



Auditor
Charles E. Walder
Chief Fiscal Officer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**AUDITOR'S OFFICE REDUCES REAL ESTATE ASSESSMENT FUND EXPENSES &
REFUNDS SAVINGS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS & TAXING AUTHORITIES**

CHARDON, OHIO, April 24, 2020 — Geauga County Auditor Charles E. Walder announced that his Office has drastically reduced expenses in the Real Estate Assessment (“REA”) Fund since his taking office in April 2018 and is refunding **a half million dollars** to Geauga County’s school districts, townships, municipalities, and other taxing authorities.

From 2014 through 2017, the REA Fund averaged over \$2.1M in annual expenses and was operating in the red.

“Immediately upon taking office in April 2018, I challenged my staff to reduce costs, comply with the law, and operate more efficiently,” Auditor Walder said. “They met the challenge; in 2018 and 2019, the REA Fund averaged less than \$1.5M in annual expenses and operated in the black. I couldn’t be prouder of our accomplishment for the taxpayers.”

The REA Fund is a special restricted fund maintained on the Auditor’s books to help defray expenses associated with property appraisal and related tax assessment. As provided by law, the REA Fund is funded by fees set as a percentage of property tax collections.

These saved funds will be refunded to the various taxing authorities in the 2nd half 2020 real property tax collection settlement. The estimated distribution is reflected in the attached documents.

“My job is to safeguard public funds,” Auditor Walder said. “Through responsible fiscal management, we continue to identify and resolve inefficiencies and waste to better serve the taxpayer.”

For more information, please contact Kate Jacob by email at kjacob@gcauditor.com or phone (440) 279-1629.

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ESTIMATED Refund of Excess Auditor Real Estate Assessment Fees

Total Fees charged on 1st Half TY2019/CY2020 Settlement	\$	1,031,680.11	
Final		<i>ESTIMATED Amount to be refunded as excess</i>	\$ 500,000.00
<u>Tax Subdivision</u>	<u>Fees Charged 1st Half</u>	<u>as % of total</u>	<u>ESTIMATED</u>
Berkshire LSD	\$ 43,505.40	4.22%	\$21,084.73
Cardinal LSD	\$ 50,411.68	4.89%	\$24,431.84
Chagrin Falls EVSD	\$ 55,703.59	5.40%	\$26,996.54
Chardon LSD	\$ 138,923.78	13.47%	\$67,328.90
Kenston LSD	\$ 168,381.59	16.32%	\$81,605.52
Newbury LSD	\$ 25,860.85	2.51%	\$12,533.37
West Geauga LSD	\$ 100,138.91	9.71%	\$48,531.96
Kirtland LSD	\$ 559.80	0.05%	\$271.31
Madison LSD	\$ 309.55	0.03%	\$150.02
Mentor EVSD	\$ 1,178.51	0.11%	\$571.16
Riverside LSD	\$ 704.91	0.07%	\$341.63
Auburn JVSD	\$ 16,480.81	1.60%	\$7,987.36
Auburn Twp	\$ 13,711.02	1.33%	\$6,645.00
Bainbridge Twp	\$ 48,200.24	4.67%	\$23,360.07
Burton Twp	\$ 3,809.12	0.37%	\$1,846.08
Chardon Twp	\$ 6,022.37	0.58%	\$2,918.72
Chester Twp	\$ 29,217.55	2.83%	\$14,160.18
Claridon Twp	\$ 3,167.55	0.31%	\$1,535.14
Hambden Twp	\$ 6,733.45	0.65%	\$3,263.34
Huntsburg Twp	\$ 2,862.50	0.28%	\$1,387.30
Middlefield Twp	\$ 3,501.75	0.34%	\$1,697.11
Montville Twp	\$ 2,096.45	0.20%	\$1,016.04
Munson Twp	\$ 12,783.46	1.24%	\$6,195.46
Newbury Twp	\$ 6,542.86	0.63%	\$3,170.97
Parkman Twp	\$ 3,402.24	0.33%	\$1,648.88
Russell Twp	\$ 25,145.65	2.44%	\$12,186.75
Thompson Twp	\$ 2,654.61	0.26%	\$1,286.55
Troy Twp	\$ 3,163.48	0.31%	\$1,533.17
Aquilla Village	\$ 113.79	0.01%	\$55.16
Burton Village	\$ 1,534.59	0.15%	\$743.73
City of Chardon	\$ 7,385.57	0.72%	\$3,579.39
Village of Hunting Valley	\$ 1,280.24	0.12%	\$620.46
Middlefield Village	\$ 2,581.76	0.25%	\$1,251.24
South Russell Village	\$ 6,710.80	0.65%	\$3,252.36
Burton Library	\$ 1,926.68	0.19%	\$933.76
Gauga Library	\$ 33,738.83	3.27%	\$16,351.40
West G Joint Rec	\$ 320.61	0.03%	\$155.38
East Geauga Fire	\$ 2,953.45	0.29%	\$1,431.38
Mentor Public Library	\$ 51.92	0.01%	\$25.16
Lake County Finance	\$ 70.70	0.01%	\$34.26
Kirtland Public Library	\$ 12.21	0.00%	\$5.92
Geauga County (see next page)	\$ 197,825.28	19.18%	\$95,875.30
	\$ 1,031,680.11	100.00%	\$500,000.00



<i>ESTIMATED Refund of Excess Auditor Real Estate Assessment Fees</i>			
Total Fees charged on 1st Half TY2019/CY2020 Settlement		\$	1,031,680.11
Geauga County	\$	197,825.28	19.18%
GENERAL FUND - COUNTY		37,485.12	18.95%
MENTAL HEALTH LEVY		17,506.99	8.85%
COUNTY ROAD & BRIDGE		15,916.29	8.05%
HEALTH DISTRICT		2,917.92	1.47%
METZENBAUM OPERAT		60,265.88	30.46%
CHILDREN SERVICES		17,538.81	8.87%
GEAUGA PARK DISTR		31,605.17	15.98%
SENIOR CITIZEN LEVY		14,589.10	7.37%
		197,825.28	100.00%
			\$95,875.30