

**GEAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF MENTAL HEALTH  
AND RECOVERY SERVICES**

**Dr. Steven Oluic**  
**Chairman of the Board**

**13244 Ravenna Road**  
**Chardon, Ohio 44024**

**Christine Lakomiak**  
**Executive Director**

**Phone: (440) 285-2282**  
**Fax: (440) 285-9617**

**Board Minutes**

**October 29, 2025**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Reba Dykes, James Lee Holden, Kathy Johnson, Douglas Lundblad, Steven Oluic, Michael Petruziello, Mary Ruth Shumway

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Patricia Varanese

**STAFF PRESENT:** Christine Lakomiak, Jim Mausser, Michelle Maneage, Teresa Slater

**GUESTS:** Brandon Lichtinger (Maple Leaf), Mary Wynne-Peaspanen (Signature Health), Dianne Kellogg (Red Tulip Project), Carol Benton (League of Women Voters Geauga)

**I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairman Oluic called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Mr. Holden called the roll for attendance, and the following Board members were present: Reba Dykes, James Lee Holden, Kathy Johnson, Douglas Lundblad, Steven Oluic, Michael Petruziello, and Mary Ruth Shumway. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**II. FUTURE PROPERTY TAX CHALLENGES OF THE GCBMHRS**

Director Lakomiak had previously forwarded information she received from Commissioner Brakey and Auditor Walder regarding the potential reduction in levy funds due to the passage of House Bill 96. The information included the following: *The Geauga County Commissioners can vote to provide additional property tax relief by creating “piggyback” tax exemptions for individuals who qualify for existing state homestead and/or owner-occupied tax credits. Additionally, it explained the local ramifications of the bill and outlined the monetary impact on each entity.* The Commissioners asked for feedback before November 17<sup>th</sup> in order to make an informed decision about the issue.

Talking points included:

- The Board would lose \$106,243.24 in levy funds annually if these tax credit exemptions are enacted at the local level.
- Charts showing reduced property tax disbursements (including both inside and outside millage) for all taxing entities in Geauga County were reviewed.

- Mr. Mausser explained that when property values increase, we do not receive an increase in collection since our levies are based on 2008 and 2009 property values.
- The intent is to return money to those who qualify for the homestead and/or owner-occupied property tax exemptions. There is concern that entities may place additional levies on the ballot to offset any reduction in tax collection.
- Commissioners are seeking input from entities that would be affected so that they can make an educated decision on whether or not to proceed.
- The Board will incur increased costs moving forward due to the expansion of the Transitional Living Center, and may need to cut something else if this is enacted.
- The Board does not benefit from higher property tax values. We owe it to the population we serve not to endorse these exemptions locally.
- It was questioned if the Commissioners would be willing to offset reductions in behavioral health services if the Board needs to reduce programs due to the loss of levy funds, since mental health is a critical component to the county.
- A few years ago, the Board rolled back collection on one levy at 50% for a year to provide tax relief.
- Board members discussed attending a Commissioners' meeting to advocate against this, especially since the Board doesn't benefit from property tax valuation increases.
- The Board unanimously voted to have Director Lakomiak draft a letter and submit it to the Commissioners by their deadline date. Points to include are: no Board member supports enacting these tax credits locally, and the Board does not benefit from property valuation increases or inside millage.

### III. DIGITAL SIGN DISCUSSION

Director Lakomiak reported:

- Sam's Landscaping provided a quote to remove any trees/underbrush/ornamental grass that would hinder visibility of the sign;
- None of the submitted quotes included additional electrical work, if needed.
- One entity did not submit a written proposal for consideration.

### IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO ORC 121.22(G)(1) TO CONSIDER THE APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, DISMISSAL, DISCIPLINE, PROMOTION, DEMOTION, OR COMPENSATION OF A PUBLIC EMPLOYEE OR OFFICIAL, OR THE INVESTIGATION OF CHARGES OR COMPLAINTS AGAINST A PUBLIC EMPLOYEE, OFFICIAL, LICENSEE, OR REGULATED INDIVIDUAL, UNLESS THE PUBLIC EMPLOYEE, OFFICIAL, LICENSEE, OR REGULATED INDIVIDUAL REQUESTS A PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Holden moved to go into Executive Session for the above stated purpose. Ms. Shumway seconded the motion. **ROLL CALL VOTE: AYES-7; NAYS-0; ABSTENTIONS-0. MOTION APPROVED.** The Board went into Executive Session at 6:45 PM. The Board came out of Executive Session and was back in Regular Session at 7:51 PM. No action was taken.

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**V. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Petruziello moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Holden seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 PM.

**Respectfully Submitted By:**

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**Teresa Slater**  
**Administrative/Office Manager**

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**Steven Oluic**  
**Chairman of the Board**

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**James Lee Holden**  
**Secretary of the Board**