

# The Council Ledger

Summer 2025

## Let's Move Bike & Hike Continues Growth in 5th Year

Summit County Council hosted the 5th Annual Let's Move Summit County Bike & Hike at Summit Lake Community Center on the Ohio & Erie Canalway Towpath Trail. The FREE event open to all ages attracted more than 500 pre-registered riders and walkers, and more than 300 participants turned out, despite heavy thunderstorms the night before and scattered showers throughout the day.

"We had a great day and a lot of fun with our bikers, hikers and volunteers. Their positive energy is contagious, and people are excited to get outside and move around this beautiful natural resource we have here at Summit Lake on the Towpath," said Summit County Councilwoman Christine Higham (District 6) who chairs the event for County Council.

Bikers began the morning at between 8 and 9 a.m. leaving in groups every 15 minutes led by Akron Police Bike Officers and volunteers following a 6 mile loop route between Summit Lake and the Nesmith Lake trailhead at Manchester Road on the Towpath Trail. At that point there was a water/refreshment station stop provided by CareSource before riders returned to the Community Center. For those without bikes, a limited number of bikes and helmets were available to rent with an ID security deposit at the "Bike Corral" supported by the Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition and South Street Ministries.

The Hike route was a little different this year for walkers as the bridge on the North Shore of

Summit Lake was closed due to construction, but following a short detour on South Street, groups easily made it back to the Towpath and onto the 2.75 mile loop around Summit Lake starting at Summit Lake Community Center. Hikers left every 15 minutes between 11 am and 12 noon. The trail crossed the Towpath Bridge near Kenmore Boulevard and passed the Metro Parks Nature Center at Summit Lake before returning to the Community Center. There was a water-refreshment station on the west side of the lake at Margaret Park at approximately the half-way point of the route.

All pre-registered participants received a T-shirt, sport-pack bag and a light lunch upon completion of the route.

"Let's Move, Summit County!" originated from former First Lady Michelle Obama's "Let's Move!" campaign which aimed to curb childhood obesity in the United States.

Locally, since 2010, the initiative has been a collaborative effort between the Summit County Council, County Executive Ilene Shapiro and several community partners. The group has hosted family fitness hikes, First Night Akron fitness activities, a Community Block Walk, Annual Health Walks at the Akron Zoo and Infant Mortality Health Events at the Buchtel Community Learning Center in past years.

*Continued on Page 2...*



County Councilmembers Christine Higham (District 6) and Jeff Wilhite (District 4) with Cindy Wilhite and Let's Move Summit County Volunteers Latoya Harris and Lisa Yeager at the 2025 Bike & Hike at Summit Lake on Saturday, May 17.

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# Let's Move Bike & Hike Continues Growth in 5th Year

## The 2025 Let's Move Summit County Bike and Hike was sponsored and supported by:

- ◆ Summit County Council
- ◆ County of Summit, Ilene Shapiro Executive
- ◆ City of Akron, Shammass Malik Mayor
- ◆ Summit County Fiscal Office, Kristin Scalise CPA, CFE
- ◆ County of Summit, Department of Job and Family Services
- ◆ CareSource
- ◆ Summit County Public Health
- ◆ Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority
- ◆ ADM Board
- ◆ Alpha Phi Alpha Homes, Inc.
- ◆ Community Action Akron Summit
- ◆ Summit County Sheriff Kandy Fatheree
- ◆ Summit County Prosecutor Elliot Kolkovich
- ◆ Tavia Galonski, Summit County Clerk of Courts
- ◆ Cleveland Clinic Akron General
- ◆ Community Health Care Copley
- ◆ Key Bank
- ◆ Summit DD
- ◆ METRO RTA
- ◆ Oriana House
- ◆ Summit County Engineer Alan Brubaker
- ◆ Akron Children's Hospital
- ◆ GOJO
- ◆ Akron Urban League
- ◆ Stewart & Calhoun Funeral Home
- ◆ Acme Fresh Market
- ◆ Mustard Seed Market
- ◆ The Distillata Company
- ◆ Sam's Club
- ◆ Summit Metro Parks
- ◆ Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition
- ◆ South Street Ministries
- ◆ Akron Area YMCA
- ◆ Akron Children's Museum
- ◆ Akron Summit County Public Library
- ◆ Summa Health
- ◆ Central Graphics

Photos below from far left: (courtesy of Allie Goble County of Summit, Ilene Shapiro Executive)

**Top row from left...** Summit County Clerk of Courts Tavia Galonski and her walk group...

**Middle Row...** Let's Move Summit County Coordinator, Kent Starks and Bike & Hike Volunteers...Councilwoman Christine Higham welcomes everyone to the event...

**Bottom Row...** Buchtel High School Football Team returned to ride the trail...Kent Starks and Councilwoman Higham with Let's Move Volunteers Carole Starks and APD Officer Karl Starks.

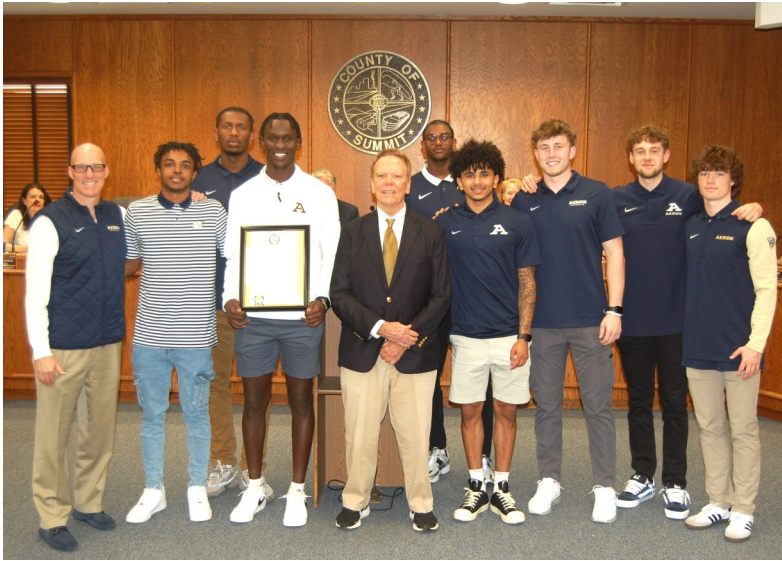
For a full photo recap of the event, visit the Council webpage at: [council.summitoh.net](http://council.summitoh.net)





## Council Recognizes Akron Men's Basketball on Season of Excellence

Summer 2025



**Summit County Councilman John Schmidt (District 2) with members of the University of Akron Men's Basketball Team and Head Coach John Groce (far left).**

At its April 28th Council Meeting, Summit County Council honored The University of Akron Men's Basketball Team on its outstanding 2024-25 season, which included both a regular season and Mid-American Conference (MAC) Championship and a berth in the NCAA "March Madness" Tournament, where the Zips competed as the 13th seed in the West Regional in Seattle, Washington.

The 2024-25 Akron team completed one of the best seasons in school history, finishing the season with 28-7 record, including an undefeated 16-0 mark at home and a 20-1 record in the Mid-American Conference.

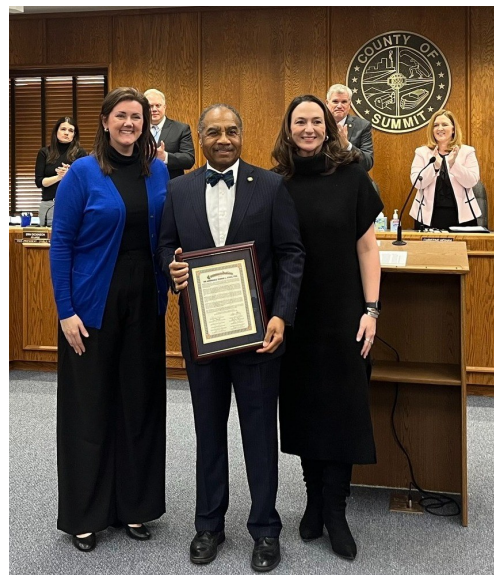
The team set several program records including most wins in a regular season and Coach John Groce was named the Hugh Durham National Mid-Major Coach of the Year.

"We congratulate this outstanding team and Coach Groce on a season of excellence," said Councilman John Schmidt, who presented the Commendation to Coach Groce and the team. "Their dedication, determination, teamwork and exceptional effort made for a season to remember for Zips fans everywhere - in Akron, Summit County and beyond."

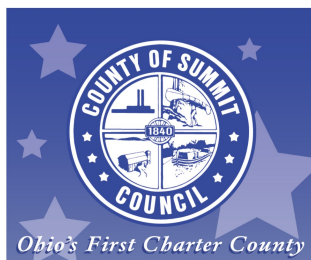
## Council Honors Retired State Senator Dr. Vernon L. Sykes, PhD.

County Council honored Retired State Senator Dr. Vernon L. Sykes, PhD. on his impressive 40 year legislative career. Senator Sykes was elected to the Ohio Senate in 2016, representing the 28th District serving the City of Akron and portions of Summit and Portage Counties. Prior to his two terms in the Senate, Senator Sykes served 13 terms in the Ohio House as the District 34 Representative from 1983 to 2000 and again from 2007 to 2014. Senator Sykes served two terms on Akron City Council before his appointment to the House of Representatives in 1983. He also served on the faculty at Kent State University as an assistant professor of political science, and as assistant professor of social science at the University of Akron. A longtime resident of Akron, Dr. Sykes is a graduate of Akron South High School, earned his bachelor's degree from Ohio University, master's degrees from Wright State and Harvard Universities and his doctorate from the University of Akron.

Throughout his career, Senator Sykes was a tireless advocate for justice, equity and opportunity. His legislative achievements in education, economic development, and community empowerment improved countless lives across the state of Ohio. Senator Sykes is one of the founding members of the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus Foundation (OLBCF), a visionary organization that has amplified the voices of Black Ohioans, empowered future leaders, and paved the way for meaningful progress. The Sykes family – Vernon, his wife Barbara and their daughters, Stancy and Emilia have established an outstanding legacy of doing for others in this community through their many years of work in public service and education.



**Recently Retired State Senator Dr. Vernon L. Sykes, PhD. pictured with Councilwoman Liz Walters (At Large) and former State Representative, Summit County Executive Deputy Chief of Staff, Greta Johnson.**



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## 2025 Council Meeting Calendar

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	TIME
June 16	Council Meeting	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
June 19	<b>COUNCIL OFFICES CLOSED FOR JUNETEENTH</b>		
June 23	Council Committee Mtg.	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
June 30	Council Meeting	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
<i>Summer Recess - No Council Meetings During Month of July</i>			
July 4	<b>COUNCIL OFFICES CLOSED FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY</b>		
August 4	Council Meeting	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
August 11	Council Committee Mtg.	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
August 18	Council Meeting	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
August 25	Council Committee Mtg.	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
September 1	<b>COUNCIL OFFICES CLOSED FOR LABOR DAY</b>		
September 8	Council Meeting	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
September 15	Council Committee Mtg.	Council Chambers	4:30 p.m.
September 22	Council Meeting	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

