

Regular Meeting #51 - 2021
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
November 9, 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 Rachel Elsea, Thomas Lininger, Joshua Horacek, Dennis Keller, Jon Kochis, Corey Clark, Chris Wagner, Jeff Porter, David Miller, Chris Schmelzer, Tony Vogel, Deputy Norris, Rick Szabrak, Audrey Stoffel, Adam Tippet, Ray Stemen, Judy Stemen, and other members of the public.

Attending virtually were: Lynette Barnhart, Tony Howard, Bennett Niceswanger, Jeff Camechis, Jason Dolin, Jeff Barron, Jim Bahnsen, Jessica Murphy, Dave Burgei, Lisa McKenzie, Joe Ebel, Stacy Hicks, Michael Kaper, Nikki Drake, Amy Brown-Thompson, and Marcy Fields.

- Welcome

Commissioner Levacy welcomed everyone.

Mr. Keller presented the Commissioners with the two Coronet Awards received from the Fairfield Heritage Society for the Records Center and Real Estate Assessment Office.

- Fairfield Forward

Licking County Request of ARP funds for Sewer Project- Under Review

We in Fairfield County are gathering information on the Licking County request for ARP fiscal recovery funds for a sewer project. We could potentially have a subgrant with Licking County.

Walnut Twp Stormwater Conveyance Study

Last week, Acting Auditor Brown and Acting County Administrator Aunie Cordle met with Township Trustee Terry Horn regarding ARP funding for a subgrant for a Stormwater Conveyance Study. There is more information to gather. Acting Auditor Brown will meet with Trustee Terry Horn and others this week.

Other Projects Under Review

There are multiple projects under review. We continue to connect partners and stakeholders to research affordable housing and various factors connected to antecedents of those in unsheltered situations.

We are also reviewing a request from the Board of Health for a subgrant relating to the public health emergency for a community health assessment.

Broadband Support for State Grant – Article of Interest

An article was in the Lancaster Eagle-Gazette about the approval of the \$500,000 dedicated to the expansion of broadband access. Rick Szabrak commented on how other counties have indicated support for the state program, but Fairfield County has a more competitive approach by including a financial commitment. He thanked Acting Auditor Carri Brown for her work in making sure the resolution last week was accurate and included the financial commitment as intended. The collaboration with the County Auditor and the County Commission has been helpful to setting the stage for successful broadband improvements.

Mr. Levacy commented that this would seem to be the obvious direction to go as this is a statewide problem, yet no one else in the state has done this.

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Mr. Szabrak agreed and stated that there are several roadblocks, including financial, that would stop counties from going this route.

Main Uses of the ARP Fiscal Recovery Funds

We discussed how there are two main uses of ARP fiscal recovery funds 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.

With the ARP fiscal recovery funds, \$1.5 M has been spent; \$4 M is encumbered, and \$8.4 M has been authorized for use.

Planning sessions with RAMA and the planning team are scheduled for November and December. We are still on target for a draft report from RAMA by the year end.

- COVID 19 Update

From the Health Department's weekly report, Fairfield County's COVID-19 case numbers increased by 8% this past week. Case rates have remained fairly flat over the past three weeks, above the goal of less than 50 cases per week per 100,000.

Over the past seven days we have had 277 new COVID-19 cases reported, for a rate of 175.8 cases per week per 100,000 population (High Transmission).

11 new hospitalizations were reported in the past week, and 8 additional COVID-19 related deaths were reported for the month of October for a total of 13 for the month.

There were 308 new first dose vaccinations given last week, with 53.65% of Fairfield County residents having received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine. So far 9,778 booster doses have been administered.

The Fairfield County Health Department has begun vaccinating children ages 5 through 11 with the pediatric COVID-19 vaccine.

They also continue to offer first dose vaccinations for anyone 12 and over, and COVID-19 booster doses for those eligible. They are offering flu shots at their clinic. Flu and COVID vaccinations can be done at the same time.

Mr. Kochis added that the hospitals in Central Ohio are seeing similar numbers,

Mr. Davis reported that FMC remains in a solid position and has case numbers under control. He recently traveled out of state where mask mandates were in place and is glad to be back in Fairfield County where there are no mask mandates.

- Legal Update

Mr. Horacek did not have a legal update.

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- Administration and Budget Update

- a. Announcements & Dates of Interest

- Announcements

- Anyone can email a question anytime: Rachel.Elsea@fairfieldcountyohio.gov

- Dates/Events of Interest

- November 11 – Veterans Day (offices closed)

- November 25 and 26 – Thanksgiving holiday (offices closed)

- November 30 – Engineer Projects Viewings and Hearings – begin at 10:30 a.m. – pack a lunch!

- November 30 - Commission Connection Video, Commissioner Levacy

- b. Highlights of Resolutions

- There were 14 resolutions for the voting meeting.

- There were 6 contracting or non-financial resolutions for approval of:

- Vacation of Shell Road to follow up on the hearing held last week;
 - An agreement with Pulte Homes for payment for the Refugee/Pickerington Road intersection improvements;
 - The contract bid award for the FAI-CR7-3.409 Refugee Road at Spring Creek Drive Intersection Improvement Project;
 - The Local Emergency Planning Committee membership;
 - The Heron Crossing West Section 2 Final Plat, as approved by RPC;
 - Approval of change order #3 for the Fairfield County CDBG – the Village of Carroll FY2020 Sanitary Sewer Improvement Project.

- There were 8 *financial and grant related resolutions* to approve:

- Appropriations from unappropriated funds for the SWAT and Airport garage;
 - 3 resolutions to appropriate from unappropriated funds for Engineer and 1 for the Soil and Water Conservation District (for a total of 4 approvals for non-general fund appropriations);
 - 2 resolutions for account-to-account transfers of appropriations to properly classify expenditures; and
 - Bills requiring Commission approval.

- 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.

- BOR COVID Related Hearings*

- BOR hearings for the special Covid-19-related complaints took place last week. There is one remaining case that is scheduled for Wednesday, November 10th

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New Construction Statistics

- In 2020, new construction in Fairfield County was assessed at \$71,898,240.
- In 2021, new construction in Fairfield County is assessed at \$81,732,780.
- This represents an increase of 13.68% in 2021 over 2020.
- In 2020, compared to 2019, the percentage increase was 8.4%.
- In 2021, 83% of new construction is residential.
- A growing county, such as Fairfield, experiences increases in new construction.
- Not all counties in Ohio are experiencing increases, and this has been noted in multiple meetings from different perspectives, including the MORPC update provided to the Commission.

Mr. Levacy highlighted the growth in Fairfield County.

ADAMH Board Position

We continue to accept applicants for the ADAMH Board position through November 12. ADAMH has a desire for financial and/or legal experience.

Interviews will be the weeks of November 16th and 23rd.

State Capital Budget Submission for Fairfield County – Workforce Center Focus

Rick Szabrak submitted an application for capital improvements for the Workforce Center last week. We are focusing on the higher education purpose. We thanked Acting Auditor Brown and Rick Szabrak for their work on this submission.

Many people commented on how much they enjoyed the tours of the Workforce Center last week. The review packet contained a fact sheet and pictures of the Workforce Center.

Mr. Fix spoke with Representative LaRe who is very supportive of this project.

Bid Opening for SWAT Building & Airport Garage

Dennis Keller reported on the bid opening for the SWAT Building and Airport Garage. The bidding was within the budget for the project. For the SWAT Facility, Setterlin Construction was the low bidder at \$1,635,650 for a metal framed building structure with a sprinkler system, rather than a wood framed structure. The metal framed structure is preferred. The published estimate was \$1,743,456. There was an option to delete the sprinkler system for a deduction of \$37,800 if the building permit code review allows this deletion.

Mr. Keller will attend the Greenfield Township zoning variance hearing on December 1st.

For the Airport SRE Garage, the only bid was from Eversole Builders at \$162,808 for a wood framed structure. The published estimate was \$162,000, so we are within the parameters to award a contract, given this is under a 10% difference.

Mr. Kochis stated the airport was in full support of this project and were appreciative of clearing out three hangars to rent and the addition of more storage.

Mr. Davis stated his concerns regarding the airport have been from an operating expense standpoint. He does support this expense coming from the general fund.

There is a resolution on the voting agenda today for appropriations.

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CORPO Grant

During the MORPC update, there was mention of CORPO grants. These funds may be used for construction, expansion, reconstruction, preliminary engineering, right of way or preservation of roads and bridges on any public road; capital costs for public transit and bus terminals; bicycle and pedestrian facilities; and other transportation-related activities. Our CORPO has prepared a list of priorities. Rick Szabrak will be attending a meeting on November 9th about the process for the CORPO grants. The grant will not provide enough resources to complete any of the prioritized projects, but there will be some progress with a grant, even though the amount is yet to be determined.

Budget Update

Ongoing Sales Tax Review & Budget Review

- Sales tax revenues for December, not including auto sales, are estimated at \$1.7 M, 10% above last year's sales tax revenues without auto sales for the same month. With about \$300K in auto sales tax, the receipt for December will exceed 2019's sales tax receipts compounded 3% annually. The YTD estimate for 2021 is \$26.2 M (without the auto sales for December). This is 14.4% above 2020 and 18.6% above 2019.
- We anticipate passing the appropriation measure on December 14.
- Level 4 entry ends on November 22.

Mr. Davis stated that the state is experiencing a 14% increase while Fairfield County is at 10%. Earlier in the year Fairfield County was tracking above the state average. This change could be a timing balance for things settling back in. He was surprised by the health of the report as he is expecting the growth to stop and thinks this is a hint that the wind beneath the economy's wings is not as strong as some expect.

d. BRAVOS

Rick Szabrak thanked Tony Vogel and Josh Anders for their help with the parking lot repair at the Workforce Center.

Thank you to everyone who worked at the polls for the election.

Bravo to the Data Board Executive Team, the County Auditor, Commission, and Clerk of Courts for implementing an electronic signature block template.

Bravo to the County Auditor's Office for the collective work on implementing a memo section on the accounts payable warrants – this was an idea box submission from Christy Noland in April of 2019 – and it is now in place! Thanks to Dan Neeley, Jay Mattlin, and David Miller, as well as the Finance Team for making this happen. Printing a memo section on the face of the warrant is intended to help with the posting of payments by our vendors. Ultimately, this will make things more efficient for the finance officers in all departments.

From Dave Burgei, thanks to Brian DeLay for his attention to internal and external customer service by assisting with delivery between buildings, adding to the efficiency of document transfers and recording processes.

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Mr. Davis thanked Dr. Brown, Ms. Cordle, Ms. Elsea, Ms. Kinsley, and the Commissioner's Office for keeping things running smoothly while Ms. Cordle was out this week.

Mr. Fix thanked the facilities team for installing the railings in the hearing room.

- Old Business

- a. Commissioner Connections & Updates

Mr. Fix is appreciative of the poll workers. He is excited for the new wave of leadership in Fairfield County after the election of Adam Tippet and Presten Ahlers.

Mr. Levacy attended the Freedom's Never Free event. He is thankful for those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice and noted that a flag was placed for Sgt. Collette.

Mr. Davis stated that Mr. Fix will retire as Chair of the Fairfield County Republican Party at the end of the year. He thanked him for his service and noted that he has been the most successful chairperson in the history of the party.

- New Business

- General Correspondence

- Invitations

- a. State of the Village/Township hosted by the Bremen Area Historical Society – Thursday, November 11th at 7:00 p.m.
- b. Fairfield County Township Association Meeting – Saturday, November 13th at 6:00 p.m. at the AAA Building, Fairgrounds
 - Commissioner Levacy will attend.
- c. Pickerington Chamber Lunch – “Workforce of the Future” – Thursday, November 18th at 11:30 a.m. at the Pickerington Senior Center (Rick Szabrak to present)
 - Commissioners Davis, Fix, Levacy will attend.
- d. Retirement Party for Judge Landefeld – Wednesday, December 15th from 2:00p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the Municipal Court, 136 West Main Street, Lancaster

Mr. Davis spoke to his longtime relationship with Judge Landefeld.

- FYI

- a. Jail Population – 263 – 6 inmates from Perry and 2 inmates from Athens
- b. Public Notice – Hunter's Run Scoping Meeting on Rehabilitation of Hunter's Run Watershed Structures 4 and 9 – December 2nd at 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.
- c. Violet Township Board of Zoning Appeals Public Hearing Notice – November 18th
- d. Auditor's year end deadlines released
- e. Dennis attended CCAO Service Corporation annual meeting. He reviewed the meeting and the next steps to be taken.

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Mr. Davis shared his thoughts regarding energy and the increasing costs of natural gas.

Dr. Brown added that the energy aggregation rates have stabilized, protecting the county's costs.

- f. MORPC Regional Mobility Plan Memo
- g. The County Auditors' Office has a twitter account and can be followed @FairCoAuditor
- h. Dr. Brown reported that HB126 had an amendment added to removed school districts from the BOR process. This is extremely problematic, and she reached out to Representative LaRe to let him know as there was a hearing scheduled later in the day.

Commissioners' Regular Meeting

A regular meeting of the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, November 9, 2021, beginning at 9:48 a.m. Commissioner Levacy called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Steve Davis, Jeff Fix, and Dave Levacy. Also present were Rachel Elsea, Carri Brown, Joshua Horacek, Thomas Lininger, Dennis Keller, Tony Vogel, Jon Kochis, Corey Clark, Jeff Porter, Rick Szabrak, Chris Wagner, Adam Tippet, David Miller, Ray Stemen, Judy Stemen, Audrey Stoffel, Deputy Norris, and other members of the public.

Attending virtually were Jim Bahnsen, Jeff Camechis, Dave Burgei, Jessica Murphy, Lynette Barnhart, and Nikki Drake.

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.

Rachel Elsea reported, 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.

Mr. Chris Schmelzer of Bremen spoke about his love of Fairfield County and shared a story of the time he received his veterans card from the Recorder's Office. He believes the COVID vaccine does not work and is not proud of the government or mandates. He is against a potential pipeline closure and believes wind and solar energy are not reliable.

Mr. Ray Stemen of 2444 West Point Road in Lancaster stated that his wife spends a lot of time gathering the information she shares with the Commissioners and that the information was from solid information groups.

Ms. Judy Stemen of 2444 West Point Road in Lancaster reviewed a list of articles regarding COVID and the related vaccine.

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Approval of Minutes for November 2, 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 November 2, 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:

- | | |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2021-11.09.a | A resolution approving a vacation request to vacate a part of a public road, Shell Street in Walnut Township. [Commissioners] |
| 2021-11.09.b | A resolution approving an account to account transfer in a major expenditure object category, General Fund# 1001 – Fairfield County Commissioners [Commissioners] |
| 2021-11.09.c | 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] |

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of the Domestic Relations Court Resolution

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Domestic Relations Court resolution authorizing an account to account transfer for the adjustment of Personal Services to cover vacation payout costs; see resolution 2021-11.09.d.

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 in the matter of nominations to the Fairfield County Local Emergency Planning Committee – LEPC for the EMA; see resolution 2021-11.09.e.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of the Engineer's Office Resolution

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

- | | |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2021-11.09.f | A Resolution to Approve the Contract Bid Award for the FAI-CR7-3.409 Refugee Road at Spring Creek Drive Intersection Improvement Project. [Engineer] |
| 2021-11.09.g | A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure |

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object category County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle for the purchase of an excavator from state contract 800842 [Engineer]

2021-11.09.h A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle for retirement payouts [Engineer]

2021-11.09.i A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle traffic light electric, gps service and office equipment [Engineer]

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 Regional Planning Commission resolutions:

2021-11.09.j A resolution to approve an Agreement between Pulte Homes of Ohio LLC and Fairfield County, Ohio for Payment for the Refugee/Pickerington Road Intersection Improvements [Regional Planning] [Regional Planning Commission]

2021-11.09.k A resolution to approve the Heron Crossing West Section 2 Final Plat [Regional Planning] [Regional Planning Commission]

2021-11.09.l A resolution authorizing approval of change order #3 for the Fairfield County CDBG – the Village of Carroll FY2020 Sanitary Sewer Improvement Project [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 Conservation District Resolution

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Soil and Water Conservation District resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category Fairfield Soil & Water Conservation District 61779.00 – Buckeye Lake Nutrient Reduction Project; see resolution 2021-11.09.m.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of the Payment of Bills

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Payment of Bills resolution authorizing the approval of payment of invoices for departments that need Board of Commissioners' approval; see resolution 2021-11.09.n.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Commissioner Levacy stated at 9:47 a.m. that the Commission would be in recess until the 11:00 a.m. Public Hearing.

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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 10:04 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 November 9, 2021, minutes were approved by the following vote:

YEAS:

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

*Approved on November 16, 2021



Steven A. Davis
Commissioner



Dave Levacy
Commissioner



Jeff Fix
Commissioner



Rachel A. Elsea, Clerk