

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, March 05, 2025 Convenes at 9:30 a.m.

- Approve Agenda
- Approve Minutes February 27, 2025
- Approve Appropriations, Transfers, New Line Items Requests/Changes, Then & Nows, & Bills
 - Fund to Fund: Pros - from 001.1115.580200 P.A. VAP Co Match to 169.2169.422101 Transfers In

- 9:30 Jack Pepper
- 9:45 John Branner - affordable housing projects in the Plains
- 10:00 Bid Opening 510 W Union Street
- 10:15 Robin Burrow for Joe Burrow Foundation
- 10:30 W&S Supt Oscar Carson - weekly updates
- 10:45 EMS Full Time dropping to Part Time
- 11:00 Planner Connor LaVelle - Ferndale Park/ODOT Bicycle Path Training Class
- 11:15 CEBCO 4th Quarter Review - Justin Grant
- 11:25 Helen King - League of Women Voters
- 11:30 LUNCH

Agenda Items

- Children Services Employment Contract
- CHIP Release of funds request
- Benefits
 - Engineer - ATH-TR196-0.71 Plans
 - Engineer - ATH-TR196-0.71 Advertisement for Bids
- Maintenance Surplus

~TRAVEL

- Sheriff - Nick Appleman & Trent Johnson; OPOTA Training, London, OH; 04/08/25-04/10/25
- Sheriff - Jayson White & Zayne Preston; Training, Decatur, Illinois; 04/06/25-04/09/25

ADJOURNMENT

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 the minutes of February 27, 2025.

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

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 including: Prosecutors Fund to Fund: Transfer 15,031.00 from 001.1115.580200 P.A. VAP County Match to 169.2169.422101 Transfers In and approving the payment of the required County Bills, which are included in the Auditor's Office INVOICE TRACKING REPORT - From: 02/25/25 To: 02/27/25 and INVOICE TRACKING REPORT - From: 02/27/25 To: 03/04/25 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.

Jack Pepper

Jack Pepper from the Health Department attended the meeting to provide clarity on discussions regarding the extension office and the upstairs space in the building on West Union. He emphasized their availability for any further dialogue or questions and assured attendees that they were not avoiding the conversation.

The discussion confirmed that ownership and maintenance responsibilities for the building are now clear. Over the past three years, approximately \$250,000 has been invested in repairs, including replacing the roof due to windstorm damage and addressing issues with a mini-split heating and cooling unit. Although there was some initial confusion regarding communication between the extension office and the

Health Department, the situation has since been clarified.

Regarding usage of the space, it was noted that the extension office has not utilized the area as much since the pandemic, primarily due to the availability of newer, more modern meeting spaces elsewhere in the county. The conversation included an evaluation of rental costs, with estimates ranging from \$9 to \$12 per square foot annually for dated spaces and up to \$15 for premium spaces. Given the size of the extension office space (approximately 3,300 square feet), the estimated rental value would range from \$2,500 to \$4,000 per month. However, the Health Department clarified that they are not interested in monetizing the space.

There was also discussion about potential alternative uses for the space. The Health Department is exploring the possibility of housing the free pharmacy, currently renting space at Ohio University, within their building at no cost. This move would align with their mission of serving underinsured and uninsured individuals.

The meeting also touched on possible relocation options for the extension office, including the Innovation Center and Athens Mold and Machine, though neither seemed viable. The remaining free options included The Plains Water and Sewer room and Records Center in Glouster. A shared-use agreement was mentioned as a potential compromise, though its feasibility would depend on the willingness of the current occupants to negotiate terms.

The discussion concluded with an emphasis on maintaining open communication, respecting the Health Department's plans for the building, and ensuring that any decisions made are beneficial to all parties involved.

Children Services Employment Contract

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the Employment Agreement (Executive Director/Athens County Children Services). Contract available 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.

CHIP Release of Funds Request

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to authorize Commissioner Eliason to sign the CHIP Release of Funds Request. See back of page 71 for document.

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

Benefits

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to set the benefits eligibility policy, requiring employees to work at least 1,040 hours per year (20 hours per week) to qualify for any or all benefits, whether provided by Athens County or a supplemental source, excluding intermittent workers.

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

Engineer - ATH-TR196-0.71 Plans

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the ATH-TR196-0.71 Plans from the Engineer's Office.

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

Engineer - ATH-TR196-0.71 Advertisement for Bids

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the ATH-TR196-0.71 Advertisement for Bids:
Advertisement For Bids

Sealed bids for the ATH-TR196-0.71 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT will be received by the Board of County Commissioners of Athens County, Ohio, at their office, 15 S. Court Street, Athens Ohio 45701 until 10:00 a.m., Prevailing Local Time on the 1st day of April, 2025 and at that time and place will be publicly opened and read aloud. All bids will be considered valid until 60 days after the opening date, although not accepted or rejected.

The work for which proposals are invited consists of replacing the bridge at ATH-TR196-0.71 with single span prestressed non-composite box beam bridge with asphalt deck and reconstruction of the approach roadway. The bidder must hold a current prequalification with the Ohio Department of Transportation for the appropriate items of work, and must maintain such prequalification during the course of the contract.

Copies of the Construction Plans, Bidding Forms, and Specifications on the Unit Price Contract may be purchased for \$30.00 from the Office of the Athens County Engineer, 16000 Canaanville Rd, Athens, Ohio 45701 during regular business hours (7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday).

Legal notice and bid documents are also posted on the internet at www.athenscountyengineer.org under the "Bids/RFPs" heading.

Each bid shall have filed with it a bid guaranty in the form of a certified check, cashier's check, or letter of credit revocable only at the option of Athens County in an amount equal to 10% of the bid or a bond in accordance with division (B) of Section 153.54 of the Revised Code.

State of Ohio Department of Development
Office of Community Development

REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS (RROF) AND CERTIFICATION
FOR FEDERALLY FUNDED STATE PROJECTS

Pursuant to Section 104 (g) of Title I, Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended; Section 268 of the Cranston Gonzales National Affordable Housing Act (NAHA), as amended; and/or Title IV of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, as amended.

Part 1: General Information

1. Certifying Officer Name and Title, Responsible Entity name, and Mailing Address: Athens County Commissioners 15 South Court Street Athens, Ohio 45701 Lenny Elason, President Phone: 740-592-3219 Email: lelason@athensco.ohio.gov	2. Administering Agent name and Address: Hocking Athens Perry Community Action 40 Stark Chaires Street Nelsonville, Ohio 45764 Phone: 740-753-3062 Email: jg@hpa.org	Submit Form and Public Notice(s) to the Ohio Department of Development, Office of Community Development at ocd@ohiodoed.com
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B-C-24-IAE-1	Administration/Fair Housing/Fair Housing	\$2,000	Athens County, City of Athens, City of Nelsonville	Fair Housing	CE
B-C-24-IAE-1	Administration/Fair Housing/General Administration	\$89,000	Athens County, City of Athens, City of Nelsonville	Administration	CE
B-C-24-IAE-2	Administration/Fair Housing/General Administration	\$35,000	Athens County, City of Athens, City of Nelsonville	Administration	CE

Part 2: Request for Release of Funds

The Responsible Entity requests the release of funds and removal of environmental grant conditions governing the use of the assistance for the following Activity(ies)/Project(s):

Grant Agreement No.	Name of Project and Activity (as listed in Attachment A of the Grant Agreement)	Activity No.	List the Amount of Federal Funds Budgeted for Each Activity	List the Activity Location, as Designated in the Grant Agreement	Describe the Entire (Appropriated) Project	Level of Environmental Finding: CE (Categorical Exclusion) EA (Environmental Assessment)
B-C-24-IAE-2	Rehabilitation Assistance/Private Rehabilitation		\$15,700	Athens County, City of Athens, City of Nelsonville	Owner Rehabilitation	CE
B-C-24-IAE-2	Rehabilitation Assistance/Private Rehabilitation		\$469,000	Athens County, City of Athens, City of Nelsonville	Owner Rehabilitation	CE
B-C-24-IAE-2	Rehabilitation Assistance/Private Rental Rehabilitation		\$140,000	Athens County, City of Athens, City of Nelsonville	Rental Rehabilitation	CE
B-C-24-IAE-1	Repair Assistance/Home Building Repair		\$276,000	Athens County, City of Athens, City of Nelsonville	Owner Home Repair	CE
S-C-24-IAE-1	Repair Assistance/Home Building Repair		\$15,000	Athens County, City of Athens, City of Nelsonville	Owner Home Repair	CE
B-C-24-IAE-1	Repair Assistance/Rental Repair		\$22,000	Athens County, City of Athens, City of Nelsonville	Rental Repair	CE

Part 3: Environmental Certification

With reference to the Activity(ies)/Project(s) identified on the reverse side of this form, I, the undersigned certifying officer of the responsible entity, CERTIFY THAT: (Note: Items 4 and 5 below require additional action.)

- The responsible entity has fully carried out its responsibilities for environmental review, decision-making, and action pertaining to the project(s) listed herein.
- The responsible entity has assumed responsibility for and complied with and will continue to comply with, the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and the environmental procedures, permit requirements and statutory obligations of the laws cited in 24 CFR 58.5; and also agrees to comply with the authorities in 24 CFR 58.6 and applicable State and local laws.
- The responsible entity has assumed responsibility for and complied with and will continue to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and its implementing regulations 36 CFR 800.
- After considering the type and degree of environmental effects identified by the environmental review(s) completed for the proposed project(s) described herein, I have found that the proposal **(CHECK ONE)** - DID X DID NOT require the preparation and dissemination of an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT.
- The responsible entity has, prior to submitting this request for release of funds and certification, published, in the manner prescribed by 24 CFR 58.43, a notice to the public in accordance with 24 CFR 58.70 and as evidenced by the attached copy. **(ATTACH COPIES OF NOTICE(S))**
- The dates for all statutory and regulatory time periods for review, comment, or other action are in compliance with the procedures and requirements of 24 CFR Part 58. The following provides a summary of critical dates:

Categorically Excluded Projects (CE)	Notice of Intent to Request Release of Funds (NOI/RROF) Publication Date	Last Date of Local Comment Period	Date Certification Signed and Submitted	Estimated Last Date of State Objection Period	Type of Other Notices (e.g., floodplain/wetland) and Date Published
	March 1, 2025	March 10, 2025	March 11, 2025	March 27, 2025	

Environmental Assessment Projects (EA)	Combined Notice (FONSI & NOI/RROF) Publication Date	Last Date of Local Comment Period	Date Certification Signed and Submitted	Estimated Last Date of State Objection Period	Type of Other Notices (e.g., floodplain/wetland) and Date Published

- I am authorized to and do consent to assume the status of Federal official under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and each provision of law designated in the 24 CFR 58.5 list of NEPA-related authorities insofar as the provisions of these laws apply to the HUD responsibilities for environmental review, decision-making and action that have been assumed by the responsible entity.
- I am authorized to and do accept, on behalf of the responsible entity personally, the jurisdiction of the Federal courts for the enforcement of all these responsibilities, in my capacity as certifying officer of the responsible entity.

Name of Certifying Officer of the Responsible Entity	Signature	Title	Date
Lenny Elason		President	3/11/25

WARNING: Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code shall apply to this certification.

Each proposal must contain the full name of the party or parties submitting the proposal and all persons interested therein. Each bidder must submit evidence of its experiences on projects of similar size and complexity. The owner intends and requires that this project be completed no later than December 19, 2025.

All contractor and subcontractors involved with the project will to the extent practicable use Ohio products, materials, services, and labor in the implementation of their project. Additionally, contractor compliance with the equal employment opportunity requirements of Ohio Administrative Code Chapter 123 is required.

Bidders must comply with the prevailing wage rates on Public Improvements in Athens County as determined by the Ohio Department of Commerce, Bureau of Wage and Hour Administration, 614.644.2239.

The Board of County Commissioners of Athens County, Ohio reserves the right to reject any and/or all bids and to waive informalities as may be in the best interest of Athens County.

Jeff Maiden, P.E., P.S.
Athens County Engineer

Advertising dates: 03/08/2025, 03/15/2025

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

Maintenance Surplus

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the Maintenance Surplus to destroy as recommended by Maintenance Superintendent Mike Biggins:

Property Description:

5-iPads cases

3-iPads (outdated can't use anymore)

Hewlett-Packard Laptop (Doesn't Work)

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:

Sheriff - Nick Appelman & Trent Johnson; OPOTA Training, London, OH; 04/08/25-04/10/25

Sheriff - Jayson White & Zayne Preston; Training, Decatur, Illinois; 04/06/25-04/09/25

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

DJFS Contract - Athens County Clerk of Courts

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the DJFS Contract with Athens County Clerk of Courts:

Name of Contract Organization: Athens County Clerk of Courts

Total \$ Value: \$138,833.38

Contract Period: 01/01/25 - 12/31/25

Program Accts & Codes to be charged: 221/510052 Administrative Cost Pool, CSEA

Billing Procedure: Submits monthly billing for 100% of the contract unit rate and the CSEA reimburses at 66%

Full Contract available in the Commissioner's Office.

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

DJFS Contract - Athens County Common Pleas Court Juvenile Division

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the DJFS Contract with Athens County Common Pleas Court Juvenile Division:

Name of Contract Organization: Athens County Common Pleas Court Juvenile Division

Total \$ Value: \$148,728.22

Contract Period: 01/01/25 - 12/31/25

Program Accts & Codes to be charged: 241/510052 Administrative Cost Pool, CSEA

Billing Procedure: Submits monthly billing for 100% of the contract unit rate and the CSEA reimburses at 66%

Full Contract available in the Commissioner's Office.

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

DJFS Contract - Athens County Common Pleas Court, Domestic Relations Division

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the DJFS Contract with Athens County Common Pleas Court, Domestic Relations Division:

Name of Contract Organization:	Athens County Common Pleas Court, Domestic Relations Division
Total \$ Value:	\$268,337.39
Contract Period:	01/01/25 - 12/31/25
Program Accts & Codes to be charged:	251/510052 Administrative Cost Pool, CSEA
Billing Procedure:	Submits monthly billing for 100% of the contract unit rate and the CSEA reimburses at 66%

Full Contract available in the Commissioner's Office.

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

Bid Opening 510 W Union Street

- *No bids were received for the property at 510 West Union.
- *Discussion followed on possible next steps, including:
 - *Holding an auction at the same price or a reduced price.
 - *Rebidding to gauge potential interest again.
- *The decision was deferred to Jean, who has a vested interest in selling the property.

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to authorize the Commissioners Board Chair to consult with Dir Jean Demosky and proceed as necessary regarding the sale of 510 West Union.

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

Affordable Housing Projects in The Plains

Planner Connor LaVelle presented the following information:

Overview of Fairfield Homes Development Proposal

- *Fairfield Homes has proposed a 58-unit, three-building development in The Plains.
- *The county received a letter requesting comments on the project.
- *Concerns were raised by neighboring property owners regarding traffic congestion.

Key Discussion Points

1. Traffic Impact & Road Access
 - *The proposed development currently has access to both First Street and Johnson Road.
 - *Another upcoming 50+ unit development will rely solely on First Street, increasing congestion.
 - *First Street is a 40-foot right-of-way with no shoulders, frequently used by pedestrians and cyclists.
 - *Recommendation: Encourage access solely from Johnson Road to reduce traffic burden on First Street.
2. Project Funding Status
 - *Some uncertainty about whether Fairfield Homes' project is fully funded.
 - *The project appears to be awarded funding but has not broken ground yet.
3. Infrastructure & Utility Concerns
 - *Developers may need to extend sewer lines and install a new manhole, triggering a subdivision review process by the City of Athens.
 - *Developers have not yet contacted the County Water & Sewer Office to discuss utility needs.
 - *Fairfield Homes should coordinate with water and sewer officials ASAP.
4. Pedestrian & Bike Safety Considerations
 - *A pedestrian/bike path project is ongoing near Johnson Road.
 - *Increased vehicle traffic near the new walkway could create safety risks.
 - *First Street lacks sidewalks, making pedestrian safety a bigger concern.

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to authorize Planner Connor LaVelle to submit formal comments recommending with a submission deadline of March 13, 2025:

1. Primary access from Johnson Road only, to reduce First Street traffic congestion.
2. Early coordination with the County Water & Sewer Office regarding infrastructure needs.

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

ODOT Bicycle Path Training Class

Planner Connor LaVelle presented the following information for ODOT Bicycle Path Training Class:

- *ODOT Pedestrian & Bicycle Training for Maintenance Crew
- *A free online training session hosted by ODOT on pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure is available.
- *The training runs for 1.5 hours per session on March 11, 13, 18, and 20.
- *Planner LaVelle suggested that the new maintenance crew attend.
- *No motion required, but arrangements will be made for interested staff.

Ferndale Park

Planner Connor LaVelle presented the following information on Ferndale Park:

Ferndale Park Water Bill Proposal

- *The Ferndale Park League requested to pay a flat annual rate of \$360 (\$30/month) instead of monthly billing.
- *Concern: If water usage increases unexpectedly (e.g., leaks, excessive use), the county might face unplanned expenses.
- *Commissioner Eliason stated that the league must guarantee payment for any overages beyond the fixed amount.
- *Discussion remains open for further negotiation.

Robin Burrow for Joe Burrow Foundation

Introduction & Background

- *Robin Burrow (Joe Burrow's mother) and representatives from the Joe Burrow Foundation introduced a new initiative in partnership with Hocking College to address food insecurity.
- *The project expands on an existing partnership with LeSoup, a food rescue organization that repurposes surplus food into meals for those in need.
- *The Foundation has been actively working with LeSoup by funding a refrigerated van and increasing meal production to serve schools in Southeast Ohio beyond just Athens County.

Need for Expansion

- *Schools have reported an increasing demand for food assistance, with some even reaching out asking how frequently meal distributions can be arranged.
- *Currently, eight schools are on the distribution list, and others are on a waiting list due to the high demand.
- *Given the need, the Foundation is looking to expand operations by establishing a local food rescue kitchen in Southeast Ohio, rather than transporting meals from Cincinnati.
- *Hocking College has stepped up to host the initiative, leveraging their culinary program to provide training and workforce development while producing meals.

Hocking College's Role

- *Jared Tudor, Executive Vice President of Hocking College, emphasized the dual benefits of the project:
 - *Food rescue: Repurposing surplus food into meals.
 - *Workforce development: Training individuals (including formerly incarcerated individuals) in food service, helping them gain skills and employment opportunities.
- *The initiative will be the first rural-based rescue kitchen in Ohio.
- *Hocking College is participating in an incubator program with LeSoup, aiming to deliver 60,000 servings in the first year, though projections suggest they will likely exceed 460,000 servings based on demand.

Potential Use of the STAR Facility

- *A potential expansion site, the STAR facility, may become vacant soon and could serve as an additional production/distribution hub.
- *Utilizing the facility would accelerate the project's timeline, ensuring quicker food delivery.
- *Each month saved in setting up operations translates to 40,000 additional servings reaching the community.

Food Waste & Supply Opportunities

- *Food waste is a major issue:
 - *40% of Ohio's food supply is wasted.
 - *Only 2% of that is currently being rescued.
- *General Mills recently reported 300,000 lbs of surplus sausage patties and egg substitute, which could be rescued and distributed through this program.
- *Bellisio Foods and other food manufacturers are also beginning to contribute.

Community Impact & School Partnerships

- *Schools are crucial in identifying and distributing food to families in need.
- *Athens City Schools has seen improved attendance due to increased food availability:
 - *Required state attendance improvement was 1.1%, but they achieved 3.2%.
 - *Food insecurity is directly linked to truancy, and access to meals has helped students stay in school.
- *The program eliminates barriers like paperwork and eligibility requirements, ensuring families receive food without needing to qualify.

Collaboration & Future Steps

- *All organizations are welcome to partner in the initiative, including food banks, pantries, and community groups.
- *The Foundation and Hocking College are open to working with veterans groups, drug treatment centers, and homeless organizations to provide meals.
- *Next Steps:
 - *Awaiting further details on the STAR facility's availability and feasibility.
 - *Planning open houses for stakeholders to tour the STAR facility.
 - *Continuing to secure food donations and funding for kitchen infrastructure.

W&S Supt Oscar Carson - Weekly Updates

Supt Oscar Carson provided the following weekly updates:

Water Line Relocation for Roundabout

*A water line near the entrance to Rutland needs to be lowered to accommodate a catch basin before finalizing the full relocation design.

*Work may begin next week, but a notice will be sent out a few days in advance to inform the public.

Sludge Inspection & Regulatory Changes

*The sludge inspection was completed about three weeks ago.

*By 2026, flood buffer zone regulations will expand, reducing available land for sludge spreading/injection by approximately 90%.

*Finding new land is challenging due to slope restrictions.

*Eric Brooks recommended exploring alternative sites, but hilly terrain may not be viable.

*Given these restrictions, pressing sludge and hauling it to a landfill might be more cost-effective in the long run.

*No immediate action is needed, but approval is requested to start pricing and evaluating options.

Potential Collaboration & Research

*A group working with the City of Athens, including a researcher from Ohio University, received a grant for dewatering and recycling solutions.

*Connection with this group could provide insights or alternative solutions.

General Information on Sludge Use

*The impact of sludge on soil depends on its classification, which determines how and where it can be used.

*More technical details exist, but further connections will be made to explore potential solutions.

Auditor Request for Approval - Penalty

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the penalty for OPERS of \$27.51 from 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.

EMS - Full Time dropping to Part Time

A motion was made by Commissioner Adkins and seconded by Commissioner Chmiel to approve the status change of Dustin Shaw from Full Time to Part Time effective March 14, 2025. Due to Vocational Education for AEMT Classes.

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

EMS - Solar & Heating-Cooling Issues

1. Solar System Issue

*Inverter #3 is down.

*The team is on a waiting list for repairs, but no firm date has been provided.

*Follow-up is needed to confirm a scheduled repair date.

2. Heating, Cooling, and Air Quality Issues

*The HVAC system has not functioned properly for four years.

*Ongoing maintenance visits result in additional costs, but issues remain unresolved.

*A new flow test is planned to diagnose problems, but no firm date is set.

*Concerns raised about continuous payments for unresolved issues.

*Previous maintenance team may have chosen Twin Oaks for assistance, leading to additional complications.

*Air Claws, the system installer, should take responsibility for necessary repairs.

3. Mini-Split and Balancing Issues

*A mini-split system was installed in some areas as a temporary fix.

*The need for a balancing test was identified but not conducted before the mini-split installation.

*The test involves adjusting thermostats, vents, and sensors to optimize airflow.

*Unclear why the balancing was not previously completed.

*Additional thermostat and sensor adjustments may be required.

4. Additional Structural Issues & Potential Solutions

*The bay floor heating system was found to be low on water, impacting heating.

*Incorrect thermostat placement and air leaks (e.g., cracked doors) may be contributing to temperature issues.

*Roof leaks were reported, complicating accountability between service providers.

*Lack of proper shading contributes to heat buildup inside the facility.

*Most trees planted for shade are dead.

*Awnings provide little relief.

*External sun blinds or window sheeting to reflect heat could be a potential solution.

5. Next Steps & Action Items

*Immediate Priorities:

*Confirm a scheduled date for the HVAC balancing test.

*Determine who will be responsible for follow-up (Commissioner Chmiel and Chief Pyle to develop a strategy).

*Review past conversations with Air Claws and the architect to understand where discussions left off.

*Explore adding an external UV blocker to windows to reduce heat.

***Long-Term Considerations:**

- *Evaluate the possibility of adding another thermostat for better climate control.
- *Improve exterior shading with new trees or additional sun-blocking solutions.

CEBCO 4th Quarter Review - Justin Grant

Justin Grant provided the following CEBCO 4th Quarter Review:

Loss Ratio and Claims Overview:

- *The county's loss ratio for 2024 stands at 80%, which is considered favorable.
- *There are currently 10 high-cost claimants, a decrease of one from the last meeting.
- *Adjustments remove approximately \$1.2 million from the experience, keeping the loss ratio at 80.1%.
- *Paid claims saw fluctuations, but overall, the county is in a stable position.
- *Two high-cost claimants are no longer active, contributing to positive trends.

High-Cost Claimants and Health Conditions:

- *Predominantly, high-cost claims are related to circulatory system diseases and musculoskeletal issues.
- *The county offers a Condition Care Program through Anthem, where individuals with chronic conditions (e.g., diabetes, COPD, cardiovascular disease, asthma) receive outreach and case management.
- *Engagement in these programs remains a challenge, as many individuals do not respond to outreach.

Discussion on Incentives for Participation:

- *There was discussion on whether employees should be required to engage in health programs or pay more if they do not.
- *Due to HIPAA regulations, identifying individuals who need outreach is not possible.
- *Incentivization must be offered across the board rather than targeted at specific health conditions.
- *Currently, employees can receive incentives, such as \$50 per pay period, for participating in wellness programs.

Medical and Pharmacy Trends:

- *Medical claims have decreased by 9.7% from 2023.
- *Pharmacy costs have increased by 6.4%, though this is still the lowest increase compared to other groups.
- *Inpatient costs have decreased by 40.67%, while outpatient costs have seen a slight 1.7% increase.
- *Professional services costs decreased by 2.1%.
- *Anthem has expanded outreach efforts, but engagement remains a challenge.

Engagement Strategies and Outreach:

- *Anthem's outreach identified 209 individuals for Condition Care Programs, but only 24 enrolled, with 3 completing the program in 2024.
- *A major barrier is individuals not answering calls due to concerns over scam calls.
- *Suggestions included:
 - *Using mail for outreach instead of phone calls.
 - *Hosting in-person meetings to provide health program awareness.
 - *Organizing a traveling roadshow to visit departments and speak with employees directly.
 - *Conducting a group meeting for elected officials to emphasize cost and program importance.
 - *Enhancing communication on available health resources and the importance of engagement.

Prescription and Lifestyle Condition Analysis:

- *Prescription costs totaled \$1.8 million, with 87% spent on generics.
- *Anti-diabetics remain a top prescription category.
- *Weight-loss prescriptions (WeGov and others) are phasing out, leading to a cost reduction.
- *Ozempic and Mounjaro remain covered but are limited to diabetes treatment.
- *Top lifestyle conditions affecting costs include:
 - *Low back problems (\$321,000 in costs)
 - *Osteoarthritis
 - *Stress, anxiety, and depression
- *Wellness initiatives were discussed, including possible support for yoga, tai chi, and fitness programs.
- *Existing county wellness incentives allow for fitness participation credits toward extra personal days.

Action Items and Next Steps:

- *Schedule department-wide visits to increase awareness of health and wellness programs.
- *Conduct a county-wide health insurance meeting to discuss cost trends and available resources.
- *Explore additional outreach methods (e.g., mailers) to improve engagement with Anthem's programs.
- *Continue monitoring high-cost claimants and prescription trends to manage costs effectively.
- *Promote Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services at the upcoming health fair.

The county's overall health plan position is stable, with efforts ongoing to reduce costs and improve employee engagement in wellness programs. Continued communication and structured outreach initiatives will be critical to sustaining positive trends.

League of Women Voters - Helen King


Helen King provided the following information:

The League of Women Voters in Athens is celebrating its 75th anniversary with a special event on March 29 from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM at Uncorked in Athens. Helen expressed appreciation for the partnership with the county and commissioners and extended an invitation for their attendance.

Adjourn

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

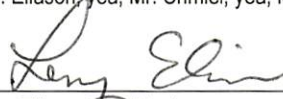
The roll being called upon for adoption, the vote resulted as follows: Mr. Eliason, yea; Mr. Chmiel, yea; Mr. Adkins, yea.



JoAnn Rockhold, Administrator



Alison Pierson, Clerk



Lenny Eliason, President



Charlie Adkins, Vice-President



Chris Chmiel