

COMMISSIONERS MEETING, MONDAY, AUGUST 18, 2008

Patricia G. Geissman called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. with Stephen D. Hambley and Sharon A. Ray present.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer.

Doug King, Administrative Assistant in the County Engineer's Office, presented a resolution accepting and awarding the bid for the replacement of Bridge No. 04 on Westfield Road (C.H. 15) in Westfield Township to The Ohio Bridge Corporation, for the price of \$93,219. Mr. Hambley moved to approve the resolution and Ms. Ray seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Roll call showed all Commissioners voting AYE.

Commissioners reviewed the weekly permits list for permits issued August 8-13, 2008.

Scott Miller, Finance Director, presented and reviewed the following resolutions: (1) amending the annual appropriation resolution; (2) amending the 2008 appropriations resolution by transferring appropriations; (3) transferring funds from various Sanitary Engineering funds to the County General Fund; (4) transferring funds from various County department accounts to the Gasoline Rotary Fund; (5) creating an Office for Older Adults Home Energy Assistance Program FY08 Fund and authorizing appropriations; (6) authorizing the purchase of 7,000 gallons of regular unleaded gasoline for the Engineering Center; and, (7) declaring Medina County property as excess property to be discarded or sold at the online auction. Mr. Miller requested payment of the weekly bills in the amount of \$1,301,630.45. Mr. Hambley moved to approve the seven Finance resolutions and payment of the weekly bills; the motion was seconded by Ms. Ray. There was no discussion. Roll call showed all commissioners voting AYE.

Gary Berkowitz, Human Resources Director, presented a resolution approving personnel changes for the employees under the jurisdiction of the Medina County Commissioners. Mr. Hambley moved to approve the resolution; the motion was seconded by Ms. Ray. There was no discussion. Roll call showed all commissioners voting AYE.

Jim Troike, Sanitary Engineer, presented and reviewed the following resolutions: (1) authorizing a cooperative agreement for the construction, maintenance, and operation of the State water project with the Ohio Water Development Authority and, (2) authorizing Change Order No. 1 for the Westfield Water Main Extension Project 2008 MCSE #W-700/00-32.2 to account for the change in pipe material. Mr. Hambley moved to approve both resolutions and Ms. Ray seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Roll call showed all Commissioners voting AYE.

Patrice Theken, Department of Planning Services Director, announced that the registration for the planning and zoning workshop on March 20 had to be closed on Friday because they have 90 people signed up to attend. This is partially due to good participation from communities that have sponsored the event. There will be a bus tour on September 12 for information about housing needs for the aging and the special needs population. The format is 1/2 day of classroom instruction at the Brunswick Recreation Center and a 1/2 day bus tour. There will be a sustainability workshop held on September 24 at the Medina County District Library.

Charles Huber, Chief Building Official, presented a resolution to establish a consistent policy regarding the processing of building permits in townships on behalf of the Medina County Park District. This resolution would provide an exception to the Park District to have the Building Department and the Building Permit Center as last stop checks before work commences. Building permits require that an applicant have the necessary permits from the Sanitary and Highway Engineers and the zoning authority. The body of the agreement cites an Ohio Attorney General opinion that places governmental entities such as Park Districts beyond the authority of zoning authorities. The agreement says this applies when necessary because of time constraints. The expedited procedures include not making it necessary to get a zoning permit from the zoning authority. Mr. Hambley moved to approve the resolution; Ms. Ray seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Roll call showed all Commissioners voting AYE.

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Mr. Huber presented and reviewed the "Medina County Building Department July 2008 Monthly Report". There were 45 one-, two-, and three-family residential housing starts in July 2008; they are continuing to decline. Permits and building permit revenues collected in July 2008 compared to July 2007 were up 6.14%. There was a break in the "free fall" in the Building Department's revenue from past months due to non-residential permitting activity that had a 71% increase in July 2008 over July 2007 in the commercial area. Year-to-date permit revenue was down 15.64% comparing 2008 to 2007. The breakout of one-, two-, and three-family residential permits by political jurisdiction showed the most activity in Montville Township followed by Brunswick Hills Township, both in the month of July and year-to-date. The most non-residential permits were obtained by the City of Wadsworth, both in July and year-to-date.

Mike Jenks, ADAMH Board Director, presented a report on the possible funding scenarios from their two State departments, the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services. The proposed reductions would have a devastating effect and impact upon their system of care. Mr. Jenks said when the economy weakens, as it is now, the ADAMH Boards are impacted and stressed in four ways:

1. They get less money because most of their money comes from tax receipts from the State of Ohio. In the last several years, State funding has been rather flat as well. This impact is less acute, but it has a cumulative affect over time.
2. The demand for services increases because more people find themselves unemployed and under stress.
3. Population growth relates to an increased demand in services.
4. ADAMH Boards are stressed with unbridled Medicaid growth. Although Medicaid is a Federal program, ADAMH Boards are required to pay a local match of 40% to the Federal government's 60% on every unit of service of a Medina County resident at any of the agencies that they contract with in- or out-of-county. They do not receive any additional money to pay this cost.

Mr. Jenks said many ADAMH Boards around the State of Ohio are in a state that is no better than saying they are bankrupt and there will likely be more to follow. The State has done little to address this other than to provide a revision to the counties' funding formula (basic subsidy). Their proposal this past spring was to move substantial money from some ADAMH Boards "in the black" to others "in the red" in order to be more equitable. Mr. Jenks commented that many view this as simply "robbing Peter to pay Paul". Unfortunately, since there is no new money, the proposed money would be to move existing allocations from "richer" Boards to "poorer" Boards. This would essentially destabilize the entire system by putting more Boards in a more fragile state. The formula proposed would cut the Medina County ADAMH Board's allocation by almost \$1 million, which represents almost one-fourth of their funding. It would make Medina County one of the "biggest losers" of all 88 counties. Only two other counties would have taken a larger loss, Stark and Montgomery Counties. This raised a considerable amount of concern by many of the ADAMH Boards; therefore, the State department withdrew this funding proposal.

The Medicaid problems have not been addressed and the State's tax receipts are reported to be less than anticipated. They are expecting funding cuts to be enacted in the coming weeks and for the next couple of years. To prepare for the imminent budget cuts, Mr. Jenks said he has been preparing as follows: (1) he has been on the ADAMH Board's State Association Executive Council and their recently-formed State Formula Committee in order to be "at the table" to inform the State of their local needs and the potential impact that the proposed changes would have on the County; they have also been working with the County Commissioners' Association of Ohio (CCAO); (2) They scrutinized their budget to make cutbacks; (3) They have aggressively sought HUD and Department of Development grants; and, (4) They reduced personnel structure from six and one-half full time employees to five.

Mr. Jenks said that, on a more positive note, over the past year ending June 30, 2008, the system of care that they fund provided over 167,000 units of service to Medina County residents. Some individuals are seen more than one time so the actual number of people that have been

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seen was 3,200. Because most individuals are part of a family, they impact more than that one individual. They estimate that they are touching about 10,000 Medina County residents per year. Mr. Jenks said he would keep the Commissioners up-to-day on the funding outlook and developments.

Mr. Hambley asked if the number of clients or the demographic factors were perhaps the reason for the proposed redistribution of funds. Mr. Jenks said money is being moved from the red columns to the black. The counties in the red are those that are experiencing a very dramatic increase in Medicaid billing. They aren't quite sure why, but reasons could be that providers are being allowed to bill without constraints or there was tremendous growth in the need for Medicaid services.

The Clerk read the resolution to allow the expenses of County officials. Mr. Hambley moved to approve the expense resolution and Ms. Ray seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Roll call showed all Commissioners voting AYE.

The meeting was opened for public comment and no one wished to speak.

Mrs. Geissman said a Discussion Session would be held immediately following this portion of the meeting.

The meeting recessed at 10:00 a.m.

Discussion Session

The meeting reconvened at 10:05 a.m. for the Discussion Session in the Hearing Room.

Mr. Hambley reported that two weeks ago Governor Ted Strickland's Office called Howard Maier, Director of the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA), Medina County's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), to recommend that they redirect federal Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) money to five area transit agencies (Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, and Medina counties). He said the money would be to ease skyrocketing fuel costs that would cause drastic public transit service cuts and fare increases resulting in the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) having a \$20 million deficit next year. The committees developed a resolution to present to the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The CMAQ fund balance is about \$28.5 million to fund all current Transportation Improvement District (TID) projects. The State is proposing the transfer of \$10.5 million for emergency public transit funding. The governor would like to announce this transfer over Labor Day. He would like NOACA to make a decision soon, but the Board does not meet until September 12. The TAC has agreed to recommend the transfer. CMAQ funds are not usually used for operating transit systems; they are supposed to be used for capital expenditures. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) has said they were willing to work with them to "swap" funds.

Mr. Hambley said the bulk of the \$10.5 million "swap" would be to take care of the RTA, not Geauga or Medina Counties; therefore, members representing these counties (including Mr. Hambley) raised objections; they do not trust ODOT Central because they have not been treated fairly in the past. The resolution passed under the TAC states that rural transit qualifies for those dollars and must be included. Under normal CMAC rules, Medina County would be entitled to over \$700,000. Instead, the preliminary recommendation is for RTA to receive 93% of the \$10.5 million using a formula based on fuel costs. Mr. Hambley said he will attend the meeting this week with representatives from the City of Brunswick to argue for more than \$155,000 that they are proposing. Although the Governor and ODOT have the final say, they have indicated that they will abide by NOACA's decision; therefore, they will present their best case for more equitable treatment of the distribution of funds to them. He does not know if it would go to a "weighted" vote. Similar to the Avon Lake interchange clash, when there are tough times and there is cash, the "big guys" in Cleveland and Cuyahoga County will go after the dollars and they will change the rules.

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Mrs. Geissman asked what they could do to fight that and Mr. Hambley said they have been doing it within the committees. That is why NOACA couldn't come to resolution on Friday at the Transit Council where Medina County Transit Director Scott Uhas has a voice. The formal recommendation and vote will take place on Friday, September 12, at the NOACA meeting to be held at Medina County University Center, hosted by the Medina County Commissioners. Mr. Hambley agreed that Cuyahoga County does spend more money on fuel, but that should not be the basis for the distribution of funds. Historically, all of the counties were entitled to the same money based on a system of ranking projects and targets. Medina County may need a resolution to communicate the unfair treatment and if NOACA has a weighted vote, they would have to justify the 93% funding to the RTA from local funds.

Mr. Jakab asked when the funds would be available. Mr. Hambley said that first, ODOT would have to determine how the funds would be used since they would not be used for capital projects. The Federal government would need to agree to that "cleansing" unless they develop a special pot that could be used for operations. They are trying to have the funds available by October 2008.

Mr. Hambley presented information provided by Lou Tisler, Neighborhood Housing Services' Executive Director. Neighborhood Housing Services is a not-for-profit organization that has provided families in Northeast Ohio with housing education and loans to buy, improve, and keep their homes. They provided funding in the amount of \$30,000 to the Barberton operation that fell apart. They are providing services in Medina County now. Mr. Tisler gave a presentation to the Housing Network and they asked him join the Network and to provide on-site foreclosure counseling at the United Way offices. One of the Neighborhood Housing Services Board members is involved with the financial stability committee with United Way and the other agencies. They will emphasize credit counseling and financial management issues. Mr. Tisler will also be involved with the foreclosure initiative under the Commissioners.

Mr. Hambley said ranking show that Medina County has one of the lowest rates of foreclosure of any county in the region (one in every 1,282 households was in foreclosure); therefore, it is more difficult to obtain help. Every foreclosure that happens is a tragedy, but in terms of comparison, that explains why Medina County is last in line for State and Federal resources. Ms. Ray said perhaps the newspaper would do a story on some of the services and provide the phone number to call. She has heard that the key to preventing foreclosure is early prevention. Mr. Hambley said the Neighborhood Housing Services is anxious to have a local presence and work with all of the agencies such as the OSU Extension that has money management education. Mr. Tisler has assured him that everyone is treated equally when they come in his door.

Mrs. Geissman said she attended the Housing Network last week with Mr. Hambley. They were very pleased that she was willing to take the leadership regarding foreclosure issues and everyone that has something started will be "under one umbrella". The next meeting is scheduled for September 3 at 3:00 p.m. in Balcony Room B. The Housing Network Chairperson said this is what was needed - someone that knew the people and how to bring them together and get some results. Ms. Ray said that in these trying times, they do not need to duplicate services.

Chris Jakab, County Administrator, asked if the Commissioners had read the joint agreement for construction of the parking garage and they had. He said to let him know if they had any comments or concerns. Mr. Hambley said his concern was the advisory group and that was addressed last week with cutting it down to three people. Mr. Jakab said the request for proposal for construction manager services was advertised on Friday. A draft copy of the financial guarantee for the fiber project was sent to the bond counsel, Squire Sanders, for their review.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:26 a.m. on a motion by Mr. Hambley that was seconded by Ms. Ray. There was no discussion. Roll call showed all Commissioners voting AYE.

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RESOLUTIONS PASSED 8/18/08

<u>Number</u>	<u>Resolution Title</u>
08-0807	RESOLUTION TO ALLOW CLAIMS AND AUTHORIZE ISSUANCE UPON THE TREASURER IN SETTLEMENT OF SUCH LIST OF CLAIMS
08-0808	RESOLUTION ACCEPTING AND AWARDED THE BID FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF BRIDGE NO.4 ON WESTFIELD RD (C.H.15) IN WESTFIELD TOWNSHIP MEDINA COUNTY FOR THE MEDINA COUNTY ENGINEER
08-0809	RESOLUTION AMENDING THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION RESOLUTION
08-0810	RESOLUTION AMENDING THE 2008 APPROPRIATIONS RESOLUTION BY TRANSFERRING APPROPRIATIONS
08-0811	RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY AUDITOR TO TRANSFER FUNDS FROM VARIOUS SANITARY ENGINEERING FUNDS TO THE COUNTY GENERAL FUND
08-0812	RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY AUDITOR TO TRANSFER FUNDS FROM VARIOUS COUNTY DEPARTMENT ACCOUNTS TO THE GASOLINE ROTARY FUND
08-0813	CREATION OF OFFICE FOR OLDER ADULTS HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FY08 FUND AND AUTHORIZING APPROPRIATIONS
08-0814	AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF 7,000 GALLONS OF REGULAR UNLEADED GASOLINE FOR THE ENGINEERING CENTER
08-0815	RESOLUTION DECLARING MEDINA COUNTY PROPERTY AS EXCESS PROPERTY
08-0816	RESOLUTION APPROVING PERSONNEL CHANGES FOR THE EMPLOYEES UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE MEDINA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
08-0817	RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT FOR CONSTRUCTION MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION OF STATE WATER PROJECT BETWEEN THE COUNTY OF MEDINA AND THE OWDA
08-0818	RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CHANGE ORDER NO.1 FOR THE WESTFIELD WATER MAIN EXTENSION PROJECT 2008 MCSE#W-700/00-32.2
08-0819	ESTABLISHING A CONSISTENT POLICY REGARDING THE PROCESSING OF BUILDING PERMITS IN TOWNSHIPS ON BEHALF OF THE MEDINA COUNTY PARK DISTRICT
08-0820	RESOLUTION TO ALLOW EXPENSES OF COUNTY OFFICIALS

All deliberations concerning official business and formal actions by this Board of Commissioners were conducted in an open public meeting this eighteenth day of August, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

COMMISSIONERS _____
Patricia G. Geissman

OF _____
Stephen D. Hambley

Pam Vereb, Clerk

MEDINA COUNTY _____
Sharon A. Ray