



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING WITH NOTES

FEBRUARY 3, 2022

Buckeye Hills Regional Council

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order | Kevin Ritter, Treasurer
- II. Roll Call | Chasity Schmelzenbach, Executive Director, Secretary (per BHRC Bylaws)
- III. Consent Agenda | Kevin Ritter, Treasurer **TAB #1**
- IV. Ratification of Action for January Request for Approval of Expenditure | Kevin Ritter **TAB #2**
- V. Request for Approval of Expenditure for February | Denise Keyes, Fiscal Director **TAB #3**
- VI. What Is and Why Use an Internet Exchange? | Jason Gintert, CTO/Board Director of Ohio IX
- VII. Legislator and Partner Agency Updates
 - a. Office of U.S. Senator Vance | Brad Kennedy, Field Representative
 - b. Office of Congressman Wenstrup | Juli Stephens, Field Representative
 - c. Governor's Office of Appalachia | John Carey, Director
 - d. Office of Ohio Attorney General Yost | Danielle Mason, Eastern Regional Director
 - e. Office of Ohio Treasurer Sprague | Cody Pettit, Public Affairs Liaison
- VIII. Regional Transportation Planning Organization | Melissa Zoller, Planning Director **TAB #4**
 - a. Resolution Approving the 2020 – 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan
- IX. Staff Spotlight | Jada Riley, Development Specialist III
- X. Executive Director Report | Chasity Schmelzenbach **TAB #5**
- XI. Citizen Participation
- XII. Other Business
- XIII. Adjournment

THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 3, 2023

**Minutes of the December 2, 2022
Buckeye Hills Regional Council Executive Committee Meeting**

The Buckeye Hills Regional Council (BHRC) Executive Committee meeting was held December 2, 2022. The meeting was held at Buckeye Hills, Marietta, Ohio.

In attendance were:

OFFICERS: Kevin Ritter, Treasurer Washington County
Chasity Schmelzenbach, Secretary BHRC Executive Director
(non-voting member per Bylaws)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Brad Peoples Noble County
Jeff Dennis Perry County (Private Sector)
Josh Schlicher City of Marietta
Misty Crosby Emeritus

GENERAL POLICY COUNCIL: James Booth Washington County

GUEST: Dorinda Byers Office of Auditor of State Faber
Lisa Woodford Office of Auditor of State Faber

STAFF: Kate Dunn Special Projects Manager RISE Ohio
Jen Huck Fiscal Assistant
Michelle Hyer Program Manager/OPWC Liaison
Denise Keyes Fiscal Director
Angie Lawrence HR & Payroll Manager
Sam Miller Development Director
Rhonda Varhola Provider Develop. Risk Assess. Manager
Jenny Simmons Executive Assistant
Drew Tanner Communications Director
Jennifer Westfall Aging & Disability Director
Melissa Zoller Transportation Manager

CALL TO ORDER

Kevin Ritter, Treasurer, called the meeting to order.

ROLE CALL

Chasity Schmelzenbach, Executive Director, conducted roll call.

CONSENT AGENDA

Brad Peoples moved to approve the consent agenda which included the Minutes from the November 4, 2022 meeting; Statement of Activities, Administrative Expense YTD; Aging and Disability Programs Services and Funding Report for period July 1, 2021 through October 31, 2022, Grant Agreements Received and Executed for November 2022 and Division and Director's Reports. Jeff Dennis seconded the motion. All yeas. Motion carried.

LEGISLATOR AND PARTNER AGENCY UPDATES

Brice Brightbill, Marietta District Staff Assistant, Office of Congressman Johnson, was a last minute cancellation.

Dorinda Byers, Deputy Director of Operations, Office of Auditor of State Faber, provided a

presentation on performance audits to the members.

Lisa Woodford, Project Manager, Office of Auditor of State Faber, provided a presentation on local government services provided by the Auditor of State office to the members.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (RTPO) UPDATE

Melissa Zoller, Transportation Planning Manager, reported that following the annual review of the Coordinated Plans, Monroe and Washington Counties will be adding an additional provider to the existing list of transportation services. No changes for the Noble County plan.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Chasity Schmelzenbach provided an update to the members:

- The FCC officially published the National Broadband Map on November 18 at broadbandmap.fcc.gov.
- The Appalachian Community Grant Program: Buckeye Hills held a series of meetings over the past month and have engaged with more than 400 stakeholders from local governments, partners, nonprofits, and businesses. Buckeye Hills will be submitting three broad planning grant applications under the following areas: Ohio River Corridor; Muskingum Corridor; Greater Buckeye Hills Region
- Schmelzenbach provided several upcoming dates for meetings and events. All information is listed in the Director's Report found in the meeting binder.

Schmelzenbach spoke with the members about adding a staff spotlight to the agenda. This would allow various staff a few minutes to provide project updates to the members. The feedback from the members was positive so the new agenda item will begin in the new year.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

No citizens present wished to address the committee.

OTHER BUSINESS

Kevin Ritter recognized Brad Peoples and thanked him for serving on the Executive Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other business, Josh Schlicher moved to adjourn the meeting. Jeff Dennis seconded the motion. All yeas. Motion carried.

Approved By: _____
Chasity Schmelzenbach, Secretary

Date: _____



STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

July 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022

YEAR TO DATE ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE DETAIL

Administrative Expenses for Fiscal Year 2023 totaled \$2,955,021.08 at December 31. This total represents 47.11% of the Council's administrative budget utilized. Total spending for this time period is budgeted to be 50%. Adjustments to specific line items are listed on the Quarterly Budget Review for consideration and approval. The cumulative Indirect Cost rate for this period is 46%. Projected Indirect Costs for Fiscal Year 2023 are 50.69%.

AGING AND DISABILITY PROGRAMS SERVICES & FUNDING REPORT

The Aging and Disability Division worked with various service providers and helped administer a multitude of direct service programs to eligible residents of our eight-county region. Between July 1 and December 31, nearly \$5 million in direct service dollars were utilized to provide the units of service listed in the report. BHRC continues to support our provider network to evaluate the needs of the communities and serve area seniors in the best way possible.



Administrative Expense Detail
For the Period July 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022

	2022	YTD Actual	2023 YTD Actual	2023 Budget	% of Budget
Salary	\$	1,480,703.67	\$ 1,576,445.05	\$ 3,234,826.00	48.73%
Fringe Benefits	\$	623,449.62	\$ 678,720.60	\$ 1,620,331.00	41.89%
Advertising	\$	72,578.62	\$ 125,118.10	\$ 250,000.00	50.05%
Audit Costs	\$	13,470.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	16.67%
Building Maintenance	\$	4,400.00	\$ 4,851.06	\$ 11,000.00	44.10%
Communications	\$	49,556.64	\$ 50,909.13	\$ 102,300.00	49.76%
Conference Registration Fee	\$	11,784.00	\$ 19,768.00	\$ 40,000.00	49.42%
Contract Services	\$	41,551.18	\$ 23,743.75	\$ 103,602.00	22.92%
Employee/Governing Board	\$	9,674.55	\$ 14,012.16	\$ 25,000.00	56.05%
Equipment Purchase/Maintenance	\$	4,244.08	\$ 13,237.43	\$ 18,350.00	72.14%
Insurance	\$	34,195.93	\$ 20,867.16	\$ 40,000.00	52.17%
Legal Costs	\$	7,141.25	\$ 1,942.50	\$ 3,500.00	55.50%
Organizational Dues	\$	14,660.00	\$ 24,056.26	\$ 39,250.00	61.29%
Other Costs	\$	7,457.21	\$ 13,265.42	\$ 15,000.00	88.44%
Postage	\$	9,505.14	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 24,408.00	36.87%
Printing Costs	\$	6,964.78	\$ 11,466.92	\$ 20,000.00	57.33%
Software & Licenses	\$	58,236.03	\$ 45,766.80	\$ 87,683.00	52.20%
Space	\$	127,670.47	\$ 127,670.48	\$ 255,342.00	50.00%
Staff Training Fees	\$	1,316.77	\$ 11,506.28	\$ 15,000.00	76.71%
Subscriptions	\$	2,209.81	\$ 5,934.85	\$ 6,000.00	98.91%
Supplies	\$	95,952.08	\$ 76,516.66	\$ 141,839.00	53.95%
Travel - Mileage Reimbursement	\$	17,019.77	\$ 49,273.10	\$ 94,903.00	51.92%
Travel - Out of Town Expense	\$	19,078.63	\$ 45,949.37	\$ 94,903.00	48.42%
TOTAL EXPENSES FOR THE PERIOD	\$	2,712,820.23	\$ 2,955,021.08	\$ 6,273,237.00	47.11%
INDIRECT COST RATE FOR THE PERIOD		48%	46%		



Quarterly Budget Adjustment
For the Period July 1, 2022 -June 30, 2023

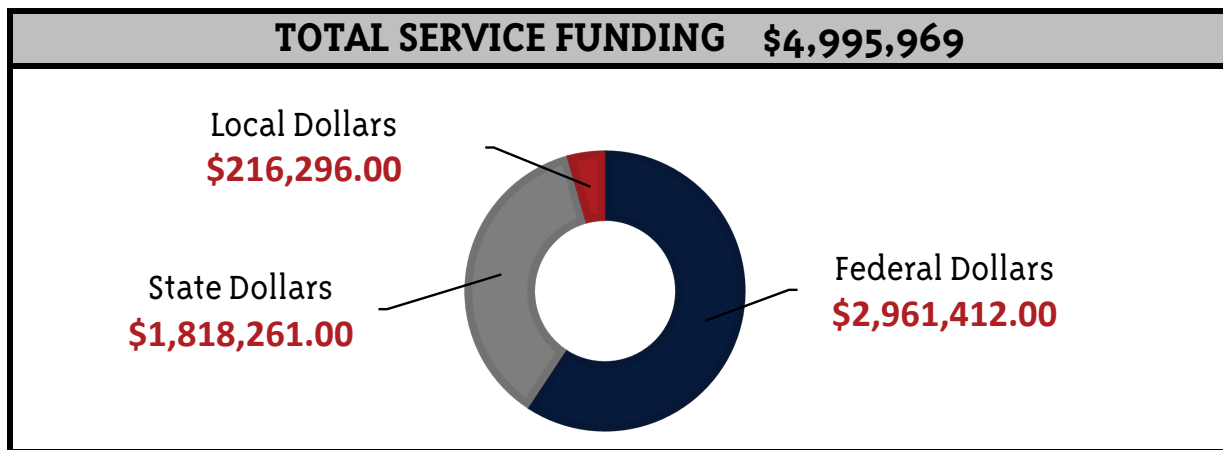
	Original Budget	07/22 - 09/22 Change	10/22 - 12/22 Change	01/23 - 03/23 Change	04/23 - 06/23 Change	Final Budget
Salary	\$ 3,234,826.00					\$ 3,234,826.00
Fringe Benefits	\$ 1,620,331.00					\$ 1,620,331.00
Advertising	\$ 100,000.00		\$ 150,000.00			\$ 250,000.00
Audit Costs	\$ 30,000.00					\$ 30,000.00
Building Maintenance	\$ 11,000.00					\$ 11,000.00
Communications	\$ 92,300.00	\$ 10,000.00				\$ 102,300.00
Conference Registration Fee	\$ 18,300.00	\$ 3,700.00	\$ 18,000.00			\$ 40,000.00
Contract Services	\$ 371,552.00	\$ (76,700.00)	\$ (191,250.00)			\$ 103,602.00
Employee/Governing Board	\$ 15,000.00		\$ 10,000.00			\$ 25,000.00
Equipment Purchase/Maintenance	\$ 18,350.00					\$ 18,350.00
Insurance	\$ 40,000.00					\$ 40,000.00
Legal Costs	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 2,000.00				\$ 3,500.00
Organizational Dues	\$ 39,250.00					\$ 39,250.00
Other Costs	\$ 15,000.00					\$ 15,000.00
Postage	\$ 24,408.00					\$ 24,408.00
Printing Costs	\$ 6,750.00		\$ 13,250.00			\$ 20,000.00
Software & Licenses	\$ 87,683.00					\$ 87,683.00
Space	\$ 255,342.00					\$ 255,342.00
Staff Training Fees	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 5,000.00				\$ 15,000.00
Subscriptions	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 1,000.00				\$ 6,000.00
Supplies	\$ 86,839.00	\$ 55,000.00				\$ 141,839.00
Travel - Mileage Reimbursement	\$ 94,903.00					\$ 94,903.00
Travel - Out of Town Expense	\$ 94,903.00					\$ 94,903.00
TOTAL BUDGET	\$ 6,273,237.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,273,237.00

Buckeye Hills Regional Council

Aging and Disability Programs Services & Funding Report

July 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022

SERVICES PROVIDED		
Direct Service Hours Provided	Transportation Trips	Adult Day Service Days Attended
164,076	5,826	900
Adult Day Service Miles Traveled	Meals Provided	Home Medical Equipment & Emergency Response Units
4,181	140,405	1,092
Legal Services Contacts	Home Accessibility Modification And Pest Control Jobs	Senior Farmers Market Coupons Redeemed
430	11	17,811
Grocery Shopping and Delivery	Telephone Reassurance	Evidence Based Classes
192	485	246
Assisted Living Days	Alzheimers Education Contacts	Senior Volunteer Hours
6,895	134	0



REGIONAL STATS		
Total Consumers Served	Total Population	Total Population Eligible for Services by Age (60+)
3,375	249,172	65,746



GRANT AGREEMENTS RECEIVED AND EXECUTED DECEMBER 2022 – JANUARY 2023

PROGRAM NAME	FUNDING AGENCY	GRANT PERIOD	AMOUNT
Environmental Review Service ARC Grant #PW 20425	Washington Electric Cooperative, Inc.	October 1, 2021 to December 31, 2023	\$4,500
State GOA Operating Grant Program	Governor's Office of Appalachia	July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2022	\$170,000
Administration of EDA Public Works Project 06-79-06409	Monroe Water Systems	October 5, 2022 to July 1, 2025	\$30,000
PY 2023 Nutrition Services Incentive Program	Ohio Department of Aging	October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2024	TBD
PY 2023 Title III, Title VII of the Older Americans Act	Ohio Department of Aging	January 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024	TBD

CURRENT INITIATIVE/ NEWS

House Bill 45 Aging Highlights:

- \$350 million for nursing homes to provide lump sum payments to nursing facilities for workforce relief payments.
- Implements the Direct Support Professional Quarterly Retention Payments Program – Makes a Fiscal Year 2023 supplemental appropriation of \$45 million in County Board Waiver Match and \$105 million in the Medicaid Services line item to be used for the Direct Support Professional Quarterly Retention Payments Program
- \$50 million for PACE expansion to Franklin, Hamilton, Montgomery, Lorain, Lucas, and Summit counties
- \$40 million for provider relief through direct care staff compensation at assisted living facilities.
- \$30 million for provider relief for hospice care workforce
- \$10 million for provider relief for home and community-based services to address the workforce shortage
- \$8 million in grant funding to support adult day centers
- change to revise the method to assess the value of affordable housing developments would increase property tax liability for senior and workforce housing developments.
- barring projects to rehabilitate federal low-income housing tax credit properties from qualifying for Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credits
- \$161 million in emergency rental assistance under the Department of Development (for 2021 arrearages)
- \$90 million for crisis care infrastructure expansion, with funding to be allocated regionally based on regional psychiatric hospital catchment areas.
- \$85 million in ARPA HCBS funding to grow behavioral health disciplines at state colleges and universities and other initiatives to recruit and re-train those workers.
- \$25 million for the state’s foodbanks
- \$30 million to County Jobs and Family Services departments to conduct eligibility redeterminations of all Medicaid recipients in the state
- Fills the state’s Budget Stabilization Fund to 8.5% of GRF Revenue received in 2022 (this would make the fund balance roughly \$3.4 billion).

Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) language: *The foregoing appropriation item 042633, HCBS Workforce Support, shall be used to fund provider relief allocations for Medicaid home and community-based services providers. These funds shall be used exclusively for direct care staff compensation, which may include staff retention bonus payments, overtime pay and shift differential payments, staff recruitment costs, and new hire incentive payments. No funds under this section shall be paid to any of the following:*

- (A) Contract workers;
- (B) Staff supplied by or through a staffing agency;
- (C) Program administrators;
- (D) Executive staff;
- (E) Owners.

Ohio Department of Aging Budget Submission Highlights:

- **Options for Healthy Independent Ohioans (OHIO) Fund**
 - Matching grants for local government and nonprofit funding to keep at risk populations in homes and communities

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- One response to this policy mismatch has been local initiatives, typically funded at the county level through property taxes that raise funds for home care services and supports for individuals in the local community or through private foundations. This program will target at-risk individuals before they are in crisis and become reliant on the Medicaid program.
- The OHIO Fund will prioritize counties with no senior service tax levy or low senior service tax levies per capita.
- These grants will provide supports and services which align with the State Plan on Aging, including, but not limited to, home modifications, personal or respite care, adult day services, and transportation. This is a new line item that will provide funds for a competitive matching grant program for localities to support older Ohioans who want to stay in their homes as they age but who are at risk of not being able to make that choice because of critical gaps in their resources and support. Grants would provide supports such as home delivered meals, personal care, respite care, adult day care, emergency response systems, transportation, and minor home repair.
- Eligible local entities could include community-based organizations, non-profits and area agencies on aging.
- Of the request, \$1.25m will be spent at the state level, including funding for 2 positions and personal services contracts for a statewide nutritional assessments, a media campaign for family caretakers, the expansion of GetSetUp to include additional classes, expansion of mental health first aid and funding for mental health training for aging service providers
- Fifteen million dollars the first year and \$25M the second year of the biennium will be used to provide grants to the local entities. It is anticipated that the funding will be granted to the local entities. It is still to be determined what the cash flow may be.
- **Increase the Alzheimer’s and Other Dementia Respite Line**
 - This increase will make it possible to continue delivering services to communities, hire a statewide caregiving and dementia coordinator, and sustain the newly established caregiver center of excellence.
 - Returning state investment to \$4.3 million as Ohio’s aging population continues to increase, as well as those living with Alzheimer’s Disease or other forms of dementia. An increase in this ALI will support expansion of service delivery to targeted Ohioans (persons living with Alzheimer’s Disease and dementias and their family caregivers) as well as support state-level initiatives to expand training and education of family caregivers and health care professionals. The state will retain 10 percent of the funds for state-level administration, including supporting Ohio’s Alzheimer’s Disease and Dementia Statewide Resource Center, as well as compliance to Ohio Revised Code 173.04.
- **Increase the Use of Participant Directed Service**
 - Most aging individuals prefer to remain in their homes. Participant Directed Services is a component of the PASSPORT program, which authorizes the enrollee to hire their caregiver. Often, the caregiver has a pre-existing relationship with program participants. As part of our request to enhance this service, Participant Direction Liaisons will be located at each AAA to assist individuals to find and guide their proposed Participant Directed Provider through the provider process and support individuals in their new “employer” role. Supporting Participant Direction is one avenue to addressing the workforce shortage, while supporting participant choice.
- **Engage in Strategic Rate Modifications**
 - We recognize that strategic rate modifications are an important piece of the budgeting conversation in the aging space, in particular the PASSPORT, Assisted Living Waiver, and PACE programs we operate.
- **Enhance Talent Attraction and Retention**
 - Specifically, we seek to focus on the future pipeline of workers
 - Options such as boomerang reverse scholarships for students returning to work, live, and volunteer in an aging-related field.

Ohio Department of Medicaid Budget Submission Highlights:

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- **Leveraging HCBS ARPA Funds**
 - In partnership with Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services, ODM seeks to implement the Governor’s Behavioral Healthcare Workforce proposal to remove financial barriers from obtaining licenses, certifications, and exams necessary for employment in community behavioral health fields. By leveraging one-time ARPA funding this targeted effort will help attract and retain more qualified professionals into behavioral health care workplaces throughout the state.
 - To date, ARPA HCBS funds have only been spent as authorized by the Legislature for provider relief. This submission includes appropriation to support the ARPA spending plan, as approved by CMS. There are strict rules around any ARPA HCBS funded projects. These funds must be spent by March 2025.
- **Provider Rate Increases**
 - Approximately 170,000 providers across Ohio serve individuals on Medicaid. ODM leadership has met with providers across the spectrum and heard with resounding clarity that most providers are facing significant inflationary and workforce challenges. However, as instructed by OBM, ODM has submitted a budget request which projects costs using current Medicaid rates. This will allow time for the administration to evaluate the overall financial outlook for the state budget and the ability to support a sustainable, aligned level of rate changes across the Medicaid agencies and various types of providers. ODM will continue the discussions regarding Medicaid rates and address the issues to the full extent that resources can support it in the FY24-25 operating budget.

PROGRAM & SERVICE UPDATE

Senior Farmers Market | Contracts for farmers are now open and available. BHRC is in great need of farmers located in Monroe and Noble counties. If you know of any farmers who might be interested, please forward the program information or refer them to Janie at jcollins@buckeyehills.org

BHRC’s Housing Grant and Home Modification Program | In need of independent contractors to complete general contracting work. Types of work completed include bathroom remodels, ramps, doorways and minor roof repairs. Please reach out the Dave at dherbert@buckeyehills.org if you have any questions or a referral.

Assessments Completed December 1st to December 31st 2022

Athens	17
Hocking	9
Meigs	6
Monroe	1
Morgan	0
Noble	5
Perry	6
Washington	20
Total	64

PASSPORT AND ASSISTED LIVING CASELOAD REGIONWIDE

- Current PASSPORT caseload is **757 individuals and 53 individuals** on the Assisted Living Waiver.

CONTACT: Jennifer Westfall, Aging and Disability Director | jwestfall@buckeyehills.org, 740-376-1038
Dawn Weber, Home Care Director | dweber@buckeyehills.org, 740-376-1041

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CURRENT INITIATIVES

HEAP Outreach | Winter/Regular Program outreach is occurring with weekly social media posts. Billboards are up in all eight counties and will continue through March promoting the program and directing consumers to their local Community Action Agencies.

Aging Outreach | Buckeye Hills participated in 45 outreach events throughout 2022. Planning is underway to fill up the Outreach calendar for 2023. If there is an upcoming outreach event in your community we should attend or a civic group that would like to have a speaker on Aging topics, please contact Amanda Reeder at areeder@buckeyehills.org.

Medicare Outreach | General Medicare posts and information on Extra Help, Medicare Savings Programs, and Preventative Services run on a weekly basis across our social media channels. Medicare Open Enrollment advertisements have concluded. We had advertisements scheduled across seven radio stations reaching all eight counties. Newspaper advertisements running in Monroe, Morgan, Perry, and Meigs county papers. A WOUB commercial aired 148 times encouraging individuals to call the OSHIIP hotline for assistance with enrollment.

Vaccine Outreach | With the recent extension of the ODA Vaccine Support Grant, the Communications team has worked with local radio stations across the region to schedule a combination ad encouraging community members to receive both their flu shot and COVID vaccine. A total of over 1,800 spots will air from the end of November through the middle of February. Stations include Results Radio, WMOA, WATH, WYVK/WBYG/WTHQ, and WYBZ.

Annual Report & LDD Report | The Communications team is compiling the 2022 annual report, which will be presented at the April 7 meeting of the BHRC General Policy Council. The LDD Return on Investment Report is underway and will be presented to our federal legislators and agency staff at the NADO DC conference in March.

Open Meetings and Open Records Procedures | The Communications Director is working with the BHRC leadership team to review and update our Open Meetings and Open Records procedures to ensure our continued transparency and compliance with Ohio's Open Meetings Act and Ohio Public Records Act.

Website Usability Questionnaire | The Communications Team is reviewing the usability and features of our website, buckeyehills.org, which saw its last significant update in January 2019. **Please watch your email for a website usability questionnaire in February.** We will also share the link in our weekly Member & Partner Update. Your responses will help shape the functionality of our website, the information it contains, and ensure that it continues to be a useful resource for the communities we serve.

FCC Broadband Map Video | The Communications Director worked with BHRC Broadband Coordinator Ryan Collins to provide a brief video outlining the process to look up one's home or business address to verify the accuracy of the FCC's National Broadband Map and, if necessary, challenge the information. Federal funding amounts and eligible households will be determined using this new FCC Broadband Map. You can view the video here: <https://youtu.be/DJT3rky1fUo>

NEWS

- **Recent Press Releases & Notices**

- December 2, 2022 – Ohio University: [Ridges Advisory Committee working to finalize development strategy for The Ridges](#)
- December 3-6, 2022 – Logan Daily News, River Cities Tribune & Register, Marietta Times: [Buckeye Hills helps older adults prevent falls, one step at a time](#)
- December 10, 2022 – The Marietta Times: [Public comment period opens for transportation plan](#)
- December 12, 2022 – Buckeye Hills: [Request for Qualifications: Environmental Assessment](#)
- December 13, 2022 – Logan Daily News: [Plan looks at all things transportation-related in eight-county region](#)
- December 14, 2022 – The Marietta Times, Logan Daily News: [Plan looks at all things transportation-related in eight-county region](#)
- December 19, 2022 – Buckeye Hills: [Provider Roundtable Addresses Home- and Community-Based Care Workforce Shortage](#)
- December 22, 2022 – Athens Messenger: [Fill out survey to help improve federal internet maps](#)
- January 6, 2023 – Buckeye Hills: [Request for Proposals: Buckeye Hills Regional Council Region 8 Coordinated Mobility Plan](#)
- January 9, 2023 – Buckeye Hills: [Federal and state pre-applications now open for local projects](#)
- January 10, 2023 – Logan Daily News: [Federal and state pre-applications now open for local projects](#)
- January 10, 2023 – WTAP TV: [BEAD funding provides opportunity for underserved communities to improve their broadband access](#)
- January 13, 2023 – Ohio University: [Ohio University Board of Trustees to receive updates on The Ridges Development Plan, ASCENT program](#)
- January 16, 2023 – Buckeye Hills: [Request for Proposals: In- and Out-of-County Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Services in Monroe and Washington Counties](#)
- January 16, 2023 – WTAP TV: [Buckeye Hills Regional Council opens applications to their projects profiles](#)
- January 19, 2023 – Morgan County Herald: [Federal and state pre-applications now open for local projects](#)
- January 20, 2023 – The Times Leader: [Federal and state pre-applications now open for local projects](#)
- January 24, 2023 – River Cities Tribune & Register: [Buckeye Hills names Melissa Zoller as planning director](#)

CONTACT INFO: Drew Tanner, Communications Director | dtanner@buckeyehills.org | 740-376-1030

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CURRENT INITIATIVES

Buckeye Hills Selected to Lead Regional Digital Inclusion Alliance | BHRC will serve as collaborative partners to BroadbandOhio, bringing together diverse stakeholders to coordinate regional planning efforts, support digital inclusion activities, and collect local feedback to better inform Ohio's Digital Equity Plan. In turn, BroadbandOhio will amplify local and regional digital inclusion successes and ensure Ohio's plan best meets the needs of all Ohioans. The map to the right shows the region in gray we will coordinate.



Project Profiles Open for ARC Funds | Completing Buckeye Hills Regional Council's online Project Profile questionnaire is the first step for local officials working with us to pursue project funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission and other state and federal partners. **The deadline to submit Project Profiles is March 31, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.** Submitted projects should focus on supporting local business, workforce development, community infrastructure, and regional culture and tourism. Profiles may be submitted online at buckeyehills.org/project-profiles. For questions or further information regarding Project Profile submissions, please contact Michelle Hyer at mhyer@buckeyehills.org or 740-376-1025.

Recreation Economies for Rural Communities | The Recreation Economies for Rural Communities (RERC) Beverly/Washington County Steering Committee is preparing for a community workshop in Spring 2023 at the Beverly-Waterford Rescue Squad building. Jada Riley, Development Specialist, sits on the steering committee as Buckeye Hills' representative. A Self-Assessment on the village's recreational assets and local commerce was completed in the first half of Phase I, along with a vision for the future of outdoor recreation for the village. The steering committee along with program consultant Northbound Ventures established a date for the workshops of March 21st and 22nd. The agenda for the community workshop will be published at the next meeting in Phase I of the program.

NEWS

Program & Service Updates

Zoller Selected to Lead Planning Division | Buckeye Hills Regional Council has named Melissa Zoller as Planning Director to head the council's newly created Planning Division. Zoller joined the Buckeye Hills team in 2001 and has worked in the council's Development Division for over 20 years. We are excited to see Melissa move into this new role!

Broadband Work Grows with FCC Grant Application | Sam Miller and Ryan Collins worked on an application to the FCC's Affordable Connectivity Outreach Grant Program. This project would focus on efforts to expand enrollment to the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) across the BHRC region. The Affordable Connectivity Program is a \$14.2 billion FCC benefit program that helps ensure that qualifying low-income households can afford the broadband they need for work, school, healthcare and more

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Appalachian Community Grant Program Guidelines Planning Projects | Buckeye Hills Regional Council led an application for a technical assistance grants covering the Muskingum River Corridor, the Ohio River Corridor, and the Greater Buckeye Hills Region. This application included governmental jurisdiction and organizations in the counties around the geographical centers. More than 60 partners signed on to the project and the total requested was \$1.6 million.

Sam Miller Attends Appalachian Leadership Institute | Miller will represent BHRC among 40 leaders from across the 13 Appalachian Regional Commission states in Birmingham, AL from February 13 – 17.

OneOhio Region 12 Update | The next organizational meeting of the OneOhio Region 12 will be held on February 24 at 9:30 a.m. The meeting will be held at John McIntire Library in Zanesville.

Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 Study | In addition to survey collection by BHRC staff, collection of the survey by our area venues has increased. We continue to raise awareness of the survey in our community and have established venues who are fully involved in the process of distributing and collecting both paper and online surveys. Our goal is to increase the number of venues that feel comfortable using their own staff and volunteers to collect the survey as it will only widen the scope of data we are trying to capture in our region. We are utilizing the help of the Ohio Arts Council's marketing team to help spread the message of what we're trying to do with the survey. Finally, we are putting as many dates as possible on our calendar that BHRC staff are able to attend. These are events where the venue's staff and volunteers are limited.

Heritage Ohio Holds Financial Tools & Incentives for Downtown Revitalization Workshop | Representatives from Heritage Ohio will be in Athens on February 23 at the Southeast Ohio History Center to share how to create vibrant downtowns and thriving communities through the Main Street approach. Then, participate in a deep-dive discussion on the Federal and State Historic Preservation Tax Credit programs for historic building rehabilitation.

Development Staff Changes | In January, Madelyn Brewer and Jason Pyles tendered resignations. Hiring has been underway to fill their positions. Development is excited to welcome Brad Peoples filling the previously vacant Development Specialist position.

STAFF UPDATES

- **Brandi Beaver** reached out to over 200 community partners in her counties and has started setting up in person meetings to discuss ways that she can assist them with their projects and events
- **Ryan Collins** is working on submitting bulk challenges across the region to the FCC mapping.
- **Michelle Hyer** is wrapping up the current OPWC round and will be holding the District 18 Small Government Committee meeting on February 1. She has also been working on NRAC (Clean Ohio), CDBG Allocation for Meigs and Washington counties, as well as CDBG Critical Infrastructure projects for Meigs and Washington.
- **Kate Dunn** presented updates on the RISE Ohio project to Ohio University's Voinovich School and shared many of the successes she and our consultants have seen on it.
- **Jada Riley** has started work for the 2023 Annual Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee Meeting started in January. She is preparing Goal Areas and Action Plan updates to share with the CEDS Committee in Spring 2023.
- **Melissa Zoller** has received the second round of Capital Funds applications and is in the process of reviewing those applications.

CONTACT: Sam Miller, Development Director | smiller@buckeyehills.org | 740-376-1028

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REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURE

January 2023

Computer

\$18,966.69

CDW-G

- Replacement of 2 agency servers that have exceeded useful life

Funding Source: Indirect

\$18,966.69

Total Request

12/13/2022 – APPROVED BY VICE PRESIDENT AND TREASURER VIA EMAIL.

WE WILL NEED A RATIFICATION OF ACTION BY OFFICERS AT THE FEBRUARY MEETING.

CURRENT INITIATIVE

Vacancies | Job Postings and interviews are currently being conducted/scheduled for the following positions:

- Development Specialist
- Senior Planner

Conflict of Interest Forms | Annual Conflict of Interest forms are currently being collected from staff

W-2/1095 Forms | The Fiscal Department has completed and distributed 2022 W-2 & 1095 forms to staff

Staff Trainings | Upon hire, all staff members complete the following courses: Ethics, HIPAA, IT Security. We will begin quarterly and biannual staff trainings to include sexual harassment and additional HIPAA trainings.

STAFF UPDATES

- **Melissa Zoller**, has accepted the promotion to Planning Director effective January 16
- **Jackson Petty**, Marietta College student began an internship in the Development Department January 17.
- **Madelyn Brewer**, Development Specialist resigned effective January 18.
- **Jason Pyles**, Senior Planner resigned effective January 20
- **Brad Peoples**, has accepted the Development Specialist position and began January 30.

UPCOMING

- **February 20, 2023** - BHRC Office Closed in observance of Presidents' Day

CONTACT INFO: Angie Lawrence, Human Resources Manager | alawrence@buckeyehills.org | 740-376-1031



REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF EXPENDITURE

February 2023

Advertising

\$25,000

WTAP – Gray Media Group

- Aging Program Outreach to increase consumer referrals and enrollments

Funding Source: PASSPORT/Title III B Information and Assistance

\$25,000.00

Total Request



**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE 2020-2045 LONG RANGE
TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR THE BUCKEYE HILLS REGIONAL COUNCIL,
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

Resolution #2023/02-01

WHEREAS, the RTPO is required to complete a Long Range Comprehensive Regional Transportation Plan for the Region, and

WHEREAS, three transportation related advisory committees were formed in accordance to the program specifications –Advisory Committee and Policy Committee to assist with the planning process, and

WHEREAS, planning was done in a cooperative manner with all committees, public input, and in accordance with the RTPO Public Participation Plan.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY BUCKEYE HILLS REGIONAL COUNCIL: that the Long-Range Transportation Plan has been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Citizens and Technical Advisory Committees; we, the Buckeye Hills Executive Council as the RTPO Policy Committee, hereby approve the submission of the 2020-2045 Long Range Transportation Plan document to Ohio Department of Transportation.

Passed this third day of February, 2023

Ron Moore, President

Lenny Eliason, Vice President

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Ohio Health Assessment Survey** | The Ohio Department of Health has contracted the Ohio University Voinovich School in partnership with the Ohio Colleges of Medicine's Government Resource Center, the University of Toledo, and the Health Policy Institute of Ohio to engage in an updating process to develop the 2022 State Health Assessment (SHA) and the 2023-2028 State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). All interested stakeholders are invited to complete the **Ohio State Health Assessment Organizational Survey** to gain insights from a wide variety of sectors to identify health-related priorities, strengths, challenges, and emerging trends that will help develop the SHA and inform the next iteration of the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). **Responses are due by February 9.** This is your opportunity to provide input with the experience you possess while adding a voice to the individuals you serve. We encourage you to forward this request to your staff, stakeholders, committees, coalitions, and other organizations with whom you work.
- **ODOT Launches New Road Funding Solutions Site and Survey** | ODOT has launched a webpage providing public education on Ohio's road funding issues and possible solutions. They have also included a survey on the website to gather public opinion on the potential solutions. Learn more and take the survey **HERE**.
- **OU Voinovich School Governing Essentials for Local Elected Officials** | The Voinovich Academy has recently launched its Governing Essentials for Local Elected Officials. The program features a combination of three in-person and three virtual sessions, all during the day, with no evening sessions. **Scholarships are available for participants from Appalachia Ohio.** Contact **GVAcademy@ohio.edu** for scholarship information before registering. The program begins on **February 24** and is limited to 30 participants. View the program info and register here: **<https://www.ohio.edu/voinovich-school/academy/upcoming-training>**
- **Governor DeWine's State of the State Address Recap** | On Tuesday, Governor DeWine delivered his State of the State address, laying out what will be in his Executive Budget. He focused on mental health, support for children and mothers, economic development, education, healthcare, public safety, and the environment. Here are some highlights:
 - Economic development, housing, and workforce policies
 - Creation of a new All Ohio Future fund with a one-time investment of \$2.5 billion to prepare necessary infrastructure for large economic development sites all across Ohio
 - \$150 million to create new innovation hubs throughout Ohio
 - Creation of a state low-income housing tax credit and single-family housing tax credits to stimulate the construction of more housing
 - \$3 million one-time funding for capital improvements & equipment for career tech programs
 - Provide need-based financial aid for university regional campuses and community colleges by increasing the amount of the Ohio College Opportunity Grant to \$6k per student per year and providing a \$5k scholarship for students in the top 5% of their high school class if they attend college in Ohio
 - H2Ohio/Environment
 - Creation of the H2Ohio Rivers Initiative to improve and protect the health and quality of rivers (dams, river restoration, and habitat work)
 - Local Government
 - Full funding of next-generation 911 systems
 - Full funding of MARCS fees
 - Aging:
 - Nothing specific for PASSPORT or Ohio Home Care waivers – either on rates or operations. Nothing mentioned about MyCare or duals. There is no specific line item for these programs so it's unclear what the fiscal impact is at this point.

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- Increase in senior community services: ALI GRF 490411. The 2024 amount requested is \$12,832,194; 2025 amount is \$12,832,323 (the previous budget appropriations were \$9,798,995 and \$9,737,042). The senior farmers market expansion is typically taken out of this amount but based on the original Ohio Department of Aging budget request there may be more funding for services through area agencies on aging as well.
- ODA will give briefings next week about the budget for all stakeholders.

The Governor also announced the creation of a new cabinet-level agency called the Department of Children and Youth, focused on addressing the physical and behavioral health of kids and mothers, early identification of mental health illnesses, support for fostering, and support for early childhood education. He also announced a new State of Ohio Action for Resiliency Network (SOARN) – a comprehensive multi-year research study to help launch new discoveries about brain and resiliency with respect to mental health and identify which interventions work best for various communities and individuals.

Other investments included full funding of school resource officers, support for the Fair School Funding plan, expanded Ed Choice scholarships, nursing home quality, police training in de-escalation and mental health crisis intervention, child tax deductions, children’s service system funding increase, and more.

The full speech can be [viewed on the OhioChannel.org](#). Formal legislative language will be introduced soon, with the Ohio House Finance Committee likely to begin hearings as soon as next week. The state operating budget must pass and be signed into law before midnight on June 30.

CURRENT INITIATIVES

- **The Ridges** | On January 19, 2023, the partnership formed under the direction of Misty Crosby—between the Buckeye Hills Foundation and Community Building Partners LLC, known as the Ridges Development Partners LLC—presented to the Ohio University Board of Trustees a Development Plan for The Ridges. The Board of Directors passed a Resolution to proceed with the Development Strategy during that meeting. The project began with BHRC and Community Building Partners LLC working under an ARC Grant to conduct assessments of the land and structures, and create a development proposal to redevelop the property. Throughout the development, the process will utilize many different economic development tools across several components including various types of housing, owner occupied business integration, work-live spaces, and other retail, commercial and educational spaces. The real value throughout the BHRC Region will be benchmarking the processes and measuring success. Moving forward, several programs and private investment strategies will be used to revitalize the property and create a “playbook” for communities throughout the region to implement similar programs and strategies in their jurisdictions.
- **Appalachian Community Grant Program** | On December 8, BHRC Development Staff submitted a Technical Assistance Grant Application with support from communities and organizations across our eight-county region. The application encompasses planning projects we discussed in recent stakeholder meetings for the Muskingum River Corridor, Ohio River Corridor, and the Greater Buckeye Hills Region. BHRC is grateful for the support shown for this regional effort, and we are excited to help you move your projects forward. The application received 170 letters of support from participating local governments and organizations, and many more have expressed interest in working alongside BHRC in this planning effort to help develop competitive applications for Round 2 of the ACPG in 2023. Ohio Department of Development and the Governor’s Office of Appalachia have stated that grant awards will be announced in early 2023. Grant awards will need to go before the State Controlling Board to approve the release of funds.

FEDERAL UPDATES

- **White House, DOT on Inflation Reduction Act Guidebook** | The White House has shared the [Inflation Reduction Act Guidebook](#) addressing clean energy, climate resilience, agriculture, and conservation-related tax incentives. For each program, the guide identifies the federal funding agency, as well as eligible applicants. *Serving Athens, Hocking, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Noble, Perry and Washington Counties in Southeast Ohio.*
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The Department of Transportation (DOT) has released a [calendar](#) of anticipated dates that Notices of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) for major funding programs will be released in 2023. To help potential applicants prepare for these opportunities, DOT also developed a [Discretionary Grant Preparation Checklist](#).

- **ARC Accepting Applications for Summer Study Programs in Entrepreneurship and STEM for Middle and High School Students** | The Appalachian Regional Commission is accepting applications for two summer study opportunities for Appalachian students: the [Appalachian Entrepreneurship Academy \(AEA\)](#) and the [Appalachian STEM Academy at Oak Ridge](#). The Appalachian Entrepreneurship Academy, hosted in Boone, North Carolina, at Appalachian State University, seeks high school students interested in nurturing creative ideas and developing skills for entrepreneurial success. AEA seeks middle and high school students and teachers ready to work alongside award-winning scientists at Oak Ridge National Laboratory. For the first time ever, ARC is expanding the middle school sessions to allow twice as many students to participate. Applications for both programs are **due February 10, 2023**.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES & EVENTS:

- **BroadbandOhio Digital Opportunity Summit – February 16** | Join BroadbandOhio and the National Digital Inclusion Alliance on February 16 at the Digital Opportunity Summit to learn about local, state and national efforts to close the digital divide for all Ohioans. Celebrate the ways in which digital inclusion champions are empowering Ohioans to fully engage in their communities, seek and maintain employment, better connect with loved ones, learn, and access healthcare and other essential services. Look toward the future as historic investments for high-speed internet are providing resources to close the digital divide on an unprecedented scale. Admission is free and space is limited to 250 people. Reserve your seat at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/digital-opportunity-summit-tickets-511691441877>
- **BHRC Aging & Disability Regional Advisory Council – February 22** | The BHRC Aging & Disability Regional Advisory Council will meet at the BHRC conference center on Wednesday, February 22, at 10:00 a.m.

CONTACT INFO: Chasity Schmelzenbach, Executive Director
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