

**Regular Meeting #07-46
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
October 30, 2007**

9:00 a.m. Meeting with Howard Siegrist

The Board of Commissioners met with Howard Siegrist from the Ohio State University Extension for an update on activities and discussion of their budget proposal. Present were Commissioners Kiger, Shupe, and Myers. Present also were Hannah Kohler, Cora Robinson and Scott Zody.

Mr. Siegrist informed the Commissioners that a Program Review for Extension is scheduled for November 14, and plans are in place to post and fill the vacant County Director position by early Spring. Commissioner Shupe asked Mr. Siegrist if the statewide employee number had been reached that would allow this position to be filled, and Mr. Siegrist replied that they were well below the required number. Commissioner Shupe asked if the Director/Educator position would be the equivalent to the former position of County Chair, and Mr. Siegrist stated it would.

Regarding the annual budget for the office, Mr. Siegrist reported that they are requesting flat funding, as they have a small carryover due to reduced personnel costs, and feel comfortable managing within those constraints. The only difference is a slightly higher fringe benefit cost, because the Extension employees are technically State employees, who have a higher fringe. Commissioner Myers questioned a higher amount in the equipment purchasing line item, and Mr. Siegrist explained that the office needs a new copier and a color printer, so they dedicated some of their carryover dollars to that line in order to make those purchases.

Commissioner Kiger pointed out one line item that was not labeled, and Mr. Siegrist explained that line was for postage costs, and mistakenly unlabeled. Commissioner Myers asked if the Extension budget is an allocation process, to which Mr. Siegrist replied he was not sure. Fiscal Clerk Staci Knisley was called upon to answer that question, and she replied that Extension receives payments from the county two times per year, and are considered an allocation under the county budget process.

Mr. Siegrist also stated that they would like to utilize some of their carryover funds to purchase new carpeting for the office, as the existing carpet is approximately 15 years old. Commissioners Shupe and Myers encouraged Mr. Siegrist to do so, and to coordinate with Facilities Manager Joe Spybey in those efforts.

Commissioner Shupe informed Mr. Siegrist that she will be out of town on November 14, and would ask one of the other Commissioners to sit in her place at the Program Review.

Cora Robinson provided the Commissioners with an update on Family & Consumer Science Programs. Much of Ms. Robinson's work involves teaching young adults and high school students family and personal finance, and Family Nutrition and Family Life classes.

Ms. Robinson reported that participation at the County Fair was down somewhat this year, she believes in part due to the warm weather. Commissioner Myers asked what is taught in the family banking/finance classes, and Ms. Robinson replied that they work with local banks to teach how to balance a checkbook, and the Extension staff focus on making wise choices in family finances.

Hannah Kohler provided the Commissioners with an update on 4-H Advisory Programs. Ms. Kohler reported that attendance to the annual 4-H camp was up in two out of three categories this year, and they are encouraged by that.

Ms. Kohler reported that 966 individual youths entered projects at this year's Fair, and 1940 animals were entered. Commissioner Shupe stated that the number of displays seemed to be down this year, and Ms. Kohler explained that there had been some shuffling around and relocating of certain displays, so the 4-H displays were somewhat spread around this year.

Commissioner Myers asked if the Town & Country Chapter was still active, and Ms. Kohler stated that it was.

Ms. Kohler invited the Commissioners to attend the annual Advisors Dinner on November 19th, which will be held at the Liberty Center.

9:30 Meeting with Michael Orlando

The Board of Commissioner met with Michael Orlando, Director of Job & Family Services, for a quarterly update on activities. Present were Commissioners Kiger, Myers, and Shupe. Present also was Scott Zody.

Mr. Orlando began by asking if there were any new developments with respect to the proposed Older Adult Services levy renewal and when it would be placed on the ballot. Mr. Zody replied that according to the Auditor's Office and Board of Elections, the Older Adult Services Levy could not be placed on the ballot until the November 2008 General Election. Commissioner Kiger stated that the Board should ask Jason Dolin to research this issue to confirm that position.

Mr. Orlando stated that he is concerned with the timing, as he had been working to put together a Child Protective Services Levy for the fall of 2008, but did not want both issues to be considered at the same time. Commissioner Shupe asked if Mr. Orlando would consider going to the March, 2008 ballot instead, and Mr. Orlando stated that it might be possible to ramp up his schedule to place an issue on the March 2008 ballot, but the timeframe would be very compressed and he is concerned about building the necessary community support.

Commissioner Shupe asked if Mr. Orlando had some community volunteers on his Hot Zone Committee, and Mr. Orlando stated that he did, but he needed to gain backing and support from a wider range of individuals throughout the county for a levy initiative.

Regarding the recent budget retreat, Mr. Orlando clarified how the \$362,000 allocation for Child Protective services approved by the Commissioners would fit into his overall budget picture. He explained that the budget figures he provided to the Board included the \$362,000, and he and Mr. Zody had met and were planning to meet again to discuss the JFS budget more in depth. In addition, Mr. Orlando confirmed for the Board that the \$362,000 is considered as a separate line item, since it is a one-time allocation.

Commissioner Kiger asked why the budget historical figures always begin with the 2001 budget year, and Mr. Orlando explained that was the first year the budgets for the former Department of Human Services and Ohio Bureau of Employment Services were combined.

Mr. Orlando gave an overview of his current budget, stating that the Child Support Enforcement area is the one that is most stable, due to technology upgrades to improve efficiency and the large amount of state incentive dollars that were earned while Carrie Brown was the Director. Commissioner Kiger asked why the Child Support Enforcement numbers appeared to be so high for 2003-2004, and Mr. Orlando explained that CSEA's budget numbers were high in 2003-2004 due to shared costs that CSEA had not had to pay prior to the merger. Adult Protective Services and Child Protective Services budgets are the major concerns, due to cuts imposed by the new Administration at the state level, especially in Adult Protective services and incentive monies that are no longer available. Federal and state funding for the most part is stable otherwise, and county General Fund dollars help fill some of the gaps.

Commissioner Myers asked how many total employees does JFS have, and Mr. Orlando stated 207. Commissioner Shupe asked Mr. Orlando if he felt the agencies should remain combined, or should an effort be made to separate them again, and he stated that since the Federal and state dollars are restricted in use, it makes more sense to stay combined to keep administrative costs down. Mr. Orlando noted that the county pays about a 3% share for CSEA and Public Assistance programs, but 50% of the Child Protective Service costs.

Mr. Orlando provided an update on the Electronic Data Management System (EDMS), which is an effort to take the agency paperless. The bad news is, the system would cost approximately \$1 million to fully implement, but would save the agency from making approximately 5 million paper copies per year. Due to CSEA's financial stability, the plan is to purchase ½ the system for CSEA, and lease the other ½ for the other JFS program areas. Over time, as savings are realized, the rest of the system could be purchased and fully implemented. Commissioner Myers asked what the operational costs of the system would be, and Mr. Orlando stated it would cost approximately \$200,000 per year.

Commissioner Shupe asked if the operational costs would be offset by other savings, and Mr. Orlando stated that copying costs and support staff reductions would occur if the system is implemented.

Mr. Orlando provided a copy of his quarterly report to the Commissioners and noted two events coming up in December – the employee Holiday Luncheon on December 5 and the Reality House Open House on December 6.

10:00 a.m. Commissioners' Regular Meeting

A regular meeting of the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, October 30, beginning at 10:00 a.m., with the following Commissioners present: Mike Kiger, Jon Myers and Judith Shupe. Also present were: Mary Jane Gard, Michael Orlando, Jason Dolin and Scott Zody.

Announcements

There were no public announcements.

Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

Approval of minutes of Tuesday, October 9, 2007

On motion of Jon Myers and second of Judith Shupe, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the minutes for Tuesday, October 23, 2007.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

Voting aye thereon: Jon Myers, Judith Shupe and Mike Kiger.

Donation of vehicle to the Eastland-Fairfield Career Center District

On motion of Judith Shupe and second of Jon Myers, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the donation of a used Sheriff's cruiser to the Eastland-Fairfield Career Center for training purposes, see resolution 07-10.30.a

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

Voting aye thereon: Judith Shupe, Jon Myers and Mike Kiger

Approval of Emergency Contract – Relocation of Sanitary Sewer Force Main

On motion of Jon Myers and second of Judith Shupe, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve an emergency contract to relocated a sanitary sewer force main on Hill Road, see resolution 07-10.30.b

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jon Myers, Judith Shupe and Mike Kiger

Approval of Contract between Fairfield County Commissioners and City of Lancaster, Law Director, for Prosecution Services

On motion of Judith Shupe and second of Jon Myers, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve a contract between the Board and the City of Lancaster law Director's Office for prosecution services, see resolution 07-10.30.c

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Judith Shupe, Jon Myers and Mike Kiger

Approval of Board of Elections Disposal of Ballot Boxes

On motion of Jon Myers and second of Judith Shupe, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve a proposal by the Board of Elections to dispose of surplus ballot boxes, see resolution 07-10.30.d

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jon Myers, Judith Shupe and Mike Kiger

Approval of CDBG Participation Agreement - Lithopolis

On motion of Judith Shupe and second of Jon Myers, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve a CDBG participation agreement with the Village of Lithopolis, see resolution 07-10.30.e

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Judith Shupe, Jon Myers and Mike Kiger

Approval of Advertising Road Project, Pleasantville Road

On the motion of Judith Shupe and second of Jon Myers, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the advertising for project GRE-36, FAI-CR17-0.915 Pleasantville Road NW over Tributary to Walnut Creek Bridge Replacement Project, see resolution 07-10.30.f

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Judith Shupe, Jon Myers and Mike Kiger

Financial Resolutions

On motion of Jon Myers and the second of Judith Shupe the Board of Commissioners voted to approve financial resolutions as follows:

- 07-10.30.g Approval of Memo Expenditure – Fairfield County Job & Family Services
- 07-10.30.h Approval of Request for Appropriations and Voucher Payment outside of normal processing – Law Enforcement Fund 2587
- 07-10.30.i Approval to ratify previously approved financial resolution – Major Crimes Unit
- 07-10.30.j Approval of Account to Account Transfer – Maintenance Fund 3435

- 07-10.30.k Approval of Account to Account Transfer – Fairfield County Commissioners
- 07-10.30.l Approval to Appropriate from Unappropriated – Dog & Kennel Fund
- 07-10.30.m Approval to Appropriate from Unappropriated – 911 Wireless Fund
- 07-10.30.n Approval to Appropriate from Unappropriated – GIS
- 07-10.30.o Approval to Appropriate from Unappropriated – Job & Family Services
- 07-10.30.p Approval to Appropriate from Unappropriated – County Engineer
- 07-10.30.q Approval to Appropriate from Unappropriated – County Engineer
- 07-10.30.r Approval to Appropriate from Unappropriated – County Engineer
- 07-10.30.s Approval of Account to Account Transfer – 2036 Reclaim
- 07-10.30.t Approval of Account to Account Transfer – 2036 Reclaim

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
 Voting aye thereon: Jon Myers, Judith Shupe and Mike Kiger

Payment of Bills

On the motion of Judith Shupe and second of Jon Myers, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the authorization for payment of bills, October 30, 2007, check date November 2, 2007, see resolution 07-10.30.u

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
 Voting aye thereon: Judith Shupe, Jon Myers and Mike Kiger

Review Session

The Board of Commissioners met at 10:20 a.m. to review correspondence, pending items, and future action items. Commissioners present at the review session were Mike Kiger, Jon Myers, and Judith Shupe. Present also were Michael Orlando, Jason Dolin, Alaina Fahey, Tierra Palmer and Scott Zody.

Mr. Orlando continued his quarterly report, discussing his refusal to implement a new computer system that the state is attempting to force all county JFS agencies to adapt. Mr. Orlando stated that there are still many problems with the system that need to be worked out before he would agree to use it. Specifically, the system is not saving data properly, and many counties that have implemented the system are spending many hours of overtime to straighten the problems out on evenings and weekends, and Mr. Orlando’s budget would not allow for those increased costs.

Commissioner Myers asked if the state had the authority to force Mr. Orlando onto the system, and Mr. Orlando stated that he did not believe so, and had a meeting scheduled with the State later that day to discuss the issue.

Mr. Orlando next discussed the impacts of the recently enacted state budget. There are three areas of JFS that will be dramatically impacted by the new budget – TANF, Income Maintenance Allocations, and Title XX benefits.

Regarding TANF, there has been a loss of incentives statewide, along with a loss of TANF demonstration projects to promote innovative solutions, and a total of \$171 million worth of special earmarks in the budget for non-government projects. The end result would be a loss of transportation, rental assistance, and utilities assistance

programs. Mr. Orlando stated that this has become a very big issue with the County Commissioners Association.

Income maintenance allocations are a Medicaid benefit, and this has been reduced statewide by almost \$20 million. The result is that wait times will increase for determining nursing home eligibility. The other significant development is that any unspent balances in the account at the end of the year will be taken back by the state – at the same time, Mr. Orlando cannot overspend his annual allocation, or he will be penalized, and it is almost impossible to be right on the annual allocation mark, as it changes every year.

Title XX funds, which are the primary source of state funding for Adult Protective Services, will be reduced by \$262,000, which will result in a reduction of services

Review Items, cont.

The Board directed Jason Dolin to update them on pending issues with the Prosecutors Office, and Mr. Dolin stated he would schedule a meeting with Mr. Zody to discuss public records policy. Mr. Dolin would also review the issue relative to the Older Adult Services levy renewal and when it could be placed on the ballot.

Commissioner Kiger asked if the Board was prepared to take action on the offering of health insurance to the members of the Board of Elections. Commissioner Shupe stated that the Board is willing to contribute the standard 15% share as any county employee would be required to do. Commissioner Myers stated that they have had the coverage for several years. Commissioner Kiger stated that he is opposed to offering health insurance to persons who are considered part time employees, and that it goes against the current policy of the Board. The issue was set aside for further discussion.

The Board requested Mr. Dolin review the Access Management proposal, and determine if the Board must hold two additional public hearings prior to taking a vote on the matter. In addition, Mr. Dolin reported that he has been researching the obstruction issue, and should have some feedback for the Board shortly. Mr. Zody reported that he is awaiting a response from the County Engineer's Association legal counsel on this issue as well.

The Board directed Mr. Zody to prepare a resolution of approval to appoint Robin Jay Bahnsen to the ADAMH Board, and Mr. Dolin reported that he would have an opinion ready soon regarding the eligibility of Sheriff Phalen to serve on the Board.

Commissioner Kiger shared information with the Board relative to a recent meeting he had with Mitch Nusser on potentially expanding Lancaster transit service to some unincorporated areas of the county. The transit system would extend service if the County would provide \$10,000 to help pay for the expansion.

Mr. Zody shared an update with the Board on the cellular 9-1-1 system, following a meeting with Mel Meloy. There will be a 9-1-1 Lobby Day at the Statehouse on December 12th, urging legislators to extend the current \$0.32 per month surcharge on all cell phone bills to provide equipment for local emergency dispatch centers to handle cellular 9-1-1 calls.

11:00 Meeting with David Conley

The Board of Commissioners met with David Conley to discuss county debt service issues at 11:00 a.m. Present were Commissioners Kiger, Myers, and Shupe. Present also were Jason Dolin, Alaina Fahey, and Tierra Palmer.

Mr. Conley had two items to review with the Board – bonding for the County Airport to make some improvements and the overall state of the county's debt service.

Mr. Conley has been meeting with Dave Sheffler from the airport and believes the facilities cash flow is more than sufficient to support the \$1 million bond for the planned improvements. Commissioner Kiger asked if the cash flow estimates include property tax payments, and Mr. Conley stated that they did.

On the subject of county debt service, Mr. Conley presented materials demonstrating the county's outstanding debt and available debt service. Currently, of the 10 mills of allowable debt, the county only has about .49 mill available, or approximate \$20 million that could be issued. Part of the current debt service has been taken by the Fairfield Union Local Schools, who exercised their ability to issue General Obligation bonds under the county ceiling. Mr. Conley assured the Board that the school is still responsible for making the debt payments, and has received approval for a school district income tax to do so.

Also included in the debt service are some Utility Bonds. Mr. Conley suggested that the Board may wish to convert those to revenue bonds to free up General Obligation debt service availability. Mr. Conley believes that if the Federal Reserve lowers rates again by another ¼ point, the county could refinance all of its outstanding debt and save approximately \$50,000 per year.

Commissioner Kiger asked what it would cost to do the refinancing, and Mr. Baird stated if all debt were refinanced, the cost would be 2% of the amount, or approximately \$430,000.

Commissioner Shupe asked how Fairfield County's debt compared to other counties around the state, and Mr. Conley replied that Fairfield County has one of the lowest debt service rates in the state, but he would still recommend refinancing and trying to "reserve" the remaining debt service for priority projects. Commissioner Myers asked if the county had done such a resolution in the past, and Mr. Conley stated that he believed that one had been enacted some years back.

Commissioner Shupe stated that with the need for a new county public safety facility now might be a good time to be planning financing. Commissioner Myers stated that Tony Vogel and Ed Laramée needed to be involved in the process.

Mr. Conley also reminded the Board that at some time they should update their credit rating.

JEDD Meeting

The Board of Commissioners met to discuss the proposed Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) involving Violet Township, Canal Winchester, Lancaster, Pickerington, and Bloom Township. Present were Commissioners Kiger, Shupe and Myers. Present also were Bill Arnett, Tony Vogel, Brooks Davis, Jason Dolin, and Scott Zody.

Mr. Vogel stated that he had had a discussion with Mayor Smith on the issue, and the Mayor informed Mr. Vogel that the purpose of the JEDD is to provide services in the unincorporated areas along the Route 33 corridor between Coonpath Road and Diley Road. However, that seems to contradict the fact that many of the services such as water and sewer service are already available via Fairfield County Utilities. Bill Arnett stated the JEDD extends out one mile on either side of US 33, and Lancaster is likely involved due to their income tax structure.

Commissioner Shupe asked how the JEDD would benefit business, if an income tax is to be assessed within it? Mr. Vogel replied that the trade-off is getting infrastructure built within the JEDD to serve the businesses that otherwise would likely not be constructed as quickly. Mr. Davis also noted that sometimes annexation of a particular property or properties is not feasible, so a JEDD is utilized to help develop an area.

Commissioner Shupe asked how the taxes are designated, and Mr. Vogel stated that they are set up to provide services but any excess taxes collected would be divided between the JEDD partners. Commissioner Myers asked what options the Board would have relative to approving or denying the formation of the JEDD. Mr. Arnett replied that the Commissioners have 30 days to review and approve a JEDD once the locals partners vote to approve, but the Board cannot invalidate a JEDD.

Commissioner Myers asked what the main concerns are with the formation of the JEDD and effects it could have on county operations. Mr. Vogel replied that his main concern is that other jurisdictions may attempt to serve areas that have already been reserved for service by Fairfield County. The wording in the agreement is confusing and in some places contradictory. Commissioner Shupe asked if a JEDD has the power to change existing service boundaries, and Mr. Vogel stated that he was not sure, but once the lines are in the ground, it could be a moot point. Commissioner Shupe asked if Mr. Vogel was willing to turn any areas over to other entities, and Mr. Vogel stated he would rather not do that, as his agency formulates their plans based upon those existing service areas. Commissioner Myers asked if the county should be requesting changes, and Commissioner Shupe asked who drafted the plan. Mr. Arnett replied that Violet Township appeared to be the lead agency, and their attorney has been involved, as well as a special counsel out of the Akron area. Mr. Vogel replied that he is concerned about potential legal battles and wants to avoid conflict if possible.

Mr. Davis stated that a majority of businesses and landowners within the proposed JEDD must vote to approve the formation of the district, and usually this type of district is used to provide development opportunities on vacant land.

Commissioner Myers asked what entity is driving this process, and Mr. Vogel replied that it appears to be Violet Township. Mr. Davis stated that if that was the case, there would need to be quite a bit of zoning adjustments made in the proposed JEDD area, as most of it is zoned residential and no residential areas are permitted within JEDDs.

Commissioner Kiger questioned the ability of one political subdivision laying water & sewer lines across another entity's lines. Mr. Vogel replied that as long as the new lines went into and served areas not currently served by Fairfield County that would be permissible.

Commissioner Myers asked why the Commissioners have not been involved in this process, especially if the intent is to prevent turf battles. Mr. Arnett stated that the other question is revenue and how much income tax would be generated, especially if the land is currently undeveloped.

Commissioner Shupe asked about a CRA and how that might fit into the mix. Mr. Arnett stated there is a CRA at Canal Point.

Commissioner Myers asked what next steps would the group recommend – a meeting with the potential JEDD partners? Mr. Vogel replied that the only contact he has had with the group has been a request to provide information on Fairfield County's service area.

Commissioner Myers suggested setting up a meeting with Bill Yapple, the Violet Township Administrator.

Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Board, on the motion of Jon Myers and the second of Judith Shupe, the Board of Commissioners voted to adjourn at 12:10 p.m.

Roll call vote on the motion resulted as follows:

Voting aye thereon: Jon Myers, Judith Shupe and Mike Kiger

Mike Kiger
Commissioner

Jon Myers
Commissioner

Judith Shupe
Commissioner

Scott Zody, Clerk/Manager

**THE NEXT REGULAR COMMISSIONERS' MEETING IS SCHEDULED TUESDAY
NOVEMBER 2, 2007 AT 10:00 A.M.**