

Regular Meeting #21 - 2021
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
May 13, 2021

Roundtable

The Commissioners met at 8:30 a.m. for the Elected Officials and Department Heads Roundtable. Commissioner Levacy called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Jeff Fix (virtually) and Dave Levacy. Commissioner Steve Davis was absent. Also present were Carri Brown, Staci Knisley, Branden Meyer, and Jon Kochis.

Attending virtually were: Park Russell, Thomas Lininger, Jim Bahnsen, Tony Vogel, Donna Fox-Moore, Mark Conrad, Chris Wagner, Dave Burgei, Michael Kaper, Chief Collins, Daniel Neely, Ginger Caito, CJ Roberts, Luann Davidson, Corey Clark, Nikki Drake, John Pekar, Jeff Porter, Marcy Fields, Lisa McKenzie, Dennis Keller, Aubry Fowler, Jessica Murphy, Chief Churchill, Rick Szabrak, Josh Horacek, Britney Lee, Joe Ebel, Jon Slater, Lynette Barnhart, Ashley Arter, Sheriff Lape, Magistrate Boone, Leslie Cooksey, and other callers.

Welcome

Commissioner Levacy welcomed everyone to the roundtable meeting.

Dr. Brown announced that this was the last virtual roundtable meeting. The statewide health orders will be lifted on June 2.

- **Department Updates**

- a. Emergency Management Agency – Jon Kochis

Mr. Kochis is excited about the statewide orders being lifted on June 2. As we get back to things as a normal process, we do have a continuity plan out there and we are here to help. We will be testing alarms. We still want to promote vaccinations. There are appointments available. After the Governor's announcement about incentives, we had 100 people sign up for vaccinations.

- b. Health Department – Joe Ebel

Mr. Ebel introduced himself. He has been the Health Commissioner for about 3 weeks. Fairfield County continues to be in the "red" designation of the state designations. Mr. Ebel reported he is hopeful that more people will keep signing up for vaccinations including the younger age group that is eligible.

- c. Sheriff's Office – Sheriff Lape

Sheriff Lape reported that there are a lot of policies and procedures that are being put in place at his office.

Chief Churchill reported he was tasked with the implementation of body cameras. Thanks to Sheriff Lape for assigning him the task. He thanked the Commissioners for supporting the project. They have a 100% buy in with staff. He thanked Amy Brown-Thompson for helping develop procedures. Also, they are redesigning the annual report. He will present the new design to the Sheriff later this week. They are also working on their Continuity of Operations Plan. He thanked Jon Kochis and his staff for their help.

Chief Collins reported that they are working with the Prosecutor's Office to develop a new procedure for the property room. They are implementing and working on other policies also.

Commissioner Levacy asked everyone to remember the fallen officers on Saturday, May 15th. Law Enforcement Officers are under scrutiny and there has been a lot of negative press. He went on to state the Fairfield County Sheriff deputies have the Board of Commissioners' support. Sheriff Lape stated he appreciated Commissioner Levacy's comments yesterday at the Peace Officer Memorial Event. He also appreciates the Board of Commissioners support.

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d. JFS – Corey Clark

Mr. Clark announced that May is foster parent awareness month. They are holding a virtual event tomorrow. World Elder Abuse Awareness is June 15th.

Mr. Clark started as the Director of JFS about a month ago. Patrick Welsh is now the Child Support Director. JFS IT Deputy Director Daniel Neely will be moving to the County IT Director position. JFS is in the process of hiring for IT. Dr. Brown congratulated Mr. Clark on his promotion. She reported on how it has been a pleasure to observe Mr. Clark's dedication and passion for public service.

e. Economic and Workforce Development – Rick Szabrak

Mr. Szabrak reported that they are pushing out their CARES Act related loans. Keller Market House, Combustion Brewery, and Vanity Cleaners are a few of the businesses that have benefited from a loan. If anyone knows a business that needs assistance, please contact Rick. The career readiness program is going on. There was a career expo held, and 30 businesses and 100 students attended. They followed up with that with a virtual career fair. This was a multi-county event. There were 70 businesses and 170 students that attended. From a staffing standpoint, Hannah Heimberger has resigned, and Doug Durrett will be leaving soon. Thanks to Human Resources for getting both positions filled so quickly. He introduced Jack Lawless, the intern for Economic & Workforce Development. Rick reported they are moving their offices to the Workforce Center. Thanks to Dennis Keller and his staff for their help. In June there is a ready to work program that is 4 weeks long. It is a manufacturing program.

Performing Arts is up and going again. We will meet again on Friday. We are looking at the feasibility study. The first part was done pre-pandemic, and it was the community's desire to have more large spaces for meetings and weddings. It is recommended to be located close to downtown Lancaster. Full results of the study will be in the next few months. Take a look at the fact sheet in the packet.

Commissioner Levacy suggested Mr. Szabrak host an Open House at the Workforce Center at some point in the future.

f. Utilities – Tony Vogel

Mr. Vogel reported that they are busy with six developments under construction and six developments in process. The housing market is continuing to boom. They have three other projects going on: a regional lift station and two water line projects. Dr. Brown commented on the improvements in water quality (helping to replace wells where there was arsenic detected) and mentioned there would be ongoing projects connected with plans to continue to focus on long-term water quality.

g. Treasurer/Land Bank – Jim Bahnsen & Michael Kaper

Mr. Kaper reported that they have collected the 1st half of real estate taxes. They were concerned with collections for 2021 due to COVID but collections were around the same percentage as 2020.

The landbank is in the process of five demolitions on residential structures. They are at the very end of the process on Working Man's Friend on Main Street. They received word from the Bureau of Underground Storage Tank Release Board (BUSTR) that there is no further action needed on this site. They are working with various partners and have awarded mini-grants to non-profits.

Commissioner Levacy stated he was happy to hear the Working Man's Friend project was at the end. It was the biggest eyesore on Main Street. Mr. Kaper reported that it was one of the 1st items on the agenda back in 2014.

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h. Auditor (Auditor, IT, GIS, REA) – Jon Slater

Mr. Slater reported that his office was in the middle of the tax appeal process with the Board of Revision. They are rolling through this season. New on the Auditor's website, you are now able to estimate taxes with new levies. There is also a tax estimator on the website. The 108 N. High Street (REGIS) lobby is open.

Mr. Slater thanked Mark Conrad for his service to the county and to IT.

Mr. Conrad appreciates his time at the county. He reminded everyone that when staff is returning to the office, be aware that the computers may need updated. Consider the lessons learned from the pandemic. In the future you might want to think about doing a rotation of working at home on a regular basis. This is just to keep up and make sure they are connected. Keep it active so if it is needed, it will be there. We now have technology that the phones can be reached at their home. Please remind IT of any changes of building hours by requesting a ticket.

Commissioner Levacy thanked Mr. Conrad for his service. We often do not think about IT until we have a problem. IT security is important.

Returning to the comment about building hours, Dr. Brown reported we sent an email out to all elected officials and department heads in April about the June 1st opening of all buildings. Either in response to the email or in follow up calls, everyone has reported they are good with the June 1 target, which aligns with the state's recent announcements. Standard hours for county buildings are from 8 am – 4 pm, and she will send communication out again to make sure outliers are noted. Some buildings are not open to the public on a regular basis.

Mr. Slater also welcomed Dan Neely as the new IT Director.

i. Recorder – Lisa McKenzie

Ms. McKenzie reported that they are busy due to real estate transactions. They are looking forward to the building being open to the public. They are working with the Auditor to implement filing deeds electronically. They are keeping the process of dropping off documents rather than filing in person in place.

Dr. Brown reported that Ms. McKenzie had previously asked a question about digitization services, and this is under review. Dr. Brown would like to know estimates of costs and timeframes from the Recorder and others as all of this is considered. Please send information to Dr. Brown as soon as possible.

j. Common Pleas Court – Magistrate Boone

Magistrate Boone reported that they have had multiple jury trials over the last month. This was a great accomplishment in holding the trials while social distancing. They are continuing to partner with agencies. The county was just awarded \$720,000 of TCAP funds over a 2-year period. She thanked Dr. Brown and the Commissioners and Sheriff Lape for the ongoing partnership with TCAP.

Commissioner Levacy asked about success stories relating to TCAP.

Ms. Boone reported that there are quantitative and qualitative statistics about success rates. The Ohio Supreme Court is now requiring more statistics. She has personally seen the alternatives work. When they have their quarterly TCAP meetings they all share their data and see if the alternatives have been effective. The Drug/Recovery Court is working well. They are reinvesting on what they are doing. It is inspiring to see. So yes, the alternatives are working. ADAMH and New Horizons are keeping statistics and sharing them at the meetings.

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j. Juvenile/Probate Court – CJ Roberts

Ms. Roberts reported that truancy has increased due to the pandemic. Judge Vandervoort created the program called “All Hands-on Deck”. The Judge appointed staff to meet with families personally. There are 20-40 more truancy cases that could come in as the school year ends. They are working with families over the summer. The Project Health program was created to help with truancy also. The schools are partnering with Juvenile Court for this program.

There is another program that involves mental health agencies, schools, probation officers, and others. They are looking at how to get back to having more processes in person. They are keeping virtual options open. They are watching for Supreme Court guidance on that.

From the Court, thank you to the county for the CPR training and NACO leadership training.

Commissioner Levacy stated that Judge Vandervoort held a Lunch and Learn and reported on the truancy effects. He sees virtual and hybrid learning contributing to the truancy problem. He hopes to get back to normal soon.

k. Engineer's Office – Jeremiah Upp

Mr. Upp thanked the Commission and Dr. Brown for the reduction in employee contribution for health insurance. Mr. Upp congratulated Mark Conrad on his retirement. The Engineer's Office appreciates his work.

The Engineer's Office has bid their 2021 paving projects. In 2018 they did almost 11 miles of paving. In 2019 they did 12.5 miles of paving. In 2020 they only did 4.6 miles of paving. In 2020 they were uncertain of their Motor Vehicle Tax and Fuel Tax revenues. Mr. Upp commented that they made some smart decisions in 2020. In 2021, we will do almost 26 miles of paving.

Commissioner Levacy thanked Mr. Upp and his staff for their work.

l. Prosecutor's Office – Kyle Witt

Prosecutor Witt reported they selected a new grand jury for the 2021 term. They are resuming and bringing in law officers to the office. They are working with Juvenile Court to file charges electronically. They have a jury trial and a murder case in June at Common Pleas Court. There is public interest following the shooting death of the LHS student that was killed. They received a call from the Attorney General's Office. They are looking to roll out a new drug testing handheld device. They asked Fairfield County to serve as a pilot. This process will allow us to move more quickly.

Commissioner Levacy believes that Fairfield County leads the state in the newest techniques and technology.

m. Coroner's Office – Luann Davidson

Dr. Varney stated that he runs a Suboxone clinic. His experience has been positive through the court programs. The Coroner's Office has been busier than usual this year. They have new criminal investigators. Most of them are continuing their education to improve their investigative skills. We have had 169 cases, compared to 133 last year. The Coroner's Office is reviewing its departmental budget. They are in the process of filling a position.

Ms. Davidson thanked Kelly Robberts at Sheriff's Office for her social media skills helping their office locate families.

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n. Clerk of Courts – Branden Meyer

Mr. Meyer thanked Mr. Conrad for his IT support with the Courts. Thanks to Amy Brown-Thompson in the Prosecutor's Office. She reviewed contacts for their new copiers very quickly.

The county has received responses to the RFQ from Architects for the Pickerington Government Services Center. This building is envisioned to hold a Title Office, BMV, a Sheriff's substation, and space for other government services. The Clerk's Office plans to convert to a new case management system.

Commissioner Levacy stated that having a presence in the northwestern portion of the county is important. Currently we lease space for the Pickerington Title Office. Thanks to Branden and others for reviewing the responses to the RFQ.

o. Facilities – Dennis Keller

Mr. Keller reported that his department is busy as usual. It has been a little difficult lately due to staffing vacancies. There are interviews in progress now.

In the past couple of months, we replaced all five HVAC systems in Reese Peters House for the DACO. We have been working on plexiglass partitions and counters to get ready for the June opening. We are finishing up the HVAC ultraviolet disinfection project. We are getting a proposal to add this to Utilities & the Developmental Disabilities buildings.

Facilities is updating the flooring at the GSC/239 W. Main Street. Levitate is the contractor for \$215,0000.

Dennis is preparing bid documents for the Baldwin Parking Lot. He is also reviewing the RFQ responses for the Pickerington Government Service Center.

The team is replacing signs and sidewalk at Liberty Center. The firing range project is moving along.

Commissioner Levacy appreciates the projects that they are working on especially during their shortage of staffing.

p. Human Resources – Jeff Porter

Mr. Porter will do his update for HR later during his presentation.

q. Dog Shelter – Jeff Porter

Mr. Porter reported that dog adoptions have increased. They appreciate support from the community and the Commission.

r. ADAMH Board – Marcy Fields

Ms. Fields introduced herself as the Associate Director of the ADAMH Board. She will be the Interim Director when Rhonda Myers retires at the end of May.

She returned to the Board office after working for an agency for 12 years and found the complexity and quantity of the work has really increased, so one of her goals is to make the office more efficient and effective. ADAMH is in search of a Finance Director.

ADAMH allocated grant funds from the state for SOR (state opioid response) to providers to really expand substance use services in the community and in the jail. They will be starting a medication assisted treatment program in the jail soon.

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ADAMH is also part of a program with the state to distribute Narcan kits to the 43130-zip code during May and June. There was an uptick in overdoses last year in these months. If you have any events or methods to get these out to the community in May and June, please contact the ADAMH board.

Thank you to the Commission for the proclamation of May as Mental Health Awareness Month. ADAMH is excited to be able to offer Mental Health First Aid training again.

s. DD – John Pekar

Mr. Pekar announced that there the Forest Rose School graduation is on May 21st in person and is virtual. He thanked Commissioner Levacy for planning to attend. Project Search, a partnership with FMC, Eastland-Fairfield Career Center, and the Ohio Development of Opportunities agency involves students with disabilities who are in their last year of high school. They are at FMC receiving their school lessons and interning there.

Thanks to the Board of Commissioners for the Proclamation to promote Autism Awareness.

Mr. Pekar announced that Todd McCullough is their new Director of Operations.

Commissioner Levacy stated that Fairfield County Board of DD is innovative and does a tremendous job.

t. Soil & Water Conservation – Nikki Drake

Ms. Drake reported that she is working with the Ohio Department of Agriculture on creating an educational video to place on YouTube, and she thanked OSU Extension for their involvement.

She also reported the USDA share is going from 50 to 100%. The engineering crew looks for the workload to go up for water prevention.

SWCD recently held their tree sales. They gave trees to 5th graders, donated to parks, and some trees were sold.

Christina Holt celebrated 25 years with the District and Chad Lucht celebrated 20 years with the District. She appreciates their hard work.

SWCD just had their Cyber Security training with the Chamber office. Thanks to EMA for their CPR training. Last July they started a precipitation program. They started the program for their MS4. It is their goal to have it in every township in the county. They are still looking for volunteers from townships.

u. OSU Extension – Aubry Fowler

Ms. Fowler thanked the Commission for their support. Thanks to Commissioner Levacy and Commissioner Fix for their attendance at the 4H drive thru banquet. The OSU Extension update is attached in the roundtable packet.

They are excited to have in person camps this summer. The camps will be held at Alley Park.

They are looking for a Natural Resources coordinator. Their offices will be open June 1st. Their office hours will be 730 am to 4 pm, Monday-Friday.

Commissioner thanked OSU Extension for all they do for the farm community. He looks forward to the in-person 4H banquet next year.

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v. Veterans Services – Park Russell

Mr. Russell reported that he joined the Veterans Court with the City of Lancaster. They are doing the City Care day on Saturday. They will be reaching out more as things start opening.

Commissioner Levacy told Mr. Russell to continue the good work and take care of our veterans.

w. County Parks District – Ginger Caito

Commissioner Levacy congratulated the Parks District on their levy renewal.

Ms. Caito reported that gates are open at Mambourg park. The trails are open. The nature center is still not open due to COVID and construction. If anyone wants to take a tour, contact their office. The county parks goal is to put a permanent restroom in the parks every year. In conjunction with Earth Day they planted trees. Rockmill Park was opened to the public on May 1st. The hours are Wednesday from 11:00 am to 3:00 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays. If it rains, the mill is not open.

x. FCFACF – Donna Fox-Moore

Ms. Fox-Moore provided the following updates:

She recognizing some great work taking place through community partnerships in our Family, Adult and Children First Council Network:

- A team of 12 community partners from child-serving agencies is participating in a capacity building training and technical assistance series offered by Ohio Family and Children First to review possible implementation of the evidence-based Wraparound method of service coordination for at-risk youth. Studies show it to be effective at keeping at-risk children out of residential placement.
- The Safe Communities Coalition is working with a group of community partners to present an outreach event at the fairgrounds called “Buck Icon” on June 26. This football camp for children is presented by former OSU football players and sponsored by State Farm Insurance Foundation, CareSource, and United Way.
- Help Me Grow Early Intervention program for families with children birth to age three with developmental delays is serving 205 families. The Community Action and Fairfield County DD are doing a great job – state monitoring reports are very favorable about the work being accomplished for families in Fairfield County.
- The Parent Education Program is presenting Nine evidence-based curriculums for parents of children ages birth to 18. Classes are being offered both in-person and virtually. Schedules are posted on our Facebook page and in our Family Resource Calendar that is posted on our website.
- Several new resources to serve families with substance-affected and substance exposed infants have emerged in our community over the past year thanks to the support of the ADAMH Board and Child Protective Services. The Perinatal Cluster Group – a cross system team -- is working together to implement a community strategy that will coordinate these resources to serve as many families as possible.

Ms. Fox Moore is looking forward to in person meetings.

Commissioner Levacy announced that Ms. Fox-Moore is retiring. He commented that she has been tremendous for Fairfield County. He thanked her for her services.

Ms. Fox-Moore stated that she looks forward to volunteering in the county and to spend some time with family.

- Human Resources Update & Honoring Diversity/Culture of Inclusivity

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HR Director Jeff Porter announced that credit monitoring and other services are being offered to employees. He thanked the Board of Commissioners for the reduction in the employees' rates for the health benefits plan.

He welcomed Cheryl Reeves to his office. She is working with the Applicant Tracking System with NeoGov.

HR is very busy with hiring new staff for all departments.

Mr. Porter shared the attached information with the group to support a culture of inclusivity. In addition, there will be opportunities for training on your own coming soon. This training was taken at JFS, and it was highly recommended for our public service environments.

Commissioner Levacy talked about the exit from the Franklin County Cooperative.

- Budget Update & Rapid News

Ms. Knisley reviewed a budget update & some rapid news previously noted by Dr. Brown.

The sales tax estimate for 2021 in Fairfield County is \$23.6 M, or 3% above the sales tax revenues of 2020. The full 2019 sales tax rev deposit in June 2019 for March sales was \$1.841 M. The non-auto sales tax deposit anticipated for June 2021 for March sales is \$1.968 M, or about 6.9% above the full receipt two years ago. The increase of the non-auto sales over the prior year is 47%, due to increases in the economy and the pandemic shut down from the prior year. We are keeping our estimate at the 3% increase, but we are tracking more than a 3% increase.

We plan to close on new bonds and refinancing on *September 3* and will remain flexible with that timeframe.

We will soon have a resolution to authorize initial uses of American Rescue Plan fiscal recovery funding and approving appropriations from unappropriated funds for the County ARP fiscal recovery fund, #2876. We expect about \$15M with the first tranche. All of these resources will be used for purposes outlined in the Act. There will be a strategic planning opportunity everyone can participate in (probably in July) so please stay tuned for an invitation.

If anyone wants to participate on the IT strategic work group, please let Dr. Brown know as soon as possible. She has been seeking information about technology projects needed since October of last year.

Please be sure to have all employees take the required cybersecurity, unlawful harassment, and ethics training in 2021.

Please review the packet of information with the roundtable, including the update about the Performing Arts study.

The packet also includes a checklist and a reminder about dates of interest.

We continue to Serve. Connect. Protect. We have a common mission of service.

Commissioner Fix stated that he appreciated the updates from the roundtable meeting. The county is good financial shape. There are big things ahead, and he cannot wait to explore the opportunities.

Review for the Regular Voting Meeting

Ms. Knisley reported we had three resolutions for the voting meeting.

- RPC proposed a resolution authorizing the contract to Wilson Excavating of Jackson County LLC and notice of commencement for the Village of Carroll FY2020 CDBG Sanitary Sewer Improvement Phase II Project.

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- We also had a contract for the flooring at the Government Services Center on Main, as discussed in previous public meetings.
- We had a resolution for changes in appropriations for EMA grants within major object categories.

Commissioners' Regular Meeting

A regular meeting of the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, May 13, 2021 beginning at 10:40 a.m., with the following Commissioners present: Jeff Fix (Virtually) and Dave Levacy. Commissioner Steve Davis was absent. Also present were Staci Knisley and Branden Meyer.

Pledge of Allegiance

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

Announcements

Commissioner Levacy asked if there were any announcements. There were no announcements.

Public Comment

Commissioner Levacy asked if anyone from the public who would like to speak or offer comments. He stated this is a time for voters and taxpayers (members of the public) to provide comments.

There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes for Tuesday, May 11, 2021

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the minutes for the Tuesday, May 11, 2021 Regular Meeting.

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

Approval of the Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Resolution

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following EMA resolution.

2021-05.13.a A resolution authorizing a reduction and an increase in appropriations for two major expenditure object categories for Fund 2649 [EMA]

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

Approval of the Facilities Resolution

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following Facilities resolution.

2021-05.13.b A Resolution Authorizing the Approval of a Contract Award for the Replacement of Carpet and Vinyl Flooring – GSC/JFS Building [Facilities]

Discussion: Commissioner Levacy stated that this project is a major improvement.

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

Approval of the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) Resolution

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Dave Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following RPC resolution.

2021-05.13.c	A resolution authorizing the contract to Wilson Excavating of Jackson County LLC and Notice of Commencement for the Village of Carroll FY2020 CDBG Sanitary Sewer Improvement Phase II Project– [Regional Planning] [Regional Planning Commission]
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Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix and Dave Levacy
Commissioner Steve Davis was absent.

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 10:43 a.m.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix and Dave Levacy

The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 18 at 9:00 a.m.

Motion by: _____ Seconded by: _____
that the May 13, 2021 minutes were approved by the following vote:

YEAS:
ABSTENTIONS: None
*Approved on May 18, 2021

NAYS: None

Absent: Steve Davis

Steven A. Davis
Commissioner

Dave Levacy
Commissioner

Jeff Fix
Commissioner

Staci A. Knisley, Acting Clerk