are volunteers and are in non-paid positions. The Blue Ribbon Efficiency Commission was created by the County Commissioners and is strictly being created to perform research and provide a report as to how to lower taxes without reducing services.

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution confirming an agreement with the **Erie County Sheriff and Village of Kelley's Island**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-395 - providing emergency dispatch services to the Village of Kelley's Island Police, Fire and EMS Departments)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution confirming an agreement with the **Erie County Sheriff and Vermilion Township Trustees**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-396 - providing dispatch services for Vermilion Township Fire Department)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution **amending the 2015 Purchasing Policies and Procedure Manual** (Amendment 7); Roll Call: All Aye (#24-397)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution declaring certain Erie County equipment surplus and ordering same to be sold by **internet auction**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-398)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution declaring certain items surplus and ordering same to be discarded or salvaged; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-399)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution authorizing the execution of Amendment No. 10 to an agreement of Sublease with respect to the **Northern Ohio Juvenile Community Corrections Facility**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-400 - replacement of facility lighting and HVAC system)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution entering into a contract with **Aramark Correctional Services, LLC**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-401 - providing food service for inmates at the Jail effective 1/1/25 - 12/31/25 with an option to extend the term of the contract for two consecutive periods of one year each)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution entering into a contract with **Aramark Correctional Services, LLC**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-402 - providing outsourcing services (dietary, janitorial and laundry) for The Meadows at Osborn Park effective 12/19/24 - 12/19/26 with an option to extend the term of the contract three consecutive periods of one year each)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution confirming an agreement with the **Erie County Sheriff and Milan Township Trustees**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-403 - providing radio dispatching services for the Milan Township Fire Department effective 1/1/25 - 12/31/26)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution entering into an agreement with **Applied Specialties, Inc.**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-404 - providing treatment chemicals (sodium aluminate solution) for DOES)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution entering into an agreement with **Bonded Chemicals, Inc.**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-405 - providing treatment chemicals (sodium hypochlorite solution) for DOES)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution entering into an agreement with **Bonded Chemicals, Inc.**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-406 - providing treatment chemicals (sodium bisulfite) for DOES)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution entering into an agreement with **Kemira Water Solutions, Inc.**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-407 - providing ferrous chloride solution chemicals for DOES)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution entering into an agreement with **Polydyne, Inc.**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-408 - providing treatment chemicals (polymer-liquid emulsion form) for DOES)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution authorizing the County Auditor to make **budget modifications and supplemental appropriations** re General Operating Fund: Facilities - Sheriff's, Sunset Permissive, Board of Elections, General - Judge Tone, Tax Map, Family Court, Juvenile Detention Facility; ADAMHS Title XX Fund; SAPT Fund; SOR Fund; ADAMHS State AOD/SUD Fund; Delinquent Real Estate Prosecutor Fund; Northern Ohio Juvenile CCF Fund; Legal Rep Pilot Project Grant Fund; Drug Enforcement Fund; and Landfill Operations Fund; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-409)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution authorizing the County Auditor to make **interfund transfers** re General Operating Fund: Planning Department; Erie Regional Planning Fund; ERPC Fund; Metropolitan Planning Organization Fund; General Operating Fund: Sunset Permissive; CF Capital Improvement Reserve Fund; General Operating Fund: Emergency Management; Emergency Management Fund; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-410)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution **adopting the 2025 Budget Spending Plan**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-411)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution entering into a Skilled Nursing Facility Provider Agreement with **First Health Hospice**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-412 - providing skilled nursing services for hospice residents at The Meadows at Osborn Park)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution executing payment of **Then and Now Certification** presented by the County Auditor pursuant to O.R.C. 5705.41(d)1, and authorizing the drawing of warrant(s) in payment of amounts due upon contract or order; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-413)

Board approves Revised Auditor's Certificate for **US Bank Equipment Finance** in an additional amount of \$287.69 providing a lease for Xerox AltaLink B8075H2 copier for The County Prosecutor.

Board approves Revised Auditor's Certificate for **Erie County Board of DD** in an additional amount of \$5,273.69 re implementing the Help Me Grow: Ohio's Birth to Three System/ Part C Component for the Erie County Family and Children First Council.

Board approves Change Order No. 1 to **Gene Ptacek & Son Fire Equipment Company, Inc.** in a **decreased** amount of \$2,332.35 re Fire alarm replacement for Erie County Courthouse.

Board approves Change Order No. 6 to **Best Commercial Energy Services, Inc.** in an additional amount of \$14,208 re natural gas conversion project at The Meadows at Osborn Park.

Board executes **Proclamation** to Tom Hamilton for winning the 2025 Ford C. Frick Award.

Board approves Travel Request Form for **Lee Ann Hippely**, ECDJFS, attending OCSA Supervisor training in Lewis Center, Ohio, on 1/21/25, 2/18/25, 3/20/25 at no cost.

Board approves Personnel Action Form for **DOES** re **William Fleck**, Environmental Specialist, longevity increase for 20 years of service effective 12/22/24.

Board approves the following annual 3% rate increase for **DOES** re **Phillip Jesberger**, Foreman - Treatment; **Dennis Hormell**, Equipment Operator III - Water; **Troy Herchler**, Equipment Operator III - Landfill; **Edward Hartley**, Plant Operator III - Treatment; **Troy Hansen**, Maintenance Repair III - Water; **Kelly Green**, Account Clerk II - Billing; **Kevin Gerber**, Maintenance Repair II - Collection; **William Fleck**, Environmental Specialist; **Austin Sharp**, Plant Operator I - Treatment; **Andrew Schoewe**, Foreman - Water; **Anthony Schaefer**, Chief Equipment Operator/Repair III - EME; **Gabrielle Saxton**, Account Clerk II - Billing Division; **Daniel Rickenbaugh**, Chief Equipment Operator III - Landfill; **Riley Prosser**, Maintenance Repair I - Water

Board approves the following annual 3% rate increase for **DOES** re **Harry Proctor**, Chief Equipment Repair III - Landfill; **David Newman**, Maintenance Repair II - Collection; **Timothy Miller**, Equipment Operator I - Landfill; **Jackson Schaefer**, Assistant Superintendent - Water; **Tobin Meyer**, Equipment Repair Operator III - Treatment; **Christopher Martin**, Maintenance Repair II - Collection; **Eric Johnson**, Equipment Operator III - Landfill; **John Kromer**, Maintenance Repair I - Water; **Dawson Koelsch**, Maintenance Repair I - Water; **Michael Simon**, Maintenance Repair I - Collection; **Tanner Thompson**, Equipment Operator III - Landfill; **Brian Stimmel**, Foreman - Collection; **Trey Thompson**, Equipment Operator I - Landfill; **Stephanie Williams**, Account Clerk II - Billing; **Robert Blevins**, Equipment Operator III - Water; **Zachary Basting**, Engineering Technician II; **Robert Yost**, Assistant Superintendent - Treatment; **Anthony Fitzthum**, Maintenance Repair III - Collection; **Wesley Brewer**, Chief Equipment Repair Operator III - Treatment.

Board approves Personnel Action Forms for **The Meadows at Osborn Park** re **Diane Rohrbacher**, full-time LPN, rate increase due to completion of probation effective 12/10/24; **Faith Chaffee**, full-time LPN, rate increase due to completion of Probation effective 12/14/24; **Jaylynn Caughell**, part-time STNA, rate increase due to completion of probation effective 12/10/24; **Lauren Wiggins**, full-time STNA, termination due to no call no shows effective 12/5/24; **Donna Willman**, Fiscal Officer - Payroll, rate increase due to annual 3% increase effective 12/8/24; **Brandon Morrow**, Maintenance Supervisor, rate increase due to annual 3% rate increase effective 12/8/24; **Lisa Moore**, Fiscal Officer - Billing, rate increase due to annual 3% rate increase effective 12/8/24; **Shawna Young**, full-time STNA, employment effective 12/11/24; **Keyana Hicks**, full-time STNA, return from unpaid leave of absence effective 12/9/24; **Mercadys Smith**, full-time STNA, employment effective 12/11/24.

Board approves Personnel Action Forms for **ECDJFS** re **Rebecca Dicker**, Eligibility Specialist Aide 3, successful completion of probation effective 12/14/24; **Jewlia Jardon**, Investigator 2, successful completion of probation effective 12/21/24; and **Shelby Ritzman**, Youth Career Coach Specialist, employment effective 1/6/25.

Board approves Request for Recruitment re **part-time Office Manager** for **ADAMHS Board** (grant funded).

Board approves Request for Recruitment re **Probation Counselor** for **Juvenile Court**.

Received letter from Clerk of Courts Luvada Wilson **requesting separation pay from the Compensated Reserve Fund** for Allean Fuqua, who is retiring effective December 31, 2024. Board approves request.

Received copy of memo to Erie County Budget Commission Members from Alyssa Heater, Finance Manager, re **2024 Revised Estimated Resources**.

The Commissioners' wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

On motion of Mr. Old and second of Mr. Shoffner, Board **adjourns** at 10:55 a.m.; Roll Call: All Aye