

Roundtable Meeting #9 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
February 25, 2025

Review Meeting

The Commissioners met at 1:00 p.m. at the Agricultural Center at 831 College Ave., Lancaster, OH. Commissioner Fix called the meeting to order, and the following Commissioners were present: Jeff Fix, Steve Davis, and David Levacy. County employees present: Aundrea Cordle, Jeff Porter, Rochelle Menningen, Bennett Niceswanger, Abby Watson, Leighann Adams, Bart Hampson, Rick Szabrak, CJ Roberts, Engineer Jeremiah Upp, Daniel Neeley, Jon Kochis, Jason Grubb, Tiffany Wilson, Corey Clark, Rachel Elsea, Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown, Judge Terre Vandervoort, Recorder Lisa McKenzie, Clerk of Courts Branden Meyer, Tony Vogel, Baylie Blevins, Kelly Frank, Austin Lines, Treasurer James Bahnsen, Michael Kaper, Marcey Fields, Marcy Shafer, Shannon Carter, Nikki Drake, Chad Lucht, Sheriff Alex Lape, and Angela Krile.

Welcome

Commissioner Fix opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance and thanked everyone who submitted their department updates ahead of the meeting.

Proclamation

Commissioner Fix provided a proclamation to Dr. Carri Brown for receiving the Excellence in Government Leadership award at the National AGA Conference.

Dr. Brown thanked the Commissioners and everyone in the room for their support and leadership throughout the county. She thanked Rachel Elsea for her part in the application.

2025-2028 Strategic Plan, Final Review

Ms. Cordle spoke about the previous Roundtable and added that the ideas provided at that meeting were incorporated into the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan draft.

Angela Krile stated that the goals for the Strategic Plan draft were established based on feedback from the department heads and elected officials. Opportunities were identified to improve broadband and infrastructure, expand Social Services, and providing affordable housing. Updates relating to workforce included childcare reform and ways to remove barriers for individuals who wish to work. County Operations must continually improve so that the county remains a leader in the state.

Ms. Cordle stated that other agencies have been incorporated into the pillars of the Strategic Plan as part of the action items. She emphasized that the cooperation of all the agencies in the county will help to bring the goals of the Strategic Plan to fruition.

Commissioner Fix thanked all those involved in the drafting of the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan. He wishes for the plan to be a living-breathing document as the county moves forward.

Contract Routing, Competitive Bidding, and HB 497

Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Austin Lines, provided updates on the changes included in HB 497. He explained the competitive bidding process, which products and services require competitive bidding, and the process for requests for qualifications. He also explained the process for reviewing contracts and reminded the attendees that contracts are reviewed to form and cannot contain indemnification clauses by law.

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County Website, Updated Bid Tab

Mr. Niceswanger stated that under HB 497 public notices can be posted on the county website and social media accounts instead of being advertised in the newspaper. There will be a new section added to the "Bids" tab on the county website for public notices to be posted.

Ms. Cordle stated that public notices can still be advertised in the newspaper, but the new bill allows the county to save time and money by posting them to the website and social media pages.

Ms. Elsea asked if the social media account being used must be the county's account, or if other agencies can post their own public notices to their accounts.

Mr. Lines stated that it should be posted to the county's social media account.

Ms. Cordle stated that there will be a template that Mr. Niceswanger uses for the social media posts so the notices remain consistent.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Levacy stated that he appreciates everyone in the room for their part in the county's success. He added that many people throughout the state look to Fairfield County as the model system.

Leadership Conference

Mr. Porter stated that the Leadership Conference will be held on April 15th at Alley Park in Lancaster and will include presentations by CORSA on required training.

Department Updates

Nikki Drake with the Fairfield Soil and Water Conservation District spoke on the funding that is available to assist farmers who were impacted by the drought in 2024. One of her employees recently was licensed to operate drones which will assist their organization in their field operations.

Shannon Carter with OSU Extension stated that her office offers programs in family consumer sciences and gardening, which are always open to the public. They will be hosting 4H Discovery Days at the fairgrounds for youth interested in learning more about 4H.

Kelly Frank with the Coroner's Office stated that Luann Davidson had retired from her position. She and the Chief Investigator recently attended training for death investigation.

Baylie Blevins with the Health Department stated their office has onboarded a new community health worker. The child fatality review will begin next week which offers insight from their community partners.

Marcy Schaffer with the Parks District stated that they finished their winter hike series, and will have a new trail opening this spring in Smeck Park. They have also transferred several properties to other governing authorities which were unsuitable for park use.

Recorder Lisa McKenzie stated that property fraud has increased in recent years so she will be offering training opportunities to local HOA's.

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Juvenile Court Judge Terre Vandervoort stated that the court was awarded an ARPA grant to assist with families experiencing attendance issues. The court was able to build a collaboration with other agencies and the schools to have a case management system. She anticipates it will serve over 100 families once it is ready.

Rachel Elsea with the Auditor's Office summarized the DocLink system and how it will be utilized by the Budget Commission. The Auditor's Office will be hosting the upcoming CAAO meeting at the Records Center.

Tiffany Wilson with Family and Children First Council stated that she plans to begin the Parent Education class next month to assist families with strong willed children in their home. Her office is also searching for a suitable applicant for a position as a parental coordinator.

Marcy Fields with ADAMH stated that the StarLight Center is operational. Venture Place is almost ready to begin site work. They will be hosting their annual dinner on Tuesday, April 29th at Crossroads which will focus on the theme of Raising Hope.

Leighann Adams with the Dog Shelter stated that the shelter has approximately 50 dogs in their care right now. They will be hosting a microchipping event this summer for residents.

Ms. Cordle added that the Dog Shelter is in need of cream cheese donations which helps staff to administer medication to dogs.

Abby Watson with Human Resources stated the new ben admin system called BeSwift is progressing. It will make for an easier experience with users selecting their employee benefits and communicating with the providers. The plan is to implement it slowly with full use by 2025 open enrollment.

Sheriff Alex Lape spoke about the implementation of the Next Generation 911 system his office uses. The system allows callers to approve temporary access to their phones so dispatchers and first responders can see the scene unfolding before they arrive. The system also can translate from Spanish to English and will soon have the capability to translate other languages. He also spoke briefly on the DD levy renewal for which he is a member of the levy committee.

Michael Kaper with the Land Bank thanked the Commissioners and County Administrator for the added security staff at the Courthouse, as well as the additional parking spots for those paying taxes. The Land Bank received funding for a mini grant program which allows them to assist with smaller projects.

Treasurer Bahnsen added that the security presence at the Administrative Courthouse has changed the mood as people have come in to pay taxes. His office is working to improve the processing of foreclosures which historically can take up to a year to conclude.

Tony Vogel provided an update on the utility projects in Violet Township. He also spoke on some of the larger subdivisions that are serviced by the City of Lancaster and those serviced by the county.

Clerk of Courts Branden Meyer stated that his office will conduct in-house testing of credit card processing. He continues to present to different groups on the Good Deeds Program and plans to continue with more presentations.

Corey Clark with Job and Family Services spoke about the impact of SNAP benefit theft and the other types of fraud his office assists in preventing. He also spoke about the Child Abuse

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Prevention Breakfast which will take place on April 4th, and the Family Fun Fest which will take place May 16th.

Commissioner Davis spoke about the positive changes that are taking place internally with the Major Crimes Unit (MCU).

Scott Duff with MCU stated that he is committed to improving the operations at MCU and is thankful for the assistance from the county in getting the agency back to a good financial position.

Jason Grubb stated that Facilities continues to make improvements to county buildings and touched on several of the current projects.

Jon Kochis with Facilities and the Emergency Management Agency stated that there are currently 6 capital improvement projects. The Commissioners purchased the Colonnade Building which will be renamed to the Sheridan Center and will serve as a conference and banquet facility for the county.

Commissioner Davis spoke about the importance of tornado shelters and stated that he has spoken with Mayor McDaniel of Lancaster about the potential of installing a tornado shelter at a mobile home neighborhood in Lancaster.

Dan Neeley with Information Technology stated that fraud is becoming more prevalent and added that IT is working to implement protections against any potential cyber security attacks. He also asked that agencies inform IT about any technology purchases so they can ensure they are added to the county's systems.

Rick Szabrak with Economic and Workforce Development provided an update on the programs being offered at the Workforce Center. He thanked Mr. Corey for his assistance in conducting a hiring event.

Mr. Hampson stated that the Commissioners' budget hearings have been set and he will begin setting up times to meet with each agency.

Commissioner Levacy complimented Mr. Clark and his team for helping seniors in the community and protecting them from fraud.

Commissioner Davis stated that the addition of Deputy Roberts at the Administrative Courthouse has been a great benefit.

Recorder McKenzie shared a story about Deputy Roberts being very thorough in monitoring the security cameras.

Ms. Cordle thanked the Sheriff's Office for their assistance in providing a deputy for the Administrative Courthouse.

Adjournment

With no further business, On the motion of David Levacy and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to adjourn at 3:24 p.m.

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

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The next Roundtable is scheduled for July 15, 2025, from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the Fairfield Center.

Motion by: David Levacy

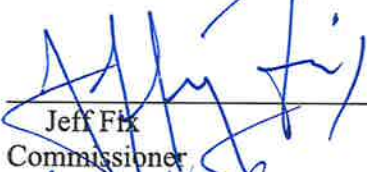
Seconded by: Steve Davis

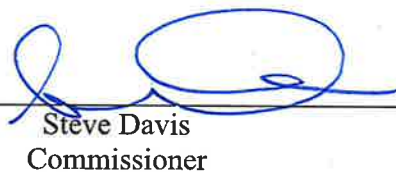
that the February 25, 2025, Roundtable minutes were approved by the following vote:

YEAS: David Levacy, Steve Davis, and Jeff Fix
ABSTENTIONS:

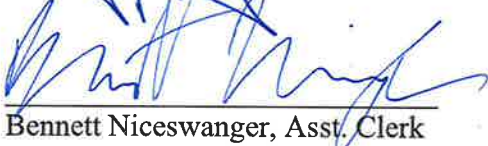
NAYS: None

*Approved on March 4, 2025


Jeff Fix
Commissioner


Steve Davis
Commissioner


David Levacy
Commissioner


Bennett Niceswanger, Asst. Clerk



A G E N D A

B O A R D O F C O M M I S S I O N E R S

Commissioners:
Steven A. Davis
Jeffrey M. Fix
David L. Levacy

County Administrator
Aundrea N. Cordle

Deputy County Administrator
Jeffrey D. Porter

Clerk
Rochelle Menningen

Roundtable - Elected Officials/Department Heads

February 25, 2025 ~ 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Fairfield County Agricultural Center, 831 College Ave., Lancaster

Purpose Statement:

The purpose of the roundtable discussion is to facilitate the review, discussion, and analysis of topics with relevance for Fairfield County elected officials and department heads. It is a time to provide information, network with peers, and plan.

AGENDA

1. Welcome
County Commissioners
Steven A. Davis
Jeffrey M. Fix
David L. Levacy
2. 2025-2028 Strategic Plan, Final Review
Aundrea Cordle and Angela Krile
3. County Updates
 - a. Contracting Routing, Competitive Bidding, & HB 497
Austin Lines
 - b. County Website, Updated Bid Tab
Bennett Niceswanger
 - c. Leadership Conference
Jeffrey Porter
4. Break
5. Departmental Updates
All Participants

ADJOURN

Next Roundtable is July 15, 2025, from 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. at the Fairfield Center

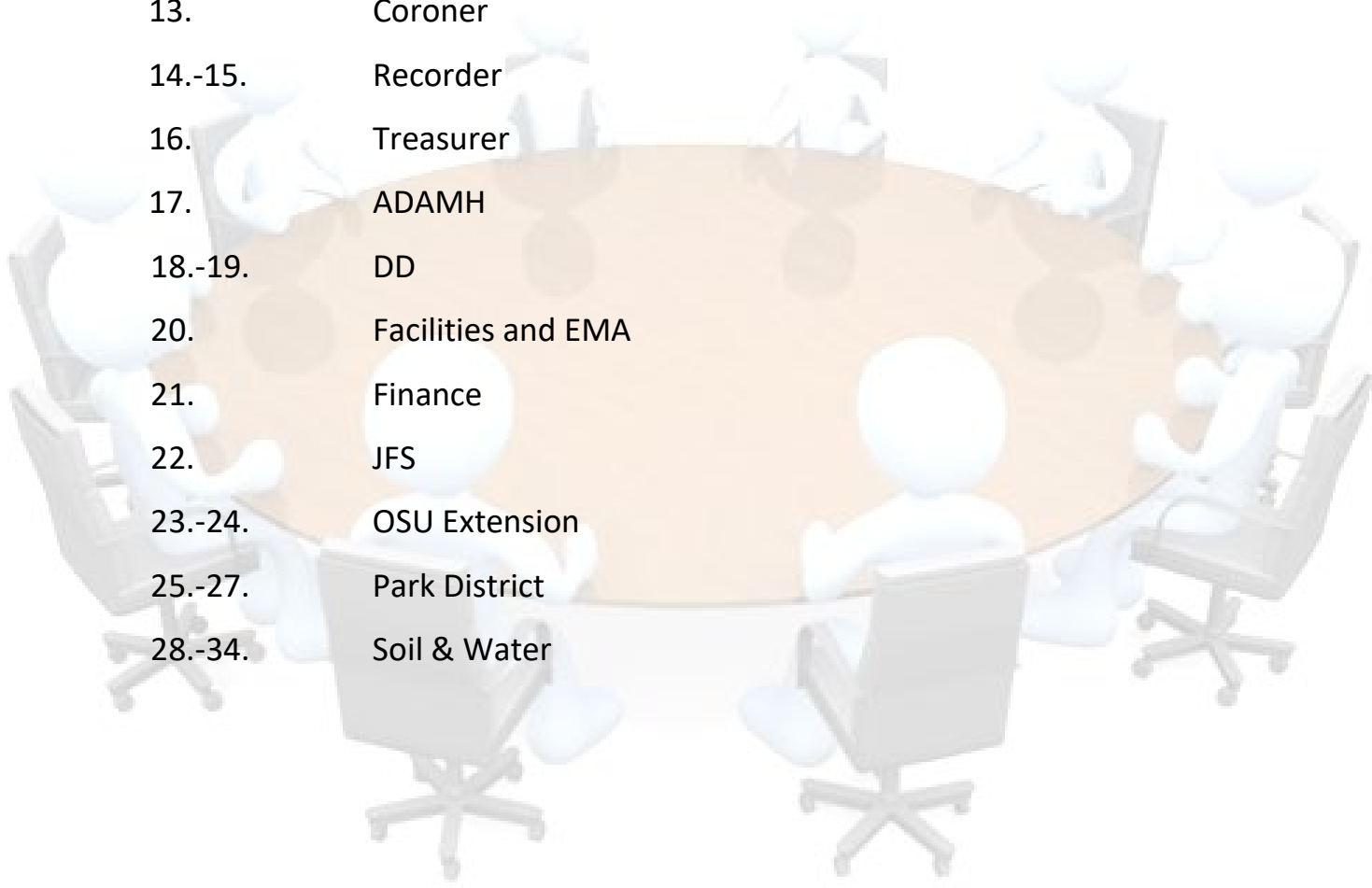
If you have suggestions for topics to address during the next Roundtable, please contact: Aunie Cordle,
Aundrea.Cordle@fairfieldcountyohio.gov.

S E R V E • C O N N E C T • P R O T E C T

Roundtable Index

Updates from Elected Officials and Department Heads

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| 14.-15. | Recorder |
| 16. | Treasurer |
| 17. | ADAMH |
| 18.-19. | DD |
| 20. | Facilities and EMA |
| 21. | Finance |
| 22. | JFS |
| 23.-24. | OSU Extension |
| 25.-27. | Park District |
| 28.-34. | Soil & Water |

AUDITOR'S LEDGER:

News from the County Auditor's Office



From the Desk of County Auditor Carri Brown

Good things are ahead! Our team here at the Auditor's Office is invigorated and energized by the incredible community that surrounds us. Our appreciation for this inspiration has lead to a few new initiatives, which you will read about in this newsletter. The first is a new spotlight, Causes We Care About, that highlights the causes our team is deeply passionate about and directly involved in. We believe in the importance of serving, connecting and protecting our community beyond working hours. We look forward to sharing these passions that bring us so much joy and fulfillment. We also will begin featuring community partnerships within our office as part of the Community Partnership Corner feature. We kick off this feature highlighting March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. Please take a moment to read more in the article below.

In this edition, we are also pleased to share about a prestigious National Excellence in Government Leadership Award. We also highlight important information related to office communications, including the recent Homestead mailer, Board of Revision Complaint deadline, information about what constitutes a community authority and more. We're looking forward to Sunshine Week, which will be held March 16-22.

If you missed a previous issue of our newsletter, you will find all of them posted online. We encourage you to visit our websites for ongoing updates and important information:

- [General County Auditor Information](#)
- [Real Estate Assessment Information](#)

All the best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carri L. Brown".

Carri Brown, PhD, MBA, CGFM
County Auditor

News From the Auditor's Office

Fairfield County Auditor, Dr. Carri L. Brown earns National "Excellence in Government Leadership" Award

Dr. Carri L. Brown, the County Auditor in Fairfield County, Ohio, has been awarded the 2025 Excellence in Government Leadership Award by the Association of Government Accountants (AGA) for her visionary leadership and exceptional contributions to governmental accounting. She received this prestigious recognition at the national AGA conference held in Washington, D.C., on February 20.

Dr. Brown was nominated by Tiffany Ridenbaugh, Special Investigations Officer with Auditor of State Keith Faber's Office. The award honors individuals whose leadership, achievements, and service have advanced financial management in government, strengthened the association, and improved communities.



Expressing gratitude for the award, Dr. Brown highlighted her more than three-decade-long relationship with AGA, emphasizing the organization's role in providing education and networking opportunities. She credited her team at the Fairfield County Auditor's Office for their daily dedication and collaboration with citizens and stakeholders. Dr. Brown's commitment to fostering a culture of growth, education, and financial stewardship stands as an inspiration to others in the public sector.

For more information about Dr. Brown's work or the Fairfield County Auditor's Office, you can visit the official website (www.co.fairfield.oh.us/auditor/) or contact Rachel Elsea, Communications Officer, at rachel.elsea@fairfieldcountyohio.gov.

Homestead Mailer Distributed

Fairfield County residents who participate in the Homestead Program for property tax reductions in the state of Ohio will be receiving a letter in the mail from Dr. Carri L. Brown, County Auditor.

The letter will include a continuing application for Homestead exemption. **Residents need to complete the application ONLY if they have any changes to report that affect their Homestead exemption.** If no changes have occurred, there is no need to return this form.

“We are highlighting this mailing because of the relatively large number of residents who will receive the letter, and we want people to know they can call the office if they have any questions,” stated Kayla Speakman, Deputy Auditor and team lead for the Homestead Program.



Ohio's Homestead Program allows senior citizens and permanently and totally disabled Ohioans that meet annual state set income requirements to reduce their property tax burden by shielding some of the market value of their home from taxation.

The income requirements in Ohio are that the total household income does not exceed \$40,000 per year if applying in 2025. The income for the program includes the Ohio adjusted gross income of the owner and the owner's spouse.

Specific questions about the Homestead Program can be addressed by calling the Auditor's Office at (740) 652-7020.

Board of Revision Complaint Deadline is March 31st

The deadline to file complaints against the valuation of real property is March 31, 2025.

For complaint forms and more information on filing, visit: [Authority of BOR: Introduction](#).



What is a New Community Authority?

A **new community authority** is a separate public body governed by a board of trustees that oversees, coordinates, constructs and finances public infrastructure improvements and community facilities.

Ohio Revised Code Chapter 349 provides the authority and procedures for forming and governing a new community authority.

These bodies are often thought of as a **public-private partnership** and can include plans for facilities for **industrial, commercial, residential,**



cultural, educational and/or recreational activities.

Generally, a new community authority is:

- **Designed to encourage the orderly development of an economically sound, new community (or an additional part of an existing community).**
- **Developer-driven.**
 - Acreage is owned or controlled by the developer.
 - If there are leases with the developer, they must be for 75 years or more.
 - The developer is represented on the board of trustees.
 - There is no minimum acreage if the new community authority is formed after March 22, 2019.
- **Created by a petition filed by the developer with an organizing board, which is a different board than the board of trustees for the new community authority. Such organizing board could be a board of county commissioners or another body.**
 - The petition must include a plan that sets forth a development program.
 - The organizing board holds a public hearing and evaluates how the new community authority's creation is favorable.
- **Revenue generating, through an assessment that provides a special benefit.**
 - The assessment can be based on acreage (such as what could be imagined with housing developments), millage (perhaps with recreational projects), income, or other variables - or combinations of variables. There is flexibility in how the assessment can be designed by the new community authority.
 - **The new community authority certifies to the county auditor its assessment by parcel and amount.** Assessments are placed on a property tax bill like other assessments are placed on property tax bills, and the new community authority is responsible for explaining its assessments to payors. Contact information for the new community authority should be provided to the county auditor and the county treasurer. The county treasurer will collect the assessments that are placed on property tax bills.
 - New community authorities may also issue bonds.

A new community authority, though, cannot offer traditional governmental services.

Sunshine Week

March 16-22 is Sunshine Week. Sunshine Week is a non-partisan collaboration to shine light on the importance of public records and open government. The Auditor's Office believes government transparency is of the utmost importance and is honored to participate in Sunshine Week.

Check our LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, and website during the week of March 16th for daily posts related to local government services.



Community Connections

Map of the Month - Revenge, Ohio

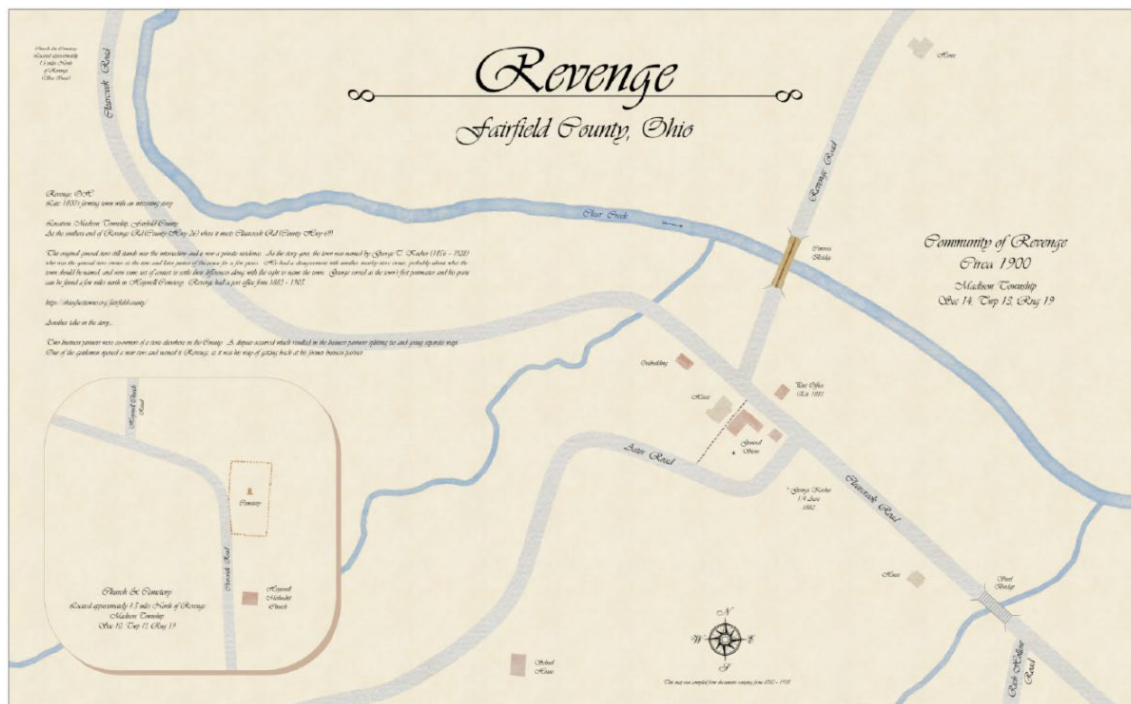
Revenge, Ohio was a farming town in the late 1800's. Revenge was located in Madison Township, Fairfield County, at the southern end of Revenge Road (County Hwy 26) where it meets Clearcreek Road (County Hwy 69).

The original general store still stands near the intersection and is now a private residence. As the story goes, the town was named for George C. Kocher (1856-1928) who was the general store owner at the time and later justice of the peace for a few years. He had a disagreement with another nearby store owner, probably about what the town should be named, and won some sort of contest to settle their differences along with the right to name the town. George served as the town's first postmaster and his grave can be found a few miles north of Hopewell Cemetery. Revenge had a post office from 1883-1905. (from <https://ohioghosttowns.org/Fairfield-county>)

Another take on the story...

Two business partners were co-owners of a store elsewhere in the County. A dispute occurred which resulted in the business partners splitting ties and going separate ways. One of the gentlemen opened a new store and named it Revenge, as it was his way of getting back at his former business partner.

Visit our website for a zoomable version of the [March Map of the Month](#).



Community Partnership Corner - March is DD Awareness Month

Did you know the first Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month was recognized in 1987 by President Ronald Reagan?

In his proclamation, dated February 27, 1987, President Reagan stated, “For many of these people with developmental disabilities there is now the prospect of a brighter future and greater opportunity. Americans are becoming increasingly aware that such disabilities need not keep individuals from realizing their full potential in school, at work or at home, as members of their families and of their communities.” His proclamation encouraged “appropriate observances and activities directed toward increasing public awareness of the needs and the potential of Americans with developmental disabilities.” He ended the proclamation with these words, “I urge all Americans to join me in affording to our fellow citizens with such disabilities both encouragement and the opportunities they need to lead productive lives and to achieve their full potential.”



For information regarding Fairfield County’s Board of Developmental Disabilities, including their annual Celebration of Possibilities event, visit the [Celebration of Possibilities webpage](#).

Getting to Know Our Team

Causes We Care About

Our office is highlighting causes close to the hearts of our team. Stacy Knight, Map Room Technician, is a member of TWIG 1. TWIG 1 runs the Cancer Care Run held the 2nd Saturday in October. Money raised from this event supports the Fairfield Medical Center Foundation's Cancer Care Fund. This fund helps provide patients with nutritional supplants; diagnostic and preventive treatments; wigs; and other necessary items that are not covered by insurance.

Stacy told the group, "As a cancer survivor, I'm always looking for ways to assist those recently diagnosed with cancer. I was thrilled to be invited to a TWIG 1 meeting and learn how much they support the Cancer Care Center at Fairfield Medical Center. This year's donation was \$11,000."

The 2025 Cancer Care Run will take place Saturday, October 11 at Marten's Park. TWIGs are auxiliary groups that raise money in support of Fairfield Medical Center. For more information on the FMC TWIGs, visit [their webpage](#).

TWIG 1 Makes Generous Donation to FMC Foundation

TWIG 1, the first community TWIG established in 1948, gathered last week to present the FMC Foundation and Foundation Board members with a generous donation of \$11,000. The money raised by the TWIG's annual Cancer Care Run, supports the FMC Foundation's Cancer Care Fund. This fund provides everything from basic nutritional supplements, diagnostic and preventative treatments, to wigs and other necessary items not covered by health insurance. FMC Foundation is truly grateful for the dedication and support of the members of TWIG 1 and all the FMC TWIGs that provide vital funding for programs and services in our region.



Pictured (L to R): Beth Bell, Holly Uhl, Sharon Scruggs, Beth Tatman, Amy Sampson-Swinehart, Diane Stuckey, Amanda Stuckey, Risha Wagner, Reese Campbell, Denise Bauer, Stacy Knight, Christa Moody, Phil Settecase, Craig Vandervoort

June 3, 2024

Volume N. 679

February Birthdays

Curt – 11
Jess – 18
Lori H. – 22
Michelle - 26



Resources



Follow Your Auditor's Office On
Social Media!

Did you know we have over 4,275 followers across our four social media platforms? If you're not one of those 4,275, you should join and follow!

- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [YouTube](#)

Public Records Requests



The mode response time for public records requests to the County Auditor's Office is within one day. If you have a request, please contact Rachel Elsea at rachel.elsea@fairfieldcountyohio.gov.

Frequently Used Forms

Most of the County Auditor forms can be found on our website.

[Search Forms](#)

March Dates of Interest

3: CAUV Renewal Applications
Due

8: International Women's Day

16-22: Sunshine Week

31: Board of Revision Application
Deadline

SAVE THE DATE

March 10-16 - Sunshine Week

Fairfield County Auditor's Office | [Website](#)



Fairfield County Auditor's Office | 108 North High Street | Lancaster, OH 43130 US

Trainings Coming Soon!

What is DocLink?

DocLink is a submission management system to simplify processes, automate workflows, and support organizational compliance, making it easier for you to work with the Auditor's Office.

How it Works

Connect with the Auditor's Office through a secured web-based solution, replacing email submissions for:

- Budget commission
- Tax settlement distributions
- Local government distributions

Get the documents you need, complete them and upload straight to our team.

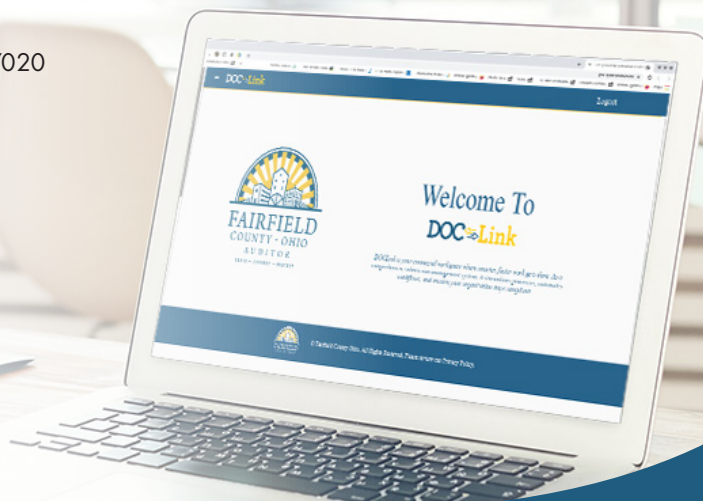
Solution Features

- Interactive dashboard
- Special announcements
- Interactive calendar with reminder notifications
- Resource/training links and documentation
- Role-based user access

Video tutorials are coming soon!

Questions?

Contact Local Government Support: (740) 652-7020
or localgovsupport@fairfieldcountyohio.gov





OFFICE OF THE CORONER

L. Brian Varney, M.D., Coroner

Commissioner's Roundtable

2/25/2025

Fairfield County Coroner's Office

- Kelly Frank, Administrator, attended Ohio Suicide Fatality Review Best Practices Summit on November 12, 2024.
- OVRS (Ohio Vital Records System) – “Go-live” of Ohio’s new vital records system to record births and deaths has been postponed from its original January 1, 2025. “Go-live” for the OVRS death certificate model has been rescheduled for July 1, 2025.
- Kelly Frank, Administrator and Mike Hardway, Chief Investigator attended and completed 16 hours in Death Investigation for the First Officer and/or Supervisor on the Scene Seminar February 19-20th.
- Congratulations and best wishes to Luann Davidson on her retirement!



SERVE • CONNECT • PROTECT



Fairfield County Recorder

Wednesday February 12th - Recorder, Lisa McKenzie; Clerk of Court, Branden Meyer; and Judge Terre Vandervoort presented an overview of the Good Deeds Program to the Fairfield County Bar Association. The intention of the presentation was to gain feedback and participation in the program from local attorneys before taking the initiative to the public. There was a lot of discussion, and we look forward to the feedback and getting the program rolling.

Thursday February 13th -the Recorder's office hosted our recording vendor Fidar and Recorders from southern Ohio for a user group meeting. We were pleased to offer guest speakers both in person and virtually and have valuable discussions on what we are doing now in our counties and future opportunities.



Lisa McKenzie • Fairfield County Recorder
210 E Main Street • Rm 205 • Lancaster, OH 43130
P: 740-652-7100 • F: 740-687-7104



Fairfield County Recorder

Property Fraud is REAL. There are several cases of property fraud in the state of Ohio right now. While there is no legislation to stop a document from being transferred or recorded, the Recorder's office does offer **FREE** Property Fraud Alert. Please feel free to share this information with anyone you know that owns property in Fairfield County. (Note: most Recorder's offices

Property Fraud Alert



Property Fraud occurs when someone records a fraudulent document in the county land records office, making it look like they own your home or property.

Property Fraud Alert is a notification service that alerts subscribers against the possibilities of fraudulent activity being committed against their property.

Sign up for Free by visiting **PropertyFraudAlert.com**, by scanning the QR code or call Property Fraud Alert Hotline at 800-728-3858.



Fairfield County, Ohio

If you require assistance to sign up please call us at 800-728-3858.

Property Fraud Alert is an online subscription service offered to the public that allows them to have their name monitored within the Recorder's office in order to track possible fraudulent recordings that affects their property.

The threat of mortgage fraud and identity theft crimes continue to rise, and all too often victims of these types of fraudulent activities are unaware their homes or identity have been stolen. While Property Fraud Alert does not prevent fraud from happening, it provides an early warning system for property owners to take appropriate actions should they determine possible fraudulent activity has taken place.

It's simple! Just enter your personal and/or business name and you will be notified when a document is recorded with your name match.

[Continue](#)

[Learn more about the Property Fraud Alert service](#)

Lisa McKenzie
County Recorder
(740) 652-7100
Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
210 East Main Street, Lancaster, OH 43130

*Register in English or Spanish.
Choose how you want to be notified:
Text, Call or Email.*



Lisa McKenzie • Fairfield County Recorder
210 E Main Street • Rm 205 • Lancaster, OH 43130
P: 740-652-7100 • F: 740-687-7104



OFFICE OF TREASURER

James N. Bahnsen, Treasurer

February 25, 2025 Roundtable Departmental Update

Treasurer's Office

1. We recently completed our 1st Half 2024 (due in 2025) tax collection period. This is always our busiest collection period of the year, and this year we noticed much higher use of the Chestnut Street Payment drive through. On Tuesday February 18 alone we processed 588 payments through the drive through location.
2. We would like to thank the Commissioners and County Administration for assisting with better security (a Sheriff's Deputy on duty in the Administrative Courthouse) and by allowing for "Tax Payment Only Parking" in the front of the building during the tax collection period. Both have been noted and commented upon by appreciative taxpayers and staff.
3. The Treasurer's Office is currently in the process of implementing a new cashiering system, with testing ongoing during our collection. The system should allow for better customer service and increased efficiency with daily balancing. We expect to make the system available in the future, once testing is completed, to other departments that collect cash payments if they are interested.

Land Bank

1. The Land Bank has 19 demolitions pending throughout the County, all funded through a State demolition grant. Projects are being completed on behalf of several local partners, including the County Parks Department, the City of Pickerington and ADAMH. Our total demolition award was in excess of \$850,000, with work scheduled to be completed by the middle of this year.
2. Our Land Bank Mini-Grant program continues to fund projects throughout the county, with recent partners including the Lancaster Fairfield Chamber of Commerce, Pickerington Community Theater, Harcum House, the Fairfield Area Humane Society and Wagnalls Memorial in Lithopolis. Each project involves renovations of some sort to buildings owned by the partners, and range in amount from \$11,000 to \$15,000.

SERVE • CONNECT • PROTECT



We are very thankful for the community's support in passing our renewal levy.

STARLight is operating and has capacity. Anyone who needs their services, or wants to ask about eligibility can call the OhioGuidestone staff at 740-672-3855.

Venture Place should be able to start site work in the next month, the Homeless outreach team continues to do great work connecting with unhoused people in Fairfield County. We just applied and received a grant to be able to expand the team that Lutheran Social Services operates.

Our Board will be holding a retreat March 8 to examine the results of the Community Needs Assessment we completed with Ohio University Voinovich school and the financial forecasting our Finance and Operations Director has put together to plan for priorities for the next 4 years.

Our staff and board positions are all filled, we feel fortunate to have a very engaged and competent board and a skilled team of staff!!

Marcy

Marcy Fields, LISW-S

Executive Director

Fairfield County ADAMH Board

108 W. Main St., Suite A

Lancaster, Ohio 43130

740.654.0829 x304

www.fairfieldadamh.org



2024 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

Our mission is to bring about a vibrant community where people lead lives of greater independence and make meaningful contributions.

BY THE NUMBERS

Program Enrollment

Early Intervention	410
Forest Rose School 23-24 & 24-25 school years	66
Case Coordination	1270
Family Support Services	430
Summer Scholarship	255

Fairfield DD does not have a waiting list.
When needs arise, we connect people with community resources.

2401

people supported during 2024

520

newly enrolled in services at Fairfield DD

68

Early Intervention children met outcomes and developmental milestones resulting in no longer needing services

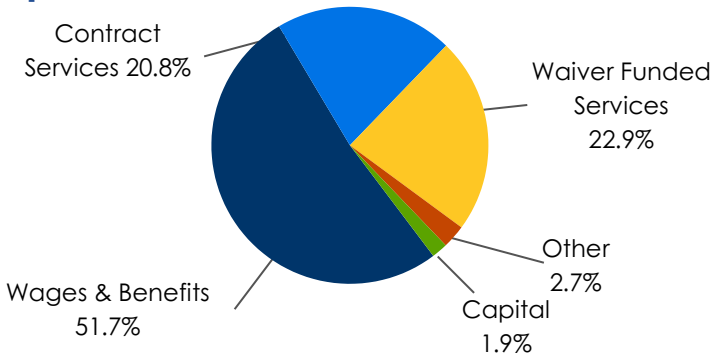
72

new provider connections established

Fairfield DD secured nearly \$900,000 in grant funding to enhance community accessibility. This includes \$500,000 for a new all-accessible ball field, \$150,000 for a mobile changing vehicle, and \$100,000 for a new accessible van. Additional funds were invested in assistive and enabling technology, as well as language translation services.

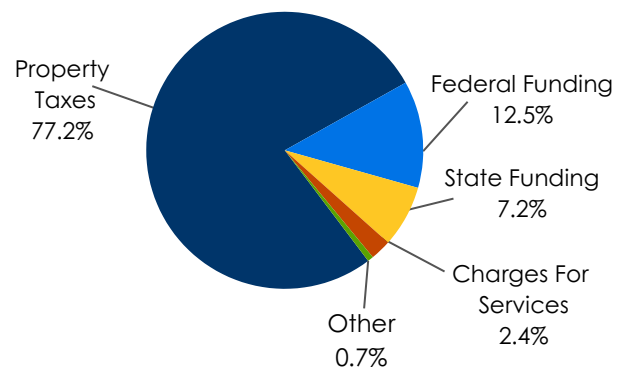
2024 Financials

Expenditures



2/25/2025

Revenue



024

INITIATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

1



Independence

Fairfield DD used technology to support people to be more independent. The Enabling Technology Lending Library was created so people can try out different devices to see if they work for them before buying. Remote support is also helping 15 people have more freedom and enjoy time on their own without others in their space.

2



Inclusion

Staff at Fairfield DD collaborated with Starfire Council to connect five families with a grant for "Inclusion Seekers." It connected these people and their teams with additional resources to help expand social networks and pursue their passions in the community.

3



Inspired Workforce

Team members participated in training and discussions on belonging, with ongoing use of shared language in communication. The agency also introduced a new leadership model based on trust and inspiration, while continuing the mission ambassador program.

4



Collaboration

Fairfield DD collaborates with various agencies each month. Partnerships have strengthened with leaders from local school districts and the Educational Service Center to foster ongoing discussions about education. Collaboration with the Family Children First Council has expanded, focusing on Early Intervention and connecting individuals to the wide range of services.



Facilities and EMA Roundtable Update February 25th, 2025

Facilities

- Completion of Projects
 - Sheridan projects
 - Salt Barn
 - Elevator at Fairfield
- Ongoing and upcoming projects
 - Sheridan Construction
 - Economic Development and Med Lab at Workforce
 - Airport Hangars
 - Jail Security
 - 239 Roof and HVAC
- New staff members
 - Kaylee Burgess – Custodian
 - LaTera Campbell – Custodian
 - Jason Grubb – Deputy Director

Emergency Management

- EOP was updated and distributed in January
- Currently updating our Debris Management and Elected Official Guide
- Thank you to everyone who assisted in updating our department emergency contact list, as a reminder if you have an agency level COOP plan now is a great time to take a look and make sure it is up to date.
- Gearing up for a busy summer supporting all of the special events occurring throughout the county.



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Commissioners:

Steven A. Davis

Jeffrey M. Fix

David L. Levacy

County Administrator

Aundrea N. Cordle

Deputy County Administrator

Jeffrey D. Porter

Clerk

Rochelle Menningen

Commissioners Finance Department
Bart Hampson Budget Director

Department updates:

- 2026 Budget
 - Level 1 will be open in ERP on April 1st, 2025.
 - Level 3 budget entry access will end on August 27th, 2025. This is the final time for General Fund departments to make changes in Enterprise ERP Budget Entry.
 - Level 4 will end December 1st for all non-general fund departments.
 - No substantial changes in the process or parameters for 2026 at this time.
- We will begin scheduling the 2026 pre-hearing conferences in March.
- The October Commissioners budget hearings have already been scheduled for 2026.
- Drainage Maintenance District
 - We will start working with the Engineer's office to complete the Drainage Maintenance District Assessments in April.

Bart Hampson, MSM Budget Director



210 E. Main St.
Lancaster, OH
43130



740-652-7089 (t)
740-503-5525 (c)
740-687-6048 (f)



www.co.fairfield.oh.us



JFS Department Update

Presenter: Corey Clark, Director

- The Governor's Budget released earlier this month contained a few items that could potentially impact JFS. They are as follows:
 1. A \$30M (425M in first year and additional \$5M in second year) increase in the State Child Protective Allocation (SCPA).
 2. \$30M (\$20M in first year and \$10M in second year) for Children's Wellness Campuses (short-term crisis stabilization centers)
 3. Increase in publicly funded childcare eligibility to 160% FPL (currently 145%), with a continuation of the child care choice voucher program up to 200% of the FPL.
- HB 338, effective 3/20/25, modifies the ORC to allow child support orders to be issued, modified, or extended for the life of an individual (child of the parties) if that individual is disabled.
- We were recently selected by the Department of Children and Youth (DCY) to participate in a pilot program for tiered foster homes. We are the lead agency and are partnering with South Central JFS. The pilot program includes funding to be used primarily for the recruitment and training of foster parents. We recently met with Krile Communications to develop an outreach and marketing plan for this program.
- Ohio was approved for an OWF Pilot program. This would allow us to bypass the traditional [OWF] work participation rates. The model will emphasize holistic services and utilize resources from DCY's Family Success Network to meet families where they are. The goal is to offer a more individualized, person-centered support for families receiving TANF as they transition to self-sufficiency.
- Fact 95, the federal plan that allowed for the replacement of stolen SNAP benefits, expired on December 20th and has not been renewed. As a result, stolen benefits are no longer being replaced which is a source of significant frustration for impacted customers.
- Adult Protective Services is partnering with Fairfield Federal Bank to combat financial scamming of elderly in our community. We have established a hotline for bank officials to call when they suspect a scam. Our APS staff will then intervene with the customers and attempt to convince them they are being scammed.

THE EXTENSION CONNECTION

Highlights from OSU Extension in Fairfield County

FEBRUARY, 2025



FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

Wellness programs were offered through a variety of family and consumer science topics including Winter Wellness, Beating the Winter Blues, Meal Planning, Cooking Under Pressure, Slow Cooking, Developing a Spending and Saving Plan, Transferring Cherished Possessions, Mindful Breathing, and Live Healthy Live Well reaching 684 people in Fairfield County. Community partners included Suicide Prevention Coalition of Fairfield County, Wagnalls Library, Fairfield District Library, Pickerington Library, Keller Market House and Fairfield Union High School.

COOKING BASICS

OSU Extension partnered with the Southeast Ohio Center for Independent Living to offer a 3-part cooking class series to 8 adults. Participants learned skills in using a kitchen knife, measuring

ingredients, and using appliances like the microwave, stovetop and oven. Participants also learned about the healthy food choices in MyPlate and how to access online libraries of healthy, low-cost recipes.



**A MATTER OF
BALANCE**
MANAGING CONCERNS ABOUT FALLS

**MATTER OF
BALANCE**

OSU Extension partnered with Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging and Fairfield County Senior Hub to teach an 8-week series to help older adults manage concerns about falling. Twenty-four adults completed at least 5 of 8 classes, and reported gaining confidence, strength and balance. Several adults reported an increase in activity level as well.



SNAP-ED UPDATES

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EDUCATION

SNAP-Ed Program Assistants are teaching Fairfield County youth at Tussing, Gorsuch West and Medill elementaries. Students are learning about the basics of nutrition and trying healthy foods. They also completed training to learn about new resources and plans for teaching adults about nutrition in the community. Planning is underway for 2026 lessons and events.

AG & NATURAL RESOURCES

OHIO VIRTUAL BEEF SCHOOL SESSION 1

OSU Extension hosted UK Extension Economist Kenny Burdine during the first session of the 2025 Ohio Virtual Beef School. There were 23 in-person participants and 42 attended virtually. The presentation has been viewed more than 100 times on YouTube since.

FERTILIZER & PESTICIDE RECERTIFICATION

On February 10th, 76 fertilizer and/or pesticide applicators joined us for recertification training. The next training is scheduled for Thursday, March 13th.

OWL PROWL

Over 35 participants joined Carrie Brown and OSU Extension Wildlife Specialist, Marne Titchenell, for a January Owl Prowl at Coyote Run. This family-friendly event featured a presentation, owl craft, raptor pellet dissection, and owl call hike.

Ohio Nature Education even brought three live owls to round out the experience.

FARM ACCOUNTING WORKSHOP

OSU Extension hosted Farm Management Field Specialist, Bruce Clevenger, for a 2-day farm accounting workshop. Computers and Quicken software were provided for participants as they explored options for keeping farm business financial records.

FAIRFIELD COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS

In 2024, forty-five Master Gardener Volunteers gave back 2,927 hours at \$31.80 (Points of Light Volunteer organization, May, 2023) for a value of give back of over \$93,000 to a variety of Fairfield County non-profit groups. While recognizing the value of the give-back is important, the value of knowledge gained, friendships shared and making a difference in community is immeasurable.



4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

45 camp counselors (29 returning, 16 new) have been selected to help plan programs and lead campers for the upcoming 4-H camp season. Fairfield County offers 4 different camps to our members hosted at Alley Park in Lancaster as well as Tar Hollow State Park.

7 new Junior Fair Board members were selected to join a team of returning board members for a total of 30 board members and 3 junior advisors. As they begin their year, they are reviewing Junior Fair rule and award changes that workflow to the Senior Fair Board for the upcoming fair.

54 youth completed the Junior Achievement Form (ages 9-13) and 40 youth completed the Ohio 4-H Achievement Form (ages 14-18). These forms are representation of the 4-H member's cumulative 4-H experiences. Members will be recognized for their award accomplishments and trip scholarships at our 4-H Achievement Program in April. Additionally, 59 Ohio 4-H Achievement Forms from 27 teens were forwarded to the state level be reviewed and considered for the Ohio 4-H Achievement Award. State 4-H Achievement Award winners will be announced by April.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

fairfield.osu.edu

CFA ES provides research and related educational programs to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis.
For more information: go.osu.edu/cfaesdiversity



Fairfield County Park District

Winter '24-'25 Highlights

Fairfield County Leadership Roundtable February 25, 2025

Repairs to Rock Mill milling apparatus (forebay) were completed in September. We intend to return to our milling demonstrations in May.

Electrical service has been installed in the Fetter-Hood Barn at Smeck Park.

H2Ohio Projects continue at Two Glaciers Park and were completed at Wagner Preserve.

We were awarded a grant from the Martens Charitable Trust to develop educational exhibits at Mambourg Nature Center. The project planning is complete, and exhibit creation is in process.

We will be officially opening the Goldenrod Trail at Smeck Park this spring.

We are currently working to fill an Assistant Naturalist position and have received more applications than for any position in several years.

As we plan for the park district's future, we recognize that we have some properties that do not have the potential to be developed for park use. We have recently transferred ownership of two small parcels, near Rock Mill Lake Wildlife Area, to ODNR and Turkey Run Church and Cemetery to Amanda Township.

Our education department worked hard to expand educational programming in 2024.

- 2318 visitors attended public programs offered at 8 park district locations.
- Our outreach programs, with 10 community organizations, connected with 715 people.
- 559 students, from 7 schools, attended field trips at Wahkeena Nature Preserve.

Finance and Administration Coordinator, Ginger Caito, will be retiring in March. Join us to celebrate Ginger on March 24th 2:00-4:00 at the Record's Center.





FEBRUARY

CROSS MOUND PARK

6pm | February 22

Spring Awakening: Owl Prowl

MAMBOURG PARK

6pm | February 8

Spring Awakening: Owl Prowl

6:30pm | February 14

Valentine's Day Luminary Walk

10am | February 15

2nd Mambourg Winter Hike

9am | February 21

Breakfast & Birding

2pm | February 21

Winter Foraging

11am | February 28

Active Amphibians

SENSORY TRAIL PARK

11am | February 12

Tots on Trail

WAHKEENA NATURE PRESERVE

1pm | February 2

Spring Awakening: Ground Hog Day

Schedule subject to change. Confirm details before attending.

fairfieldcountyparks.org/events

MARCH

MAMBOURG PARK

6pm | March 7

Ohio Game Birds

11am | March 22

Leprechaun Hunt

8pm | March 29 | REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Flying Squirrels

SMECK PARK

6pm | March 8

**Spring Awakening:
Woodcock Walk**

3pm | March 15

**Spring Awakening:
First Flowers Hike**

1pm | March 16

Wellness Hike

Schedule subject to change. Confirm details before attending.

fairfieldcountyparks.org/events



OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Fairfield County District Library

"Rock Stars!"

March 5 | Baltimore Branch

March 6 | Main Library

What can you find in the dirt?
We're talking about fossils in rocks!

After storytime you can
craft a 'fossil' to take home.



Annual Report 2024



Staff

***Josh Troyer/Brent Dennis** - Engineering Technician

Nikki Drake - District Manager/
Engineering Technician

Jonathan Ferbrache – Sr. Resource Specialist

***Molly Gilleland** - Urban/Resource Technician

Christina Holt - Fiscal Coordinator

Chad Lucht - Urban Manager

Margaret Roberts – Urban/Geomatic Technician

Lauren Vires – Wildlife/Education Specialist

***resigned**



Board of Supervisors

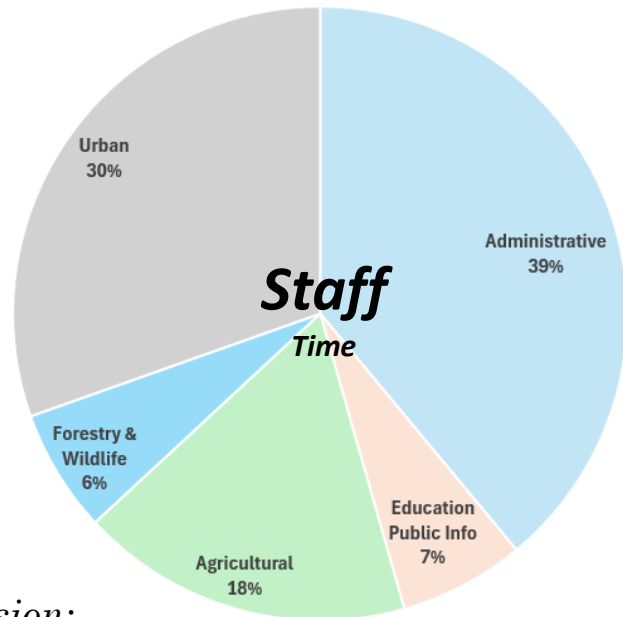
Doug Tenney – Chair (2022-current)

Gregg Pontius - Vice-Chair (2021-current)

Amber Hoisington – Secretary (2023-current)

Linda Claypool – Treasurer (2019-current)

Cheyenne Jepsen – Member (2024-current)



Thank You!



Our mission:

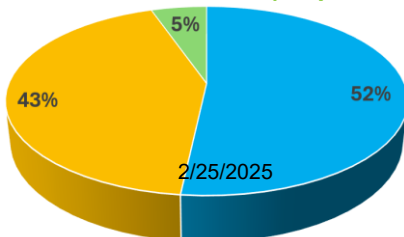
*to be progressive natural resource advocates
by assisting the public with conservation choices*

Budget

Commissioner Funds = \$346,800

State Funds = \$287,981

Other Local Funds = \$35,728



\$ Into Fairfield County Economy Through Programs (does not go to FSWCD)

Conservation Reserve Program	\$438,726
Environmental Quality Incentives Program	\$634,665
Conservation Stewardship Program	\$430,615
Farmland Preservation Program	\$131,200

\$1,635,206

AGRICULTURE



8 Emergency
Conservation
plans

petition
ditches **2**
inspected w/
Co. Engineer



160 drainage
calls/visits



20
drone
flights

451
acres of tile
installed



H2Ohio

8,020

acres
enrolled for
nutrient mgmt.
plans



182.5 acres + 325 trees
& 17,000 grapevines
planted w/ drills &
tree planter



4 farmland
preservation
applications



Protected farm
33 monitoring
inspections

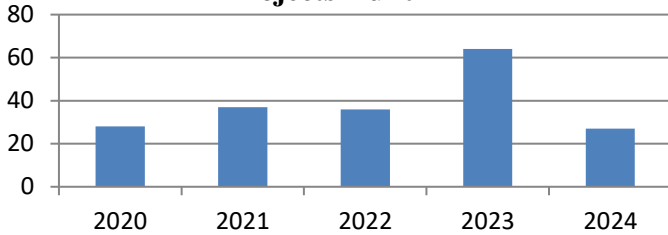
1 selected + **1** closing

2/25/2025

035

2024 Engineering Review

Projects Built

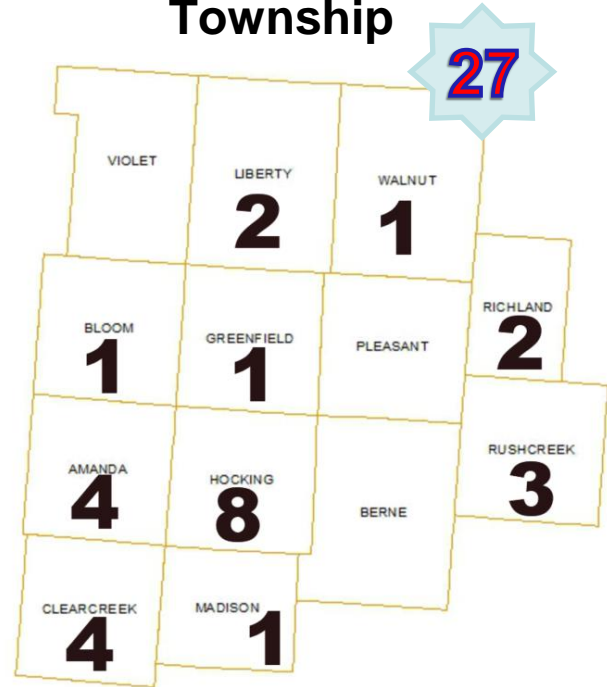


Above: Graph shows 5 years of construction trends. CRP waterway cost-share from 50% to 100% in 2021, staff changes (Carrie 3/19-7/21, Josh 9/21-7/24, Brent started 9/24), and the 2024 drought have affected numbers. Design requests remain strong, although the rising cost of materials is an issue.

Projects constructed = 27

- 13 tile systems
- 6 watering facilities
- 5 waterways
- 1 grade stabilization structure–new insta-turf chute
- 1 heavy use pad
- 1 access road

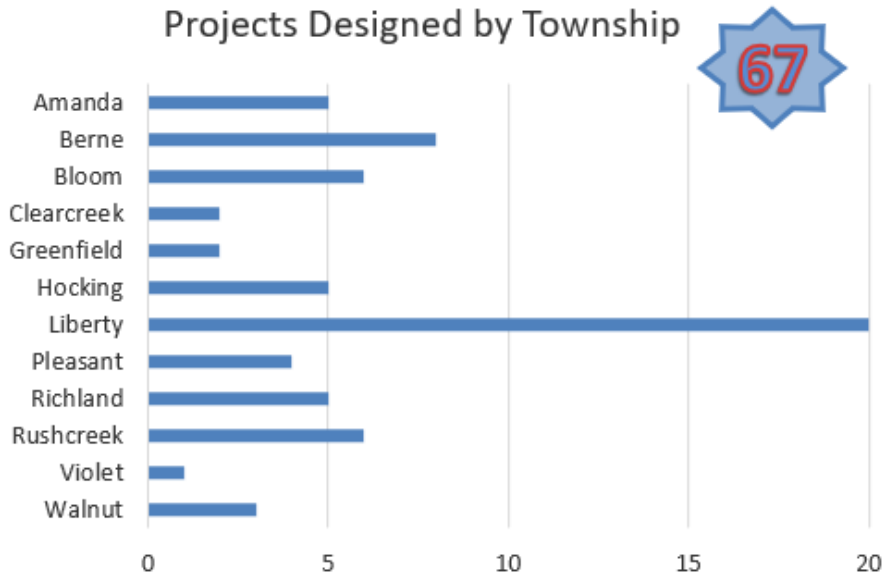
Projects Constructed by Township



Projects designed = 67

- 24 waterways
- 16 tile systems
- 15 watering facilities
- 5 grade stabilization structures
- 2 spring developments
- 2 stream crossings
- 2 heavy use pads
- 1 access road

Projects Designed by Township



Projects surveyed = 73

- 31 watering facilities
- 21 waterways
- 14 tile systems
- 2 stream crossings
- 2 heavy use pads
- 1 animal waste
- 1 access road
- 1 emergency spillway

NRCS Contribution agreement funding received for engineering projects completed:

\$9,755.25 CRP

\$320.25 EQIP

CRP waterway renewal inspections = 31

(every 10 years for re-enrollment)

5 inspections for 2-yr incentives

Ag. pollution complaints – 3 (all non-violations)

Timber harvest pollution complaint – 1 (non-violation)

2



122 cars
2.9 tons electronics
107 lbs. drugs

drug
collection
events



OUTREACH

60,884

Readers reached through
published articles

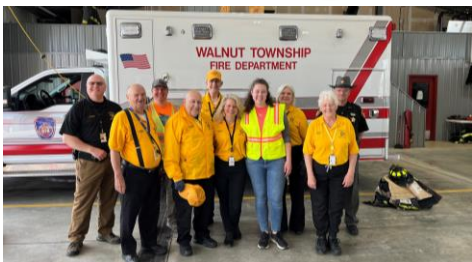
3



college
scholarships

1

Camp Canopy
Sponsorship



950



tree seedlings
donated to
5th graders at
8 schools

3,967

Trees sold

109

Tree sale
customers



126

Students evaluated
for Science Fair, 4-H,
FFA Agriscience Fair

Annual Meeting
at Wagnalls
Memorail Library



Fair Booth

50

Students at Earth
Camp at Smeck Park



35

School Programs, Workshops &

Other Events Reached:

2,484

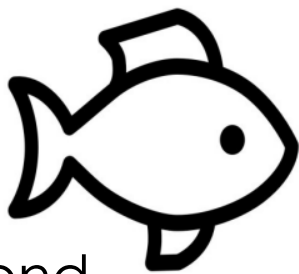
kids

1,301

adults

WILDLIFE

9



Pond

Visits/Inquiries

41

Landowners issued a deer damage permit due to crop damage



16



Field Assessments conducted for CRP mid-management



since 2015

3



Landowners provided habitat assistance

12

Individuals assisted with nuisance wildlife concerns

1



Radio Interview



2



Newspaper Articles Published on wildlife related topics

SURVEYS

conducted w/
Division of Wildlife



River otter



Roadkill



16

Wildlife Related Programs

 **URBAN**
324 drainage
calls/visits across
all townships



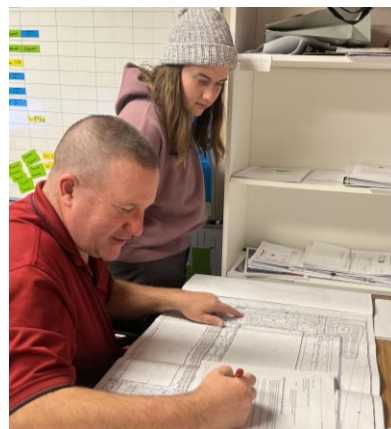
27
dry weather
inspections
across **2** MS4
communities



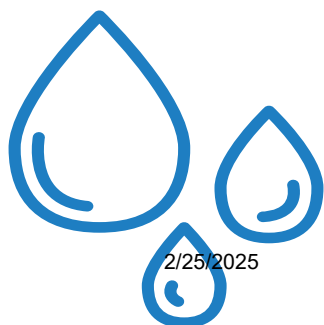
296
Construction Site
inspections across
22 sites



5 MS4
communities
assisted



 **59**
(RPC) Plans
reviewed



3,400+
Residential lot inspections
& **132** new DESC+**25** pool
permits issued



2/25/2025

039

Drought Relief Funding



Department of
Agriculture

Governor DeWine signed into law Senate Bill 54 which allocates state funding to provide relief to Ohio farmers in counties severely impacted by historic drought.

The Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) will work with local Soil and Water Conservation Districts to administer \$10 million to 28 counties designated as primary natural disaster areas between August 19, 2024, and September 16, 2024.



Highlighted Ohio counties are eligible for drought funding

Application Process

- This program is available to any livestock producer with land enrolled in the USDA FSA Livestock Forage Disaster Program in a county designated as a primary natural disaster area by the USDA Secretary of Agriculture between August 19th and September 16th, 2024 due to drought.
- Farmers must fill out an application to apply.
- Sign-up period begins February 15, 2025 and closes April 1, 2025.
- Contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District for more information.

2025-2028 Strategic Plan Update

County Leadership

February 25, 2025



Process to date:

- Developed dashboard spreadsheet of activities achieved and in progress.
- Shared progress on strategic plan at State of the County.
- Reviewed dashboard and current plan with department leaders as a baseline.
- Developed next-level plan building on previous plan.
- Met with Leadership for input in November 2024.
- Reviewed and incorporated collective input and shared with department leaders.
- Met with department leaders to finalize content in February 2025.

Pillars

- **INFRASTRUCTURE** (Transportation and Utilities)
- **SOCIAL SERVICES** (Self-Sufficiency, Mental Health, Addiction & Youth Services)
- **HOUSING** (Affordable Housing & Housing Assistance)
- **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT** (Job Training & Growing and Supporting a Skilled Workforce)
- **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** (Driving & Managing Equitable Growth)
- **COUNTY OPERATIONS** (Internal Operations & Policies)

Goals

1. Advocate for, develop, and maintain infrastructure that supports access, connectivity and wellbeing of current and future Fairfield County residents and businesses.
2. Strengthen and support social service programs through broader coordination to promote self-sufficiency of residents.
3. Improve availability and access to safe, quality and affordable housing throughout the County.
4. Grow and support a skilled workforce to meet the needs of current and future employers.
5. Facilitate and drive economic growth through effective planning, collaboration, promotion, and development.
6. Optimize County operations to serve, connect and protect the citizens of and visitors to Fairfield County.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Identify and assess opportunities to increase broadband access throughout the county.

- 1.1.1 - Advocate for areas of the county that do not have sufficient access to broadband.
- 1.1.2 - Work with broadband service providers to enhance access and affordability of fiber, hotspots, wireless and other technology.
- 1.1.3 – Collaborate with partners to identify and seek funding opportunities for expansion.

Improve public transportation options to better meet local needs.

- 1.2.1 - Improve existing transit services, ease of use, and community awareness of the services.
- 1.2.2. Expand transit service to meet the needs of Fairfield County citizens and employers, including opportunities for innovative funding.
- 1.2.3 – Advocate for Fairfield County within the region’s long-term future plans for regional connectivity, such as partnerships with other transit authorities and public rail transportation.
- 1.2.4 –Continue to improve access and expand corporate aviation offerings at the airport.
- 1.2.5 – Enhance active transportation of the community (walkability, bike-ability, scooters, mobility aids, etc.)

INFRASTRUCTURE

Ensure all residents and businesses have access to critical utility services.

1.3.1 - Assess and coordinate the installation of water and sewer to developing areas (commercial & residential) consistent with established local development plans.

1.3.2 – Advocate for the development of commercial power and natural gas in underserved areas.

1.3.3 – Serve as a resource to townships and villages regarding water and sewer services.

Provide and maintain a safe and efficient road network throughout the county.

1.4.1 – Support the completion of necessary Transportation Improvement District projects throughout the county.

1.4.2 - Prioritize and coordinate efforts to address traffic congestion and safety issues.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Expand capacity to provide effective social services for targeted populations.

- 2.1.1 – Identify gaps and coordinate mental health and addiction services to maximize resources and capacity to serve.
- 2.1.2 - Identify gaps and coordinate youth services to maximize resources and capacity to serve.
- 2.1.3 – identify gaps and coordinate services to address the needs of the community’s older adult population.
- 2.1.4 - Increase recruitment and retention efforts for social service professionals.
- 2.1.5 – Explore and identify innovative, ongoing funding sources for services.

Improve services to be more responsive to the homeless population.

- 2.2.1 - Include / expand supportive case management services for emergency shelters to promote transition to permanent housing.
- 2.2.2 – Foster the development of permanent supportive housing in our community.

Identify, assess and expand awareness of services that support self-sufficiency for all individuals and families in our community.

- 2.3.1 – Identify any gaps in currently provided services that support self-sufficiency and explore opportunities to address any shortcomings
- 2.3.2 – Develop a comprehensive strategy to promote services and expand awareness of programs targeting self-sufficiency for individuals and families.

HOUSING

Identify needs and opportunities to improve housing options for County residents.

- 3.1.1 - Assess the continually evolving housing needs of the community, identify strategies for improvement and collaborate with school districts to address impact of growth.
- 3.1.2 - Advance policies to support additional housing inventory within the county and central Ohio region.
- 3.1.3 – Improve development policies and processes, while removing barriers and increasing services to build more housing in the County.
- 3.1.4 – Promote Fairfield County as a great place to build diverse housing options for residents.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Align job/skills training programs with the needs of current and future employers.

4.1.1 - Invest in programs that meet the needs of current and future employers to build a pipeline of skilled workers for In-Demand Jobs.

4.1.2 - Promote local career pathways to students and job seekers by working with educational partners to develop a skilled workforce for the jobs of today and tomorrow.

4.1.3 – Improve effectiveness and engagement of regional partners through the Area 20 Workforce Development Board.

Promote awareness of the advantages of working for Fairfield County employers.

4.2.1 – Convene employers to analyze and provide labor market information to ensure competitiveness in the region.

4.2.2 - Use Fairfield 33 Alliance to promote the benefits of employment in Fairfield County.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Support efforts to remove barriers to address gaps in employment.

4.3.1 – Evaluate access to childcare in the county to identify gaps and build a plan to address affordability and increase capacity.

4.3.2 – Assess transportation resources to align with employment centers/large employer workforce needs.

4.3.3 – Utilize grants and other funding to connect supportive services to employees and job seekers to remove barriers such as basic life needs, tools, technology hardware, and clothing.

4.3.4 - Convene and collaborate with partners to support career transitions, including rapid response re-training for in-demand (current and future) jobs and employment-gaps.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Assess and understand opportunities and challenges for commercial and residential development in the county.

5.1.1 - Identify areas for future commercial and mixed use development and potential hurdles.

5.1.2 - Educate and support local entities to align tax and incentive policies to meet local development needs.

5.1.3 – Utilize the Fairfield 33 Development Alliance to engage local stakeholders and promote Fairfield County to potential employers.

5.1.4 – Support townships, municipalities and villages in managing growth in their communities, including working with school districts to address impact.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Develop planning goals for industry growth within the county.

5.2.1 - Prioritize attraction and retention efforts for critical and or high-growth, high-wage industries (examples: manufacturing and healthcare).

5.2.2 - Ensure that the land use plan is being followed to maintain a strong agricultural base throughout Fairfield County.

5.2.3 - Implementing economic development activities that align with the Fairfield Growing Plan.

5.2.4 – Support the development and growth of small businesses and downtown areas.

5.2.5 – Identify needs to be prepared to act quickly and nimbly when economic development opportunities arise.

5.2.6 – Support the efforts of the travel and tourism industry in our community.

COUNTY OPERATIONS

Demonstrate the value of County government to our citizens and community partners.

- 6.1.1 - Highlight County programs and initiatives to educate public about county government services and the value they provide.
- 6.1.2 – Collaborate with and/or support other jurisdictions to enhance government interactions and services.
- 6.1.3 – Provide outstanding customer service and enhance accessibility of services for all citizens.

Continue to leverage technology to improve county operations and efficiencies.

- 6.2.1 - Continue implementation of virtual options to support county service delivery and workforce.
- 6.2.2 – Continually evaluate current technologies and processes to protect and enhance operations (cybersecurity, data retention, etc.).
- 6.2.3 - Evaluate and implement new technology to support better communication, training and planning efforts.

Identify and implement opportunities for efficiencies in the delivery of County services.

- 6.3.1 - Work across County departments to determine opportunities for centralized procurement efforts.
- 6.3.2 - Assess, identify and implement opportunities for facility upgrades to eliminate leases and secure efficiencies, including evaluating the return on investment of advanced energy solutions.

COUNTY OPERATIONS

Ensure a safe and favorable working environment for county employees.

6.4.1 - Proactively solicit and utilize feedback from employees to improve the work experience.

6.4.2 – Consistently assess and enhance safety and security to protect our employees.

6.4.3 – Ensure alignment of compensation, benefits and professional development with the employee marketplace to attract and retain a skilled and talented workforce.

Prepare for future growth of the County based on population growth projections.

6.5.1 – Consistently evaluate and seek to understand future needs for enhanced and/or increased County services.

6.5.2 - Identify opportunities to be proactive in developing innovative solutions and partnerships to address potential challenges.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

Fairfield County Contracting Procedures Update 2025

APA Amy Brown Thompson

APA Steven Darnell

APA Austin Lines



Updates for contract routing



Use the Updated Contract Routing Form (Revised 12-31-2024)

Increase the Competitive Bidding limit from
\$75,000 to \$77,250!

Ohio Rev. Code 9.17

Each calendar year the amount increases three
percent from the previous year as determined
and published by the director of commerce.

Please make sure that this is the version of the
contract routing form that you are using!



ROUTING FORM FOR CONTRACTS

The undersigned designee of the County affirms that he/she has reviewed the attached contract to ensure that it complies with County's needs and previous negotiations. The undersigned designee further affirms that the County has complied with the competitive selection process, as prescribed by Ohio Revised Code 9.17, and the applicable sections as outlined on this form, by selecting the applicable boxes below.

- A. ☐ Goods and/or Services in excess of \$77,250.00—competitively selected via an Invitation to Bid, pursuant to R.C. 307.86-307.92
- B. ☐ Goods and/or Services in excess of \$77,250.00—competitively selected via a Request for Proposals, pursuant to R.C. 307.862
- C. ☐ Public Improvement contracts—competitively selected pursuant to R.C. 153.08-153.12
- D. ☐ Architect/Engineer design services for public improvements—selected through the Request for Qualifications process pursuant to R.C. 153.65-153.72
- E. ☐ County Road Improvement/Construction—competitively selected pursuant to R.C. 5555.61
- F. ☐ The subject matter was exempt from competitive selection for the following reason(s):
1. ☐ Under \$77,250.00
 2. ☐ State Term #: _____ (copy of State Term Contract must be attached)
 3. ☐ ODOT Term #: _____ (See R.C. 5513.01)
 4. ☐ Professional Services (See the list of exempted occupations/services under R.C. 307.86)
 5. ☐ Emergency (Follow procedure under ORC 307.86(A))
 6. ☐ Sole Source (attach documentation as to why contract is sole source)
 7. ☐ Other: _____ (cite to authority or explain why matter is exempt from competitive bidding)
- G. ☐ Agreement not subject to Sections A-F (explain): _____
- H. ☐ Compliance with Fairfield County Board of Commissioners Procurement Guidelines
1. ☐ No County employee, employee's family member, or employee's business associate has an interest in this contract OR such interest has been disclosed and reviewed by the Prosecutor's Office
 2. ☐ No Finding for Recovery against Vendor as required under R.C. 9.24 (search via "Certified Search" on <http://ftr.ohioauditor.gov/>)
 3. ☐ Obtained 3 quotes for purchases under \$77,250.00 (as applicable)
 4. ☐ Purchase Order is included with Agreement

Signed this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

Name and Title

*** Please note that this checklist only addresses County and statutory requirements. If a contract is paid for with state and/or federal funds, please consult with the appropriate state and/or federal agency to ensure your department is complying with any additional requirements. By submitting a request for approval, you are certifying you have addressed County, statutory, and grant requirements.***

Rev. 12-31-24
Eff. 1-1-25 to 12-31-25

What does the creation ORC 9.17 do?

Competitive Bidding Limits increase annually by 3%. This began January 1, 2025

The new limits will be posted on the Ohio Department of Commerce website (same place where prevailing wage limits are posted)

Check out the effective dates listed on the bottom of the Contract Routing Form



When is competitive selection necessary? (R.C. 307.86)

- ANYTHING TO BE:

- Purchased

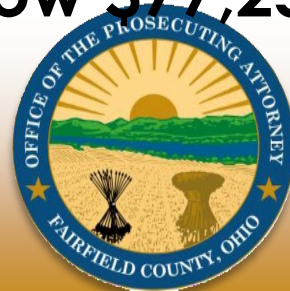
- Leased

- Leased with an option or agreement to purchase

- Constructed AND

When the cost exceeds the limits prescribed in Ohio Rev. Code 9.17

Therefore, any purchase below \$77,250 does not have to be competitively bid.



What does this include?

- –Any product
- –Structure
- –Construction/reconstruction
- –Improvement
- –Maintenance
- –Repair
- –Service



Exceptions to Competitive Bidding

See Contract Routing Form

- "Professional Services" include the following:

- accountant
- architect*
- attorney at law
- physician
- professional engineer*
- construction project manager
- consultant
- surveyor
- appraiser

*So long as the services are not design services related to a public improvement. Must do a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for those design services under R.C. 153.65 -153.73



Exceptions to Competitive Bidding

- "Emergency" (ORC 307.86(A)) means unanimous vote of BCC and the estimated cost is less than \$125K and there is actual physical disaster to structures, radio communications equipment, or computers
 - If all of the above occurs, still need to do an informal quote process of obtaining at least 3 quotes
 - Have to hold documentation regarding quotes for at least one year
- "Sole source" refers to ORC 307.86(B)(1) and (2)
 - (B)(1) The purchase consists of supplies or a replacement or supplemental part or parts for a product or equipment owned or leased by the county, and the only source of supply for the supplies, part, or parts is limited to a single supplier.
 - (2) The purchase consists of services related to information technology, such as programming services, that are proprietary or limited to a single source.

If you are asserting a "sole source" exception, must include documentation to support that assertion. A written summary from the person routing the contract with a letter from the vendor should be sufficient.



Different types of competitive selection

- Invitation to Bid (ITB)
 - Solicitation for "lowest and best" bid
 - winning bid must be both the lowest and most responsive to the ITB
 - more important to be responsive to the ITB and not necessarily the cheapest bid
 - Important to be fair to all prospective bidders during process
 - If a question is posed by one bidder, a response needs to be issued to all bidders
 - Any amendment to the solicitation must be shared with all



Different types of competitive selection (cont'd)

- Request for Proposals (RFP)
 - Solicitation for proposal that is later scored and negotiated
 - See R.C. 307.862
 - Can only be used for certain types of purchases/leases
 - Preferred for more technical or service-based purchases



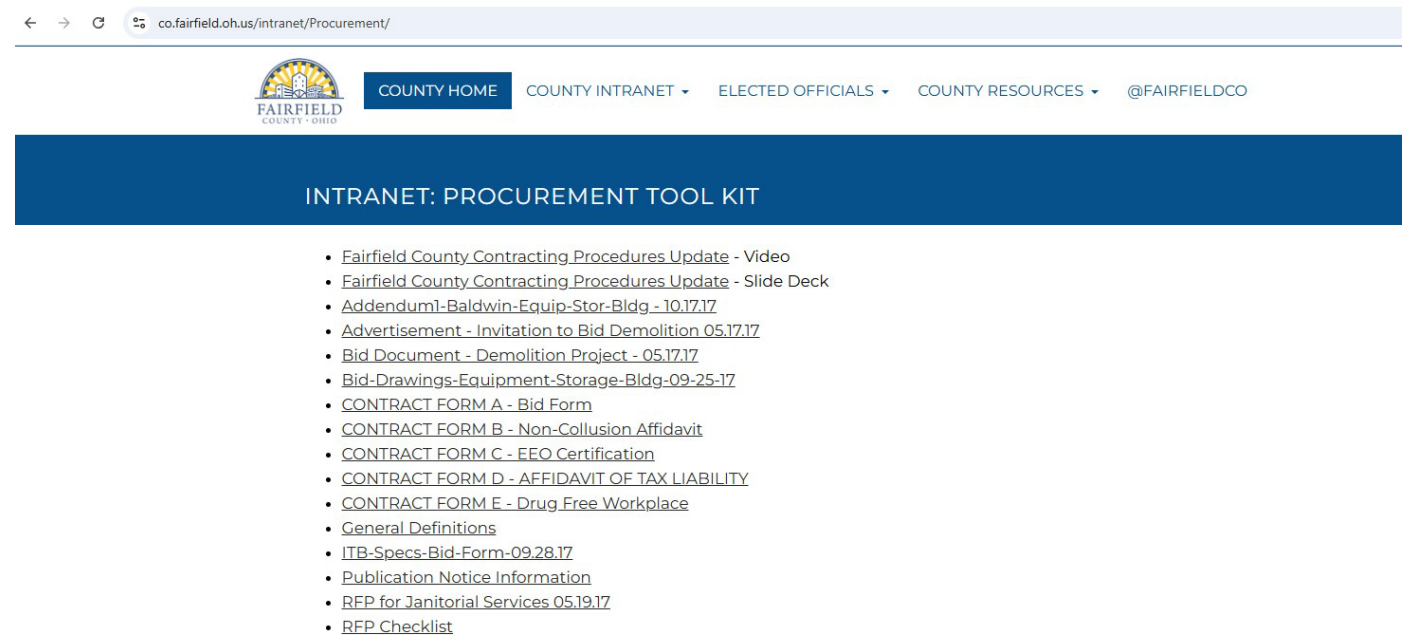
Different types of competitive selection (cont'd)

- Request for Qualifications (RFQ)
 - Solicitation for qualifications of architects and engineers to design public improvements
 - Covered by R.C. 153.65-153.73
 - Only need to do for design build construction projects
 - Can pre-qualify architects and engineers if project is less than \$50,000 but more than \$25,000
 - If project is less than \$25,000, no prequalification of architects or engineers for design projects is necessary (ORC 153.71)
 - If project is more than \$50,000, specific RFQ must be issued
 - Can solicit qualifications more informally



Where to find bidding forms and samples?

- <https://www.co.fairfield.oh.us/intranet/Procurement/>



The screenshot shows the Fairfield County Intranet Procurement page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: COUNTY HOME, COUNTY INTRANET, ELECTED OFFICIALS, COUNTY RESOURCES, and @FAIRFIELDCO. Below this is a blue header with the text "INTRANET: PROCUREMENT TOOL KIT". The main content area lists various procurement-related documents and forms:

- [Fairfield County Contracting Procedures Update - Video](#)
- [Fairfield County Contracting Procedures Update - Slide Deck](#)
- [Addendum1-Baldwin-Equip-Stor-Bldg - 10.17.17](#)
- [Advertisement - Invitation to Bid Demolition 05.17.17](#)
- [Bid Document - Demolition Project - 05.17.17](#)
- [Bid-Drawings-Equipment-Storage-Bldg-09-25-17](#)
- [CONTRACT FORM A - Bid Form](#)
- [CONTRACT FORM B - Non-Collusion Affidavit](#)
- [CONTRACT FORM C - EEO Certification](#)
- [CONTRACT FORM D - AFFIDAVIT OF TAX LIABILITY](#)
- [CONTRACT FORM E - Drug Free Workplace](#)
- [General Definitions](#)
- [ITB-Specs-Bid-Form-09.28.17](#)
- [Publication Notice Information](#)
- [RFP for Janitorial Services 05.19.17](#)
- [RFP Checklist](#)



Updates to contract review



- In 2023, our office reviewed and approved 409 contracts through CRMS.

- In 2024, our office reviewed and approved **461** contracts through CRMS.

This does not include contracts for other County boards whose contracts do not go through CRMS (i.e. Board of DD and ADAMH)



Issues the Prosecutor's Office will look for in contract review

- Indemnification clauses
- Collection/attorney fees
- Interest
 - The Auditor must be able to appropriate the necessary funds per RC 5705.41(D)(1). Unless there is a maximum or definite amount, the funds could not be properly appropriated.
- Venue
- Choice of law
 - The contract should be governed by laws of the state of Ohio and the venue in Fairfield County Courts



Issues the Prosecutor's Office will look for in CRMS review (cont'd)

- Not included terms and conditions (link to a website)
- The Prosecutor's Office reviews the contracts for form only. We do not review them for fair terms, etc. The expectation that the department negotiating the contract has the expert knowledge to obtain the best terms.



(R.C. 5705.41) (Holy grail for contract review):

- The County may NOT make any contract involving the expenditure of money unless there is attached thereto a certificate of the Auditor that the amount required to meet the obligation or, in the case of a continuing contract to be performed in whole or in part in an ensuing fiscal year, the amount required to meet the obligation in the fiscal year in which the contract is made, has been lawfully appropriated for such purpose and is in the treasury or in process of collection to the credit of an appropriate fund free from any previous encumbrances.
- **THIS OBLIGATION IS MET BY THE PURCHASE ORDER**



R.C. 5705.41:

- The requirement of R.C. 5705.41 means that the contract **MUST** have a definite maximum amount
 - Auditor cannot certify unknown amount
- No open indemnification clauses!
 - An indemnification clause is a promise to cover losses or damage sustained—but if we do not know what those losses or damages are, how can we say we have the money to cover them?



HB 497 to the rescue!

Signed into law by Governor DeWine on January 8, 2025

Aka "County Omnibus Bill"

Does many things, but the one thing we will discuss today is that HB 497 prohibits certain terms from being included in a county contract.

New ORC 307.901 (effective 04-09-25)

(A) As used in this section, "county" includes any agency, department, authority, commission, office, or board of a county.

(B) Except as otherwise required or permitted by state or federal law, a contract entered into by the contracting authority for the procurement of goods or services shall not include any of the following:

- (1) A provision that requires the county to indemnify or hold harmless another person;**
- (2) A provision by which the county agrees to binding arbitration or any other binding extrajudicial dispute resolution process;**
- (3) A provision that names a venue for any action or dispute against the county other than a court of proper jurisdiction in the county;**
- (4) A provision that requires the county to agree to limit the liability for any direct loss to the county for bodily injury, death, or damage to property of the county caused by the negligence, intentional or willful misconduct, fraudulent act, recklessness, or other tortious conduct of a person or a person's employees or agents, or a provision that otherwise imposes an indemnification obligation on the county;**
- (5) A provision that requires the county to be bound by a term or condition that is unknown to the county at the time of signing a contract, that is not specifically negotiated with the county, that may be unilaterally changed by the other party, or that is electronically accepted by a county employee;**
- (6) A provision that provides for a person other than the prosecuting attorney, or an attorney employed pursuant to section 305.14 or 309.09 of the Revised Code, to serve as legal counsel for the county;**
- (7) A provision that is inconsistent with the county's obligations under section 149.43 of the Revised Code;**
- (8) A provision that limits the county's ability to recover the cost for a replacement contractor.**

New 307.901 (cont'd)

(C) If a contract contains a term or condition described in division (B) of this section, the term or condition is void ab initio, and the contract containing that term or condition otherwise is enforceable as if it did not contain such term or condition.

(D) A contract that contains a term or condition described in division (B) of this section shall be governed by and construed in accordance with Ohio law notwithstanding any term or condition to the contrary in the contract.

(E) This section does not apply to a contract in effect before the effective date of this section

Does ORC 307.901 affect all of the terms that FCPO reviews for?

The short answer is "no"

Terms not impacted by ORC 307.901:

- Interest rate on delinquent balances
- Liquidated damages
- Damages for violating a non-solicitation clause
- Injunctive relief
- Miscellaneous costs for other services (i.e. litigation holds)

These terms still need to be redlined and removed (even after ORC 307.901 goes into effect.)

How will this change contract review as we know it?

--As of today (1/29/25), it is still business as usual as HB 497 will not go into effect until 4/9/25.

--However, after 4/9/25, contract review should be easier

--FCPO considering developing a letter for CRMS to be shared with all vendors that sets forth ORC 307.901 and the fact that if those terms are included

--Will continue to monitor and see if any guidance is issued from CCAO on how best to utilize ORC 307.901.



Implementation of ORC 307.901

Regardless, you as the fiscal point of contact for Fairfield County contracts are the best line of defense when it comes to contract review.

#doitforyourunclesam

Questions?