

Regular Meeting #15 - 2020
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
March 31, 2020

Meeting with Jack Janoso

The Commissioners met with Jack Janoso at 9:00 a.m. Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Jeff Fix, and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Rachel Elsea, Jack Janoso, Mark Conrad, Jeff Barron, and Innerphase Video. Joining via teleconference were Jon Kochis and staff from the Prosecutor's Office.

Commissioner Davis welcomed everyone. He explained the meeting was being live streamed and the Commission was practicing social distancing for those in attendance.

The Commissioners met with Jack Janoso, President and CEO of Fairfield Medical Center.

Mr. Janoso thanked the Commissioners for having him and provided an update on how FMC is preparing for the COVID-19 case increase. He stated they are following all of the Governor's orders and repurposing employees who are no longer needed in their roles or are no longer serving in their usual capacities due to lack of events. He thanked everyone in the community for their assistance in making their jobs easier. Mr. Janoso has been on daily calls with CEOs from across the state. FMC is trying to be as transparent as they can.

Mr. Davis asked about capacity issues.

Mr. Janoso replied there are a few variables with COVID-19 patients. Those who require hospitalization require intensive care. FMC has roughly 40 ventilators for patient care; they have about the same number of intensive care beds that can be scaled up or down. The observation unit, 14 beds, has been turned into their COVID-19 unit with plans to change a few other areas into expansion areas. FMC has a total of 180-200 beds. Beyond that, the variables are staffing and equipment.

Mr. Davis asked about the potential for ventilator sharing between patients. He asked if that was accurate.

Mr. Janoso replied it was theoretically possible, as he understands it. Medical professionals can answer that question better.

Mr. Davis asked if there was any necessity for off-site access in the planning.

Mr. Janoso replied they have been working with others regarding scaling. They have been working with Jon Kochis (with Emergency Management) on this, as well looking at other areas in the community including the surgery center. The government has allowed them to be flexible on how they can re-purpose areas for patient care. They believe they have enough capacity now to handle what they will need to, and they can scale up if necessary.

Mr. Levacy stated FMC has been around 104 years, and he is a firm believer in them being a non-profit hospital. He asked how FMC supports smaller facilities to the south.

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Mr. Janoso replied that FMC recognizes the best car you can get is close to home. Some of their patients are from other counties, including Athens County, and even into West Virginia. They have worked closely with Hocking Valley and others because they want those patients to stay close to home. FMC can do a good job locally, they just need the resources to do it.

Mr. Levacy asked how they are doing financially.

Mr. Janoso replied that the elimination of elective surgeries has a huge negative impact on all organizations across the state. The shelter at home order has made it worse as the ERs are also seeing lower numbers. The loss of the volume is impactful. They are spending all of their costs on ramping up for COVID-19 with a fraction of the revenue. The projections over the next several months are frightening. He is having conversations with every legislator to bring awareness to the problem. FMC needs to be able to survive this at the end. In the short term, they will do whatever they need to do, but there will be long-term effects.

Mr. Fix thanked Mr. Janoso for his leadership. His confidence in FMC during this time is extremely high. He asked if Mr. Janoso anticipates patients from other counties and medical facilities coming to FMC because others institutions are overrun, or vice-a-versa.

Mr. Janoso replied they did not have an idea as to which way that would go, but they are prepared for both options.

Mr. Fix asked about testing.

Mr. Janoso reviewed the testing options and how they are really being driven through the physicians' offices. The problem is the results are taking 7-10 days to get back. They have tested over 200 people and only have 75 of those results back, with one positive case who was outpatient. Testing will get better, but in Fairfield County's case, it may be too little to late.

Mr. Fix asked what else the Commission could do to help.

Mr. Janoso asked to let him know what they are hearing in the community. They have a strong social media presence and are not hiding anything. They are trying to dispell rumors and get through this together. This is a community effort.

Dr. Brown mentioned the collaborative spirit in Fairfield County. She stated the governor was promoting the together@governor.ohio.gov email address for residents who want to donate supplies or time. She asked if there was a preference on the part of FMC for how to contact them regarding donations.

Mr. Janoso replied the FMC Foundation would be a good pass-through as their other operations have been halted for the time being. The donations and help FMC has received has been uplifting.

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The Commissioners described their efforts to support critical, medical infrastructure for Fairfield Medical Center.

Mr. Davis thanked Mr. Janoso for sharing the update. He mentioned that Ohio hospitals have found themselves in a difficult situation with the Governor being appropriately proactive with his orders. The Ohio hospital systems were one of the first to experience the revenue decline and one of the last to see the surge. This has put a strain on the system as a whole with the rural hospitals experiencing more strain than the larger hospitals.

All three Commissioners have been in touch with members of Congress and the State officials over the past 72 hours in an effort to express the timeliness of the CARE Act revenue and to discuss the methodology of its distribution. He was encouraged this morning to see that 81 members of Congress have sent a letter to US HHS Secretary Azar for immediate disbursement to the states. They are asking that the State of Ohio show leadership and create a fund for rural hospitals to have a lifeline in this environment. Some of these conversations have been very encouraging. Mr. Fix will be asking CCAO to deploy their efforts to join the Ohio Hospital Association. Congressman Stivers is joining the call to push the funding to rural hospitals.

Mr. Janoso replied this is a situation which the community needs to understand. He thanked the Commissioners for their help during this time. This is a supply and demand issue. The Governor rightly acted to flatten the curve and increase the supply of care resources, but the problem is that they operate as a fixed capacity. This created a war time situation to ramp up cost, supply, and resources while the revenue is shelled. The other problem is that they prepare for disasters all the time, but those disasters are short-term events that resolve themselves in a short period of time. This pandemic is a long-term event that greatly impacts FMC economically. He pointed out that FMC has a great impact on the community as a whole. An average day's revenue for FMC was roughly \$1-\$1.2 million. That has dropped substantially.

Mr. Davis thanked Mr. Janoso for his time and leadership in this time.

Mr. Janoso reassured the community that throughout this crisis, FMC will be there for the community. It is built with people who have a heart for what they do. They will provide the best care to those in the community. He asked those who are not currently feeling well and are afraid to go to FMC that they know FMC is keeping the facility safe. It is safe to go to FMC for care. Not coming in could make their health worse. Everyone is safe to come to the ER and other facilities. They will keep them safe.

The Commissioners provided a proclamation of appreciation to Mr. Janoso to display at Fairfield Medical Center. We are appreciative of our medical professionals during the COVID 19 pandemic and all throughout the year.

Review

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The Commissioners met at 9:46 a.m. to review legal issues and pending or future action items and correspondence. Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Jeff Fix, and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Rachel Elsea, Mark Conrad, Jeff Barron, and Innerphase Video. Joining via teleconference were Jon Kochis of members of the Prosecutor's office.

- Welcome
- COVID-19 Update

Jon Kochis, EMA Director provided an update.

There have been some exciting developments. The supply of Battelle related PPE is exciting, and they are working on how that can be useful in Fairfield County. This is a FEMA eligible reimbursement expense. The items received from the Federal Government are not at the quantities they are needing. They will get another shipment tomorrow and will make sure the hospital, nursing homes, long term health care facilities, and home health providers get what they need.

Mr. Davis asked for any new data of their needs if the Commission does not have that data.

Mr. Kochis replied they have the resources they need for the time being. They will work with Battelle on how that system will work. They may need a separate agreement for first responders. There are plans should they need to use alternate sites.

Mr. Levacy asked if first responders had all the PPE they needed to be safe.

Mr. Kochis replied they were able to do an initial push with major thanks to Dr. Varney who had stockpiled Coroner resources. That is not something they would typically keep on hand, but the Coroner had the foresight to keep their stockpile. The Sheriff's office has been able to take care of law enforcement right off the bat.

Mr. Fix stated he spoke to Franklin County Commissioner O'Grady last night, and they are seeing a large increase in patients. He asked if that shows what they anticipate seeing here.

Mr. Kochis replied that as of this morning the regional bed count was in the 1,500 range for all central Ohio hospitals. They are already ramping up the Convention Center for extra beds.

Mr. Fix asked if the surge in Columbus was a signal that Fairfield County would be seeing more patients soon, or is the County better prepared?

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Mr. Kochis replied he thinks this is just a reflection of how many people are in a square mile. The more people there are closer together, the faster the virus will spread. If they double everything in three days, they are doing a good job. Canceling the Arnold Classic was a great way to stop community spread early on.

Mr. Davis thanked Mr. Kochis for his work and planning over the years for an event such as this one.

Mr. Fix and Mr. Levacy thanked Mr. Kochis as well.

Mr. Kochis thanked the community for their PPE donations. EMA is distributing those as soon as they come in.

- **Announcement**

We are remembering former Commissioner Kiger. He passed away on March 26, 2020. All three Commissioners shared memories of Commissioner Kiger and expressed their condolences to Alma and the Kiger family.

Commissioner Kiger truly loved being a commissioner and enjoyed connecting with all people in Fairfield County. We know that during this time, Commissioner Kiger would really appreciate how we are continuing to get work done and provide essential services to the people of Fairfield County.

Another day, we will have opportunity to celebrate his life. A celebration of life ceremony is planned for the summer.

Commissioner Kiger served as Commissioner from 2002-2018.



- **Legal Update**

The review packet contained a summary about public meetings held in a virtual manner.

There was a legal summary and a managerial summary, which included 20 tips for conducting virtual meetings. CCAO created a bulletin on this topic.

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Mr. Tom Lininger highlighted the new virtual meeting options.

(Josh, Amy, and Tom continue to work remotely and are continuing to serve the departments.)

Mr. Davis asked if things were still working well on the criminal side.

Mr. Lininger replied that they were monitoring it and doing those items constitutionally required.

Administration and Budget Update/Carri's List

Operational Update

The plan communicated on March 16 and updated in response to the Order to Stay at Home is working well. Intensive social distancing is in place. There have been several community meetings held to help organizations deal with the pandemic and its effects.

Critical/Essential Services

Critical services continue.

This site allows you to apply, renew, or make changes for cash, food, or medical assistance: www.benefits.ohio.gov.

To report abuse or neglect please call:(740) 652-7887. Call 911 for emergencies.

We are will continue protective services, utilities, and critical support services. Critical services will continue, including but not limited to:

- Law Enforcement/Jail
- Protective Services
- Courts - CPOs and CSPOs
- Utilities
- JFS benefits - getting benefits to people
- Payroll services
- A/P - getting payments to businesses
- EMA
- Road/Bridge emergency services
- Administration to keep critical services going
- Veteran Services emergency transportation
- Care of Dogs at the Shelter

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We have checked in daily with department heads and elected officials. All is under control at the Jail and MCJDC. They are doing all they can to keep the populations as low as possible.

Commission and RPC Meetings Through April 8 – Possibly Longer - /Websites

We are encouraging limited staff, alternate locations, alternate schedules and use of technology to employ extensive social distancing. All buildings are closed to the general public.

For Commission (and RPC Meetings) the meetings are being streamed live on the Internet. We have invited the public to comment by email or through the regular “ask a question” format. The website is updated regularly. The website has all agendas, minutes, and announcements. Here is a link:

<https://www.co.fairfield.oh.us/important-notice.html>

We will continue this pattern throughout the Stay at Home order, even as it might be extended in time.

The press is invited to attend the meetings. We are maintaining good social distancing practices.

The Commissioners will be posting video messages on March 31.

Election – By April 28

The Board of Elections website includes information about absentee ballots. The review packet summarizes elections requirements.

<https://www.fairfieldelections.com/>

Drop Boxes Available in Lancaster

We now have a drop box at the Administrative (Historical) Courthouse.

There is one at JFS, the Government Services Center, on Main Street, too.

The Chestnut Street Payment Center is open to drop off documents. We are also able to accept child support payments there. Thanks to CSEA personnel for accepting documents for all departments.

If something is dropped in the drop box locations and does not belong to the county (such as a Utilities payment for the City of Lancaster), we are sending it by mail to the proper recipient.

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Date Reminders and Calendar Review

- April 8 – Wear Blue for Child Abuse Prevention Awareness
- April 10 – Good Friday – Close at Noon

The review packet includes special dates of the year, as well as a list of prospective proclamations. In April, there are no large meetings.

In April, we will still issue proclamations for Victims Crimes Rights and Earth Day, as well as a proclamation to honor volunteers. We have asked all to provide that information by email. We can hold an in-person celebration at another time.

September 16 is the Economic and Workforce Development Summit, and there will be some focus groups held throughout the coming months to plan for that Summit.

Commissioner Fix has volunteered to join Rick Szabrak and others in that effort. We already have some information to begin the planning.

September 24 is the new date for the State of the County Address. This is also the date for the next leadership conference.

There are many other calendar dates, and these are ones to highlight for now.

Mr. Levacy highlighted the last day for absentee voting is April 28th with a postmark date of April 27th.

a. Highlights of Resolutions

There are 7 resolutions planned for the voting meeting.

We had a proclamation to honor Doctor Appreciation Day, and we are appreciative of all health professionals during this time.

We had a resolution to approve advertising for the WAL-38, FAI-TR473-00.57 South Bank Road over a Tributary to Buckeye Lake - Bridge Replacement Project.

There were *financial and grant related resolutions* to approve, such as:

- The repayment of an advance from Juvenile/Probate Court;
- A resolution to request appropriations relating to unanticipated receipts (memo receipts) and memo expenses for fund 2050, for annual inspections in various subdivisions as of 03/26/2020, relating to ditch maintenance districts;

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- Account to account transfers to properly classify expenditures for the County Engineer and Commissioners; and
- A fund to fund transfer of appropriations for an Engineer's project for resurfacing.

There are additional financial and contracting resolutions in queue.

For example, there are contracting resolutions in queue for protective placement in network. There are five such contracts for the next meeting, and there are more in queue. The contracts are the normal protective placement in network contracts.

b. Administrative Approvals, Program, & Budget Update

Administrative & Program Updates

Administrative Approvals

The review packet contained a list of administrative approvals.

Complete Count – US Census 2020

For information about the US Census, call the **Census Bureau Customer Service Center** at 1-800-923-8282 or 301-763-INFO (4636.)

Visit <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/surveyhelp/contact.html>

For the 2020 Census, on March 12-20, the federal government sent out letters asking households to respond online.

Each home can respond online (at **2020Census.gov**), by phone, or by mail.

There will be reminders and visits, as needed. You can respond to the 2020 Census online using a desktop computer, laptop, smartphone or tablet, and can also respond by phone or mail.

The December 31 deadline to deliver the count to the President remains, as does the April 1, 2021 deadline to deliver information to states. Other dates have been adjusted.

Training Update

We have provided links to required and optional training for all departments.

This might be a good time to get in ethics, cybersecurity, and unlawful harassment training for the year for some.

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Commission departments are also taking essential, customer service skills with ServiceSkills, an online tool that uses videos in manageable increments of time, with most in 10-minute modules.

These ServiceSkills modules are available to all county employees all throughout the year, and they are being well received.

Budget Update

Dr. Brown stated that initial parameters envisioned are flat parameters, with the exception of insurance, for which a 2% increase is anticipated. This will be for “level one” of the process to prepare a Tax Budget. We will continue to communicate with departments.

Flat parameters for salaries will be calculated on the existing salaries right now extrapolated for a twelve-month period, with no new hires and a hiring freeze, with the exception of emergency response positions.

Allocations have been adjusted, as well, for 2021, and will reflect a decrease, mostly due to the reduction expected for the MCJDC allocation. That estimate for 2021 is \$600,000, down from \$800,000 in 2020.

Mr. Davis stated he has been asked if the County is in a layoff position. The position he is taking right now is that this a moment where County government needs to stand up. There will be real data after the pandemic passes, and we will act then. For the immediate and foreseeable future, the position of the office should be that this is the time for county government to stand up, not stand down.

Mr. Fix agreed this is a time for county government to stand strong during this time to provide the critical services needed.

Mr. Davis thanked the county employees who continue to provide critical services especially the Sheriff's employees, JFS, road workers, and utilities employees. The Commissioners sincerely appreciates their continued service in the face of fear and anxiety.

c. BRAVOs

There are many examples of positive and innovative thinking during this time.

Thanks to everyone for obtaining webcams and updating processes, including jail processes, for the Court to hold videoconferencing. Defense Counsel and the Prosecutor's Office will be able to attend these hearings from remote locations, and the jail will not have to expose inmates to any outside persons. The Sheriff's

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Office has been very helpful. A pilot is in place. This is an example of how collaboration and innovation can pull us through even the most difficult situations.

A defense attorney included this note below in an e-mail to the Court:

“Thanks for all you are doing in this crazy situation. At a time when many courts are simply throwing in the towel, I appreciate that the court is willing to remain open to allow many people like my client to have an opportunity to be released from incarceration.”

Thanks to Magistrate Boone for sharing this example.

Thanks to everyone who is using alternate locations, alternate work procedures, and technology to continue essential services. There are many examples of this, and while imperfect – we are learning a lot that will likely help us well into the future.

Buildings are closed the public, but there is a lot of work continuing. We are physically distancing ourselves and maintaining good hand washing and cleaning procedures.

Another community member was thankful for EMA’s help the delivery of PPE:
“ I want to express how much we appreciated the supplies that you were able to donate to us. Our staff will put them to good use during this crisis. I cannot say how amazing the Lancaster Community is and the lengths that they will go to help each other.”

Bravo to Hannah Heimberger and Tina Childers for volunteering to help the Board of Elections. Thanks to Aunie Cordle for mobilizing volunteers to help, too.

Thanks to financial officers for working hard to organize expenditures to that we can have tracking relating to COVID 19.

Thanks to payroll officers and HR for organizing policy and procedures relating to the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act. (A copy of the communication to all elected officials and department heads was in the review packet. CCAO bulletins were also in the review packet.)

Thanks to the County Engineer and staff for maintaining critical road and bridge infrastructure.

The Fairfield County Health Department is now a Nationally Accredited Health Department! Congratulations!

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Thank you to the Eagle Gazette for their Ace of Trades article on Rachel Elsea.
Thank you to Rachel Elsea for showing the County in a positive light.

Thank you to Dr. Varney for the Coroner's Office donation of PPE to the community.

- Old Business (none)
- New Business (none)
- General Correspondence Received (none)
- Calendar Review/Invitations Received (none)
- FYI
 - a. Jail Population – 201
 - b. Anytime, a public records request or a question can be posed to Rachel.Elsea@fairfieldcountyohio.gov or [Carri. Brown@fairfieldcountyohio.gov](mailto:Carri.Brown@fairfieldcountyohio.gov)
- Open Items

Ms. Elsea and Dr. Brown confirmed there were no public comments received via email or the online comment forum. Mr. Davis thanked everyone for their patience during the time the meetings are physically closed to the public. The Commission looks forward to the time when the meetings are physically open to the public again.

Commissioners' Regular Meeting

A regular meeting of the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, March 31, 2020 beginning at 9:49 a.m., with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Jeff Fix and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Rachel Elsea, and Innerphase Video. Also joining via teleconference was Tom Lininger and Jon Kochis.

Moment of Silence

Commissioner Davis led everyone in a moment of silence for those experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Announcements

Commissioner Davis asked if there were any announcements.

There were no announcements.

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Public Comment

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

No public comments were received through the web application.

Approval of Minutes for Tuesday, March 24, 2020

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the minutes for the Thursday, March 24, 2020 Regular Meeting.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of the Commissioners' Resolutions

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

- 2020-03.31.a A resolution authorizing the approval of a proclamation. [Commissioners]
- 2020-03.31.b A resolution approving an account to account transfer in major object expense categories for General Fund# 1001 – Fairfield County Commissioners [Commissioners]

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of the Engineer's Resolutions

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

- 2020-03.31.c A resolution to request for appropriations for additional unanticipated receipts of Memo receipts and memo expenses for fund 2050 for annual inspections in various subdivisions as of 03/26/2020 [Engineer]
- 2020-03.31.d A resolution of increasing appropriations, appropriate from unappropriate, account to account and fund to fund transfer for 33A Resurfacing [Engineer]
- 2020-03.31.e A resolution approving an account to account transfer in a major expenditure object category – Fairfield County Engineer [Engineer]

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2020-03.31.f A Resolution to Approve Advertising for the WAL-38, FAI-TR473-00.57
South Bank Road over a Tributary to Buckeye Lake Bridge Replacement
Project. [Engineer]

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

Approval of the Juvenile/Probate Court Resolution

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Juvenile/Probate Court resolution authorizing the approval of repayment of an advance to the General Fund from Fund #2856 Child Abuse and Neglect Discretionary Fund; see resolution 2020-03.31.g.

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

Review Continued

Mr. Levacy reflected on the meeting three weeks ago to pass a resolution to declare an emergency in Fairfield County. He was impressed with the collaboration in Fairfield County.

Mr. Fix stated he appreciates Dr. Brown's and the county's preparation for the COVID-19 pandemic. Fairfield County is used as an example throughout the state. Mr. Davis' work on the rural hospital situation is leading the state. This will eventually save the health care system in the state of Ohio.

Mr. Davis stated that last week the Commission met via teleconference and this week in person. The reason he wanted to be in person today, with social distancing, was to hear from Jack Janoso about FMC and their current situation. Mr. Davis will continue, with the other Commissioners, to reach out and lobby everyone they can for continued support for the hospital system.

Dr. Brown commented on how helpful it was to have commissioners with strong relationships at the state and federal levels. They have worked tirelessly to amplify the voice of the Fairfield County community.

Adjournment

With no further business, on the motion of Jeff Fix and a second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to adjourn at 10:37 a.m.

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

