

Commissioners Meeting Calendar

4/1 Work Session Water/Sewer 9:00 am (1st Thursday every month)

4/6 Work Session Building Dept 8:30 am (1st Tuesday every month)

Work Session General Matters/Agenda items 8:30 am (every Tues)

Agenda Meeting 1:00pm (every Tuesday)

4/8 Work Session County Home 9:00 am (every 2 weeks on Thursday)

Work Session-Community Corrections Rehab Facility 1:00 pm (every 2 weeks on Thursday)

4/15 Work Session Geneva Lodge 10:00 am (every 3rd Thursday every 2 months)

4/29 Work Session Commissioners Department Heads 9:30 am (every 4th Thursday every 2 months)

All meetings are subject to change please click below <http://www.co.ashtabula.oh.us/220/Commissioners>

Commissioners have been using GoTo as a virtual platform for conducting meetings to continue their availability to the public.

Ashtabula County Board of Commissioners



25 West Jefferson St. Jefferson, OH 44047

First Quarter Reflections January to March 2021

Whittington to lead Board in 2021

At the Ashtabula County Organizational meeting held January 7, 2021, Kathryn Whittington was appointed President of the Ashtabula County Board of Commissioners, to serve for fiscal year 2021, along with J. P. Ducro IV, Vice-President and Casey Kozlowski, Commissioner. As President, Commissioner Whittington's duties include: presiding over all sessions of the Board; serving as Chair of various boards and committees and serving on the Board of Revision. Each Commissioner has positions on various boards. "I am honored to have the support of my colleagues and look forward to serving as President of the Board of Commissioners for 2021", said Whittington. "I look forward to working with my fellow commissioners; local, state and federal elected officials; and the residents of Ashtabula county to continue building relationships to enhance opportunities as we work to better our county," said Commissioner Whittington.



Ashtabula County Commissioner Kathryn Whittington is serving as the President of the Board for 2021. Commissioner J.P. Ducro is serving as the Vice President with Commissioner Casey Kozlowski completing the Board.

Vaccinate, Vaccinate, Vaccinate!

Now that we have just surpassed the one year mark since the national shutdown orders due to the pandemic, it is a good time to reflect on how far we have come while reminding everyone we still have room to improve. Ashtabula County, after months of being a red county (high exposure and spread, limit activities) based on the Ohio Public Health Advisory System, just came down to orange (increased exposure and spread, use caution) due to our county meeting several factors regarding new cases, ER visits, outpatient visits, hospital admissions, and ICU bed occupancy. As of 3/18/21, we are still at just over 95 cases per 100,000 in population (66th of 88 counties in the state), but that is declining as we seek to get to the 50 cases per 100,000 for two consecutive weeks to meet the safety mark in that indicator. Also, our non-congregate cases for the past 3 weeks are close to 100% with very few cases being in a congregate setting. This indicator is targeting 50% to be deemed safe from having a significant risk of being spread in the community.



As of 3/21, 20,221 residents have received at least one dose of the vaccine or almost 21%. Not bad considering the limited supply we have had and the fact that just recently the vaccine became available to most of the population, but we are slightly behind the rest of the country and the state. We do have some work to do to protect our most vulnerable though as only 62% of those over 80 have received the vaccine, followed by 57% of those 75-79, and 59% of those 70-74. Percentages decrease in age bracket as they get younger. All of this information, along with a facts sheet and detailed data and statistics, can be found at the www.coronavirus.ohio.gov website. You may also call 211 for local information on COVID-19.

As supplies are increasing and we now have 3 different vaccines available, more clinics are being held and larger numbers are getting vaccinated each day. A list of local vaccine options can be found at www.ashtabulacountyhealth.com where providers are listed as well as a schedule for upcoming open clinics that do not require registration and people can be vaccinated on a first come, first served basis on 3/30, 4/8, 4/10/ and 4/13. Also, the mass vaccination clinic is still taking place in Cleveland at the Wolstein Center where they are vaccinating 6000 people per day. To schedule a vaccination, you may go to www.gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov and select a provider. If you happen to be on a list with multiple providers, once you get a vaccination, please be considerate and notify the ones that you will not be needing so time will not be wasted trying to reach you to schedule an appointment that will not be needed.

Although transportation has often been a challenge for many in Ashtabula County, that should not be a barrier for anyone needing a COVID vaccination. Ashtabula County Job and Family Services will provide rides for vaccination appointments at no charge. Simply call 994-1220 or ACTS directly at 992-4411 and let them know it is for transportation for a vaccination.

While everyone has a right to make their own decision about getting vaccinated and you certainly should clear it with your medical provider, research and results have shown the vaccines to be safe and I want our community to be safe and healthy to the fullest extent possible. I received my shot and am thankful I was able to. I hope you will also. With a spouse working on the front lines with a local health department, I hear every day about the medical difficulties so many are facing that have contracted the virus and the challenges placed on them and their families when they need to quarantine to reduce the risk of spread to others. Sadly, as a funeral director I also see the toll this disease has taken on families who have lost loved ones earlier than otherwise likely as well as the struggle with not being able to be by their side during their illness. My hearts truly go out to these folks. I also see the exhaustion of those working hard every day, protecting our most vulnerable, and serving residents and patients in our nursing homes, hospitals, and community at large. I thank them for their tireless efforts and the double shifts away from their homes and families trying to keep our community safe and healthy. We are hopefully close to getting past this. Please don't become complacent. Wear a mask when appropriate, wash your hands and sanitize regularly, try to keep an appropriate physical distance from those you do not live with, and get the vaccine with the approval of your medical provider. Continued blessings to you all.

By J.P. Ducro IV, Ashtabula County Commissioner



Commissioners solidify 2021 for Ashtabula County!

Hello, Ashtabula County! Today, I wanted to share an update with you as it relates to one of our largest responsibilities as county commissioners here in Ashtabula County.

This week the commissioners formalized the complete operating budget for the county's general fund for all of 2021. The passage of this budget totaling approximately \$24 million is the culmination of five months of work that was spent developing and fine-tuning numbers ultimately leading to its passage.

If you recall I shared the process with you a few months ago when the budget hearings began in the month of November. The commissioners met with elected officials, department heads and numerous other staff as it relates to their budget requests for 2021. After learning of their requests, we then worked with each department to fine tune a budget that was manageable with the number of financial resources we have available.

Here in Ashtabula County, we take the step of passing a temporary budget first before passing a budget in its entirety for the year. We do this because we rely on the county's year end carryover balance to use for the following years allocations. It's the goal of the county commissioners to get to a point of not requiring a carryover balance to allocate for the following year, but we aren't quite there yet. That is work that will continue by us to ultimately get to that point.

This budget that we have passed is a fiscally conservative budget that funds the critical programs and services that Ashtabula County relies on. We were successful in heralding through a budget that keeps staff, programs and services working for the residents of Ashtabula County.

One year ago, I wasn't quite sure what to expect because of the potential economic fallout from the Coronavirus pandemic. Fortunately, with sound budgeting practices and immediate action by the Commissioners last year to reduce expenditures when revenue sources declined, we were able to protect our treasury that has put us in a sound fiscal position for 2021. While some communities may have to look at layoffs, reductions in departments and curtailed hours, that is NOT the case for Ashtabula County government and for this year we will be able to operate at previous levels.

While we recognize there will be adjustments made throughout the year with departments, we expect to stay closely aligned with the budget that we have passed.

Much appreciation goes to County Administrator and Budget Director Janet Discher for her work on the budget, Clerk Lisa Hawkins, Deputy Clerk Crystal Sturgill, the rest of our staff, my colleagues on the county commission, Budget Committee members, the auditor's office, our elected officials and departments and the countless others that have helped with the process.

If you have any questions or would like more information on the county's budget feel free to reach out and I'd be happy to answer your questions.

By Casey Kozlowski, Ashtabula County Commissioner

Proclamations Issued



The Ashtabula County Board of Commissioners declared February 20-27, 2021 as FFA Week in recognition of our local FFA members and leaders, and their fellow participants across the United States. (pictured both sides)



March 7-13, 2021 was recognized as Ohio 4-H Week in recognition of our local 4-H members and leaders, and their fellow participants across the state of Ohio.



March 21-27, 2021 was recognized as National Agriculture Week in recognition of Americans who work together to produce safe, abundant and affordable agricultural products.

Ashtabula County Commissioners appreciate and recognized employees during February FUN month

A winner was drawn every week day with a prize correlating with that recognized day. A grand prize drawing was held on March 5th to commemorate Employee Appreciation Day. Grand Prize winner was Donna Yan, our Dog Warden. She won an overnight stay at the Lodge & Conference Center and a \$100 gift card to Crosswinds Grille at Lakehouse Inn. All prizes were purchased by the Commissioners who greatly appreciate all that the employees do for customers, constituents and county residents. The Commissioners thank everyone for all of the hard work and dedication to our county.

- 1st-Natl Dark Chocolate Day-Laura Bobbitt/Environmental
- 2nd-Natl Tator Tot day-Cory Hubbard/Building
- 3rd- Natl Carrot Cake Day-Jamie Arcaro/Commissioners
- 4th-Natl Homemade Soup Day-Lisa Hawkins/Commissioners
- 5th-World Nutella Day-Connell Maxwell/Environmental
- 8th-Natl Kite Flying Day-Dawn Gates/Community Serv.
- 9th-National Pizza Day-Barry French/Environmental
- 10th-Natl Umbrella Day-Arthur Heavner/Environmental
- 11th-Natl Don't Cry Over Spilled Milk Day-Lori Larson/Commissioners
- 12th-Abe Lincoln's Birthday-Jim Buchan/Maintenance

- 15th-Natl Gum Drop Day-Angie Gruber/Environmental
- 16th-Fat Tuesday-Noah Pierce/Environmental
- 17th-Natl Café au Lait Day-Barb Ellsworth/Environmental
- 18th-Natl Drink Wine Day-Tom Congdon/Building
- 19th-Natl Chocolate Mint Day-Heidi Barringer/Community Serv.
- 22nd-Natl Margarita Day-Alicen Limestoll/EMA
- 23rd-Natl Banana Bread Day-Ed Spoor/Environmental
- 24th-Natl Tortilla Chip Day-Darren Buell/Maintenance
- 25th-Natl Chocolate Covered Nut Day-Robert Wardrop/Environmental
- 26th-Natl Pistachio Day-Jake Brand/Community Serv.