

The Council Ledger

Winter-Spring 2025

Darrow and Dickinson to Lead Council in 2025



2025 Summit County Council Officers Vice President Erin Dickinson (At-Large) and President Rita Darrow (District 1).

At its January 6th Organizational Meeting, Summit County Council selected **Rita Darrow (District 1)** to serve as Council President and **Erin Dickinson (At Large)** as Vice President for a second term in 2025.

Since her election to Summit County Council in 2020, Darrow has served as Vice President (2023), has chaired the Health and Human Services and Long Term Planning Committees, been vice chair of the Personnel Committee and served on the Public Safety Committee. Dickinson has served on Council since 2022 and has chaired the Public Safety and Rules Committees and been vice chair of the Public Works Committee. She currently chairs the Public Safety Committee, is vice chair of the Personnel & Intergovernmental Committee and serves on the Rules, Public Works and Long Term Planning Committees.

In other Council Committee news, **Jeff Wilhite (District 4)** will chair the Health and Human Services Committee; **Elizabeth Walters (At Large)** will chair the Planning and Economic Development Committee; **Brandon Ford (District 5)** will chair the Public Works Committee; **David Licate (District 3)** will chair the Long-Term Planning Committee; **John Donofrio (At Large)** will chair the Finance Committee; **Christine Higham (District 6)** will chair the Personnel and Intergovernmental Committee and **John Schmidt (District 2)** will chair the Rules Committee.

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For complete information on 2025 County Council Committee Members please visit the Summit County Council Web-Page at council.summitoh.net. Look for Motion 012-2025.

SAVE THE DATE

SUMMIT LAKE

2025 Bike&Hike
LET'S MOVE SUMMIT COUNTY

SATURDAY, MAY 17TH

SUMMIT LAKE COMMUNITY CENTER
OHIO & ERIE CANALWAY TOWPATH TRAIL
380 W. CROSIER ST. AKRON, OH 44311

BIKE RIDE: 7:30 A.M. - 11 A.M.
WALK: 10:30 A.M. - 2 P.M.

Council Honors International Parkour Ambassador Guinness Book World Record Holder Dinesh Sunar

At its January 27th Council Meeting, Summit County Council honored Dinesh Sunar, a renowned athlete from Nepal, celebrated for his expertise in parkour and gymnastics. Sunar holds the distinction of being Nepal's first international parkour player and has represented the nation in the USA Parkour Cup.

Sunar has set 20 Guinness World Records, is a three-time national gold medalist in gymnastics and a certified parkour instructor from the World Free Running Parkour Federation. His skills also extend to the film industry, where he has worked as a stuntman in Nepali and Bollywood films.

Dedicated to inspiring youth and encouraging physical fitness through parkour in his adoptive home of Akron, Ohio, Sunar's ultimate goal is to establish a parkour academy, and he has been proactively involved motivating Nepalese, American and Asian Diaspora youths towards the Parkour Game.

On December 7, 2024, Sunar earned his 20th Guinness World Record, setting the record for performing "The Most Blindfolded Backward Somersaults in 30 Seconds" by completing 14 backflips without using his hands at the Akron International Dance Festival. This remarkable feat was witnessed by Summit County Council members Christine Higham and Jeff Wilhite.

"Dinsh is an amazing athlete and his story of perseverance, and dedication to achieving his goals is inspiring to not only our youth but anyone who has a dream and is willing to pursue it wholeheartedly. We are proud that he represents Akron and Summit County wherever he goes and we are pleased to honor him today," said County Councilmember **Christine Higham (District 5)** who presented Sunar with a Commendation.



Parkour Ambassador and Guinness World Record Holder Dinesh Sunar (center) with his family and County Councilmembers Jeff Wilhite (back row right behind Sunar), Christine Higham (third from right) and Akron City Councilman Phil Lombardo (second from left) following his Commendation presentation at January 27th County Council Meeting. Below, Sunar in action at Akron Cascade Plaza. Photo courtesy of Downtown Akron Partnership.



Council Recognizes Cuyahoga Valley National Park on 50th Anniversary



At its February 10th Council Meeting, Summit County Council honored The Cuyahoga Valley National Park on the occasion of the park's 50th Anniversary. The Cuyahoga Valley National Park was created by Public Law 93-555 and passed by the United States Congress on December 27, 1974. That law officially created the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area that would later be renamed the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. The park consists of 33,000 acres stretching roughly from Akron to Cleveland along 22 miles of the Cuyahoga River and includes a myriad of trails and sights for visitors to explore such as: Brandywine Falls, the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail, Hale Farm & Village and the Boston Mills Visitors Center.

The park is also home to the Blossom Music Center, two ski resorts and the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad. Last year, Cuyahoga Valley ranked 12th for total visitors among the 63 national parks, with 2.8 million visitors. "We congratulate The Cuyahoga Valley National Park on their 50th anniversary," said **Council Vice President Erin Dickinson**, who presented the Commendation to Lisa Petit, Park Superintendent. "Not only is the park a tremendous asset to Summit County and the entire region of Northeast Ohio, but it is treasured nationally as well for its harmony between nature and urban centers." **Councilwoman Dickinson is pictured at left with CVNP Superintendent Petit.**

Council Bids Farewell To Gloria Rodgers

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Former District 3 Council Member **Gloria Rodgers** was honored by Summit County Council at the final Council Meeting of 2024 on December 9th. A Summit County Councilwoman since 2009, Rodgers was known throughout the County of Summit for her principled and consistent views on issues of vital importance. She also demonstrated an ability to work collaboratively with a wide range of politicians and officials to protect taxpayers, representing the residents of District 3 in Stow, Hudson, Silver Lake and parts of Cuyahoga Falls.

Throughout her four terms on Council, Rodgers served as vice chair of the Public Safety Committee and served on the Health and Human Services, Long Term Planning, Personnel and Intergovernmental, Finance and Rules Committees. Also during that time, she served on the Opiate Task Force, was a member of the Child Fatality Review Board of Summit County, a member of the Fetal Infant Mortality Rate (FIMR) Case Review Team, a member of the Akron Zoological Park Board of Directors and a key member of the Planning Committee and volunteer for Let's Move Summit County.

"Gloria Rodgers has earned the utmost admiration and respect from her colleagues on Council through her professionalism and dedication to her family, friends, colleagues and community. Her commitment has been genuinely appreciated. We thank Gloria for her service with Summit County Council and although we will miss her as a Council Member, we are proud of her accomplishments and wish her all the best in her future endeavors," said Councilwoman **Bethany McKenney (District 7)** who presented the Commendation to Rodgers along with Councilman **Jeff Wilhite (District 4)**. County Executive Ilene Shapiro's office (represented by Deputy Chief of Staff Greta Johnson) also recognized Rodgers with a Commendation.



Former Summit County Council Member Gloria Rodgers (District 3) thanks Council for her commendation on December 9. Jeff Wilhite (District 4), Greta Johnson (Exec Office) and Bethany McKenney (District 7) participated in the presentation.

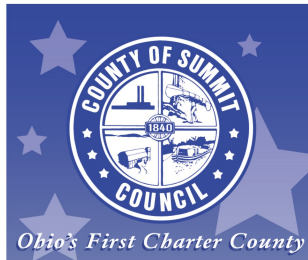
Council Honors Retiring SCPH Commissioner Donna Skoda

County Council and Executive Ilene Shapiro honored Donna Skoda, who retired as Commissioner of Summit County Public Health at the end of 2024 after leading the organization since July 1, 2015. Commissioner Skoda dedicated 38 years of her professional career to working in programs in a variety of settings such as hospital, university and local public health departments.

Commissioner Skoda worked with SCPH staff through successful responses to multiple public health crises including H1N1, Ebola and the COVID-19 pandemic. She was also instrumental in the Summit County Opioid settlement in Summit County, and worked directly with Council members as a member of the Summit County Racism as a Public Health Crisis Special Review Committee and the Let's Move Summit County Infant Mortality Awareness Walk and Healthy Mom's, Healthy Babies, Health Families initiatives.

Commissioner Skoda is pictured at right with Executive Shapiro (far left) and County Councilmembers Rita Darrow, Jeff Wilhite, Bethany McKenney, Christine Higham, Brandon Ford and Joseph Kacyon.





Summit County Council

Ohio Building
175 S. Main St., Ste. 700
Akron, OH 44308-1314
Phone: 330-643-2725
Fax: 330-643-2531

The Council Ledger is a quarterly publication of the Summit County Council Office produced by Council Staff.

W. Kent Starks II — Editor
Phone: 330-643-2074
E-Mail: kstarks@summitoh.net

County Council Staff

Mark Potter
Chief of Staff

W. Kent Starks, II
Senior Research Analyst

Monique Willis
Clerk of Council

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countycouncil@summitoh.net

2025 Council Meeting Calendar

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	TIME
March 24	Council & Committee Mtg.	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
March 31	Council Meeting	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
April 7	Council Committee Mtg.	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
April 14	Council Meeting	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
April 21	Council Committee Mtg.	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
April 28	Council Meeting	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
May 5	Council Committee Mtg.	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
May 12	Council Meeting	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
May 17	LET'S MOVE SUMMIT COUNTY BIKE & HIKE at Summit Lake Towpath Trail		
May 19	Council Committee Mtg.	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
May 26	Council Offices CLOSED For MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY		
June 2	Council Meeting	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
June 9	Council Committee Mtg.	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.

2025 County Council Members

Rita Darrow
President
District 1
Erin Dickinson
Vice President
At Large
John Schmidt
District 2
David Licate
District 3
Jeff Wilhite
District 4
Brandon Ford
District 5
Christine Higham
District 6
Bethany McKenney
District 7
Joseph Kacyon
District 8
John Donofrio
At -Large
Elizabeth Walters
At -Large

