

Regular Meeting #16 - 2022
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
April 19, 2022

Review Meeting

The Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room of the Historic Courthouse on 210 E Main St., Lancaster, OH. Commissioner Fix called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Dave Levacy, and Jeff Fix. Also present: Aunie Cordle, Jeff Porter, Bennett Niceswanger, Rochelle Menningen, Bart Hampson, Dennis Keller, Tony Vogel, Jon Kochis, Dr. Carri Brown, Marty Norris, Amy Brown-Thompson, Stephanie Taylor, Raz Sabaiduc, Corey Clark, Dan Neeley, Staci Knisley, Branden Meyer, Rick Szabrak, Judy Stemen, Lauren Strobe, Ray Stemen, Lisa McKenzie, Keith Conroy, and Ian Nickey.

Attending virtually: Ashley Arter, James Bahnsen, Becky, Brian, Britney Lee, Calvin Robinson, Jane, Jeff Barron, Jeremiah Upp, Jessica Murphy, Joshua Horachek, Lori Hawk, Marcy Fields, Park, and Stacy Hicks.

Welcome

Commissioner Fix opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance and spoke about the passing of Fran Miller, Commissioner Levacy's sister, who was a well-known pillar in the community due to her many years of service in multiple organizations.

Listen & Learn, Rick Szabrak and Hicks Partners, LLC

Rick Szabrak, Director of Economic and Workforce Development, introduced Hicks Partners, LLC. Hicks Partners had been contracted with, after submitting a proposal from an RFP, to assist villages, townships, and cities with grant applications.

Keith Conroy, from Hicks Partners, stated that the company had applied for over 3.2 million in funding for Fairfield County communities. Mr. Conroy spoke about Hicks Partners and stated they had been in business since 2003 and that they do public relations and economic development work. He added that they help entities and companies access funding and help with grant writing. The company employs Brian Hicks, Keith Conroy, Ian Nickey, Lauren Strobe and Lisa Sihvonon-Binder, and has several federal grant writers. Hicks Partners has set up several metrics to assist communities, and they have met with 19 in Fairfield County. Hicks Partners did an online survey to find out what kind of funding communities needed and held grant writing and funding webinars. Conroy added that when you apply for federal funding there is a lot of prep work such as applying for a DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) number and that Hicks Partners sent out grant alerts to all the communities in the county. He added that they applied for a lot of fire grants for equipment and personnel. He further added that they worked closely with the land bank for site prep and applied for several foundation grants. Conroy also stated that the nature work program is specifically for parks and that cemetery grants funding is through the Ohio Department of Commerce.

Rick Szabrak spoke about the Kirkbride company in Bremen and the partnership that was developed between the company and Hicks Partners.

Conroy said they are now working with the City of Pickerington on their Farmer's Market.

Ian Nickey of Hicks Partners stated that when they were thinking about the best way to implement the project, they thought about how to collect and use data, and they have done three data collections/surveys. He added that throughout the process, they had a basic application form so that they could gauge how to best help the townships and villages. He further added that they have a searchable database that looks at all the data points. He also stated that they have more success when they look at a grant, look at the communities, and then provide the communities with a tailored curated grant.

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Keith Conroy stated that Hicks Partners has received calls from communities saying they had seen paving funding, and then we reviewed to see if they had the matching funds, and then went over the grant requirements. He added that they have templates that help the communities participate with writing and submitting grants and that some grants require the communities to submit so they help with the process. Conroy added that there is a lot of money that will continue to flow and that the state will get their second tranche of ARP money in May which will allow for additional opportunities, new programs, and continued programs. He added that Hicks Partners are trying to let the communities know when there are monies that will be released and stated that communities often have a learning curve with the entire grant process. Conroy also stated that Hicks Partners is mindful to help communities apply for grants only when the entity is competitive for the grant.

Commissioner Levacy asked if there are grants the 13 county townships should be seeking and are not.

Mr. Conroy stated there are a couple of communities they have reached out to that have not returned calls and emails.

Commissioner Fix asked if Hicks Partners had been contacted by townships and villages to help with American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding.

Mr. Conroy replied that they have been a resource.

County Administrator Aundrea Cordle asked what Hicks Partners feel they could you have done differently to assist the county communities.

Mr. Nickey stated he would have started with the curated letter to the communities so that they would have been better at identifying the needs of the communities earlier in the process.

Ms. Cordle thanked the Prosecutor's Office for assisting townships with the ARP process.

County Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown, commended Hicks Partners on the job they have done and advocated for moving the partnership forward that they have built with county communities.

Public Comments

Ray Stemen of Lancaster spoke about protecting Christian values and defending the military.

Judy Stemen of Lancaster read excerpts from a handout that she provided (handout available at the end of the minutes.)

Stephanie Taylor stated she spoke with Habitat affiliates at a conference and thanked everyone in the county for making the county a place she wants to call home.

Legal Update

Assistant Prosecutor, Amy Brown-Thompson commented on the informativeness of the Listen and Learn and the Prosecutor's Office's limited involvement with county entities and their APR filing requirements.

County Administration Update

County Administrator Cordle reviewed the Week in Review, Highlights of Resolutions, the Budget Review, Recognitions, and the Jail Population, as follows.

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Week in Review

COVID-19 Update

Fairfield County's reported COVID-19 cases have increased by 33% over the past week. From 4/8/2022 through 4/14/2022 there have been 81 new COVID-19 cases reported, for a rate of 51.4 cases per week per 100,000 population (Low Community Levels). Two new hospitalizations were reported in the past week and no new COVID-19 related deaths were reported for Fairfield County residents. We will be transitioning away from a formal weekly COVID-19 update and will add to the agenda as needed to provide significant updates.

Health Commissioner, Joe Ebel stated that levels remain low, about 12 cases a day, and that hospitalizations have not increased. He added that the CDC lifted the travel mask mandate. He further added that the Health Department had a grant that allowed them to do a tire collection event where 1700 tires were received.

Commissioner Fix asked what was done to dispose of the 1700 tires.

Mr. Ebel stated that they contracted with a company to ensure they are destroyed of properly.

ARP Update

There are multiple projects under review.

From the \$15,303,451.00 received as the first tranche of fiscal recovery funds, \$9.3M has been appropriated, \$2.9M expended, and \$4.2M encumbered or obligated.

Special Election

Per the O.R.C. the Board of Elections is required to calculate election costs and submit to the Secretary of State's office and the Commissioners' office. This notification appears in the Review packet and identifies the special election cost at \$127,285.09.

Jane Hanley from the Board of Elections joined the meeting online and encouraged everyone to vote in the upcoming election.

Commissioner Davis asked if the amount of state funding received for the second election is known.

Ms. Hanley replied that the \$110,000 received was to aide with election redistricting costs and that unused funding had to be returned.

Spectrum News Piece on Career Fair and Trade Opportunities

Spectrum News did a great job highlighting the Career Fair as well as opportunities in the various trades.

Rick Szabrak spoke about the positive response to the Spectrum TV news video and added details about how unique the Workforce Center is across the state and country.

Administrator Cordle added that the Rama consulting group is working with seven employees.

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NACo Presentation on Strengthening America's Workforce

On Wednesday, May 4th at 3:00 Rick Szabrak will be presenting on the ARP funding project that Fairfield County is working on with RAMA Consulting and area businesses to evaluate their recruitment and retention efforts. The NACo session will cover how counties are tackling the labor shortage, connecting people to good jobs, expanding childcare services for the workforce and meeting the needs of residents through local government services.

Public Records Request Update

Clerk, Rochelle Menningen, provided an update on the public records requests that have been received for the period of 1/1/22-4/16/22. The data is contained later in these minutes.

Highlights of Resolutions

Administrative Approvals

The review packet contains a list of administrative approvals.

Resolution Review

There are 15 resolutions for the voting meeting.

Resolutions of note:

- Appointments of Sarah Fortner and Stephanie Fyffe to the Ohio Children's Trust Fund Child Abuse and Child Neglect Regional Prevention Council.
- A resolution to approve a fund-to-fund transfer from the General Fund to the Flexible Spending Account Fund.
- A resolution authorizing the reduction appropriations in major expenditure object category for the Certificate of Title Fund# 2326 for the Fairfield County Clerk of Courts.
- Approval of Local Emergency Planning Committee bylaws.

Quarterly Budget Update

Budget Director, Bart Hampson, provide a quarterly budget update. He stated that there are 82 separate revenue accounts that are summarized in 9 categories and that Fairfield County continues to have one of the lowest sales tax rates in the state, with only four counties at a lower rate.

Mr. Hampson stated that the real challenge will be adjusting to how the pandemic will impact the county in future years. Hampson provided data using a PowerPoint that is available later in the minutes. He informed the Commissioners that first quarter sales tax is up 15.5%, property tax is up 1.6%, and that other categories have also increased.

Commissioner Davis added that when the 2022 projections were developed, the data was questionable due to events of the past couple of years and that Auditor Brown is increasing the original estimate to reflect the 2021 experience. Commissioner Davis added that given the county has an extraordinary cash balance and that the trajectory on that sales tax growth appears to be decelerating. The Commissioner also spoke about a possible recession that economists state will be within the next 5 years.

Auditor Brown added that collections have increased.

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Mr. Hampson continued by explaining the data and graphs he provided and highlighted that the county continues to monitor all revenue and expenditures, focus on ARP reports, and improvements for financial reporting. Hampson finished by stating that the 2023 budget will not include new staff positions, and will include a 3.5% increase for salaries, and a 2% increase in health insurance.

Aunie Cordle added Rochelle Menningen will be sending out invites for the Budget Hearings that will take place in October.

Commissioner Davis stated it is difficult for anyone to understand the impact of trillions of dollars flowing through the economy from federal government spending and that we cannot exactly predict what financial systems will look like when they eventually process those trillions. Davis stated he is concerned the increase in 2021 was influenced by the federal spending. Davis further explained that the word recession indicates two consecutive quarters of negative growth.

Commissioner Fix added that people try to project into the future, but that the bottom line is the county is in a healthy financial situation.

Commissioner Davis noted the Investment Advisory Committee Meeting for later that morning.

Recognition

- Congratulations to the JFS, Child Protective Services team for an outstanding Child Abuse Prevention Month breakfast event.
- Thank you to Bennett Niceswanger for his leadership with the newly formed Records Commission.
- Dr. Brown thanked Jen Dickerson and the entire payroll team for supporting the Sheriff's Office during a time when they had extraordinary staff outages with the payroll officers.
- Congratulations to Patrick Welsh, Levi George, Heather Shields, Melanie Culbertson, Magistrate Boone, and Jay Mattlin for completing the chamber leadership program. A graduation presentation is scheduled for April 29th at the Workforce Center.

Calendar Review/Invitations Received

- Land Liberty Coalition, Tony Zartman, April 19, 2022, 11:00 a.m., Commissioner Fix's Office (Fix)
- IAC Meeting, Fairfield County Treasurer, James Bahnsen, April 19, 2022, 11:15 a.m.
- Earth Day/Arbor Day, April 23, 2022, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., Rising Park, 1120 N. High St., Lancaster (Davis)
- National Day of Prayer Invitation, Thursday, May 5, 2022, 7:30 a.m., The Bridge, Fifth and Broad Street
- The Refuge Changing Lives Affected by Addiction Through Christ, Open House Luncheon and Tour, Wednesday, May 4, 2022, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., The Refuge, 3484 Cincinnati-Zanesville Rd. NE, Lancaster
- Ohio Attorney General's Elder Justice Unit Webinar, "What to Know About Cryptocurrency and Scams", Wednesday, May 4, 2022, 2:00 p.m.

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- Family Fun Fest, Wednesday, May 11, 2022, 5:00-6:30 p.m., Fairfield County Job and Family Services

Correspondence

Informational Items

- Ohio Auditor of State Ohio Public Employees Retirement System Census Data Examination, Year Ended 2021
- Thank you from the Fairfield County Auditor's Office
- Multi-County Juvenile Detention Center Visitation Guidelines
- Elder Abuse Commission Report, 2021-2022, Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost
- Fairfield County Auditor's Office Vendor License Press Release, April 18, 2022
- Fairfield County Auditor Memo, Alignment of the County Auditor Strategic Plan with the County Strategic Report, April 15, 2022
- General Fund Revenues (2023 Early Projections) memo from County Auditor

Jail Population

- April 12 was 261 with 27 of those being contracted placements
- April 19 is 254 with 33 of those being contracted placements

Commissioner Davis wished to mention that over the past two years, family visits at the juvenile detention center had been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, but the new Visitation Guidelines will be a welcome change.

County Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown, stated her office is aligned with the formal estimates for 2023.

Commissioner Davis added that in any event, the county has never had a situation where it has had to go in and refine the estimate.

Dr. Brown mentioned that the alignment of the Auditor's Strategic Plan and County's Strategic Plan allows us to see how the activities compare and that it was helpful for her team to see how the pillars of the plan connect.

Old Business

Facilities Manager, Dennis Keller, mentioned that the bid opening for the Fairfield Center is set for this Friday.

New Business

No new business presented.

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Regular (Voting) Meeting

The Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room of the Historic Courthouse on 210 E Main St., Lancaster, OH. Commissioner Fix called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Dave Levacy, and Jeff Fix. Also present: Aunie Cordle, Jeff Porter, Bennett Niceswanger, Rochelle Menningen, Bart Hampson, Dennis Keller, Tony Vogel, Jon Kochis, Dr. Carri Brown, Marty Norris, Amy Brown-Thompson, Stephanie Taylor, Raz Sabaiduc, Corey Clark, Dan Neeley, Staci Knisley, Branden Meyer, Rick Szabrak, Judy Stemen, Lauren Strope, Ray Stemen, Lisa McKenzie, Keith Conroy, and Ian Nickey.

Attending virtually: Ashley Arter, James Bahnsen, Becky, Brian, Britney Lee, Calvin Robinson, Jane, Jeff Barron, Jeremiah Upp, Jessica Murphy, Joshua Horachek, Lori Hawk, Marcy Fields, Park, and Stacy Hicks.

Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Fix asked everyone who was able to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Approval of Amended Roundtable Meeting Minutes for April 05, 2022, and Review and Regular Meeting Minutes for April 12, 2022

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the amended minutes for the Tuesday, April 05, 2022, Roundtable Meeting and the Review and Regular Minutes for the Tuesday, April 12, 2022 Meeting.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of Resolutions from the Board of Commissioners

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolutions from the Board of Commissioners:

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| 2022-04.19.a | A resolution to approve the appointment of Ms. Sarah Fortner to the Ohio Children's Trust Fund Child Abuse and Child Neglect Regional Prevention Council. [Commissioners] [Commissioners] |
| 2022-04.19.b | A resolution approving the reappointment of Stephanie Fyffe to the Ohio Children's Trust Fund Child Abuse and Child Neglect Regional Prevention Council. [Commissioners] [Commissioners] |
| 2022-04.19.c | A resolution to approve a fund-to-fund transfer from the General Fund #1001 to the Flexible Spending Account Fund # 7680 – Fairfield County Commissioners [Commissioners] |
| 2022-04.19.d | A Resolution of Renewal to the Capitol City Chapter EAA 443, Experimental Aircraft Association lease agreement for the use of 3383 Old Columbus Road property at the Fairfield County Airport. [Commissioners] |

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Commissioner Fix had the chance to review the backgrounds on Sarah Fortner and Stephanie Fyffe and stated the county is fortunate to appoint them to the Ohio Children's Trust Fund Child Abuse and Child Neglect Regional Prevention Council.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of a Resolution from the Fairfield County Clerk of Courts – Title Division

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution from the Fairfield County Clerk of Courts – Title Division:

2022-04.19.e A resolution authorizing the reduction appropriations in major expenditure object category for the Certificate of Title Fund# 2326 - Fairfield County Clerk of Courts [Clerk of Courts- Title]

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of a Resolution from the Fairfield County Emergency Management Agency

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution from the Fairfield County Emergency Management Agency:

2022-04.19.f A resolution to approve the Local Emergency Planning Committee By-Laws [EMA]

Jon Kochis stated the by-laws reflect a few small changes.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Engineer

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolutions from the Fairfield County Engineer:

2022-04.19.g A resolution approving an account to account transfer [Engineer]

2022-04.19.h A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle for vacation payout [Engineer]

2022-04.19.i A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle for traffic light repairs [Engineer]

2022-04.19.j A Resolution to Approve the Contract Bid Award for the 2022 Resurfacing FAI-CR3/31/60/84 Resurfacing Project. [Engineer]

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

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Approval of a resolution from the Fairfield County Family, Adult and Children First Council

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution from the Fairfield County Family, Adult and Children First Council:

2022-04.19.k A resolution authorizing the Early Intervention American Rescue Plan Act service agreement between the Fairfield County Commissioners, as administrative agent of the Fairfield County Family, Adult and Children First Council and the Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency. [Family, Adult and Children First Council]

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Juvenile Probate Court

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolutions from the Fairfield County Juvenile Probate Court:

2022-04.19.l A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category – Juvenile Court Fund #2641 Title IV-E Fund [Juvenile/Probate Court]

2022-04.19.m A resolution authorizing the approval for the amendment by and between Fairfield County Juvenile and Probate Court and Tyler Technologies Inc. [Juvenile Court] [Juvenile/Probate Court]

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of a Resolution from the Fairfield County Law Library

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution from Fairfield County Facilities:

2022-04.19.n A resolution authorizing an account to account transfer – Law Library [Law Library]

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of the Payment of Bills

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution for the Payment of Bills:

2022-04.19.o A resolution authorizing the approval of payment of invoices for departments that need Board of Commissioners' approval [Commissioners]

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

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The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday April 26, 2022, at 9:00 a.m.

Commissioner Fix called a five-minute recess.

Fairfield County Airport Update

Jon Kochis, Fairfield County Emergency Management Director, and Airport Board member, spoke about the Fairfield County Airport Master Plan. Kochis stated that the board had gathered costs for the proposed Master Plan projects, some of which include, in no specific preference order, a T-Hanger, a commercial box hangar, and a corporate hangar. Kochis added that the proposed projects would break even in approximately 20 years, depending on the projects selected. He also stated that the debt service for the airport was paid in 2019.

Commissioner Levacy asked if the space rental fee was reasonable compared to other similar airports.

Mr. Kochis stated that the airport fees are comparable to other airports in Central Ohio and that we currently charge the industry standard and that gradual increases in fees are expected.

Mr. Kochis stated that the airport's leases generally have a built in 3% increase with continued renewal and that the current hangar is from the 1960's. He spoke about the various types of hangars proposed and stated that if 4 commercial box hangars were built, they could fill four in the same day because of the demand for hangar space.

Commissioner Levacy asked about the typical term of a hangar lease and what the cost would be to build the commercial hangars.

Mr. Kochis replied that the initial cost is a little over 1 million for two hangars and then went on to talk about the idea of a corporate hangar. He elaborated that if a corporation comes to Central Ohio, they are looking for a hangar to store their corporate jet. He further elaborated that a corporate hangar could serve as a community hangar until the county had a lease for a corporation. The airport board believes a corporate hangar would lease for \$5,000.

Commissioner Levacy asked if there was a shortage of hangars around central Ohio.

Ben Cooley, an engineer for the airport, stated that when people fly in, they want to know that they can park their plane somewhere and these hangars would allow for shuffling of planes and for people to park their planes to take care of overnight. He stated he believes the commercial hangar would be the biggest success today and would attract businesses.

Rick Szabrak stated the best return on investment (ROI) is the T-Hangars, but the best value would be the commercial hangars to attract businesses. However, T-Hangars are easier to construct and there is a current known interest.

Commissioner Davis asked if people could walk around the airstrip to get to their flight.

Jon Kochis stated that following the proper safety measures, people show up to the terminal and then go straight to the plane, and further stated that clients from around the county, and in many sizes of aircraft, are able to fly into the county airport.

Commissioner Fix asked Rick Szabrak to analyze what could happen from an economic development standpoint.

Mr. Szabrak pointed out that these investment opportunities are interesting and relatively inexpensive and would like to see what opportunities could be that don't exist today because of the airport's current state.

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Staci Knisley added she believes the money can be loaned.

Commissioner Davis asked for complete clarity on the details behind agreeing to the airport updates and projects and stated he would be in favor of a cost recovery analysis.

Jon Kochis stated that surrounding areas don't have commercial hangars either and would like the Fairfield County Airport to be able to attract customers to the airport with a commercial hangar. Kochis also stated that the Airport Master Plan is in its final approval state with the FAA and that airports across Central Ohio are growing if they have the land to do so.

With no further business, on the motion of Steve Davis and a second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to adjourn at 11:20 a.m.

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

YEAS: Steve Davis, Dave Levacy, Jeff Fix
ABSTENTIONS: None


Jeff Fink
Commissioner


Dave Levacy
Commissioner


Steven A. Davis
Commissioner

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