

**Regular Meeting #11 - 2021
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
March 16, 2021**

Review

The Commissioners met at 9:01 a.m. to review legal issues and pending or future action items and correspondence. Commissioner Levacy called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Jeff Fix, Steve Davis, and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Rachel Elsea, Jon Kochis, Joshua Horacek, Amy Brown-Thompson, Jeff Porter, Stephanie Fyffe, Marc Fishel, and Sheriff Lape.

Attending virtually were: Thomas Lininger, Jason Dolin, Lisa McKenzie, Madeline Niceswanger, Shanna Nash, Tony Vogel, Ray Stemen, Jeff Barron, Dennis Keller, Dave Burgei, Aunie Cordle, Jim Bahnsen, CJ Roberts, Michael Kaper, Audrey, Shannon Carter, Donna Fox-Moore, Jon Slater, Chris Wagner, Michael Orlando, Tony Howard, Nikki Drake, Jeremiah Upp, Rick Szabrak, and other callers.

- Welcome
- COVID-19 Update

Jon Kochis, EMA Director, updated the Board and others on COVID-19 responses.

Last week's call center will be the last for the local call center. Thank you to the 30+ county employees who have volunteered to help. Scheduling now is handled through the state enrollment system.

Case numbers are remaining steady. Mr. Kochis and Ms. Fyffe are unsure if or when the color code will go orange from red.

Mr. Davis asked about those who had registered on the local system prior to the state system opening.

Mr. Kochis replied for those who have registered and are eligible they have made every effort to schedule them. There has been a Fairfield Alert issued, as well.

Mr. Davis suggested whatever is necessary to get the 5,000 signed up on the new system be done.

Those outside of the eligibility received a notice that the systems are changing.

Ms. Fyffe reported that they have received 300 doses of Johnson and Johnson. They also transferred another 300 doses of Johnson and Johnson that they received from FMC.

There have been successful call center sessions and vaccination clinics. Postcards have been created and will be sent to residents of Fairfield County. (A check was drafted within hours of receipt of the information from the vendor! Thanks for the teamwork that made that happen!) Billboards are ready, and social media activity has increased. There is a strong effort to have residents accept the vaccination when it is offered to them.

Dr. Brown reported on incentives for vaccinations. In thinking about encouraging the vaccination, several businesses are providing incentives to employees. Fairfield County is also considering incentives, especially as we are nearing a time when there will be more supply of the vaccination doses available. There are multiple factors that contribute to hesitancy in accepting the vaccination. The Recruitment and Retention committee recommends an incentive of a waiver of the employee portion of the health benefits plan (for example, in September) if an employee gets the vaccination (in full) or if an educational opportunity is taken. Dr. Brown explained that an incentive would drive participation in desired behavior and would result in lower costs for the health plan by mitigating risk. A COVID-19 hospitalization can cost more than \$100,000. Costs for one month of a premium is about \$160,000 if 70% of the eligible employees were to become vaccinated, meaning the costs outweigh benefits if fewer than two people are able to continue working and not be hospitalized. County operations and public services

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improve as the population is vaccinated. It is also important that people who have had COVID-19 also get vaccinated.

Mr. Kochis added that EMA is seeing a lot of employers offering this incentive.

The Commissioners looked favorably on the concept of the premium holiday as an incentive (with a pathway for all employees), and there will be communication prepared for the employees for next week. It is okay to provide informal communication now (as Mr. Porter mentioned the courts were obtaining vaccinations now).

Mr. Fix stated he exchanged texts with the Lt. Governor and he agreed they should and most likely would open the vaccine soon for those 18 years and older.

Mr. Kochis thanked Commissioner Levacy for the radio recordings.

- Legal Update

Mr. Horacek did not have a legal update.

- Administration and Budget Update/Carri's List

- a. Announcements

Anyone can email or text a question anytime:
Carri.Brown@FairfieldCountyOhio.gov or (740) 777-8552

Congratulations to Rachel Elsea and her family who will be welcoming a new baby tomorrow.

Dates/Events of Interest

March 14-20 - Sunshine Week
March 15 - Highlighting Public Records Training (Commission Offices have completed)
March 17 - St. Patrick's Day breakfast and food drive at JFS (7:30 am)
March 23 - EMA Lunch n Learn
March 30 - Commissioner Fix – Commissioner Connection video

April 2 – Good Friday, Commission Offices Close at Noon
April 14 – Wear Blue for Child Abuse Prevention Awareness
April 14 – Virtual Job Fair
April 15 – 11:30 am State of the Schools Address, Lancaster City Schools

The State of the County Address is scheduled for September 28 at the WigWam.

- b. Highlights of Resolutions

Dr. Brown highlighted 12 resolutions for the voting meeting.

The County Engineer proposed an agreement between Fairfield County, the City of Pickerington, and Braun Holdings Graystone, LLC, relating to the intersection of Refugee Road and Springcreek Drive.

There were 11 *financial and grant related resolutions* to approve:

- Preparations to pay debt service payments as planned;
- A signature for a MCU grant;
- Six resolutions for appropriations and financial transactions for the County Engineer (Motor Vehicle projects);
- Appropriations for the County Sheriff and JFS (special revenue funds); and
- Bills over \$100,000.

There were financial and contracting resolutions (and administrative approvals) in queue.

c. Administrative Approvals, Program, & Budget Update

Administrative Approvals and Updates

The review packet contained a list of *administrative approvals*. There was an additional bill list for the payment to the vendor to send postcards to residents in Fairfield County, encouraging them to register for the COVID-19 vaccination.

Budget Update

There are no recommendations for changes to the 2021 budget estimates. A letter describing *parameters for 2022* is in progress.

We have been monitoring the *federal legislation* for pandemic *relief funds* for local governments, specifically for counties. The State and Local Coronavirus Fiscal Recovery Funds legislation, part of the American Rescue Plan Act, has been approved by Congress and signed by President Biden. The bill includes \$65.1 billion in direct, flexible aid to every county in America, as well as other crucial investments in local communities. The overall bill is a \$1.9 Trillion bill.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury will oversee and administer these payments to state and local governments, and every county would be eligible to receive a direct allocation from Treasury.

Counties should receive funds in two tranches – with 50 percent this year and the remaining 50 percent no earlier than 12 months from the first payment. The U.S. Treasury is required to pay first tranche to counties not later than 60-days after enactment, and second payment no earlier than 12 months after the first payment.

We are aware of the state efforts to *increase the future reimbursement percentage* to counties for indigent defense. Thank you to state representation for this support.

As of the end of February, revenues are up nearly 5% and expenditures are down almost 13%, from a general fund perspective. There is a payroll timing difference with expenditures.

Mr. Fix asked about the year-to-date sales tax revenues.

Dr. Brown reported that year-to-date, the sales tax revenues were \$4.036 M as of February this year, compared to \$3.802 last year at the same time, for an approximate 6% increase.

The *non-auto sales tax receipts* from January sales to be received in April for Fairfield County are estimated at \$1.48 M, or 12% above the previous year. The state collections are estimated at 7% above the previous year. As we think about comparing these things on a monthly basis, we will need to keep in mind the pandemic experiences. The sales tax estimate for 2021 in Fairfield County is \$23.6 M, or 3% above the sales tax revenues of 2020.

d. BRAVOs

Thanks, again, to employees for volunteering to help with the call center and to their supervisors for allowing this. This is a critical need, and we sincerely appreciate the leadership.

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Thanks to the Commissioners' and Auditor's Office for coming together to support the Health Department and quickly draft a check for communication efforts.

Bravo to Dennis Keller and Tammy Smith for their support and help with the DACO HVAC project.

Congratulations to Park National Bank for being honored with the Rotary Business Ethics Award!

Mr. Kochis thanked, in advance, all the volunteers at the COVID clinic. More and more volunteers are needed for greeting and data entry.

Mr. Davis asked Ms. Fyffe if she knew what financial assistance existed for the Health Department in the new Fiscal Recovery portion of the American Rescue Act, and Ms. Fyffe replied that she did not have that information.

- Old Business

- a. Commissioner Communications

- Commissioner Davis commented on a meeting he had with realtors regarding Land Bank processes. Mr. Davis will have a fuller report at the next Land Bank Meeting.
- Commissioner Fix reported on CCAO meetings including Economic Development committees. He also commented on meetings with OU-L and appreciated the energy from Dean Jarrod.
- Commissioner Levacy will be attending Community Action, RLF, and FCFACF meetings (virtually) this week.

- New Business

- a. American Rescue Plan

Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Portion

Dr. Brown reported the US Treasury shall allocate these resources within 60 days of enactment. The NACo Fairfield County estimate is \$30.8 M. The uses of the funds are to:

1. Respond to the public health emergency with respect to the COVID19 or its negative economic impacts, including assistance to households, small businesses, and nonprofits, or aid to impacted industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality.
2. Respond to workers performing essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency by providing premium pay to eligible workers of the county that are performing such essential work, or by providing grants to eligible employers that have eligible workers who perform essential work.
3. For the provision of government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue (i.e., online, property or income tax) due to the public health emergency relative to revenues collected in the most recent full fiscal year of the county prior to the emergency (i.e., January 20, 2020), or
4. Make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure.

It is important to note under #1 that the examples outlined are intended to clarify congressional intent that these activities would be eligible. However, state, and local activities would not be limited only to these activities.

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- States are not allowed to use the funds to either directly or indirectly offset a reduction in the net tax revenue that results from a change in law, regulation or administrative interpretation during the covered period that reduces any tax. If a state violates this provision, it would be required to repay the amount of the applicable reduction to net tax revenue.
- No funds shall be deposited into any pension fund.
- State and local governments are allowed to transfer to a private nonprofit organization, a public benefit corporation involved in the transportation of passengers or cargo or a special-purpose unit of State or local government.
- Any local government, including counties, that fail to comply with the federal law and related guidelines shall be required to repay the federal Treasury.
- “Premium pay” means an additional amount up to \$13 per hour that is paid to an eligible worker for work during the COVID-19 pandemic. The bill imposes a cap of \$25,000 for any single eligible worker.

There are multiple reporting requirements. Local governments would be required to provide “periodic reports” providing a detailed accounting of the use of funds. The deadline to spend funds would be December 31, 2024.

The bill would provide \$77 million for the Government Accountability Office and \$40 million for the Pandemic Response and Accountability Committee for oversight and to promote transparency and accountability.

There will be guidance from the US Treasury.

County Planning Relative to the Fiscal Recovery Funds

- For the county, proper implementation of the projects using the fiscal recovery funds will be a tremendous undertaking. We have been brainstorming about the effort and have many ideas. The focus will be on rebuilding Fairfield County as it comes out of the pandemic. We are brainstorming about assistance to small business and the industries that have been impacted the most; entrepreneurial support services; technology improvements; water and sewer improvements; Workforce Center services; public health and public safety payroll support; premium pay for essential workers (law enforcement); revenue replacement for multiple entities (and contracted services to help with grant applications); broadband improvements; equipment for a non-profit hospital; PRC supplements; solar pods for the homeless; data imaging services; supplies and materials; employee credit monitoring services; and HVAC improvements. For Fiscal Recovery, the estimate for Fairfield County is \$30 M+ through 2024.
- A senior level leader should be assigned to the effort in order to ensure accountability, transparency, and success. Fairfield County is of a sophistication and size to warrant a Deputy County Administrator, and with the Fiscal Recovery Funds upon us, now would be an appropriate and justified time to add this position and add value to the public services.
- There will be a need for strong organizational, communication, and strategy development skills held by an experienced leader with energy and passion for public service.

Mr. Levacy commented he was in favor of some of the funding being used for township assistance.

Mr. Davis stated that he does not believe Fairfield County should reject the \$30.8 million as those funds would go to New York or California. He added that NACO asked Mr. Davis to

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participate with legislators to lobby to get this legislation passed. He refused as he does not agree with the legislation.

However, Mr. Davis stated does look favorably on the creation of a Deputy County Administrator position and has for several months now.

Mr. Levacy and Mr. Fix agreed.

Motion to authorize the County Administrator to prepare documentation for a senior leadership (Deputy County Administrator) position description and compensation plan placement as well as hiring or assignment recommendations, focusing on Fiscal Recovery, as well as related hirings or assignments as needed, reporting to the Board of Commissioners on the progress on a weekly basis until the process has been completed.

On the motion of Steve Davis and second by Jeff Fix, the Board of Commissioners moved to authorize the County Administrator to prepare documentation for a senior leadership (Deputy County Administrator) position description and compensation plan placement as well as hiring or assignment recommendations, focusing on Fiscal Recovery, as well as related hirings or assignments as needed, reporting to the Board of Commissioners on the progress on weekly basis until the process has been completed.

Discussion: Mr. Davis feels like he has never leaned on any one person as much as he has leaned on Dr. Brown. He is in favor of the creation of a new position.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

- General Correspondence Received (none)
- Calendar Review/Invitations Received
 - a. Fairfield County State of the Schools – Virtual Event – Thursday, April 15th at 11:30 a.m.
- FYI
 - a. Jail Population – 221
 - b. Sunshine Week Press Releases
- Open Items

Commissioners' Regular Meeting

A regular meeting of the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, March 16, 2021 beginning at 9:57 a.m., with the following Commissioners present: Jeff Fix, Steve Davis, and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Rachel Elsea, Jon Kochis, Amy Brown-Thompson, Joshua Horacek, Ray Stemen, Jeff Porter, Marc Fishel, and Sheriff Lape.

Attending virtually were: Jim Bahnsen, Chris Wagner, Aunie Cordle, Dave Burgei, Dennis Keller, Donna Fox-Moore, Jeff Barron, Jeremiah Upp, Jon Slater, Nikki Drake, Shanna Nash, Thomas Lininger, Tony Vogel, and Tony Howard.

Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Levacy asked everyone to rise as able, and he led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements

Commissioner Levacy asked if there were any announcements.

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Ms. Elsea wished Ms. Foster a Happy Birthday.

Public Comment

Commissioner Levacy asked if anyone from the public who would like to speak or offer comments.

Mr. Ray Stemen of 2444 West Point Road in Lancaster believes the rough times are just beginning. He believes people are forced to get shots and the things happening to them as a result of the shots are not being reported.

Approval of Minutes for Tuesday, March 9, 2021

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the minutes for the Tuesday, March 9, 2021 Regular Meeting.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix and Dave Levacy

Abstaining: Steve Davis

Approval of the Commissioners' Resolution

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Commissioners' resolution authorizing fund to fund transfers from the General Fund #1001 to #4483, #4529, #2809, 4714, & 4550 – Debt Service payments for 2021; see resolution 2021-03.16.a.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of the Engineer's Resolution

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following Engineer's resolutions:

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 2021-03.16.b | A resolution to approve an Agreement between Fairfield County, the City of Pickerington, and Braun Holdings Graystone, LLC. [Engineer] |
| 2021-03.16.c | A resolution of increase appropriations, appropriate from unappropriate, account to account and fund to fund transfer for AMA-33 bridge replacement project [Engineer] |
| 2021-03.16.d | A resolution to request for appropriations for additional unanticipated receipts of memo receipts and memo expenses for fund 3445 33A/Election House [Engineer] |
| 2021-03.16.e | A resolution to request for appropriations for additional unanticipated receipts of memo receipts and memo expenses for fund 3434 BLO-35 Bridge Replacement Project [Engineer] |
| 2021-03.16.f | A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle for rear and right-wing flail mower and tractor and other equipment [Engineer] |
| 2021-03.16.g | A resolution to request for appropriations for additional unanticipated receipts of memo receipts and memo expenses for fund 3445 Refugee Rd CR7-1.94 [Engineer] |
| 2021-03.16.h | A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure |

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object category County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle for overtime and
comp payout [Engineer]

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of the JFS Resolution

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the JFS resolution to approve additional appropriations by appropriating from unappropriated into a major expense object category – Fund #2072 – Child Services Fund – Fairfield County JFS; see resolution 2021-03.16.i.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of the Major Crimes Unit Resolution

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Major Crimes Unit resolution to authorize the Fairfield County Commissioners to sign the Fairfield-Hocking Athens Major Crimes Unit Sub-Grant Award Agreement; see resolution 2021-03.16.j.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of the Sheriff's Office Resolutions

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Sheriff's Office resolution authorizing an account to account transfer Fund 2593 Concealed Carry; see resolution 2021-03.16.k.

Discussion: Mr. Davis asked the Sheriff if the office is seeing a spike in concealed carry applications like the rest of the nation.

Sheriff Lape replied that they are seeing an increase, and it is an ongoing and bigger task than it has been in the past due to the pandemic. They hope to get back normal operations soon.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of the Payment of Bills

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Payment of Bills resolution authorizing the approval of payment of invoices for departments that need Board of Commissioners' approval; see resolution 2021-03.16.l

Discussion: Dr. Brown stated that the payment was for anticipated marked vehicle costs for the Sheriff.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Open Items

Dr. Brown reminded everyone of the EMA COVID Lunch & Learn next Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. This will be an opportunity to learn more about the vaccinations and scheduling.

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Executive Session – The Employment and Compensation of Public Officials

On the motion of Steve Davis and second of Jeff Fix, the Board voted to enter into Executive Session to discuss the employment and compensation of public officials at 10:06 a.m.

Discussion: Commissioner Levacy stated that the following people be included in the executive session: Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Levacy, Commissioner Fix, Carri Brown, Rachel Elsea, representatives from the Prosecutor's Office, representatives from Human Resources, and Sheriff Lape.

Roll call on the motion as follows:

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

On the motion of Jeff Fix and second of Steve Davis, the Board voted to exit Executive Session at 11:35 a.m.

Roll call on the motion as follows:

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

Review (continued)

The Commissioners met at 11:35 a.m. to review legal issues and pending or future action items and correspondence. Commissioner Levacy called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Jeff Fix, and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Rachel Elsea, Marc Fishel, Amy Brown-Thompson, Joshua Horacek, Jeff Porter, and Sheriff Lape.

Attending virtually was: Dennis Keller.

Additional Open Items

CCAO will be hosting a Regional Legislative Briefing on March 24th. Commissioners Levacy and Fix will attend virtually.

Dr. Brown updated everyone on the new groups anticipated to be eligible for the COVID vaccine.

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Adjournment

With no further business, on the motion of Jeff Fix and a second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to adjourn at 11:36 a.m.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for March 23, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

Motion by: Jeff Fix Seconded by: Steve Davis
that the March 16, 2021 minutes were approved by the following vote:

YEAS: Fix, Davis, Levacy

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

*Approved on March 23, 2021

 Steven A. Davis Commissioner	 Dave Levacy Commissioner	 Jeff Fix Commissioner
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~~Rachel A. Elsea, Clerk~~

Staci A. Knisley, Acting Clerk