

Regular Meeting 12 - 2026
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
March 17, 2026

2026-03.17.h A resolution authorizing the approval of payment of invoices for departments that need Board of Commissioners' approval.

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

Executive Session – Pending or Imminent Court Action

Commissioner Davis motioned to go into Executive Session to discuss pending or imminent court action at 10:08 a.m. with the following people/positions: the Board of County Commissioners, representatives from the Prosecutor's Office, Director of Fairfield County JFS, the County Administrators, Sheriff Lape, and the Commissioners Clerks. Commissioner Fix seconded the motion.

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

Commissioner Davis motioned at 10:25 a.m. to close the Executive Session, seconded by Commissioner Fix.

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

Executive Session – Security Matters

Commissioner Davis motioned to go into Executive Session to discuss security matters at 10:26 a.m. with the following people/positions: the Board of County Commissioners, representatives from the Prosecutor's Office, the County Administrators, Sheriff Lape, and the Commissioners Clerks. Commissioner Fix seconded the motion.

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

Commissioner Fix motioned at 10:45 a.m. to close the Executive Session, seconded by Commissioner Levacy.

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

Adjournment

With no further business, On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to adjourn at 9:42 a.m.

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

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

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- 2026-03.17.b A resolution to declare the VIO-21 Bridge Replacement Project to be a continuing real and present emergency and authorizing the County Engineer to Proceed Accordingly
- 2026-03.17.c A Resolution to Approve the Contract Bid Award for the FAI-CR7-3.390 Refugee Road Resurfacing Project

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

Approval of Resolutions from Fairfield County Job and Family Services

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

- 2026-03.17.d A resolution to approve a memo exp./ memo receipt for the costs of Birth Certificates paid to Fairfield County Health Departments as a memo expenditure for fund# 2072 Public Children's Services
- 2026-03.17.e A resolution to approve a memo exp./ memo receipt for the costs of Birth Certificates paid to Fairfield County Health Departments as a memo expenditure for fund# 2072 Public Children's Services

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

Approval of a Resolution from the Fairfield County Regional Planning Commission

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

- 2026-03.17.f A resolution to approve an award of bid to Cooper Concrete Services LLC for the CDBG - PY2024 - Village of Bremen – Community Pool Improvements Project

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

Approval of a Resolution from the Fairfield County Sheriff

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

- 2026-03.17.g A Resolution to Appropriate from Unappropriated in a Major Expenditure Object Category for Sheriff; 2394 Litter

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

Approval of the Payment of Bills

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

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Regular (Voting) Meeting

The Commissioners continued to the Regular/Voting portion of the meeting, and the following Commissioners were present: Steve Davis, David Levacy and Jeff Fix. Also present: Deputy County Administrator, Jeff Porter; Clerk, Rochelle Menningen; Communications and Information Coordinator, Bennett Niceswanger; Budget Director, Bart Hampson; EMA & Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; IT Director, Dan Neeley; JFS Director, Corey Clark; Economic & Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabrak; Engineer, Jeremiah Upp; Recorder, Lisa McKenzie; Treasurer, Jim Bahnsen; FCFC Manager, Tiffany Wilson; Budget Officer, Staci Knisley; Regional Planner, Nicholas Eastham; Deputy HR Director, Abby Watson; Benefits Specialist, Colleen Cook; Deputy JFS Director, Heather O'Keefe; Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Steven Darnell; Utilities Director, Tony Vogel; Sheriff, Alex Lape; and Sheriff's Deputy, Kevin Romine. Also in attendance: Garrett Davis and Chris Snider.

Virtual attendees: Michael Kaper, Shannon Ward, Lori Hawk, Marcy Fields, Shelby Hunt, Lori Lovas, Nikki Drake, Holly Lybrook, Tony Vogel, Jeff Barron, Deborah, Jessica Murphy, AC, Stacy Hicks, Andy Robberts, Bayley Fields, Ashley Arter, Britney Lee, and Jason Grubb.

Pledge of Allegiance

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

Announcements

None.

Approval of Minutes for March 10, 2026

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

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

Approval of a Resolution from the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners

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

2026-03.17.a A resolution to approve signing an agreement relating to Associated Pharmacies, Inc. (and American Associated Pharmacies); JM Smith Co.; Morris and Dickson; Louisiana Wholesale Drug Company, Inc.; North Carolina Wholesale Drug Company, Inc.; and UNFI/SuperValu as presented by legal counsel for national opioid litigation

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

Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Engineer

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

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Dan Neeley stated he will be in Columbus at a conference with other IT government professionals discussing AI and cybersecurity.

Corey Clark provided an update on the statewide SNAP efforts to reduce error rates. During the first week of April Fairfield County Job and Family Services (JFS) will receive a list of 20 cases to determine the error rate.

Commissioner Davis asked if the 20 cases is a random sample size.

Clark stated the case load for the sample is based on the county's population size but the error rate for the county doesn't translate to the statewide error rate.

Commissioner Fix added he was at a CCAO meeting where there were discussions around the State's JFS computer system.

Clark replied that each county must do the assessment manually due to issues with the state system. He believes the error rate is due in part to the state's system issues.

Staci Knisley stated the Transportation Improvement District has paid the contribution loan in full.

Tiffany Wilson stated that Family and Children First is accepting donations for the community baby shower to be hosted in April.

Garrett Davis stated United Way's 2025 campaign is closed and they are now planning for the 2026 campaign. They will hold a community listening session to give the public a chance to share feedback on the direction they would like to see United Way head in the future.

Old Business

Commissioner Fix stated he had the opportunity to sit on a housing panel with Columbus Mayor Ginther, and a few hundred others, including developers and investors. He also attended a MORPC meeting with former U.S. Representative Steve Stivers and a separate meeting with Senator Bernie Moreno on a plan to increase available housing. He added that there is a continuing effort with a regional housing coalition to build solutions to the housing crisis.

Commissioner Levacy met with Congressman Balderson at the Workforce Center. The Congressman was very impressed with the Workforce Center's renovations. He added that he also attended a meeting with the Salvation Army.

Commissioner Davis stated he also attended the Salvation Army meeting. He added that he met with OU-L regarding last year's flood and stated that the festival would continue.

New Business

Commissioner Levacy stated he will attend MORPC's State of the Region.

Commissioner Fix added he will also be attending MORPC's State of the Region. He stated that he was without power for 17 hours following the last storm and was grateful that South Central Power is prepared for such situations.

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Updates from Elected Officials and Department Heads

Commissioner Davis stated he appreciates that so many elected officials and department heads attend and participate in the Board of Commissioners' meetings.

Sheriff Lape provided an update on a case in the Court of Common Pleas where a child sex offender was prosecuted. He also spoke on the key role that Harcum House played in that prosecution.

Treasurer Bahnsen stated his office continues to move forward on electronic processing of credit card payments.

Recorder McKenzie stated her office has started the credit card process. She added that the vendor has been great to work with and they have had a lot of positive feedback.

Commissioner Davis asked Engineer Upp if his office has emergency funds set aside for items such as the bridge repair on Basil-Western Road.

Engineer Upp stated they have a carry-over for operational items and emergency situations but are handicapped by the purchasing amount. He added that there are also force accounts that can be used once approved by the Commissioners.

Dr. Brown thanked the Sheriff for participating in the OU leadership summit. She added that she is serving on the OU Alumni Board and volunteered the previous week at MOW. Dr. Brown also spoke at a Pickerington Schools' Town Hall on how property taxes relate to schools. The deadline for property valuation is March 31st. Her office won the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting award from the Government Finance Officers Association.

Tony Vogel thanked the Commissioners for providing the county with the tools to be resilient during and after storms. Utilities was able to maintain services during the recent outages and the office has been working with the Village of Millersport on the design of their new wastewater facility.

Rick Szabrak spoke about issues with advanced higher education rules. The OU Engineering associate's degree at the Workforce Center has 18 students enrolled but the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) denied the waiver to allow the program to continue. The program was impacted during COVID. The students will still receive a certificate, but they will not be able to use it toward their degree. All criteria were met for the program to receive a waiver but it was denied.

Commissioner Davis asked how the program would proceed based on the information regarding the waiver.

Szabrak replied that this is the first time this has happened with any of the programs at the Workforce Center so they are still working through what would happen next. There are students in the program and OU will have to create individual studies for these students to get their degree.

Commissioner Levacy stated he had conversations with Federal and State representatives on the higher education rules.

Jon Kochis stated there is an upcoming statewide emergency test. He added that participants could take pictures and be added to EMA's social media pages.

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Commissioner Davis asked if the sink hole or bridge failure were related to the Basil-Western Road project.

Engineer Upp replied that the sink hole and bridge issue were simply a coincidence.

- The Engineer's Office also has a resolution on the agenda to approve awarding the Refugee Road Resurfacing Project to the Shelly Company. The Shelly Company was the lowest bidder and deemed a responsive and responsible bidder.
- Regional Planning has a resolution to approve awarding Cooper Concrete Services the Village of Bremen Community Pool Improvements Project. The project received a CDBG grant for PY2024.

Budget Review

Budget Director, Bart Hampson

Calendar Review/Invitations Received

- *The Calendar Review and Invitations Received were provided by Communications and Information Coordinator, Bennett Niceswanger.*
 - Millersport Business Group, March 18, 2026, 8:30 a.m., American Legion, 2557 Canal St., Millersport
 - Meeting with Representative from the AG's Office, March 19, 2026, 10:00 a.m., 201 Clint Dr., Pickerington
 - Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency Board of Directors Meeting, March 19, 2026, 11:30 a.m., Recycling Center, 1761 E. Main St., Lancaster
 - Family and Children First Full Council Meeting, March 20, 2026, 8:30 a.m., Fairfield County Agricultural Center, 831 College Ave., Lancaster
 - MORPC's 2026 State of the Region, March 20, 2026, 11:00 a.m., Hilton Columbus Downtown, 402 N. High St., Columbus

Correspondence

- County Municipal Court, Criminal/Traffic Division Fees Collected Report, February 2026
- Fairfield Energy Fairfield Center, March 5, 2026, Re: Fairfield Energy Center Public Informational Meeting for Proposed Natural Gas Generation Facility in the Village of Millersport, Fairfield County, Ohio, First Meeting
- Fairfield Energy Center, March 11, 2026, Re: Fairfield Energy Center Second Public Informational Meeting for Proposed Natural Gas Generation Facility in the Village of Millersport, Fairfield County, Ohio

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Dr. Uhl replied that sustainability is totally related to the cost of the programming. He added that DD provides services from birth to death and about half of the 1800 serviced are student age. School districts also define disability as learning disabilities. Learning and developmental disabilities differ but many are linked.

Public Comments

None.

Legal Update

Steven Darnell offered to answer questions on the Engineer's resolution for the emergency repair of the bridge on Basil-Western Road but the Commissioners did not have questions at that time.

County Administration Update

- *The County Administration Update was provided by Deputy County Administrator, Jeff Porter, unless otherwise indicated.*

Week in Review

The Next Evening Meeting

The next evening meeting of the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners will be held on March 31st at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will be at the Amanda-Clearcreek School located at 328 E. Main St. in Amanda. The April 7th meeting will be held at 1:00 p.m., at the Levacy Center, following the Leadership Conference.

Highlights of Resolutions

Administrative Approvals

The review packet contains a list of administrative approvals.

Resolution Review

There are 8 resolutions on the agenda for the Regular voting meeting.

Resolutions of note:

- The first resolution on the agenda is to approve a participation agreement relating to Associated Pharmacies, Inc., JM Smith Co., Morris and Dickson, Louisiana Wholesale Drug Company, Inc., North Carolina Wholesale Drug Company Inc., and UNFI/SuperValu for national opioid litigation.
- The Engineer's Office has an emergency resolution due to the collapse of a bridge on Basil-Western Road. The bridge is located between Amanda Northern Road and Pickerington Road and washed out due to a strong storm that came through the area last week.

Engineer Upp stated a culvert developed a sink hole along a bridge on Basil-Western Road and his office issued an emergency closure.

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Review Meeting

The Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners Hearing Room located at 210 E. Main St., Lancaster, OH. Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order, and the following Commissioners were present: Steve Davis, David Levacy and Jeff Fix. Also present: Deputy County Administrator, Jeff Porter; Clerk, Rochelle Menningen; Communications and Information Coordinator, Bennett Niceswanger; Budget Director, Bart Hampson; EMA & Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; IT Director, Dan Neeley; JFS Director, Corey Clark; Economic & Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabrak; Engineer, Jeremiah Upp; Recorder, Lisa McKenzie; Treasurer, Jim Bahnsen; FCFC Manager, Tiffany Wilson; Budget Officer, Staci Knisley; Regional Planner, Nicholas Eastham; Deputy HR Director, Abby Watson; Benefits Specialist, Colleen Cook; Deputy JFS Director, Heather O'Keefe; Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Steven Darnell; Utilities Director, Tony Vogel; Sheriff, Alex Lape; and Sheriff's Deputy, Kevin Romine. Also in attendance: Garrett Davis and Chris Snider.

Virtual attendees: Michael Kaper, Shannon Ward, Lori Hawk, Marcy Fields, Shelby Hunt, Lori Lovas, Nikki Drake, Holly Lybrook, Tony Vogel, Jeff Barron, Deborah, Jessica Murphy, AC, Stacy Hicks, Andy Robberts, Bayley Fields, Ashley Arter, Britney Lee, and Jason Grubb.

Welcome

Commissioner Davis opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance.

Listen & Learn, Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities (DD) Superintendent, Dr. David Uhl

Dr. Uhl thanked the Commissioners and others around the County for their support of DD. He spoke about DD's Community Impact Report and added that March is DD Awareness Month. DD is celebrating the innovations that help people live more independently. Dr. Uhl has been with DD for 14 years and the DD board has utilized the dollars entrusted to them in great ways to positively impact the lives DD supports. The Board supported over 1800 individuals in 2025, many which utilized support/case workers. There were 477 kids between birth and 3 years of age supported by DD, and the numbers continue to grow. He added that when DD supports individuals from birth to 3 years of age, those individuals are less likely to need assistance later in life. DD hired a therapist who coordinates assistive technology. Dr. Uhl reported that previously DD had one language on its website and now it has a translator for the top five languages used in the area. The website translator was used 40,000 times in its first year. Dr. Uhl spoke about funding and added that DD has a focus group to talk about revenue and how to protect public services going forward. Dr. Uhl played a video titled the "House of Many Journeys." The video is available on DD's website and covers the history of the Fairfield County Infirmary.

Commissioner Davis thanked Dr. Uhl for a great presentation and added that he appreciated the connectivity.

Commissioner Fix also thanked Dr. Uhl for his presentation. He asked about the number of individuals enrolled at DD and if there is a pattern to the increased numbers.

Dr. Uhl replied that more people come into the county each year and impacts the level of individuals served by DD. He added that DD is a statewide system administered by each county. Work is being done at the state level to ensure sustainability for programming now and in the future.

Commissioner Fix asked why the program might not be sustainable.

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