

FAIRFIELD COUNTY TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING

September 12, 2023

FAIRFIELD COUNTY RECORDS CENTER

138 WEST CHESTNUT STREET; LANCASTER, OHIO 43130

Sonja Simpson called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. on September 12, 2023 at the Fairfield County Records Center. The following persons were present: Sonja Simpson (TID Chairperson); Rick Szabrak (TID Vice-Chairperson); Jeremiah Upp (TID Secretary/Treasurer); Greg Butcher (TID Board Member); Curt Shonk (TID Board Member); Dave Levacy (Fairfield County Commissioner); Aundrea Cordle (Fairfield County Administrator); Mitch Noland (Fairfield County Engineer's Office); Jason Grubb (Fairfield County Engineer's Office); Anthony Iachini (Fairfield County Economic Development); Bill Lozier (TransCon Ohio); Tom Pannett (Kegler, Brown, Hill & Ritter); Scott Seamen (GPD Group); Kyle Massaros (ASI); Damon Fulk (Environmental Design Group); Ralph Hedrick (Amanda Twp Trustee); Jacque Annarino (ODOT); Don Keller (Liberty Twp Trustee); Jeff Baird (City of Lancaster); Jennifer Shuey (DLZ); Holli Mattei (Regional Planning Commission); Safa Saleh (Regional Planning Commission); Josh Anders (Fairfield County Utilities); Paul Denny (Woolpert); Conner Brintlinger (American Structurepoint)

1. ROLL CALL:

- a. Greg Butcher, Jeremiah Upp, Rick Szabrak, Sonja Simpson, and Curt Shonk were the board members in attendance.

2. APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES:

- a. Approval of the August 08, 2023; regular meeting minutes.
- b. Motion to approve made by Mr. Butcher. Second by Mr. Upp. All members approved. Motion carried.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

- a. No public comments.

4. REPORT FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE:

- a. County TID Financial Report
 - i) Report beginning August 02, 2023, to September 06, 2023.

Date	Description	Revenue	Expenses	Balance
08/02/23	Beginning Balance			\$275,032.63
08/21/23	Woolpert		\$6,300.00	\$268,732.63
08/21/23	TransCon, Ohio (July Invoice)		\$3,000.00	\$265,732.63
08/21/23	Kegler Brown Hill & Ritter		-\$1,852.50	-\$263,880.13
09/06/23	Ending Balance			\$263,880.13

- b. Mr. Shonk made a motion to approve the Financial Report. Second by Mr. Butcher. All members approved. Motion carried.

5. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. **Resolution #2023-07:**— A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated fund 7790 Transportation Improvement District for attorney fees. Approval to move \$20,000.00 to fund 75779000-533020 Contractual Services.
 - i) A motion to approve the resolution was made by Mr. Szabrak. Second by Mr. Shonk.
 - ii) Roll call vote: Butcher, yes; Upp, yes; Shonk, yes; Szabrak, yes; Simpson, yes.
 - iii) All members approved. Resolution passed.
 - iv) Mr. Butcher had a question about resolution #2023-07. He wanted to know if the resolution was specific to legal contractual services or all contractual services. Mr. Upp noted he would find out. Mr. Lozier made a comment that, in general, the funds would go into a general contractual services account. This is an area that should be discussed further as the board moves to hire an accountant. For now, it will remain in a general “Contractual Services” fund.

- b. **Additional Funds Needed:** - Mr. Upp noted that the board should authorize additional funds to pay for additional legal fees that will be realized as part of the Basil Western Road Project.
 - i) Mr. Szabrak made a motion to approve an additional \$20,000.00 to cover legal fees. Second by Mr. Shonk.
 - ii) All members approved by saying aye. Motion passed.

- c. **Accountant:** – The board discussed hiring an accountant. Mr. Upp stated he met with Fairfield County Treasurer James Bahnsen. Mr. Upp also put together an RFQ for an accountant and will send that out soon. Mr. Upp has talked to a couple of different accountants around Fairfield County to assess their interest in the position. Mr. Lozier commented that the LCTID holds separate contracts and accounts for each consultant. In each contract they are identified if they are done on an hourly basis, or done on a monthly basis. Either way, the money for each contract is encumbered but held in the general fund. Mr. Upp noted right now everything goes into Contractual Services and we can adjust that moving forward if needed.

- d. **Consultant for Basil Western Project:** – Mr. Upp stated that when FCTID receives the first check from DHL, FCTID would have enough money in its account to authorize the consultant to begin environmental, surveying, and phase 1 of the design. After those portions of design are complete, we should have a good idea of cost, quantities, and a clear picture of right-of-way. FCTID is still going to be approximately \$400,000.00 short of completing all design for the project. Mr. Upp believes FCTID will still need to work with the commissioners to fully fund the design portion of the project. Mr. Szabrak stated Tom Pannett put together an inter-governmental agreement with the commissioners that would allow FCTID to receive the necessary funds to complete the design. Mr. Szabrak also stated Canal Winchester is currently reviewing the agreement. Violet Township had a couple questions that were easily answered. Mr. Szabrak talked with the county prosecutor about those questions. The county commissioners are also

reviewing the agreement. There will be a follow-up agreement for phases 2 and 3. Mr. Lozier asked if one of the resolutions approved at the last meeting was to allow Jeremiah to enter an agreement with the design consultant. Mr. Upp confirmed that 2LMN was ready to begin survey and design.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

a. **TID Website:** – Mr. Grubb showed the board the “beta” version of the website. The website is not live yet, but the board reviewed a proposed layout for the site. The board requested that the site have a direct link. They requested to have its own page and then have the page linked to the County Commissioner’s page as well as the County Engineer’s page. Mr. Levacy noted he would like to see a list of the board members. The board agreed.

b. Consultant Project Update Report:

i) **Basil Western Rd. Realignment-TID Grant:** – Mr. Lozier noted that we did not receive the \$350,000 TID grant in the last round, but Mr. Lozier did receive a call from Mr. Fred Vogel at Ohio Jobs & Commerce. Mr. Vogel stated he likes the Basil Western project and would like the board to reapply for the grant in 2024. Mr. Szabrak noted there are additional projects moving forward in the Basil Western Road corridor. The Hemmer Project and the Leveck Project are moving forward. The agreements for both projects are based on what is going to be built there. Both projects will pay the first 1/3 of the fees immediately because the MOU is already complete. The two projects could produce up to approximately \$500,000.00 in the first draw to help pay back the inter-governmental agreement with the county commissioners. Mr. Lozier stated that if we complete/execute the consultant contract then these projects would not be eligible for the TID grant funds. The board discussed different possibilities for funding. Construction versus design. Should we request funding for right-of-way? The board discussed right of way (RW) costs and possible issues with the RW moving forward. Mr. Lozier stated there is approximately 1 million dollars available for TID grants next year. Mr. Lozier will check the details for the next round of TID grant funding and update the board. He believes we could apply for additional funding next year for RW.

(1) Mr. Szabrak made a motion permitting FCTID Secretary/Treasurer Jeremiah Upp, or his designee, submit the application for the Basil Western Road Project as part of the next round of TID funding with Ohio Jobs & Commerce. Second by Mr. Shonk. Mr. Butcher questioned “*Can we make a motion on something we don’t know exists?*” Mr. Szabrak noted that his motion was to apply for the “*next round of TID funding.*” Mr. Pannett asked if the application would be brought before the FCTID board before submitting the application for the next round. Mr. Butcher stated, “*what if in the next round, we don’t want it to go towards Basil Western?*” Mr. Lozier stated that even if there was a 4-week application period he could work on it and bring it before the board. The board agreed to wait until the next meeting to discuss. Mr. Szabrak rescinded his motion.

ii) **Far East Freeway:** – Mr. Lozier stated there is another TRAC round on October 4th for construction. He is working with ODOT District 5 on the project. The

preliminary scoring for the project was 38. Mr. Lozier stated that a score of 42 is within the funding range but 38 is a little low. Mr. Lozier will talk to District 5 about this because they are the applicant for this round. Mr. Butcher asked if we were anywhere near construction on this project. Mr. Lozier agreed that construction would not occur for some time as stage 1 design won't be submitted until spring 2024. Mr. Lozier noted that we do need to get in line for the TRAC requests because ODOT D5 is asking TRAC for 127 million for construction. Mr. Conner Brintlinger (American Structurepoint) noted he believes ODOT is looking at spring 2027 to possibly begin construction. Mr. Lozier asked ODOT about the certified traffic counts. Those should go to Structurepoint so they can begin work on the local road study for state route 204. Mr. Lozier continues to have concerns about the impacts to local traffic, especially to SR204, because of the new interchange. Mr. Brintlinger stated Structurepoint should receive those reports from ODOT in November. Mr. Lozier noted he will continue to work with D5 on the project.

- iii) Far-Far East Freeway:** – Mr. Lozier mentioned another I-70 widening project. This project is the Licking County piece that begins just east of Palmer Road to SR158. This project scored a 42 for TRAC. This project is asking for 5 million for design, which may contribute to the higher score. Mr. Lozier asked ODOT if any of the interchanges would be considered as part of the project, ODOT said no. ODOT is looking at widening towards the median as part of this project. Mrs. Simpson asked where the project started. Mr. Lozier stated it begins at Taylor Road and works east into Licking County. Mrs. Simpson noted ODOT has discussed some improvements to I-70 at SR 79. Mr. Lozier stated this project is not associated with the SR79 improvements. Mr. Brintlinger stated that Structurepoint is looking at replacing the Palmer Road bridge over I-70 as part of the Far East Freeway project, so this project (Far-Far East Freeway Project) will pick up just east of Palmer Road. Mr. Lozier will continue to monitor this project.
- iv) US33/I-70 Connector:** - Mr. Lozier noted ODOT has an RFP out to study a possible connector road between I-70 and SR161. This is significant because Mr. Lozier feels this may spill over into the US33/I-70 connector. If they are really looking at creating a new north/south connector between I70/SR161 then part of the decision making may involve looking at the US33/I-70 connector as well. This is most likely a 15-20 year look ahead. ODOT may take existing routes and look at operational improvements versus new north/south routes.

Mr. Lozier noted that MORPC has completed the project report. The conclusion of that report was: *“going forward it will be the responsibility of the local study partners to determine the next stages for the appropriate infrastructure improvements within the study area. The US33 to I-70 study has provided data and information to aid these decisions. Next steps could include public involvement, benefit cost analysis, (and) preliminary engineering studies.”* Mr. Lozier noted that MORPC is concluding a new base model for the whole region this month. It involves Intel and the associated development going on in that area. Overall, there is nothing left to do except monitor this project. Unless there is a large job producing agent, like Intel, or a major financial contribution from the state or federal

government to build this project, it will remain dormant. The county does not have the resources or financial capability to fund a project this size.

- v) **Refugee Road/Shared Use Path:** – The project has been turned over to the Fairfield County Engineers Office for construction. Mr. Upp has a meeting with Violet Township and Pickerington Local School Districts to discuss the project. Mr. Lozier noted there is additional work to be accomplished, possibly a round-about, or a median, perhaps both. There was a traffic study done to look at specific things but until we complete the rest of the design for the project, we can't define the whole scope of work. Technically, FCTID isn't involved in the project anymore but there are safe routes to school funding available. Mr. Lozier noted that the ODOT Safety Committee (ODOTSC) loves this project, and he believes there is an opportunity to capture more money from ODOTSC. FCTID received approval for 1.2 million. That money is permitted to be used for consulting so Mr. Lozier believes we should be moving forward with consultant selection at this time. Mr. Lozier also noted that ODOTSC could provide up to 500,000.00 dollars and that amount would finance the improvements needed for sidewalks. Mr. Upp noted that he did not intend to pull the project from FCTID. ODOT wanted an LPA to perform the project and the County Engineers Office can do that. Mr. Lozier commented that Mr. Pannett found out that FCTID can fill the requirements of the LPA because Mr. Upp is the Secretary/Treasurer of FCTID, and he is the Fairfield County Engineer. Because Mr. Upp is a certified LPA in the eyes of the Federal Highway Administration, he can administer the project for FCTID as the Secretary/Treasurer. Mr. Pannett agreed but noted that we need to get ODOT's approval before moving forward. If possible, Mr. Upp would like FCTID to be the LPA on the project if ODOT approves.
- vi) **US33 Corridor Lane Widening CAP Project:** – Mr. Lozier stated that Mr. Upp was supposed to get a funding agreement from ODOT District 6. There is nothing else to report on the project currently. We will continue to monitor the project.
- vii) **East Side Industrial Connector:** – Mr. Shonk presented a planning study map to the board that was put together by American Structurepoint based off the study done for this project. The city has done numerous Main Street studies over the years. This map is part of the latest study. This started as a feasibility study, but the scope was too large to check all the boxes for a feasibility study, so it became a planning study, a corridor, to provide an alternate route through Lancaster. In Mr. Shonk's opinion, the reason this didn't involve a bypass was because of state route 37, and the direct route to I-70. Mr. Shonk noted the city gets a lot of commercial traffic from SR37. That traffic turns west on US22 or goes south on US33, so this study originates in the downtown area where the bottleneck begins at SR37 and US22. Mr. Shonk noted this would not be an expressway or a freeway. It is more of a managed access roadway. It connects to all state routes in Lancaster. Mr. Shonk estimated roughly 50 million dollars to construct the project. Next steps include a meeting with MORPC, city council members, and stakeholders. Mr. Shonk feels it is a good project and would increase access to the industrial ground on the east side of Lancaster without going through downtown. The city will be moving forward with a more detailed study,

possibly a feasibility study, or alternate engineering on the downtown portion where it connects to US33.

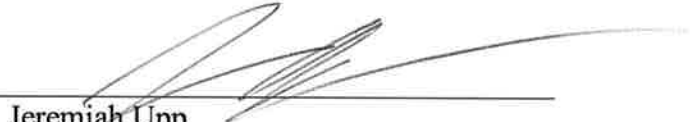
7. OTHER BUSINESS:

- a. At 2:06pm Mrs. Sonja Simpson left the meeting.
- b. Mr. Upp requested some guidance from Mr. Pannett about the benefits of FCTID having its own bank account. Mr. Pannett agreed to meet with Mr. Upp at a later date to discuss the issue.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

- a. Motion to adjourn by Mr. Butcher. Second by Mr. Shonk. All members approved by saying aye. The meeting was adjourned at 2:08pm.

Minutes approved by:



Jeremiah Upp
Secretary/Treasurer