

Regular Meeting 16 - 2026
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
April 7, 2026

Review Meeting

The Commissioners met at 1:00 p.m. at the Levacy Center, 1550 Sheridan Drive, Lancaster, Ohio. Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order, and the following Commissioners were present: Steve Davis, Jeff Fix and David Levacy. Also present: County Administrator, Aundrea Cordle; Deputy County Administrator, Jeff Porter; Clerk to the Board of Commissioners, Rochelle Menningen; Budget Director, Bart Hampson; EMA & Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; Utilities Director, Tony Vogel; IT Director, Dan Neeley; JFS Director, Corey Clark; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Amy Brown-Thompson; Regional Planner, Josh Hillberry; Economic & Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabrak; Engineer, Jeremiah Upp; Recorder, Lisa McKenzie; Treasurer, Jim Bahnsen; Clerk of Courts, Branden Meyer; BOR Deputy Director, Linda O'Toole; Deputy HR Director, Abby Watson; Human Resources Administrators, Colleen Cook and Amberly Hannum; and Sheriff's Deputy, Kevin Romine. Also in attendance: Ray Stemen, Gary Silcott, Paul Carbol, Shannon Ward, Matt Claypool, and Jacelyn Cain.

Welcome

Commissioner Davis opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance.

Port Authority Interviews

Commissioner Davis stated there would be four interviews conducted for the open position on the Port Authority Board. He noted that a final decision would not be made during the meeting but would likely be communicated at a future session.

The first interview was with Gary Silcott. Mr. Silcott shared that he is a lifelong resident of Fairfield County and has over 35 years of experience as a civil engineer. He currently works for DLZ, a consulting firm based in Logan, and has extensive experience in grant work and infrastructure-related projects.

Commissioner Fix thanked Mr. Silcott for his willingness to serve and asked whether he anticipated any potential conflicts of interest between his role at DLZ and serving on the Port Authority Board.

Mr. Silcott responded that he did not foresee any conflicts.

Commissioner Fix also inquired about what Mr. Silcott viewed as the greatest economic development opportunities for Fairfield County.

Mr. Silcott noted that there are many opportunities throughout the county that could positively impact the workforce, including the emergence of data centers, though he expressed his reservations about them due to their resource usage and limited job creation. He emphasized that his goal would be to support job creation and expand opportunities for residents.

Commissioner Levacy thanked Mr. Silcott for his interest in serving and asked what he believed to be the primary economic development role of a port authority.

Mr. Silcott responded that ensuring adequate infrastructure is in place is critical to support growth and attract new opportunities. He explained that having the necessary resources prepared allows development projects to move forward more efficiently.

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Commissioner Davis asked Mr. Silcott to describe what he believes the primary mission of the Port Authority is and how it is currently performing. Mr. Silcott responded that the core mission is to promote job creation and develop the infrastructure needed to support economic growth. He added that he believes the Port Authority is already working toward these goals and expressed confidence that his experience - particularly in funding and infrastructure - would make him a strong contributor to the Board.

Mr. Silcott concluded by thanking the Commissioners for the opportunity and reiterating his interest in serving.

Commissioner Davis introduced the next interviewee, Jacelyn Cain.

Ms. Cain shared that her professional experience is centered on workforce development and relationship building. She expressed a strong interest in serving on the Port Authority Board, emphasizing her goal of creating more job opportunities within Fairfield County so that residents—particularly future generations—do not need to commute to other counties for employment. She also noted that she is currently pursuing her SHRM certification and has experience in case management, grant work, and community-based initiatives.

Commissioner Levacy asked Ms. Cain how she believes the Port Authority contributes to job creation.

Ms. Cain responded that pursuing and leveraging grant funding is a key component, and she expressed interest in using creative funding strategies to support hiring and workforce development initiatives.

Commissioner Levacy thanked her for her willingness to serve.

Commissioner Fix also expressed appreciation for Ms. Cain's interest and asked what she sees as the most significant economic development opportunity in Fairfield County.

Ms. Cain emphasized the importance of creating employment opportunities that not only attract workers but also retain them, keeping local talent and resources within the county.

Commissioner Davis asked Ms. Cain what work she was most proud of during her time with Habitat for Humanity.

Ms. Cain highlighted her involvement in workforce training and employee retention efforts, as well as her work supporting the ReStore, fundraising for families, and helping educate the community about homeownership responsibilities, including the reality that Habitat for Humanity homeowners still maintain mortgages. She also noted her experience serving in various roles within the organization and her involvement in relocating the Fairfield County office to a more central and accessible location.

Commissioner Davis acknowledged the County's Land Bank partnership with Habitat for Humanity.

Ms. Cain expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to interview and reiterated her desire to contribute to bringing more jobs and opportunities to Fairfield County.

Commissioner Davis introduced the next interviewee, Matt Claypool.

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Mr. Claypool shared that he has been actively involved in numerous community organizations, including the Fairfield Heritage Association and the local Chamber of Commerce. He noted that he currently serves as President of Claypool Electric and is also involved with the board of a local savings bank. Mr. Claypool emphasized his commitment to supporting the community and maintaining Fairfield County as a great place to live and work.

Commissioner Fix asked Mr. Claypool what he sees as the greatest opportunity for economic growth in Fairfield County.

Mr. Claypool responded that the county is well-positioned for development due to its available land and strong workforce potential, including the ability to draw workers from surrounding southern counties. He explained that the Port Authority plays a critical role in facilitating relationships between the county and businesses looking to locate in the area, and that offering competitive incentives is key to attracting those businesses over neighboring counties.

Commissioner Levacy asked what type of business or industry Mr. Claypool would like to attract to Fairfield County.

Mr. Claypool indicated that he would favor large-scale manufacturing operations and noted that data centers can also be beneficial, particularly due to the construction jobs and economic activity they generate.

Commissioner Davis referenced the Lancaster Festival and thanked Mr. Claypool for his involvement and support.

Mr. Claypool shared that he had been a part of the festival's stage crew during high school and spoke about the festival's importance in bringing the community together. In closing, Mr. Claypool expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to interview and reiterated his desire to see economic development in Fairfield County continue to grow and thrive.

Commissioner Davis introduced the next interviewee, Steve Carbol.

Mr. Carbol shared that he is a long-time resident of Lancaster and originally grew up in Northeast Ohio. He works as a real estate appraiser at Huntington Bank and is a veteran. Mr. Carbol highlighted his extensive volunteer experience, including work with Habitat for Humanity, Bowling for Kids, and other community organizations, emphasizing his personal motto: "service above self."

Commissioner Levacy asked what he sees as the Port Authority's biggest role in economic development in Fairfield County.

Mr. Carbol stated that the Port Authority should strategically facilitate growth and attract development while considering multiple factors to ensure balanced progress. He also noted that as more growth opportunities arise in the county, there will be a need for expanded development and additional housing.

Commissioner Fix asked what type of economic development Mr. Carbol would prioritize.

Mr. Carbol indicated that he favors manufacturing and development parks, reflecting Fairfield County's history as a manufacturing town. He also suggested attracting businesses from more urban areas, such as Columbus, to rural parts of the county, including bank service centers and other enterprises that support local communities.

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When asked how the Port Authority might assist in county development, Mr. Carbol emphasized the importance of spreading out new development to prevent oversaturation in any one area. Mr. Carbol concluded by expressing his desire to contribute to the county's development and maintain its quality of life for residents.

Commissioner Davis acknowledged the deep bench of candidates for the Port Authority Board and noted that even if not selected immediately, each interviewee could contribute in other ways to Fairfield County's growth.

Public Comments

Ray Stemen of Lancaster commented on the state of the Levacy Center and how the building has changed positively over time. He also provided a prayer.

Legal Update

There was no legal update.

County Administration Update

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

Week in Review

No Meeting on April 21st

There will not be a Commission meeting during the week of April 20th. For 2026 we developed a schedule that exceeded the required 50 meetings while taking into consideration scheduling conflicts. The Commissioners have 53 meetings scheduled for 2026.

SNAP Administrative Funding

Governor Dewine signed House Bill 730 on March 31st, which included \$10 million in SNAP administrative funding for counties. The estimated loss for Ohio counties from the decrease in federal SNAP funding in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act was \$38 million. The \$10 million state appropriation, with the \$2.5 million federal match, will assist counties in filling the budget shortage. Fairfield County will receive \$112,775.90 out of the max of \$226,486. This restores that budget line item.

Corey Clark added that the funding will provide full restoration for one year. He further added that some metropolitan counties have a \$4-6 million shortage and the maximum assistance under House Bill 730 would cover very little of their budget shortage.

Highlights of Resolutions

Administrative Approvals

The review packet contains a list of administrative approvals.

Resolution Review

There are 22 resolutions on the agenda for the Regular voting meeting.

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Resolutions of note:

- From the Commissioners' Office there is a resolution to approve a plan agreement with CCAO for inclusion in the Worker's Comp Group Retrospective Rating Plan Program for 2027.

Jeff Porter stated that the renewal rebate for the Group Retro program is based on the claims experience.

- The Engineer's Office has a resolution to approve an agreement with ODOT to purchase salt through the cooperative purchasing program.
- Facilities has a resolution authorizing the disposal of a disabled 2009 Ford F-150.
- Regional Planning has two resolutions on the agenda. One to authorize a contract, notice to proceed, and notice to commence for Cooper Concrete Services for the Village of Bremen CDBG Community Pool Improvements project. And the other resolution is to approve a bid award to Downing Construction for the Village of Bremen's CDBG Water Treatment Plant- softener improvements project.
- The Sheriff's Office has two resolutions, one to dispose of a disabled vehicle, a 2014 Dodge Charger. The second resolution is to authorize the donation of a speed trailer to the Lithopolis Police Department.
- Transit has a resolution to amend a previous resolution which authorized an agreement with Meals on Wheels/The Senior Hub. MOW asked that the agreement correct the language in Section 2 related to a route description.

Budget Review

Bart Hampson stated the 2027 budget process had begun.

Calendar Review/Invitations Received

- *The Calendar Review and Invitations and Correspondence Received, were provided by the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners, Rochelle Menningen.*
- Child Abuse Prevention Month Breakfast, April 8, 2026, 8:00 a.m., The Levacy Center, 1550 Sheridan Drive, Lancaster
- Open House & Ribbon Cutting, Fairfield County ADAMH, Lutheran Social Services – Faith Mission, Integrated Services for Behavioral Health and the Fairfield Center of Hope, May 19, 2026, 12:30 p.m., 230 & 231 Venture Place, Lancaster

Correspondence

- Ditch Petition, Received 3/31/2026, Sturbridge Meadows Lots 10-16 and New England Acres Lots 40-48

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Updates from Elected Officials and Department Heads

Engineer Jeremiah Upp provided an update on Basil Western Road, which is currently closed due to a gas leak. He also addressed the recent ditch petition received by the Commission. Several tiles have busted and are blocking drainage. The cost of construction is divided among the residents who benefit from the improvement, with a maintenance fund set up to manage ongoing upkeep.

Corey Clark shared his anticipation for the upcoming Child Abuse Prevention Month Breakfast and praised the lineup of impressive speakers.

Linda O'Toole acknowledged Michael Guerriero's work on the "Map of the Month" and reported that the Board of Revision has 215 formal cases filed, with formal hearings scheduled to begin in May.

Rick Szabrak provided updates from the Area 20 Workforce Board and highlighted a new teacher apprenticeship program that already has 17 participants enrolled. He o thanked everyone who attended the Workforce Center ribbon-cutting event.

Old Business

Commissioner Levacy commented on the well-attended Workforce Center ribbon-cutting event, noting that the facility was full and it was great to see Representatives Lare and Miller in attendance. He also expressed pride in the work accomplished by staff at the Workforce Center.

Rick Szabrak mentioned a potential funding opportunity for the radiology lab.

Commissioner Davis extended thanks to the Deputy for their support at meetings.

New Business

Commissioner Levacy expressed excitement for the upcoming Child Abuse Prevention Month Breakfast, noting he enjoys hearing from the dedicated foster parents who will be speaking. He also addressed the Millersport area data center, clarifying that it is a closed system that cools its own water, emphasizing that misconceptions exist but the benefits outweigh any concerns. Additionally, he noted an investment of \$30 million toward a water and wastewater system for the village.

Commissioner Davis spoke about the courage of the men and women involved in the incident with the pilots who ejected from an F-15E fighter jet and landed in Iran.

Regular (Voting) Meeting

The Commissioners continued to the Regular/Voting portion of the meeting, and the following Commissioners were present: Steve Davis, Jeff Fix and David Levacy. Also present: County Administrator, Aundrea Cordle; Deputy County Administrator, Jeff Porter; Clerk to the Board of Commissioners, Rochelle Menningen; Budget Director, Bart Hampson; EMA & Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; Utilities Director, Tony Vogel; IT Director, Dan Neeley; JFS Director, Corey Clark; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Amy Brown-Thompson; Regional Planner, Josh Hillberry; Economic & Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabrak; Engineer, Jeremiah Upp; Recorder, Lisa McKenzie; Treasurer, Jim Bahnsen; Clerk of Courts, Branden Meyer; BOR Deputy Director, Linda O'Toole; Deputy HR Director, Abby Watson; Human Resources Administrators, Colleen Cook and Amberly Hannum; and Sheriff's Deputy, Kevin Romine. Also in attendance: Ray Stemen, Gary Silcott, Paul Carbol, Shannon Ward, Matt Claypool, and Jacelyn Cain.

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Pledge of Allegiance

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

Announcements

None.

Approval of Minutes for March 31, 2026

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Minutes for the Tuesday, March 31st, 2026, meeting.

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

Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners

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

- 2026-04.07.a A Resolution to Approve a Plan Agreement with the County Commissioners Association of Ohio for Inclusion in the Workers' Compensation Group
- 2026-04.07.b A resolution authorizing a fund to fund transfer to the Fairfield County Family Adult Children First Council for Multi-Youth Committee, 2nd payment for the 2026 Allocation]
- 2026-04.07.c A resolution authorizing a fund to fund transfer for Fairfield County Job and Family Services (JFS) for the 2nd Quarter 2026 Allocation
- 2026-04.07.d A resolution authorizing a fund to fund transfer for the 2nd Quarter 2026 Allocation for the Multi County Juvenile Detention Center (MCJDC)
- 2026-04.07.e A resolution to approve to appropriate from unappropriated into a major expense category for debt and memo transactions for the 2026B Series, Jail Refunding
- 2026-04.07.f A resolution to authorize the establishment of new capital project fund for the Local Jails Project, Appropriate from Unappropriated in major expenditure object categories, Advance from the General Fund and a fund to fund transfer

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 Emergency Management Agency

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

- 2026-04.07.g A Resolution to Approve Appropriations by Appropriating from Unappropriated into a Major Expense Object Category – 2707/8348 Emergency Management Fund

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2026-04.07.h A Resolution to Approve Appropriations by Appropriating from Unappropriated into a Major Expense Object Category – 2090 Emergency Management Fund

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:

2026-04.07.i A Resolution to Approve Advertising for the 2026 Crack Seal Project

2026-04.07.j A Resolution to Approve Advertising for the 2026 Pavement Markings Project

2026-04.07.k A Resolution to Approve Advertising for the Purchase of Liquid Asphalt Project

2026-04.07.l A resolution to request for appropriations for additional unanticipated receipts of Memo receipts and memo expenses for fund 2580 for subdivision inspections of various subdivisions

2026.04.07.m A resolution to approve the ODOT Road Salt Contract for 2026

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

Approval of a Resolution from Fairfield County Facilities

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

2026-04.07.n A resolution authorizing the disposal of a vehicle by the Fairfield County Facilities Department

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

Approval of a Resolution from Fairfield County Juvenile/Probate Court

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

2026-04.07.o A Resolution to Appropriate from Unappropriated in a Major Expenditure Object Category for 2036 Department of Youth Services-Reclaim

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

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Approval of Resolutions 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 resolutions from the Fairfield County Regional Planning Commission:

- 2026-04.07.p A Resolution Authorizing the Contract, Notice to Proceed and Notice of Commencement to Cooper Concrete Services LLC for the CDBG – Village of Bremen – Community Pool Improvements Project
- 2026-04.07.q A Resolution to Approve an Award of Bid to Downing Construction Co.

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 Sheriff

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

- 2026-04.07.r A Resolution Approving the disposal of a disabled vehicle
- 2026-04.07.s A Resolution Authorizing the Donation of a Speed Trailer Purchased by the Fairfield County Sheriff's Office to the Lithopolis Polis Department

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of a Resolution from the South Central Major Crimes Unit

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

- 2026-04.07.t A resolution to request appropriations for receipts for 2023 Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse Grant 7858 (8360)

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of a Resolution from Fairfield County Transit

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

- 2026-04.07.u A Resolution Amending Resolution 2026-03.10.s, a Resolution Authorizing the Approval of a Service Agreement by/between Fairfield County Transit and Meals on Wheels (Senior Hub)

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

