

ERIE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

REGULAR SESSION

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 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. Old and second of Mr. Shoffner, Board **recesses** into **Solid Waste District Board meeting**; Roll Call: All Aye

On motion of Mr. Old and second of Mr. Shoffner, Board **reconvenes**; Roll Call: All Aye

County Administrator Hank Solowiej re Various Issues.

Mr. Solowiej congratulated Commissioners' Shenigo and Old on their re-election to another four-year Commission term.

Sales Tax - For the month of November, which represents August sales, Erie County collected \$1.9 million, compared to \$2.1 million last year at this time. Hank noted, year-to-date, Erie County has collected \$19.9 million and is budgeted to end the year around \$21 million.

Gas Tax - Erie County has collected \$332,000 in gas tax for November and \$3.5 million year-to-date. Erie County is expected to receive \$3.8 million by the end of the year.

Grant Award - Mr. Solowiej congratulated Landbank Executive Director Ellen Schirg and Treasurer Caleb Stidham on being awarded a \$10 million grant for the Battery Park Redevelopment in the City of Sandusky. Mr. Solowiej noted that receiving this grant will continue the investment in the City of Sandusky and Erie County.

Christmas Eve - Mr. Solowiej stated, in years past, the Board has given permission to close County offices on Christmas Eve. He asked if the Commissioners wanted to entertain this closure again this year. Mr. Old stated his belief is that any year Christmas Eve falls on a weekday that the offices' should be closed.

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board authorizes the **closure of the County offices on Tuesday, December 24, 2024**; Roll Call: All Aye

Wheatsborough Solar Project Update - In the specifications of the Wheatsborough Solar Project TIF, one-time \$150,000 is to be given to a non-profit organization of the Commissioners' choosing. Hank advised that this payment be made to the Greater Sandusky Partnership, to cover Erie County's commitment of \$125,000 for 2024 and \$25,000 for 2025.

Competitive Bidding - Hank stated the Finance Department has been updating the Purchasing Policy to follow the State's regulations of increasing the competitive bidding cost 3% each year. In 2025, the competitive bid price will increase to \$77,250. Hank recommended increasing the amount a department needs approval to apply for Equipment Outlay forms from \$1,500 to \$10,000. The Commissioners' feel uncomfortable with this increase, however they agreed to have Hank sign off on the Equipment Forms without Commissioners' signature.

Budget Work Session. Fiscal Officer Pete Jackson and Utilities Manager John Rufo were present for this session. Hank noted that the Department of Environmental Services' salary and benefits have been prepared per policy, however negotiations with the bargaining unit are still ongoing.

Mr. Jackson reviewed the capital improvement requests and other expenses for the various districts within the Department of Environmental Services:

Sewer District - capital requests total \$2 million and are as follows: I & I leak repairs (\$50,000); new pickup truck with plow for Treatment (\$70,000); $\frac{3}{4}$ ton crew cab 4x4 with plow for Collection (\$68,600); sewer expansion costs (\$115,000); sewer lining project (\$1,500,000); chopper bumps for Huron Basin Wastewater Treatment Plant (\$56,000); and Huron Basin Wastewater Treatment Plant digester cleanout (\$150,000).

Water District A - lead service line replacements continue in 2025 (\$800,000); and River Road Water Tower will be razed/new gateway collector tower built (\$113,400). With the increase in water rates from the City of Sandusky, utility costs will increase in 2025. An additional \$878,000 is being budgeted for utility costs. Hank noted that the price for Erie County to purchase water from the City of Sandusky has increased by 15% in 2024 and will also increase by 15% in 2025. The Erie County Commissioners instituted a 3% rate increase to its customers for 2024 and 2025, and the Commissioners may need to reevaluate another rate increase after 2025. Hank noted that approximately \$500,000 in debt service will be paid off in 2027.

Mr. Shenigo noted that the employees of DOES have spent the past year checking 12,500 water meters in Erie County for lead and found 607 customers who had lead in their lines. Letters have been mailed out informing these customers of the issue and the reassurance that the County will fix the problem in the near future. John Rufo noted that the bid specifications for this job are ready to get this project moving forward. The estimated cost is about \$3,000 per unit. The Commissioners are on board with moving forward with the bid specifications, therefore the project can be completed as soon as possible.

Landfill - Continuing projects for the expansion and re-phasing cells for 2025 total \$475,000 and capital requests total \$664,700. There is an increase in services for 2025 due to additional engineering services costs.

Solid Waste Management District - All funds are budgeted within policy. Other expenses scheduled for 2025 include: Recycled Materials Grant Program (\$250,000); Debris Management Plan (\$25,000); and Revolving Loan Fund (\$75,000).

The Commissioners' thanked the Environmental Services staff and Utilities Director John Rufo for their hard work on the discovery and inventory of the lead waterlines in Erie County.

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board **cancels** the following **December Commission Meetings**: Monday, December 2; Wednesday, December 4; Thursday, December 12; Monday, December 16; Wednesday, December 18; Monday, December 23; Wednesday, December 25 (Christmas Day); Thursday, December 26; and Monday, December 30, 2024; Roll Call: All Aye

Mr. Shoffner congratulated Mr. Old and Mr. Shenigo on winning their re-elections. He stated that Erie County is lucky to have the two of them service as Commissioners for Erie County.

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution entering into a First Amendment to the Agreement with **Sprint Com, Inc.**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-362 - increasing the annual payment and escalator of the lease to the water tower space at 5320 Billings Road, Castalia)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution **authorizing the County Auditor to make payment to the Erie County Treasurer**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-363 Burdette Ditch Improvements Project)

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: Commissioners General; General OPS - FCFC Fund; General Operating Fund: Commissioners General; Sheriffs Dispatching Fund; General Operating Fund: Administrative Employee Self-Insurance Fund; Care Facility Operations Fund; and General Operating Fund: Commissioners General; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-364)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution **authorizing the County Auditor to make payment to Mrs. Anne Massey**; Roll Call; All Aye (#24-365 - Lakecrest TIF)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution entering into Contract Addendum No. 1 with **Corso's Flower & Garden Center**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-366 - extending snow removal services for county facilities through April 15, 2025)

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, Board of Elections, Commissioners - Administration, Board of Elections and Veterans Services; Wahl Joint Ditch - Sandusky County Fund; Sheriff Policing & SRO Fund; Special Project - Tone Fund; /SANE Continuous Fund; 2025 SAA Grant Fund; Capital Improvements Fund; Employee Self - Insurance Fund; General OPS - FCFC Fund; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-367)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. old, Board adopts resolution authorizing the County Auditor to make an **interfund transfer** re Erie County Sewer Fund; Bay View Sewer Rev Bond Payment Fund; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-368)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution **adopting the Revised Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary** of the Erie Regional Planning Commission Metropolitan Planning Organization; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-369)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Old, Board adopts resolution entering into a Revolving Loan Fund Administration Agreement with the **State of Ohio, Development Services Agency**; Roll Call: All Aye (#24-370 - providing administration services of the Revolving Loan Fund for the CDBG Grant effective 1/1/24 - 12/31/26)

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 (#24-371)

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 (#24-372)

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 (#24-373)

On motion of Mr. Shoffner and second of Mr. Shenigo, Board reappoints Mr. Eric Kibler to another four-year term on the **Board of Developmental Disabilities**, expiring on December 28, 2028; Roll Call: All Aye

Erie-Ottawa International Airport - Mr. Solowiej noted that he received the 2025 funding request in the amount of \$205,000 from Clay Finken, Director of the Erie-Ottawa International Airport. Hank believes this cost also includes \$100,000 for operations. Hank has asked Clay for additional information on these requests. Hank noted that a terminal study will be completed in 2025 for a new terminal.

The FAA has agreed to pay 95% of the cost for the new terminal. Hank also noted that Ottawa County is paying \$300,000 for the sewer expansion at the Airport.

Mr. Old asked if anything has changed in the policy that does not allow 99-year hangar leases. He mentioned that new leases should not be entered into until the language for new leases has been updated and approved by both counties. Mr. Old suggested making Erie County's 2025 funding contingent on having new leases that have shorter terms and he believes that both Counties should be able to view and sign the leases.

Tax Map Draftsman - Mr. Old noticed a Request for Recruitment going through the meeting today for a Tax Map Draftsman. The current draftsman has been elected to the Clerk of Courts Office. Mr. Old stated that this position should not be filled until the new County Engineer starts his term at the beginning of January, since this position is a staff member of the County Engineer. The Commissioners will hold the Request for Recruitment until January when the new Engineer is in office to approve this request.

Engineer's budget - Hank received the current Engineer's budget for 2025. Mr. Farschman's draft budget includes spending \$9.2 million, with his fund balance being \$6 million. Hank stated for the transition of Engineer's, he has decided to scale back the budget and only pass office functions such as payroll and supplies, until the new Engineer takes office. Hank noted he sent the newly elected Engineer, Eric Dodrill, a copy of the Engineer's budget so he can review and give feedback.

Board approves the following **Revised Auditor's Certificates:**

- **Erie County Prosecutor's Office** in an additional amount of \$20,000 re providing legal counsel regarding the administration of funding received under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act for ECDJFS.
- **Northwest Group Services Agency, Inc.** in an additional amount of \$1,750 re providing professional services related to benefit enrollment, COBRA administration and flexible benefits administration services for the Erie County employees' health insurance program and Erie County Human Resources Department.
- **VIP Supreme Staffing** in an additional amount of \$2,000 re providing the planning and execution of the Nurse Aide education program in at The Meadows at Osborn Park.
- **ICP, Inc.** in an additional amount of \$24,000 re providing pharmaceuticals at the Erie County Jail.
- **Doug H. Kilbride** in an additional amount of \$375.12 re radio tower agreement with Douglas S. Kilbride for the Sheriff's Office.
- **ICP, Inc. dba Institutional Care Pharmacy** in an additional amount of \$38,000 re providing pharmaceuticals at The Meadows of Osborn Park.
- **Lucas County Coroner** in an additional amount of \$35,000 re providing routine autopsies for the Erie County Coroner.

Board approves payment of Pay Estimate No. 1 (final) to **ECS Midwest, LLC** in the amount of \$11,922 re soil borings for the Darrow B-512 and Bellamy B-103 bridges for the County Engineer.

Board approves payment of Pay Estimate No. 1 (final) to **Griffin Pavement & Striping** in the amount of \$40,495.50 re pavement marking on various roads in Erie County for the County Engineer.

Board approves Change Order No. 5 to **Best Commercial Energy Services, Inc.** requesting additional time to finish The Meadows at Osborn Park Building Natural Gas Conversion.

Board approves Engineer's Estimate of Cost for the Mylar Plat in the amount of \$145,000 re **pavement marking on various county roads for 2025.**

Board executes **Certificates of Retirement** to **Ty Ransom**, Erie County Engineer's Office and **Mary Daniel**, ECDJFS.

Board approves Request to **Carry Over Vacation** for **Alyssa Heater**, Finance Manager.

Board authorizes expenses for **Barb Knapp**, Dog Warden, attending Ohio County Dog Warden's Association/CCAO Winter Conference in Columbus, Ohio, on 12/3 - 12/6/24 in an estimated amount of \$319.00.

Board authorizes expenses for **Stephanie Burkhart Stanley**, Dog Warden's Office, attending Ohio County Dog Warden's Association/CCAO Winter Conference in Columbus, Ohio, on 12/3 - 12/6/24 in an estimated amount of \$291.00.

Board approves Travel Request Form for **Neil Yingling, Trudy Riddle and one member of Fiscal**, ECDJFS, attending GOWBI Quarterly Board meetings in Lewis Center, Ohio, on 12/4/24, 3/5/25, 6/4/25, 9/3/25, 12/3/25 at no cost.

Board approves Travel Request Form for **Rebecca Diekman**, ECDJFS, attending Toledo District Meeting for OCSPA in Findlay, Ohio, on 12/6/24 at no cost.

Board approves Personnel Action Form for **Hank Solowiej**, County Administrator, rate increase due to completion of five years of employment effective 12/9/24.

Board approves the following 3% annual rate increase Personnel Action Forms for **The Commissioners' Department: Hank Solowiej**, County Administrator; **Erin Paolano**, Clerk of the Board; **Alicia Stefano**, Administrative Assistant; **Michele Stevens**, Records Specialist; **Lori Yancy**, Records Specialist; and **Jacalyn Yost**, Archivist/Records Administrator.

Board approves the following 3% annual rate increase Personnel Action Forms for **The Dog Warden's Office**: **Barb Knapp**, Dog warden and Humane Agent; **Timothy Errett**, part-time Deputy Dog Warden; **Shelly Graves**, Chief Deputy Dog Warden; and **Stephanie Burkhardt Stanley**, Deputy Dog Warden.

Board approves the following 3% annual rate increase Personnel Action Forms for **DOES**: **John Rufo**, Utilities Director; **Howard Holzhauser**, Superintendent - Treatment; **Riley Prosser**, Maintenance Repair I - Water; **Austin Sharp**, Plant Operator I - Treatment; **Chris Cullen**, part-time Season Worker - Water Division; **Julie Stoll**, Administrative Assistant; **Peter Jackson**, Fiscal Officer; **Sandra Ehrhardt**, Accountant/Billing Office Manager.

Board approves the following 3% annual rate increase Personnel Action Forms for **Facilities Department**: **Gary Weilnau**, Director of Facilities; **Brad Budd**, Custodian; **Mark Behnko, Jr.**, Maintenance IV - Electrician; **Timothy Kenneley**, Mail/Supplies Courier; **Kenneth Killingsworth**, Maintenance IV - HVAC/Plumber; **Brad Kraft**, Maintenance III - General; **Dominick Muratore**, Mechanic; **Darlene Reed**; **Kevin Marenberg**; Senior Facilities Tech; **Robert Rosswurm**, Maintenance III - Lead; **Susan Schippel**, Custodian I; and **Roger Stanley**, Fleet Manager.

Board approves Personnel Action Form for **Facilities Department** re **Brad Budd**, Custodian I, longevity increase due to completion of ten years of employment effective 9/29/24.

Board approves the following 3% annual rate increase Personnel Action Forms for **Family and Children First Council**: **Melissa Bayer Smith**, Executive Director; **Richard Alexander**, part-time Family Mentor; **Cynthia O'Farrell**, Wraparound Facilitator and Community Outreach; **Alyssa Puckrin**, part-time Respite Coordinator; **Tory Yarbrow**, Youth Outreach Specialist; and **Tira Serrano**, Part-time Program Assistant.

Board approves Personnel Action Form for **Finance Department** re **Kristinia Bilby**, Account Clerk II, end of 4% working out of classification pay effective 11/18/24.

Board approves the following 3% annual rate increase Personnel Action Forms for **Finance Department**: **Kristinia Bilby**, Account Clerk II; **Emily Galloway**, Purchasing Coordinator; and **Alyssa Heater**, Finance Manager.

Board approves the following 3% annual rate increase Personnel Action Forms for **Human Resources**: **Matthew Wilson**, Director; and **Clark Garriss**, Loss Control Coordinator.

Board approves the following 3% annual rate increase Personnel Action Forms for **IT**: **Dan Baum**, Systems Analyst; **Caleb Goodwin**, Network System Administrator II; and **Devra Jensen**, Computer Tech II.

Board approves the following 3% annual rate increase Personnel Action Forms for **EMA: Timothy Jonovich**, Director; **Kim Johnson**, Assistant Planner/Administrative Assistant; and **Gary Wobser**, 911 Telecommunications Coordinator.

Board approves Personnel Action Forms for **ECDJFS** re **Dulcie Bushhorn**, Social Service Worker 3, employment effective 12/2/24; **Kristen Lindsey**, Eligibility/Referral Supervisor 1, longevity increase due to completion of 10 years of employment effective 12/5/24; **Jordan Holt**, successful completion of probation effective 11/24/24; **Amanda Turner**, Social Services Supervisor 1, longevity increase due to completion of 20 years of employment effective 12/1/24; **Laurie Fogg**, Social Service Worker 1, retirement effective 12/1/24; **Sarah Gawronski**, Social Service Worker 3, successful completion of probation effective 11/28/24; **Mary Daniel**, Eligibility Specialist 3, retirement effective 1/31/25; **Sarah Clemons**, Social Services Supervisor 1, on-call stipend combined into base rate due to children services management on-call adjustment/restructure effective 11/10/24; **Ashley Gilbert**, Deputy Director Social Programs, on-call stipend combined into base rate due to children services management on-call adjustment/restructure effective 11/10/24; **Penny Nixon**, Social Services Supervisor 1; on-call stipend combined into base rate due to children services management on-call adjustment/restructure effective 11/10/24; **Amanda Turner**, Social Services Supervisor 1, on-call stipend combined into base rate due to children services management on-call adjustment/restructure effective 11/10/24; **Cortne Johnson**, from Youth Specialist to Youth Career Coach Specialist effective 11/11/24, revised start date.

Board approves the following annual 3% rate increase for **ECDJFS**: **Brian Bixler**, **Amber Bruno**, **Sarah Clemons**, **Rebecca Diekman**, **Ashley Gilbert**, **Lee Ann Hippely**, **Amber Jenkins**, **Diane Lehner**, **Andrew Lill**, **Kristen Lindsey**, **Penny Nixon**, **Trudy Riddle**, **Becky Smith**, **Amanda Turner**, **Sandra Walton**, and **Neil Yingling**.

Board approves Personnel Action Forms for **The Meadows at Osborn Park** re **Lauren Wiggins**, full-time STNA, employment effective 11/13/24; **Samantha Gessner**, part-time STNA, resignation effective 11/2/24; **Karsyn Brewer**, full-time STNA, rate decrease due to shift change effective 10/27/24; **Michelle Born-Rister**, full-time STNA, employment effective 11/13/24; **Rachel Carey**, part-time LPN, rate increase due to completion of probation effective 11/3/24; **Ashley Gilbert**, full-time STNA, resignation effective 11/4/24; **April Webb**, part-time STNA, resignation effective 10/29/24; **Tracy Arison**, full-time LPN, rate increase due to completion of probation effective 10/30/24; **Carrie Greene**, full-time RN, rate increase due to completion of probation effective 10/30/24; **Jody Nolan**, full-time RN, rate increase due to increase in longevity effective 11/14/24; and **Jody Nolan**, full-time RN, retirement effective 11/30/24.

Board approves the following annual 3% rate increase for **The Meadows at Osborn Park**: Anne Marie Borer; Maggie D'Amico; Candie Doerner; Kristina Fuqua, Carrie Greene, Eva Hooven, Ashley Johnson, Christine Laser, Katie Lewis, Donna Luttmann, Charles Martin, Lisa Moore, Brandon Morrow, Jody Nolan, Donna Patrick, Charlene Philon, Catherine Ponton, Angela Roberts, Jamie Roth, Elyssa Sherer, Jacques White, Leslie Williams, Donna Willman, Kelly Wolbert, and Nykyta Young.

Board approves the following annual 3% rate increase Personnel Action Forms for **Regional Planning Department: Zachary Rospert**, Financial Planner; **Ellen Schirg**, Planner/Assistant Solid Waste Coordinator; **Timothy King**, Director; and **Kevin Cannon**, Transportation Planner/Assistant Solid Waste Coordinator.

Board approves Request for Recruitment for **Veterans Services** re **Administrative Assistant**.

Commissioners have no objection to transfer a liquor license from JR99 Enterprises Ltd, dba Mason Jar to RBCK623, LLC dba **Mason Jar**, Oxford Township.

Received letter from County Engineer re **inventory of tools, road machinery and equipment and recommendations for purchases in 2025**, per O.R.C. 5549.01 and ditch maintenance equipment, per O.R.C. 6137.07.

Received letter from Sheriff Sigsworth re estimate of \$250.00 to be spent for **gasoline credit cards** for the month of December 2024, per O.R.C. 301.27.

Received letter from Sheriff Sigsworth re **Transportation of Prisoners Report**, O.R.C. 325.07.

Received copy of memo to All Township Trustees from County Engineer re **annual Township Meeting**.

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

Received copy of **Monthly Financial Report** for the month ending October 31, 2024 from Erie County Auditor, per O.R.C. 319.15.

Public Comment.

Resident Rick Scheel, stated that he recently attended a Soil and Water Conservation District presentation regarding how road salt affects lakes and streams. He asked the Commissioners for their support of this initiative to keep the salt out of the waterways.

On motion of Mr. Old and second of Mr. Shoffner, Board **recesses into Executive Session**, pursuant to O.R.C. 121.22 (G)(4), re negotiations and bargaining sessions with public employees concerning their compensation and other terms and conditions of their employment with **DOES**; Roll Call: All Aye

On motion of Mr. Old and second of Mr. Shoffner, Board **reconvenes**; Roll Call: All Aye

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

Meet24-45