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HAMILTON COUNTY COMMISSIONER

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PRESS RELEASE

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Commissioners Approve 2012 General Fund Budget

CINCINNATI (November 2, 2011) – The Hamilton County Board of Commissioners unanimously approved the 2012 General Fund Budget today. The Budget provides increased economic development funding, enacts cost-cutting measures within the general fund and provides for strategic facility planning to enable the sale of county property and future criminal justice facility needs.

“The 2012 Budget represents a balance between the need to adapt to continuing economic challenges, and the importance of supporting job creation in the County,” said Commission President Greg Hartmann. “By prioritizing economic development initiatives and enacting responsible cost-saving measures, we are positioning Hamilton County for a future of stability and growth.”

The 2012 County general fund budget provides funding for aggressive economic development initiatives in the County including:

- \$135,000 to the Cincinnati USA Partnership in support of the JobsOhio program to encourage business attraction and retention efforts. This funding will enable both Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati to provide matching contributions of \$135,000 for Partnership’s new development activities.
- \$653,000 to the Hamilton County Development Company, the County’s primary agency providing day-to-day economic development services to the County, including \$75,000 to offset reduced community development block grant funding for the Urban Land Assistance Program.
- \$700,000 to the Port of Greater Cincinnati Development Authority to support brownfield development work, their expanded role as manager of the County’s Land Bank and other critical improvement projects for the County. The Port will receive a \$175,000 increase in funding.

The County’s \$208.8 million budget includes a transition to compensated Sheriff’s Department townships patrols. Eliminating uncompensated patrols will save the Sheriff’s Department \$4 million annually following an over 25% reduction in the department during the last four years. Commissioners agreed to provide \$2 million from the County’s reserves as one-time transition funding to assist both the Sheriff’s Department, and indirectly the townships, as new agreements are enacted based upon the service each township requests. Including the balance of this year, this will provide roughly eight months for the Sheriff to enact new patrol agreements with each township.

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Commissioner Hartmann also proposed the elimination of the annual roll-over of employee vacation leave accrual, which will reduce millions of dollars of future, unfunded County liabilities. Employees of Board-controlled departments will now follow a “use it or lose it” policy beginning in 2012, which is meant to bring Board controlled departments in line with private sector policies that don’t accommodate the practice of roll-over and accrual of vacation hours, much less paid out vacation time upon retirement or separation of employment.

The County budget also provides funding to match the City of Cincinnati’s \$100,000 contribution to fund a joint City-County Shared Services Commission. The Commission will be appointed during the weeks ahead.

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For more information about the 2012 budget process, visit the County’s Web site at <http://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/administrator/bsi/budget.asp>.