

THE BOARD OF ATHENS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, met in regular session, with Lenny Eliason presiding, Chris Chmiel and Charlie Adkins in attendance.

Agenda

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the following agenda:
Athens County Board of County Commissioners
Meeting Agenda for Wednesday, February 05, 2025 Convenes at 9:30 a.m.

Approve Agenda

Approve Minutes January 28, 2025

Approve Appropriations, Transfers, New Line Items Requests/Changes, Then & Nows, & Bills

- 8:00 Interview
- 9:30 HAPCAP - 93 High St Change Order
- 9:30 Solid Waste
- 9:45 DJFS Dir Jean Demosky - weekly updates
- 10:00 Ohio Public Defender Pre-meeting for Contract
- 10:15 Treasurer Quarterly Update
- 10:30 W&S Supt Oscar Carson - weekly updates
- 10:45 EMS - New Hire
- 11:00 BCS - Old STAR Facility -Matt Morris
- 11:15 BCS - Old STAR Facility -Matt Morris
- 11:30 LUNCH

Agenda Items

- Utility Permits
- W&S Payment Agreement
- 2025 Permanent General Fund Budgets
- IT Contract and Network Support Contracts and Clearly Services
- Hockhocking Adena Bikepath Appointment
- AEP 75 Connett Rd (Ratify Commissioner Chmiel's Signature)
- Public Defender contracts
- OWDA Request #6 for New Marshfield Sewer (Ratify Commissioner Eliason's Signature)
- Increase the County Administrator's Credit Card limit
- Job Description for Building Maintenance Assistant Superintendent
- Purchase of Maintenance Equipment
- Add & Remove Users to EMS Office Card

~TRAVEL

- DJFS Dir Jean Demosky; OJFSDA Executive Board Meeting, Lewis Center, OH; 03/12-03/14/25
- Eng Jeff Maiden; CEO Engineers Conf, Dublin, OH; 02/05-02/07/25
- Title Office Dottie Adkins, Heather Stack, Jennifer Grimes, & Katie Skivers, Hocking Valley Bank, Athens, OH; 2025

ADJOURNMENT

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

Executive Session

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to enter into executive session at 8:00 with Mike Biggins to discuss consideration of employment of a public employee.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

Regular Session

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to return to regular session at 8:45.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the minutes of January 28, 2025.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, abstain.

Appropriations, Transfers, New Line Items Requests/Changes, Then & Nows, & Bills

A motion was made by Commissioner Chmiel and seconded by Commissioner Adkins approving the Appropriations, Transfers, New Line Items Requests/Changes and approving the payment of the required County Bills, which are included in the Auditor's Office INVOICE TRACKING REPORT - From: 01/23/25 To: 01/29/25 and INVOICE TRACKING REPORT - From: 01/28/25 To: 01/30/25 and the bills are hereby the same and authorize the County Auditor to issue warrants on the County Treasurer for payment in the same. Complete list of bills maintained in the Auditor's office.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

HAPCAP - Change Order #3 (93 High Street)

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the Change Order #3 for 93 High Street in the amount of \$545,296.94 as presented by HAPCAP Jeff Jenkins.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

HAPCAP Jeff Jenkins - Project Updates

Glouster Walk-Off Building (87 High Street):

Eric from BDT conducted roof and window measurements for design purposes.

The project is in the design phase.

Jacksonville NRG & Albany Inclusive Playground:

Jeff will return next Tuesday for the release of funds.

Coordination is ongoing with ANA regarding playground equipment procurement.

Sunday Creek Water District:

An RFP was issued.

Nathan is managing most of the process, while Jeff handled the Environmental Review (ER).

Construction is set to begin soon, focusing on water tower repairs, water lines, and equipment improvements.

HAPCAP OCEAN User Agreement

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the OCEAN User Agreement for Jeff Jenkins.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

Solid Waste - Jane Forrest-Redfern's Insurance Deduction

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve setting the Solid Waste District employee (Jane Forrest-Redfern) insurance deduction at 10% for the medical plan, which is what it's traditionally been.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

DJFS Lisa Radford - 510 W. Union Street Building Advertising

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve advertising for Sealed bids for the 510 W. Union Street, with a minimum bid of \$1,625,000.00, bid opening will be March 5, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. See back of page 38 for the advertisement.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

Utility Permits

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the following Utility Permits:

Permit #: 25-579
From: Le-Ax Regional Water District
6000 Industrial Drive
Athens, Ohio 45701

We hereby request permission to install utility lines within public right-of-way limits.

Location of work: Co Rd # 14, Co Rd Name: Factory Rd

Description of Work: Water

Type of Installation: Underground (buried) Line Crossing Rd

Agreed to by: /s/Christina Richey
Athens County Commissioners
/s/ Charlie Adkins
/s/ Chris Chmiel
/s/ Lenny Eliason

510 WEST UNION STREET ATHENS OHIO 45701

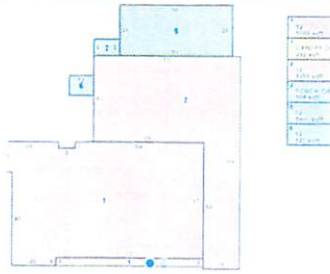
Commercial Property for Sale!

- Commercial Space
- 11, 224 sq ft
- 1.388 Acres
- 25 Offices
- 5 Conference Rooms
- Breakroom
- 5 Restrooms
- 2 Parking Lots
- 3 Handicap Accessible Entrances
- Digital Sign

Athens County JFS
 740.677.4203
 athensjfsomjdirector@gmail.com

<https://map.app.ohio.gov/G2upYUR44xUjprM59>

WWW.JFS.ATHENSOH.ORG



Distinctive investment opportunity in the heart of Athens' West Side Community.

Look for Ad in Athens Messenger 2/8, 2/11, 2/15, 2/18 2/22, 2/25

LEGAL NOTICE

Public Notice
Athens Messenger
February 5, 2025

The Athens County Commissioners are seeking sealed bids for property located at 510 West Union Street, Athens, Ohio 45701. The property includes the following parcel IDs: A022260001200, A022260001300, A022260001400, A022260001500, A022260001600, A022260001700, A022260001800, A022260001900, A022260002000, and A022260002100.

Bids will be received at the Athens County Commissioners' office, 15 South Court Street, Athens, Ohio 45701 until 10:00 A.M. on March 5, 2025 at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. For questions regarding the property please contact Athens County Job & Family Services at 740.677.4203.

Minimum bid: \$1,625,000.00

The Athens County Commissioners reserve the right to waive any information or reject any or all bids.

By order of the Athens County Commissioners:
 Jeremy Ellison, President
 JoAnn Rockfield, Administrator
 Athens, Ohio 45701

Permit No. 25-580
From: AEP
9135 SR 682
Athens, Ohio 45701

We hereby request permission to install utility lines within public right-of-way limits.

Location of work: 4070 Fisher Rd Athens County/Alexander Township

Description of Work: Electric

Type of Installation: New Poles

Estimated Project Schedule: 02/25/25 through 02/25/25

Agreed to by: /s/Adam Pfeiffer, AEP

Athens County Commissioners

/s/ Lenny Eliason

/s/ Chris Chmiel

/s/ Charlie Adkins

/s/Jeff Maiden, Athens County Engineer

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

W&S Payment Agreement

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel authorizing a payment agreement as requested by for monies owed the Athens County Water and Sewer District for water and sewer service, the total amount due is \$235.71 with \$137.21 past due and payments on balance of \$45.74 plus current bill, 02/28/25, 03/31/25, & 04/30/25 to be paid. If the terms of this agreement are not met, the account will be considered delinquent and service could be shut off.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

2025 Permanent General Fund Budgets

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to table the 2025 Permanent General Fund Budgets until BOE provides updates on budget.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

IT Contract, Network Support Contracts, & Clearly Services

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve all 3 contracts (IT Contract, Network Support Contract, & Clearly Services). Contracts available on file in the Commissioners Office.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

Hockhocking Adena Bikepath Appointment

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to appoint Madison Donohue to the Hockhocking Adena Bikepath Board.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

AEP 75 Connett Rd (Ratify Commissioner Chmiel's Signature)

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to ratify Commissioner Chmiel's Signature on the AEP 75 Connett Rd ECO-Advantage Plan.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

Public Defender Contracts

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the Public Defender Contract Addendums.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

OWDA Request #6 for New Marshfield Sewer (Ratify Commissioner Eliason's Signature)

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to ratify Commissioner Eliason's Signature on the OWDA Request #6 for New Marshfield Sewer.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

Increase the County Administrator's Credit Card Limit

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve increasing the County Administrator's Credit Card Limit to \$20,000.00.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

Job Description for Building Maintenance Assistant Superintendent

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the Job Description for Building Maintenance Assistant Superintendent and to advertise for the position.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

Purchase of Maintenance Equipment

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to table until next week to compare prices for snowblowers for 911 and CourtHouse.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

Add & Remove Users to EMS Office Card

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve removing Danny Radford and Jeff Gabriel all county credit cards and adding Jerry Welch to EMS and Building & Grounds Credit Cards.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

Travel

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the following travel:

- DJFS Dir Jean Demosky; OJFSDA Executive Board Meeting, Lewis Center, OH; 03/12-03/14/25
- Eng Jeff Maiden; CEO Engineers Conf, Dublin, OH; 02/05-02/07/25
- Title Office Dottie Adkins, Heather Stack, Jennifer Grimes, & Katie Skivers, Hocking Valley Bank, Athens, OH; 2025

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

Ohio Public Defender Pre-Meeting for Contract

Chase Carter, Doug Francis, & Kristen Martin provided the following updates:

1. Budget Status and General Assembly Process:
 - *The governor's budget was released, and everything remains relatively stable.
 - *The General Assembly process has begun, with initial meetings held.
 - *No major budget cuts were imposed, but no significant increases were granted either.
 - *The office is advocating for as much funding as possible, but full funding remains unlikely.
 - *There's a push to require counties (e.g., Montgomery, Cuyahoga, Lucas, and Wood) to submit budgets in advance for better planning and avoiding unexpected bills.
2. Current Financial Outlook:
 - *Year-end processing is underway, with no significant expenses anticipated.
 - *Projections remain conservative but accurate within a 3-5% margin.
 - *Coordination with the County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO) is ongoing to push for more funding.
 - *While some agencies faced 10-15% budget cuts, the office's reduction was around 1.5-2%, mainly affecting Columbus operations.
 - *Positive legislative relationships with new House representatives (e.g., Kevin Ritter) may help secure additional funding.
3. Competency Evaluations and Mental Health Treatment:
 - *District 9 has improved evaluation timelines by hiring more staff and allowing video evaluations.
 - *The main bottleneck now is hospital bed availability, delaying treatment.
 - *About two-thirds of evaluations result in hospitalization recommendations, surpassing the state average.
 - *The governor is considering funding reforms to expedite competency evaluations and implement alternative dockets for misdemeanors.
 - *A proposal is being developed to divert individuals from jail to mental health facilities, reducing incarceration for mental health issues.
4. Hospital Bed Shortages and Placement Issues:
 - *Hospitals are overfilled with forensic cases (90-97% capacity instead of the intended 60-40 split between forensic and civil cases).
 - *Civil mental health cases are often sent to Columbus due to local bed shortages.
 - *Patients sometimes wait months in regional facilities before getting hospital placements, increasing county costs.
5. STAR Facility and CBCF Programs:
 - *The STAR and Community-Based Correctional Facility (CBCF) in Nelsonville shut down, creating a need for alternative placement options.
 - *Discussions are ongoing to secure funding for new CBCF programs or expanding existing ones.

6. Diversion Programs and Legal Processes:

- *Diversion programs are supported as they prevent felony convictions and reduce incarceration rates.
- *Ethical guidelines prevent prosecutors from discussing cases directly with defendants if they request an attorney.
- *The Supreme Court has introduced more oversight, slowing down diversion processes but ensuring fairness.
- *Some counties previously misused diversion as an investigative tool, prompting Supreme Court involvement.
- *The prosecutor's office diversion program has a strong success rate with minimal issues.

Treasurer Quarterly Reports

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to authorize Commissioner Eliason to sign the Treasurer Quarterly Reports (October, November, December 2024) as presented by Treasurer Ric Wasserman.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

Treasurer Upcoming Departure

1. Transition Planning:

- *Treasurer Ric Wasserman's term is ending on August 31st.
- *He is ensuring a smooth transition for the incoming treasurer by maintaining transparency.
- *He plans to leave all emails and documents accessible to the new treasurer for continuity.
- *There are shared spreadsheets between Ric, the prosecutor, and the land bank, which will remain available for reference.

2. Collections & Foreclosures:

- *Treasurer Wasserman highlights recent successes in collections, particularly by filing foreclosure cases against long-time delinquent payers.
- *He mentions a recent case in Jacksonville where a payment was made after a foreclosure was filed.

3. State Law Requirements for Office Transition:

- *Outgoing officials are required to leave a transition book with passwords and important documents.
- *The new treasurer will have to update passwords and submit an oath of office to gain access to accounts.
- *The nine-month gap between election and taking office allows for mandatory education (26 hours total) required by the state.

4. Tax Collection Timing:

- *Tax collection schedules create complexities in transitioning treasurers.
- *Collections for the second half of the year won't be settled by the time Ric leaves.

5. Commissioner Adkins Acknowledgment:

- *Commissioner Adkins praises Treasurer Wasserman's work, noting that his transparency and efficiency have made it easier for the county to function smoothly.

W&S Supt Oscar Carson - Weekly Updates

Supt Oscar Carson provided the following Weekly Updates:

Project Updates and Construction Work

- *Whispering Pines Relocation: Danny Sickles will begin work around March 1st.
- *Roundabout Project: The contractor handling the roundabout may also have Danny Sickles complete the six-inch line installation.
- *Tap Relocation on Sunset: Scheduled for Monday.
- *Public Notices for Water Disruptions:
 - Stephanie is waiting to hear from 911 regarding a notice.
 - Discussion on how to notify residents, including using utility bill inserts or Hyper-Reach system for targeted alerts.
 - Consideration of using social media, but concerns were raised about lack of control over posted content.

Tree Removal and Right-of-Way Issues

- *Heatherstone Area: A resident reported multiple trees down in the right-of-way area due to wind.
- *Discussion on Responsibility:
 - If trees were within the construction area, removal may be required.
 - Concerns about setting a precedent for future tree removals.
 - Decision to handle trees within the construction area but avoid extending beyond that.

Sewer Connection Updates

- *Health Department Authority: Residents questioning why some properties were not included in connection mandates were informed that the Health Department determines system failures.
- *90-Day Hook-Up Notice:
 - Plan to issue letters in spring requiring unconnected properties to hook up.
 - Supt Carson to gather updated numbers on unconnected properties for the next meeting.

Utility and Infrastructure Work

- *Heatherstone, Whitland, and Edward Stations:
 - Underground conduit installed but wires not yet run.
 - Weather delays affecting progress.
 - Plan to contact the contractor for a timeline update.

EPA Violation Notices:

- *Brandon reached out regarding unresolved EPA violations.
- *Supt Carson confirmed the necessary materials are available but work has been delayed.
- *Commitment to addressing and correcting issues soon.

EMS - New Hire

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the new part time hire as requested by Chief Pyle:

EMT Hannah Edgar with a rate of pay \$16.00 per hour & a start date to be determined.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

EMS - Tuition Reimbursement Agreement

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the EMS Tuition Reimbursement Agreement with Paramedic Derek Hendershot in the amount of \$199.73 every pay for 3 years or until he leaves.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

EMS Executive Session

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to enter into executive session at 10:41 with Chief Pyle and Assist Chief Crossen to discuss employment of public employees.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

Regular Session

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to return to regular session at 10:53 with No Action to be taken.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

EMS Levy Discussion

Review of Levy Strategies:

- *Commissioner Adkins inquired about discussions from the previous week regarding levy and financial planning.
- *Commissioner Eliason emphasized the need for careful analysis of accumulated funds from levies and a close examination of expenses, noting that estimates can be uncertain.
- *Commissioner Eliason suggested considering a renewal or renewal plus a half, but no replacements, while ensuring proper financial management.

Uncertainty Around Medicaid Reimbursement:

- *Commissioner Chmiel highlighted that Medicaid reimbursement remains a major unknown factor, with clarity expected next year.
- *Given the various levy options available, he stressed the importance of avoiding unnecessary taxpayer burden while maintaining financial stability.

Strategic Approach:

- *Commissioner Adkins reiterated the need to advance responsibly while ensuring continued progress.
- *The Commissioners agreed that further discussions and financial analysis are needed before making final decisions.

BCS - Old STAR Facility - Matt Morris

Discussion on Future Use of STAR Correctional Facility Building

Background:

The STAR Correctional Facility in Athens County is vacating its current location and merging operations with its Franklin Furnace facility. Athens County has the right of first refusal for the building's use due to bond agreements.

Interest in the Facility:

Multiple organizations have expressed interest in repurposing the facility, including:

- *Hocking College – Considering the site for a rescue kitchen.
- *SOAP/New LEAF – Interested in housing options for clients.
- *Public Defender's Office – Noted a shortage of mental health crisis beds, aligning with a potential use for competency restoration.
- *Other Potential Uses – A halfway house to address lack of services in the region.

County's Considerations:

- *Need to understand bond obligations and responsibilities if Athens County assumes the building.
- *Open to public input and collaboration to determine best use.
- *Emphasis on community benefit, reducing jail costs, and addressing local needs.

Next Steps:

1. Legal Consultation – State officials will consult legal teams regarding bond obligations and usage requirements.
2. Community Outreach – Athens County to compile a list of interested organizations.
3. Building Tours & Public Meeting –
 - Initial tour for county representatives.
 - A public meeting at the facility in early March to engage stakeholders.
4. Ongoing Coordination –
 - State officials to share photographs of the facility.
 - Athens County will work with stakeholders to outline potential funding options and partnerships.

Hire Building Maintenance Superintendent

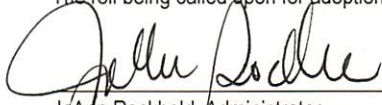
A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to hire Building Maintenance Superintendent: Mike Biggins with a rate of pay \$32.50 an hour and a start date of 02/25/2025.

The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.

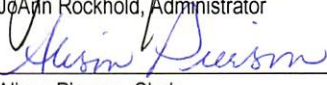
Adjourn

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to adjourn the above meeting.

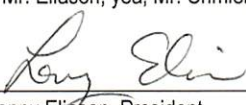
The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.



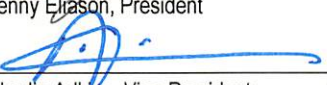
JoAnn Rockhold, Administrator



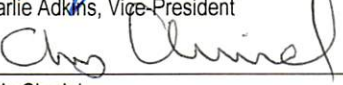
Alison Pierson, Clerk



Lenny Eliason, President



Charlie Adkins, Vice-President



Chris Chmiel