

**Regular Meeting #44 - 2021**  
**Fairfield County Commissioners' Office**  
**October 5, 2021**

**Review**

The Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. to review legal issues and pending or future action items and correspondence. Commissioner Levacy called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Jeff Fix and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Sheriff Lape, Ed Laramie, Dan Neely, Marcy Fields, Rick Szabrak, Sophia Boyer, Tony Vogel, Jon Kochis, Staci Knisley, Chris Wagner, James Mako, Dennis Keller, Chief Collins, Chief Ervin, Deputy Mann, Deputy Meloy, Audrey Stoffel, Judy Stemen, Ray Stemen, Chris Schmelzer, and others.

Attending virtually were Jeff Barron, Jim Bahnsen, Joe Ebel, Lynette Barnhart, Raz Sabaiduc, Bennett Niceswanger, Stacy Hicks, Branden Meyer, and others.

- **Welcome**

Commissioner Levacy welcomed everyone.

- **K9 Update**

Chief Collins, Deputy Meloy, and Deputy Mann introduced retiring K-9 unit “Kahr” and our new K-9 unit “Lupo” at the top of the meeting’s agenda. Everyone was excited to see these two professional dogs who are tremendous assets to the community. Chief Collins indicated that the office has seen good result already with the new K-9 unit.

Commissioner Davis asked for law enforcement to describe a day in the life of a K-9 unit, and Chief Collins provided interesting information about how the dogs are training and work.

Commissioner Fix asked if the dogs were in training programs at schools, and Deputy Meloy stated they were.

Commissioner Levacy asked about what happens when a dog retires. Chief Collins commented on the tradition of promoting the dog to Sergeant. Just today, Kahr received his stripes. Kahr is 10 years old.

Dr. Brown commented that the dogs are tremendous assets of the county and are recorded as such. In addition, sometimes members of the public ask about donating to obtain a K-9 unit, and there is a process available for that.

Chief Collins thanked the Commissioners and Dr. Brown for their support of the program and the process to obtain a new K-9 unit.

- **Fairfield Forward**

**Habitat for Humanity – Playhouse at the Workforce Center**

We reviewed pictures from an event to build a playhouse at the Workforce Center. The event was sponsored by Habitat for Humanity. Many volunteers from the community stepped up to help. It was a very good event.

**Visit from Lt. Governor Husted to the Workforce Center**

It was a pleasure to meet with Lieutenant Governor Husted on September 29. Based on the Lancaster Eagle Gazette article, he was impressed. Our goal was to show there needs to be multiple partners to help address career training, and that was a goal achieved well. Thanks to everyone who participated. Rick Szabrak commented on how rewarding it has been for Pickerington students to be trained at the Workforce Center.

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Commissioner Davis mentioned he believed the Lt. Gov. Husted would be helpful in the future based on how the Lt. Gov. was impressed with the Workforce Center. Commissioner Davis commented that his history with Lt. Gov. Husted led him to have confidence in his willingness to be involved even more than he is now.

Planning for the County Fair

We will continue to meet administratively with the Fair Board. We are planning for October 11 and October 15 fair days. The grand opening begins at 8 am.

Main Uses of the ARP Fiscal Recovery Funds

We will continue using the Fairfield Forward theme for strategic planning. There are two main uses for us:

1. Responding to the public health emergency with respect to the COVID19 or its negative economic impacts, including assistance to households, small businesses, and nonprofits, or aid to impacted industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality.
2. Making necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure.

As we think about the first purpose, we will need to:

- Identify a need or negative impact of the public health emergency,
- Identify how the county investment would specifically address that need, and
- Readily explain how the investment helps the county respond to the disease or the harmful economic consequences of the economic disruption.

The review packet contained a report of approved uses, expenditures, and encumbrances thus far for ARP fiscal recovery funds. \$1,365,147.58 has been expended. \$3,055,425.39 is encumbered. \$8,050,435.74 has been authorized for use.

The report to the US Treasury is not due until January 2022 and will cover the performance period through December 31, 2021. We will continue to work on ways to automate the process.

We continue to connect with partners and stakeholders to research homelessness, affordable housing, and various factors connected to these topics as antecedents.

Aunie Cordle updated the group on the efforts conducted by RAMA for strategic planning. RAMA was pleased with the work of the day.

Commissioner Fix and Dr. Brown introduced the process on September 30<sup>th</sup>. More than 20 key stakeholders participated. The next planning session is October 7<sup>th</sup>. There are about 40 expected to attend (so the group is moving to a larger area at Life Church.)

Aunie Cordle mentioned that participants commented on the effectiveness of the RAMA led event. We understand the concept of a mobile health unit arose, and we understand there was favor for the county's Government Services Center NW. There will be a survey of staff, as well.

We have sent a thank you note to Life Church for their hospitality. Aunie Cordle added that she was grateful to Jason Grubb and Jeremiah Upp for their participation.

- Legal Update

Commissioner Levacy commented that on August 24<sup>th</sup>, there was a public hearing to review construction cost estimates of the County Engineer so that estimate can serve as the permanent base to calculate maintenance fund assessments for owners benefiting

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from improvement at Rushcreek Estates. At that hearing, the Commission requested follow-up from legal counsel on two issues: 1. The Prosecutor's Office was to look into issues with enforcement connected with "tie-ins" that the County Engineer does not allow, following up on the August 24<sup>th</sup> Ditch Maintenance District public hearing. 2. The Prosecutor's Office was to look into what happens to a DMD assessment if a stormwater utility district is created.

Joshua Horacek responded to these two issues in the attached letter and provided highlights from his response during the meeting. There is likely some authority to address tie-ins, and the Prosecutor will work with the Engineer to address case by case examples. When there are details about a stormwater utility development, there can be more research on how to address converting to a new process.

Commissioner Davis commented that implementing a stormwater utility will be more complex than anyone thinks, noting there are multiple groups to involve. He predicted it would take some time to evaluate such a change and noted that adjusting the base assessment is practical.

Commissioner Fix wondered if there was a need to do anything right now if a change was imminent.

Commissioner Davis stated that even if the change is envisioned, there will be multiple steps to occur which will take time. He appreciated how the Engineer's estimate accounted for a longer period of time in the assessment and suggested the best course of action today was to work within the system that is now in place, even though no one likes the idea of multiple hearings otherwise. In the coming months, the Engineer and others will work on recommendations for change.

- Administration and Budget Update/Carri's List

- a. Announcements & Dates of Interest

- Announcements

- Anyone can email or text a question anytime:  
[Carri.Brown@FairfieldCountyOhio.gov](mailto:Carri.Brown@FairfieldCountyOhio.gov) or (740) 777-8552

- Dates/Events of Interest

- October 5 – Foster the Future Mural Dedication – today!
    - October 7 – RAMA event (staff survey coming soon)
    - October 11- County Fair Grand Opening
    - October 12 – Common Pleas Court Lunch n Learn (and Wear Purple for Domestic Violence Awareness)
    - October 15 – Fair Day
    - October 21 – Budget Hearings begin
    - October 26 – Commission Connection videotaping – Commissioner Davis
    - October 28 – Budget Hearings continue

- b. Highlights of Resolutions

- Dr. Brown highlighted 16 resolutions for the voting meeting.

- We had a proclamation for Cybersecurity month, which is October. Dan Neeley, IT Director, and his team are leading training activities planned for the month.

- We had a resolution to establish a viewing and hearing for a road vacation.

- We proposed a resolution authorizing the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners to enter into a sale agreement relating to the ADAMH stabilization center. Dr. Brown attended the ADAMH meeting on September 28. The stabilization center continues to be a top priority for ADAMH.

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The Soil and Water Conservation District proposed a resolution approving signing two deeds of agricultural easement relating to the Clean Ohio Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program for the Wolfe's Acres LLC farm and the McCrady farm.

We proposed approval of the Rushcreek DMD assessment following the public hearing and analysis.

RPC proposed two resolutions to approve the final plats for the Chesapeake Section 2 and Section 3 subdivisions.

There were 9 *financial and grant related resolutions* to approve:

- A resolution to approve the recommendation of the Fairfield County Revolving Loan Fund Loan Review Committee to fund Delta H as a Fairfield County CARES ACT Recovery Assistance Revolving Loan Fund project;
- Three resolutions for planned allocations;
- A fund-to-fund transfer for a new project;
- Account-to-account transfers of appropriations for EMA;
- Appropriations from unappropriated funds for FCFACF (grant funds);
- Appropriations to support the gun range (\$27,000 for a change order to spread gravel/millings on range floor area; to spread gravel on remaining section of driveway near the road; and to revise the seed mixture to a "no-mow" grass to eliminate future maintenance);and
- Appropriations from unappropriated funds for the Coroner's Office (general fund appropriations).

In queue, there were multiple contracting and financial resolutions.

c. Administrative, Program, & Budget Update

Administrative & Program Updates

*Administrative Approvals*

The review packet contained a list of administrative approvals. There were no questions.

*Debriefing State of the County Address*

Fairfield County held a State of the County Address on September 28th. There was a lot of positive feedback about the presentation and videos. Thanks to everyone who worked hard to make it a successful event that was well organized and on time.

*Invitation to Bid Issued*

The County has issued an invitation to bid for the installation of electric vehicle charging stations at the Workforce Center. The grant terms and conditions give us until June 25, 2023 for these to be operational.

We plan on them being operational in 2022, but we are aware of the potential of supply chain disruptions.

*Happy Birthday to Ed Laramée, Chief Deputy Auditor*

Meeting attendees paused to wish Ed Laramée a happy 80<sup>th</sup> birthday when he arrived at the meeting. The group sang "Happy Birthday" to Mr. Laramée.

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*Required Training*

Commission department heads, supervisors, and employees have completed the three required annual trainings of cybersecurity, ethics, and unlawful harassment as of October 4. Some have taken multiple trainings.

*SWAT Building Project*

We are close to completion of the drawings and specifications. The project will be competitively bid soon, and we need to review cost estimates from the engineer and conduct some value engineering. The construction market is more costly than it has ever been.

The facility will include laundry, bathrooms, and reinforced concrete floors. It will be a massive improvement over the current leased space – and it is a project that is more than a garage.

Chief Collins has confirmed to Carri Brown that we have an agreement for month to month leasing at the current space and the current rate; this is helpful because of the supply chain disruptions that projects are experiencing.

*Pausing on the Sidewalk Project & Change in Drop Box at Liberty Center*

Dr. Brown noted that one of the good signs of leadership is knowing when to hit the pause button. We are doing just that to examine all options for the locations for the Board of Elections drop box and to reconsider the inclusion of a sidewalk from MCJDC to the Board of Elections. The sidewalk work can easily be removed. MCJDC leadership has expressed a safety concern with the inclusion of a sidewalk.

They do not want to promote the use of the parking lot near MCJDC for anything other than MCJDC purposes, although the lot usually has open spaces. The safety concern they have is to limit the foot traffic near the detention facility.

Also, we have an October 14<sup>th</sup> meeting on the calendar to refresh about the location of the drop box needed for the Board of Elections. There are some options to explore. There is an administrative meeting set on October 18<sup>th</sup> to review these topics and the potential of additional signage for MCJDC, as well.

For now, the drop box will remain as it is at the Board of Elections. There is close by parking for those who want to use the drop box.

Because MCJDC was mentioned, Commissioner Davis stated that the funding agreement with the MCJDC partners was negotiated with a king rounding up feature and the inclusion of a \$100,000 amount outside of the formula. He recalled how there was difficulty in obtaining this agreement and noted that renegotiating the next agreement will likely also be complex.

*Major Crimes Unit Award and Conference*

On October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the Major Crimes Unit and Project FORT will host the Ohio Quick Response Team/Outreach conference here in Fairfield County at the Crossroads church in Lancaster.

Dr. Brown will be speaking at the event. This event will bring public safety, treatment/recovery service providers, healthcare professionals, those in recovery, and others involved in outreach programs from across Ohio and surrounding states together for one full day of training and networking.

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The intended goal is to not only highlight our programs here in Fairfield County but to provide a meaningful exchange of ideas and explore ways to build relationships among diverse disciplines.

Congratulations again to the Major Crimes Unit on their statewide award for excellence.

Budget Update

*Ongoing Sales Tax Review & Budget Review*

The sales tax estimate for 2021 in Fairfield County is \$23.6 M, or 3% above the sales tax revenues of 2020. We are tracking ahead of that estimate.

Overall, the county receipts for multiple categories are tracking ahead of estimates.

Budget hearings begin October 21.

The administrative reviews are in progress. There are multiple corrections being made.

d. BRAVOS

Bravo to the Recorder's Office for their attention to detail and kindness shown to a veteran. The review packet will contain a copy of a thank you note.

Thanks for the tremendous leadership shown in the conduct of the State of the County Address. We have sent several thank you notes. (Brad Berry from Facilities delivered the meals!)

Congratulations to Brenda Shook, Housekeeper, on her retirement!

- Old Business

- a. Commissioner Connections & Updates

Commissioner Fix commented on the positive experience of the State of the County Address and thanked everyone for their preparations. He also has been impressed with the multiple events at the Workforce Center and noted that the Lt. Governor held up Fairfield County as an example at the Ohio Council of County Officials reception held on the evening of September 29. He also enjoyed the Habitat for Humanity event to build a playhouse which will be used for 15 year or more by a family. He also thanked Ed Laramie for his many years of service and wished him a happy birthday again.

Commissioner Levacy attended the first construction meeting for the Energy Conservation Project part 2 on September 30 and enjoyed seeing the project begin.

Commissioner Levacy will be presenting the COAAA award for the Senior Citizen Hall of Fame to Ken Culver this week.

The viewing and hearing date with the County Engineer has been changed to November 30<sup>th</sup>, from October 19<sup>th</sup>.

- New Business

*Letter from Auditor Slater and Letters from Mr. Horacek and Dr. Brown*

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Congratulations to Auditor Slater on his pending retirement.

- General Correspondence
- Invitations
- FYI
  - a. Jail Population – 261 – 7 contracted
  - b. CORPO comments period – two documents
  - c. EMA – end of September communication
  - d. Rainfall report
  - e. Positive communication about the health benefits plan

**Utilities Gift Card Pilot Program Update**

Mr. Vogel and Ms. Boyer have been working on a pilot project to introduce an option for Fairfield County customers to purchase gift certificates to apply to Utilities accounts. They plan to introduce this option prior to the holidays and advertise it on the Utilities bills. This may be a helpful option for many, especially during the pandemic. The Commissioners each liked the idea of the pilot and encouraged the team to share more as more information was learned.

**Commissioners' Regular Meeting**

A regular meeting of the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, October 5, 2021, beginning at 9:45 a.m. Commissioner Levacy called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Jeff Fix, and Dave Levacy. Also present were Carri Brown, Sheriff Lape, Ed Laramée, Dan Neely, Marcy Fields, Rick Szabrak, Sophia Boyer, Tony Vogel, Jon Kochis, Staci Knisley, Chris Wagner, James Mako, Dennis Keller, Chief Collins, Audrey Stoffel, Judy Stemen, Ray Stemen, Chris Schmelzer, and others.

Attending virtually were Jeff Barron, Jim Bahnsen, Joe Ebel, Lynette Barnhart, Raz Sabaiduc, Bennett Niceswanger, Stacy Hicks, Branden Meyer, and others.

**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.

As a reminder, public comments are to be limited to three minutes. Comments may or may not be about county business. While this is a time for the public to offer comments, this is not a time for questions and answers. Comments represent the view of the person commenting.

**Public Comment**

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

Ray Stemen of West Point Road in Lancaster asked if anyone knew who Christine Grady was and asked for people to pay attention to his wife who would be speaking next.

Judy Stemen of West Point Road in Lancaster highlighted the attached documents and explained that Christine Grady was with the National Institutes of Health and approved which "jabs the FDA will approve" for vaccinations, and Mrs. Stemen encouraged the Commissioners to read the

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articles she highlighted. She also stated that the documents she provided last week included an admission from the military that the vaccination causes injury.

**Approval of Minutes for September 28, 2021 Regular Meeting**

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the minutes for the September 28, 2021 Regular Meeting.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

**Approval of the Commissioners' Resolution**

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Commissioners' resolutions:

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| 2021-10.05.a | A resolution authorizing a fund to fund transfer for Fairfield County Job and Family Services (JFS) –4th Quarter 2021 Allocation - Fairfield County Commissioners [Commissioners]  |
| 2021-10.05.b | A resolution authorizing the approval of a proclamation. [Commissioners]   |
| 2021-10.05.c | A resolution to consider a petition to vacate a portion of public roads, Shell Road, Walnut Township and establish a viewing and hearing date. [Commissioners]   |
| 2021-10.05.d | A resolution authorizing the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners to enter into a sale agreement. [Commissioners]   |
| 2021-10.05.e | A resolution authorizing a fund to fund transfer for the 4th Quarter 2021 Allocation for the Multi County Juvenile Detention Center (MCJDC) - Fairfield County Commissioners [Commissioners]   |
| 2021-10.05.f | A resolution to approve a construction cost estimate of the County Engineer so that estimate can serve as the permanent base to calculate maintenance fund assessments for owners benefiting from improvement at Rushcreek Estates. [Commissioners]        |
| 2021-10.05.g | A resolution authorizing a fund to fund transfer from General Fund# 1001 and Appropriate from Unappropriated into a major expenditure category to the General Fund# 1001 & Capital Improvement Fund # 3435 -Fairfield County Commissioners [Commissioners] |
| 2021-10.05.h | A resolution authorizing a fund to fund transfer to the Fairfield County Family Adult Children First Council for Multi-Youth Committee – 4th payment for the 2021 Allocation - Fairfield County Commissioners [Commissioners]                              |
| 2021-10.05.i | A resolution to approve a fund to fund transfer from the General Fund# 1001 to the Fairfield County GSCNW Capital Projects Fund#3888 & Appropriate from Unappropriated to Fund#3888 - Fairfield County Commissioners [Commissioners]                       |

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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



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**Approval of the Coroner's Office Resolution**

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Coroner's Office resolution to appropriate from unappropriated funds in a major expenditure object category for fund# 1001; see resolution 2021-10.05.j.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

**Approval of the Economic Development Resolution**

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Economic Development resolution to approve the recommendation of the Fairfield County Revolving Loan Fund Loan Review Committee to fund Delta H as a Fairfield County CARES ACT Recovery Assistance Revolving Loan Fund project.; see resolution 2021-10.05.k.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

**Approval of the Emergency Management Agency Resolution**

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Emergency Management Agency resolution authorizing an account to account transfer for EMA Fund 2707 (Subfund 8213) Emergency Management Performance Grant; see resolution 2021-10.05.l.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

**Approval of the Family, Adult, and Children First Council Resolution**

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Family, Adult, and Children First Council resolution to appropriate from unappropriated funds in a major category expense for the Fund #7521, subfund #8286; see resolution 2021-10.05.m

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

**Approval of the Regional Planning Commission Resolutions**

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following Regional Planning Commission resolutions:

2021-10.05.n            A resolution to approve the Final Plat for the Chesapeake Section 3  
Subdivision [Regional Planning] [Regional Planning Commission]

2021-10.05.o            A resolution to approve the Final Plat for the Chesapeake Section 2  
Subdivision [Regional Planning] [Regional Planning Commission]

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

**Approval of the Soil and Water Resolution**

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Soil and Water resolution approving signing Deeds of Agricultural Easement relating to the Clean Ohio Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program for the Wolfe's Acres LLC. Farm and the McCrady Farm.; see resolution 2021-10.05.p

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

**Foster the Future Mural Dedication**

The Commissioners announced they will meet for the dedication of the Foster the Future Mural. Everyone is invited to attend.

**Executive Session to Regarding Personnel**

At 9:57 a.m., on the motion of Steve Davis and second of Jeff Fix, the Board of Commissioners voted to go into executive session regarding personnel pursuant to Revised Code Section 121.22 (G) (1) for the purposes of discussing appointment and employment of public employees, with Commissioners Davis, Fix, and Levacy in attendance for the executive session.

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

At 10:16 a.m., on the motion of Steve Davis and second of Jeff Fix, the Board of Commissioners voted to exit executive session.

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

**Adjournment**

With no further business, on the motion of Jeff Fix and a second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to adjourn at 10:17 a.m.

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

Motion by:

Seconded by:

that the October 5, 2021, minutes were approved by the following vote:

YEAS:

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

\*Approved on October 12, 2021

  
Steven A. Davis  
Commissioner

  
Dave Levacy  
Commissioner

  
Jeff Fix  
Commissioner

  
Rachel A. Elser, Clerk