

Regular Meeting #7 - 2026
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
February 17, 2026

Review Meeting

The Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners Hearing Room located at 210 E. Main St., Lancaster, OH. Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order, and the following Commissioners were present: Steve Davis, David Levacy and Jeff Fix. Also present: County Administrator, Aundrea Cordle; Deputy County Administrator, Jeff Porter; Clerk to the Board of Commissioners, Rochelle, Menningen; Communications and Information Coordinator, Bennett Niceswanger; Budget Director, Bart Hampson; EMA & Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; IT Director, Dan Neeley; Utilities Director, Tony Vogel; Child Support Program Administrator, Patrick Welsh; Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown; Recorder, Lisa McKenzie; Treasurer, James Bahnsen; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Austin Lines; Financial Analyst, Taylor Forquer; Economic & Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabrak; Budget Officer, Staci Knisley; Soil and Water Manager, Nikki Drake; and Sheriff's Deputy, Kevin Romine. Also in attendance: Ray Stemen, Garrett Davis, and Chris Snider.

Virtual attendees: Ash Sark, Josh Grossman, Lori Hawk, Beth Cottrell, Jared Collins, Greg Forquer, Jason Grubb, Jeff Barron, Lori Lovas, Chris, David Uhl, Stacy Hicks, Shelby Hunt, Holly Lybrook, Deborah French, Andy Robberts, Jessica Murphy, Tony Vogel, Jennifer Morgan, Andy Boystel, Steven Darnell, Britney Lee, Joe Ebel, and Alex Lape.

Welcome

Commissioner Davis opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance and speaking about the Basil-Western Road Intergovernmental agreements.

Joshua Grossman spoke about drafting the resolution on the agenda as the county's bond council.

Commissioner Davis spoke about a meeting the previous week held so that everyone could gain a better understanding.

Commissioner Fix stated he is glad the county is moving forward with the Basil-Western Road project.

Commissioner Levacy asked about the refunding timeline for the bonds.

Grossman replied that only the bonds that would be advantageous to refund would be refunded.

Commissioner Davis added that he had reviewed multiple scenarios with Mike Burns and the total savings will be between \$400,000 and \$600,000.

The County Auditor and Treasurer both expressed that they have no issues with the plans related to the bonds.

Public Comments

Ray Stemen of Lancaster offered a prayer.

Legal Update

Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Austin Lines stated he had no concerns regarding the Basil-Western Road bonds and thanked Josh Grossman for his expertise.

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County Administration Update

- *The County Administration Update was provided by County Administrator, Aundrea Cordle, unless otherwise indicated.*

Week in Review

Carnation Solar Project

County Administrator Aundrea Cordle attended the Ohio Power Siting Board evidentiary hearing for the Carnation Solar Project as the County's Ad Hoc member of the Board.

Highlights of Resolutions

Administrative Approvals

The review packet contains a list of administrative approvals.

Resolution Review

There are 24 resolutions on the agenda for the Regular voting meeting.

Resolutions of note:

- The first resolution on the agenda is to authorize the issuance of bonds up to \$8,375,000 for the purpose of paying for part of the acquisition, and improvements to Basil-Western Road, and adjacent areas.
- The next three resolutions are to authorize the refunding of all or a portion of the bonds that were related to the construction of the jail, sanitary sewer collection, treatment, and the disposal system at the Mingo Estates and Lakeside water reclamation facilities, and the improvements to the county's water supply, treatment, storage, and distribution system, and roadway improvements related to water facilities.
- The fifth resolution is to consolidate up to four of the bonds for road improvement, jail, sewer, and water.
- The sixth resolution is the last resolution on the agenda related to the Basil-Western Road Intergovernmental Agreement. This resolution authorizes a State Infrastructure Bank loan up to \$4,008,000.
- EMA has a resolution to amend resolution 2023-10.10.k which approved a partnership for operation of a MARCS Tower. This resolution executes the Tower agreement with the updated equipment list and the proper legal description, as well as the updated Bill of Sale.
- JFS has two financial resolutions, 4 network service agreements, and two addendums to previously approved service agreements.

Budget Review

None.

Calendar Review/Invitations Received

Informational Items

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- Millersport Business Group Meeting, February 18, 2026, 8:30 a.m., American Legion, 2557 Canal Dr., Millersport
- Veteran Services Meeting, February 18, 2026, 3:00 p.m., Veteran Services, 1550 Sheridan Dr., Lancaster
- Capital Budget Discussion, February 19, 2026, 12:30 p.m., Fairfield County Workforce Center, 4465 Coonpath Rd. NW, Lancaster
- Family and Children First Executive Committee Meeting, February 20, 2026, 8:30 a.m., Fairfield County Agricultural Center, 831 College Ave., Lancaster
- MCJDC Board of Trustees Meeting, February 20, 2026, 9:00 a.m., MCJDC, 923 Liberty Dr., Lancaster
- Bond Rating Call with Baird, February 20, 2026, 10:00 a.m. Commissioners' Hearing Room
- MCJDC Joint Board of Commissioners Meeting, February 20, 2026, 10:30 a.m., MCJDC, 923 Liberty Dr., Lancaster

Aundrea Cordle stated that she, Rick Szabrak, Commissioner Levacy, and Representative LaRe, were scheduled to meet at the Workforce Center to discuss the capital budget.

Updates from Elected Officials and Department Heads

Treasurer Jim Bahnsen stated that the due date for the first half property taxes is February 19th and added that residents have begun using the drive-through on Chestnut Street, but the Treasurer's Office continues to have high in-person traffic.

Recorder Lisa McKenzie stated she continues to move forward with the plan to allow credit card use for fees in her office.

Auditor Carri Brown provided the Commission with charts related to property tax, including how taxes are allocated and what they fund. It provided a simplified view of information on taxes in the community, and Commissioner Davis was pleased to see the analysis.

Rick Szabrak thanked Jon Kochis and Dan Neeley for addressing AV needs in the conference room for the Workforce Board Meeting. He added that 18 individuals visited the Workforce Center from the Licking County Business Advisory Council to tour the facility.

Jon Kochis spoke on the resolution related to virtual reality training and added that EMA continues to provide emergency bleed control supply kits to the community.

Commissioner Davis asked Jon Kochis and Tony Vogel to analyze the metrics collected from the solar array at the BMV to determine if additional arrays would be advantageous.

Commissioner Davis asked Director Neeley if county staff should be using Microsoft Copilot or if other AI platforms were also suitable.

Dan Neeley replied that county staff have access to Copilot and that the platform is considered more secure and closed than other publicly available AI platforms.

Patrick Welsh shared that the JFS drive-through payment center is open for child support payments. He also reported partnering with OUL for a job fair geared toward students approaching graduation. The job fair will also be open to the public.

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Nikki Drake stated that Fairfield County Soil and Water received several awards at a meeting held with all 88 Ohio counties.

Garrett Davis from Fairfield County United Way reported that the United Way campaign would reach just over \$1.1 million.

Commissioner Davis shared he is pleased with the work of United Way despite difficult circumstances.

Old Business

Commissioner Fix reported that he met with a landowner in Fairfield County who is interested in developing his site. He encouraged CCAO to be proactive with the state legislature and shared that he met with the Farm Bureau to discuss concerns about rising land costs and the challenges farmers face in expanding their operations. He also expressed appreciation to those who hosted the township and village training.

Commissioner Davis asked if Vantage Data was at a point where concerns regarding State legislature had passed.

Rick Szabrak replied that Vantage Data has already received the necessary approvals.

Commissioner Davis spoke about a conversation with Mike Burns and the county's chance for a AA1 Bond rating.

New Business

Commissioner Levacy expressed his desire to participate in the America 250-Ohio festivities and added that he will be on a call with a state committee to discuss how the county can be more involved.

Regular (Voting) Meeting

The Commissioners continued to the Regular/Voting portion of the meeting, and the following Commissioners were present: Steve Davis, David Levacy and Jeff Fix. Also present: County Administrator, Aundrea Cordle; Deputy County Administrator, Jeff Porter; Clerk to the Board of Commissioners, Rochelle, Menningen; Communications and Information Coordinator, Bennett Niceswanger; Budget Director, Bart Hampson; EMA & Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; IT Director, Dan Neeley; Utilities Director, Tony Vogel; Child Support Program Administrator, Patrick Welsh; Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown; Recorder, Lisa McKenzie; Treasurer, James Bahnsen; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Austin Lines; Financial Analyst, Taylor Forquer; Economic & Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabrak; Budget Officer, Staci Knisley; Soil and Water Manager, Nikki Drake; and Sheriff's Deputy, Kevin Romine. Also in attendance: Ray Stemen, Garrett Davis, and Chris Snider.

Virtual attendees: Ash Sark, Josh Grossman, Lori Hawk, Beth Cottrell, Jared Collins, Greg Forquer, Jason Grubb, Jeff Barron, Lori Lovas, Chris, David Uhl, Stacy Hicks, Shelby Hunt, Holly Lybrook, Deborah French, Andy Robberts, Jessica Murphy, Tony Vogel, Jennifer Morgan, Andy Boystel, Steven Darnell, Britney Lee, Joe Ebel, and Alex Lape.

Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Davis asked everyone to rise as able and lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Announcements

None.

Approval of Minutes for February 10, 2026

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Minutes for the Tuesday, February 10, 2026, meeting.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, David Levacy and Steve Davis

Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution:

- 2026-02.17.a A resolution authorizing the issuance of not to exceed \$8,375,000 of bonds for the purpose of paying part of the cost of the acquisition, construction, equipping and installation of certain improvements to Basil Western Road and other roads and areas adjacent or in close proximity thereto within the county, including, but not limited to, Kings Crossing and Hill Road, with such improvements including but not limited to the construction, widening, and paving of roads, the installation of water and sewer lines and stormwater drainage, the installation of lighting and traffic signage, the relocation of overhead wires underground, and landscape planting and other site improvements, and all necessary appurtenances thereto; and matters related to such bonds.

Commissioner Davis stated he has been a part of several meetings on added that there are always risks with such an endeavor.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, David Levacy and Steve Davis

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution:

- 2026-02.17.b A resolution authorizing the issuance of not to exceed \$16,075,000 of bonds for the purpose of currently refunding all or a portion of outstanding bonds issued, in part, to pay part of the cost of constructing a new county jail facility on real property owned by the county, and matters related to such bonds.

Budget Officer Staci Knisley stated that the county had already refunded a portion.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, David Levacy and Steve Davis

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution:

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2026-02.17.c A resolution authorizing the issuance of not to exceed \$1,430,000 of bonds for the purpose of currently refunding all or a portion of outstanding bonds issued, in part, to pay part of the cost of improvements to the county's sanitary sewer collection, treatment and disposal system, including roadway improvements at system facilities and improvements at the Mingo Estates and Lakeside water reclamation facilities, and matters related to such bonds.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, David Levacy and Steve Davis

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution:

2026-02.17.d A resolution authorizing the issuance of not to exceed \$930,000 of bonds for the purpose of currently refunding all or a portion of outstanding bonds issued, in part, to pay part of the cost of improvements to the county's water supply, treatment, storage and distribution system, including roadway improvements at system facilities and system improvements in the area of State Routes 204 and 256, and matters related to such bonds.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, David Levacy and Steve Davis

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution:

2026-02.17.e A Resolution consolidating up to four bond issues of the County of Fairfield, Ohio into a consolidated bond issue, and establishing the terms of such consolidated bond issue.

Commissioner Davis emphasized that the resolution established optionality, not obligation.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, David Levacy and Steve Davis

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution:

2026-02.17.f A resolution authorizing the Board of County Commissioners of Fairfield County, Ohio to finance the realignment and reconfiguration of the Kings Crossing/Hill Road and Hill Road/Basil Western Road intersections as well as the addition of a traffic lane and widening of existing lanes along the Basil-Western Road corridor in Violet Township, with the proceeds of a loan not to exceed \$4,008,000 in principal amount from the Ohio Department of Transportation State Infrastructure Bank; authorizing the execution of a loan agreement, a pledge and security agreement, a purchase agreement, an intergovernmental agreement, and related loan documents; and matters related thereto.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, David Levacy and Steve Davis

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On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolutions:

- 2026-02.17.g A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated & memo transactions Fund# 3435, Capital Improvement Project Fund.
- 2026-02.17.h A resolution to approve to appropriate from unappropriated into a major expense category for Fund # 3903, project# T0001, Basil Western 629 grant.
- 2026-02.17.i A resolution to authorize the establishment of a new bond retirement fund & capital project fund and appropriate from Unappropriated into major expenditure categories for the Basil Western Project

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, David Levacy and Steve Davis

Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolutions the Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities:

- 2026-02.17.j A resolution to approve a reimbursement for share of costs for Ethernet Services paid to Eline GloFiber as a memo expenditure for fund# 2060 - Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities
- 2026-02.17.k A Resolution to Approve a Reimbursement for Share of Costs for Liability Insurance Paid to CORSA as a Memo Expenditure for Fund# 2060

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, David Levacy and Steve Davis

Approval of a Resolution from the Fairfield County Emergency Management Agency

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution from the Fairfield County Emergency Management Agency:

- 2026-02.17.l Amendment of Resolution 2023-10.10.k, Which Approved a Partnership Agreement between the State of Ohio, Department of Administrative Services and the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners, for Operation of a MARCS Tower

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, David Levacy and Steve Davis

Approval of a Resolution from the Fairfield County Engineer

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution from the Fairfield County Engineer:

- 2026-02.17.m A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle for refunding general fund for CORSA fees

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Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, David Levacy and Steve Davis

Approval of Resolutions from Fairfield County Job and Family Services

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolutions from Fairfield County Job and Family Services:

- 2026-02.17.n A resolution to approve a memo exp./ memo receipt for the costs of Transportation paid to Fairfield County Transit as a memo expenditure for fund# 2018 Public Assistance Fund
- 2026-02.17.o A resolution to approve a memo exp./ memo receipt for the costs of Transportation paid to Fairfield County Transit as a memo expenditure for fund# 2599 Workforce Fund
- 2026-02.17.p A resolution authorizing the approval of a service agreement by and between Fairfield County Job & Family Services, Child Protective Services Division and Just Like Us Enrichment Agency Inc.
- 2026-02.17.q A Resolution regarding an amendment for a previously approved Network Placement and Related Services Agreement between Journey Home Foster Care and Child Protective Services Department.
- 2026-02.17.r A Resolution regarding an amendment for a previously approved Network Placement and Related Services Agreement between Reflections Group Home LLC. and Child Protective Services Department.
- 2026-02.17.s A Resolution regarding an amendment for a previously approved Network Placement and Related Services Agreement between Sojourners Care Network and Child Protective Services Department.
- 2026-02.17.t A Resolution regarding an amendment for a previously approved Network Placement and Related Services Agreement between Ohio Mentor, Inc. and Child Protective Services Department.
- 2026-02.17.u A Resolution regarding an amendment for a previously approved Network Placement and Related Services Agreement between Circle of Peace, LLC and Child Protective Services Department.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, David Levacy and Steve Davis

Approval of a Resolution from the Fairfield County Sheriff

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution from the Fairfield County Sheriff:

- 2026-02.17.v A Resolution to Appropriate from Unappropriated in a Major Expenditure Object Category for Sheriff; 2503; Police Revolving

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, David Levacy and Steve Davis

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Approval of a Resolution from the South Central Major Crimes Unit

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution from the Fairfield County South Central Major Crimes Unit:

2026-02.17.w A resolution authorizing an account to account transfer for MCU Fund 7829 (Sub fund 8362) Justice Assistance Grant 24

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, David Levacy and Steve Davis

Approval of the Payment of Bills

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution for the Payment of Bills:

2026-02.17.x A resolution authorizing the approval of payment of invoices for departments that need Board of Commissioners' approval.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, David Levacy and Steve Davis

Adjournment

Commissioner Levacy stated that the MARCs tower is a dramatic improvement in Fairfield County, and thanked Director Kochis for his leadership.

Commissioner Fix was deeply appreciative of the information provided by Auditor Brown.

With no further business, On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to adjourn at 10:01 a.m.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix, David Levacy and Steve Davis

The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 24, 2026, in the Commissioners' Hearing Room located at 210 E. Main St., Lancaster, OH.

