

Regular Meeting #1 - 2026
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
January 6, 2026

Review Meeting

The Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners Hearing Room located at 210 E. Main St., Lancaster, OH. Commissioner Fix called the meeting to order, and the following Commissioners were present: Jeff Fix and Steve Davis. Also present: County Administrator, Aundrea Cordle; Deputy County Administrator, Jeff Porter; Clerk, Rochelle, Menning; Communications and Information Coordinator, Bennett Niceswanger; Budget Officer, Staci Knisley; Sheriff, Alex Lape; Recorder, Lisa McKenzie; Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Amy Brown-Thompson; Utilities Director, Tony Vogel; Economic & Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabrek; EMA & Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; IT Director, Dan Neeley; JFS Director, Corey Clark; Treasurer, Jim Bahnsen; Land Bank Director, Michael Kaper; Deputy JFS Director, Heather O'Keefe; FCFC Manager, Tiffany Wilson; Soil and Water Director, Nikki Drake; Deputy EMA Director, Garrett Blevins; Financial Analyst, Taylor Forquer; Chief Deputy Sheriff, Jared Collins; Transit Director, Aaron Kennedy; Interim RPC Director, Holly Mattei; Sheriff Deputy, Kevin Romine. Also in attendance: Garrett Davis, Ray Stemen, Jeremy Primmer, Chris Snider,

Virtual attendees: Tony Vogel, Christy Noland, Lori Hawk, Shannon Meloy, Pam Meloy, Beth Cottrell, Jessica Murphy, David Uhl, Rachel Elsea, Bayley Fields, Ash Sark, Shelby Hunt, Jason Grubb, Deborah, Shannon Ward, Sue, Lori Lovas, Jerry Starner, Jeff Barron, Andy Robberts, Austin Lines, Mesina Clark, Holly Lybrook, Jennifer Morgan, Jennifer Dickerson, Abby King, Michelle Wright, J Harmon, Arika Farrar, Deborah, Reagan Fagrell, Makala Finley, Stacy Hicks, and Jessica Ferguson.

Welcome

Commissioner Davis opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance.

Approval of a Resolution from the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners

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

2026-01.06.b A Resolution Authorizing the Approval of a Proclamation

Sheriff Lape joined the Commissioners in presenting a proclamation to Mel Meloy for his contributions to the county's 911 system. November 29th was declared "Mel Meloy Day" in Fairfield County.

Shaun Meloy stated it was an honor to accept the proclamation on behalf of his father.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Fairfield County Auditor's Strategic Plan Update

Fairfield County Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown, provided an update on the Fairfield County Auditor's Office. She stated her office recently participated in their annual retreat and added she was proud to announce that the office had 2026 financial systems open on January 2nd, which was a new record. She continued by speaking about the office's mission, their "Why Statement", and Code of Ethical Conduct; of which the details are included in the minute's packet. The Auditor's Strategic Plan aligns with the county's Strategic Pillars and provides supervisory support and coaching, updated processes, a focus on customer service, communication, and outreach, and improves use of technology and records management.

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Commissioner Levacy asked about House Bills 186 & 335.

Dr Brown spoke about the property tax reforms, inside millage, providing more oversight for tax rates, and the timing of the property reassessment. She added that credits will appear on the second half property tax bill.

Commissioner Fix thanked Dr. Brown for her leadership in both her office and the state.

Commissioner Davis stated he is hopeful for additional changes that would be helpful to residents.

Public Comments

Ray Stemen of Lancaster offered a prayer to begin the year.

Legal Update

None.

County Administration Update

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

Week in Review

2026 Commission Meetings

The Commissioners have 53 meetings scheduled for 2026 and will hold their first evening meeting of 2026 on February 3rd. The meeting will be held here, in the Commissioners' Hearing Room, at 6:00 p.m. All four 2026 evening meetings will be held at 6:00 p.m. and there is a resolution on the agenda today to approve the location of the other three evening meetings.

- March 31, 2026, meeting to be held at the Amanda-Clearcreek Local Schools building, 328 E. Main St., Amanda
- July 28, 2026, meeting to be held at the Event Center at Violet Woods, 10190 Blacklick-Eastern Rd. NW, Pickerington
- September 1, 2026, meeting to be held at the Pleasantville Community Center, 207 W. Columbus St., Pleasantville

Highlights of Resolutions

Administrative Approvals

The review packet contains the list of administrative approvals.

Resolution Review

The Regular voting meeting had 26 resolutions on the agenda.

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Resolutions of note:

- The Engineer, Recorder, Sheriff, and Treasurer have all submitted resolutions for permission to travel. Pursuant to O.R.C. 325.20 county officers are to apply to the board of commissioners in writing for the approval for travel for themselves and their staff.
- We have a resolution to approve a proclamation to Honor Mel Meloy. Mel served as the original 9-1-1 coordinator for Fairfield County and played a vital role in the development of the county's current emergency communication system. Mel's son is here today to accept the proclamation.
- We have a resolution to appoint the Fairfield County Apiary. Shawn Rinehart has been serving as the county's apiarist and has agreed to continue doing so in 2026.
- There is a resolution to designate County Commissioner, Steven Davis, and representatives for Commissioner Davis, to the 2026 Board of Revision.
- A resolution is on the agenda for the 2026 Krile Communications agreement.
- There is a resolution reappointing Gale Neville to the Ohio Children's Trust Fund Child Abuse and Child Neglect Regional Prevention Council for another two years. The term will run from February 7, 2026, to February 6, 2028. Gale completed the last couple months of a term for someone who was unable to complete her term and a full two year term.
- EMA has two resolutions. The first to approve the 2026 Fairfield County Emergency Operations Plan and the signing of the Promulgation Statement, and the second to approve the appointment of an authorized agent for the State Disaster Relief Program in response to the 2025 flooding.
- The Engineer's Office has a resolution to purchase a Western Star 47X cab and chassis from Fyda Freightliner Columbus, Inc.
- Family and Children First Council has a resolution to identify the responsibilities and membership of their Executive Committee, and to formally adopt the Bylaws of the Council.
- The Sheriff's Office has a resolution for a contract extension between the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners, the Fairfield County Sheriff's Office, the Vinton County Board of Commissioners, and the Vinton County Sheriff's Office, for the housing of prisoners in the Fairfield County Jail.
- Transit has two resolutions. The first is a resolution to amend resolution 2025-12.09.pp, which approved the Fairfield County Transit Zero Tolerance Drug and Alcohol Policy. ODOT has asked that "and alcohol" be included in a couple of areas in the policy. Transit's second resolution is for the approval of a service agreement between Fairfield County Transit and The Routing Company for software implementation, support, and other related functions.
- Community Action also has two resolutions. The first is to authorize the submission of the 2025 CHIP program grant application and implementation plan to the Ohio Department of Development. The second resolution is to enter into a contract with Fairfield County for 2026 Recycling and Education Services.
- And, due to year-end processes, there is no resolution today for the payment of bills that require the Board of Commissioners' approval.

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Sheriff Lape stated the resolution allows other counties to utilize jail services. Fairfield County currently has 13 federal inmates through the US Marshalls contract. As of right now 100% of corrections staff have either completed training or are actively in training.

Aaron Kennedy spoke about the resolution for Transit software and added they have been looking forward to purchasing the software. The current dispatching and public facing software is not as efficient, nor is it as transit customer friendly as he would like.

Aundrea Cordle asked about implementation timelines.

Kennedy stated he is hoping the software will be ready by the end of the first quarter.

Budget Review

Staci Knisley spoke about the 2025 year-end cash balance.

Commissioner Davis stated the county has made dramatic improvements and continues to charge residents less than other counties for services.

Calendar Review/Invitations Received

Informational Items

- Integrated Services for Behavioral Health and Fairfield Community Health Center Partnership Celebration and Ribbon Cutting, January 26, 2026, 10:00 a.m., Fairfield Community Health Center, 220 E. Walnut St., Lancaster
- Fairfield County ADAMH Board Retirement Celebration for Toni Ashton, January 27, 2026, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. ADAMH, 108 W. Main St., Lancaster

Correspondence

- Expedited Type II Annexation, 1.220+/- Acres from Greenfield Township to the Village of Carroll, Agent for the Petitioner, Jeffrey Feyko
- Lancaster Festival Thank You Letter, November 30, 2025
- Fairfield County Municipal Court Criminal/Traffic Division Report of Fees Collected for November 2025
- Pickerington Food Pantry Letter Regarding “Partners in Fighting Hunger, Feeding Hope” Campaign, December 2025
- CCAO Letter Regarding the Ohio Counties Scholarship Fund, December 18, 2025
- Vivera Fairfield and Marian Development Group Notice Regarding Planned Residential Development and Senior Assisted Living Facility, December 17, 2025
- Letter from State Senator, Tim Schaffer, Regarding Capital Budget and Funding for Capital Projects, December 2025

Updates from Elected Officials and Department Heads

Sheriff Lape stated his office was recently awarded the OCJSA through the AG's office for substance abuse services. He added that the jail population is currently 262 inmates.

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Commissioner Davis recalled a point where 70% of inmates had experienced some form of addiction in the home.

Sheriff Lape stated the number he most frequently heard is closer to 80%.

Treasurer Bahnsen stated the tax rates have been certified and will be sent to the printer to mail out the tax bills due February 19th.

Commissioner Davis had asked the treasurer to print a bar chart for investment revenues.

Recorder McKenzie stated her staff worked with their vendor to move forward with preservation fee increase and added the notary fraud alert is on the website and many people have already signed up for the service.

Auditor Brown stated cash projections were on target. There will be some mid-year adjustments, and they will likely be a modest increase. She added that the deadline for dog licensing is January 31st.

Tony Vogel stated Utilities will continue helping Millersport with the data center. By the end of 2026, Utilities should be in construction for the new wastewater treatment plant.

Commissioner Davis met with Vantage Data regarding donating to United Way, and they donated.

Rick Szabrak thanked Utilities for their work with the Village of Millersport. He also spoke about the engagement of pre-apprenticeship students attending the workforce center.

Commissioner Levacy asked about CDL training progress.

Rick Szabrak reported that it is coming but the funding will likely go to another organization that can provide the training sooner.

Jon Kochis reported about the Emergency Operations Plan and continued funding relief from the flooding. He thanked Laura, his new EMA planner, for the work she has been doing.

Commissioner Davis asked about delays in the disaster relief funding.

Kochis stated Ohio EMA is still in their review phase.

Commissioner Davis stated he heard the Small Business Association funding process remains slow.

Kochis added he is not sure what the delay is at the federal level. They received positive information that the county will likely be funded for some stream repairs.

Dan Neeley spoke about IT projects throughout the county and added he is proud of his team and the partnerships with county departments and agencies.

Corey Clark gave an update on COAAA and their intention to go to a regional council of governance. He reported the process has concluded and is official. He noted that JFS received their closure letter for the 2024 audit and had no findings.

Commissioner Davis asked if Fairfield County has experienced fraud as other reported in other parts of the country.

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Clark replied that the particular funding being reported on in other parts of the country is handled primarily at the state level in Ohio. Fairfield County has not experienced fraud as being reported elsewhere.

Commissioner Davis stated he would be shocked as well but the commissioners would want to be informed immediately.

Jeff Porter wanted to remind everyone of their wellness options and the YMCA offerings. He also spoke about a 4-part management training and a local government training course on cybersecurity and public records.

Nikki Drake highlighted the 9-1-1 and CPR training her staff participated in through the Sheriff's Office.

Holly Mattei stated the RPC put out a request to all villages for the neighborhood revitalization grant. After rating, the Village of Thurston seems to be the most appropriate entity to move forward with an application.

Old Business

Commissioner Fix was reminded how amazing the Fairfield County team is and added the details in the evaluations of each department head were very impressive.

Commissioner Levacy spoke on the impact of the Vantage Data Center on the Village of Millersport. He gave his appreciation to the departments in the county who have been instrumental in the project.

New Business

Commissioner Davis considers the commissioners to be very fortunate. He expressed his immense appreciation for the work of Administrator Cordle and all she does for the county.

Regular (Voting) Meeting

The Commissioners continued to the Regular/Voting portion of the meeting, and the following Commissioners were present: Jeff Fix and Steve Davis. Also present: County Administrator, Aundrea Cordle; Deputy County Administrator, Jeff Porter; Clerk, Rochelle, Menningan; Communications and Information Coordinator, Bennett Niceswanger; Budget Officer, Staci Knisley; Sheriff, Alex Lape; Recorder, Lisa McKenzie; Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Amy Brown-Thompson; Utilities Director, Tony Vogel; Economic & Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabruk; EMA & Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; IT Director, Dan Neeley; JFS Director, Corey Clark; Treasurer, Jim Bahnson; Land Bank Director, Michael Kaper; Deputy JFS Director, Heather O'Keefe; FCFC Manager, Tiffany Wilson; Soil and Water Director, Nikki Drake; Deputy EMA Director, Garrett Blevins; Financial Analyst, Taylor Forquer; Chief Deputy Sheriff, Jared Collins; Transit Director, Aaron Kennedy; Interim RPC Director, Holly Mattei; Sheriff Deputy, Kevin Romine. Also in attendance: Garrett Davis, Ray Stemen, Jeremy Primmer, Chris Snider,

Virtual attendees: Tony Vogel, Lori Hawk, Beth Cottrell, Jessica Murphy, David Uhl, Ash Sark, Shelby Hunt, Shannon Ward, Lori Lovas, Jeff Barron, Andy Robberts, Austin Lines, Holly Lybrook, Jennifer Morgan, Jennifer Dickerson, Michelle Wright, J Harmon, Deborah, Reagan Fagrell, and Jessica Ferguson.

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Pledge of Allegiance

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

Announcements

None.

Approval of Minutes for December 9, 2025

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Minutes for the Tuesday, December 9, 2025, meeting.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

Voting aye thereon: Jeff Fix and Steve Davis

Abstaining: David Levacy

Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners

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

2026-01.06.a	A Resolution Amending Resolution 2025-10.28.a, Establishing the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners' 2026 Review Session and Regular Meeting Dates, and Special Meeting Dates
2026-01.06.c	A Resolution to Approve the Appointment of an Apiary Inspector for Fairfield County for 2026
2026-01.06.d	A Resolution to Designate a County Commissioner, and Representatives for the Designated County Commissioner, to the Hearing Board for the 2026 Fairfield County Board of Revision
2026-01.06.e	A Resolution Authorizing an Agreement Between Krile Communications and the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners
2026-01.06.f	A resolution approving the reappointment of Ms. Gale Neville to the Ohio Children's Trust Fund Child Abuse and Child Neglect Regional Prevention Council
2026-01.06.g	A resolution authorizing fund to fund transfer from the General Fund # 1001 to Fund# 4832 LGIF debt – Fairfield County Commissioners
2026-01.06.h	A resolution to approve a memo transactions for interest allocation reimbursements for Fairfield Department of Health, Fairfield County Parks, & Fairfield County Port Authority – Fund #7012, #7321, & #7308.
2026-01.06.i	A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated into a major expense category for fund # 2736, Subfund#8376 – FY2026 CFLP Grant – Fairfield County Commissioners

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

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Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Emergency Management Agency

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

2026-01.06.j A resolution to approve the 2026 Fairfield County Emergency Operations Plan and signing of the Promulgation Statement.

2026-01.06.k A resolution to approve the appointment of an Authorized Agent for the State Disaster Relief Program in response to the 2025 Flooding

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Engineer

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

2026-01.06.1 A resolution granting Jeremiah Upp, County Engineer, and staff permission to attend.

2026-01.06.m A resolution to purchase a Western Star 47X Cab and Chassis.

2026-01.06.n A Resolution to Authorize the Use of Force Account by the Fairfield County Engineer.

2026-01.06.o A resolution of increase appropriations, appropriate from unappropriated, account to account and fund to fund transfer for 2026 Superstructure Replacements Project BLO-17/GRE-04/WAL-29/WAL-42

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of a Resolution from the Fairfield County Family and Children First Council

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

2026-01.06.p A Resolution to identify the responsibilities and membership of the Family and Children First Council Executive Committee

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of a Resolution from Fairfield County Job and Family Services

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

2026-01.06.q A resolution authorizing the approval of a service agreement by and between Fairfield County Job & Family Services, Child Protective Services Division and Necco SE, LLC dba Necco Center.

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

Approval of a Resolution from the Fairfield County Recorder

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

2026-01.06.r Resolution granting Lisa McKenzie, Fairfield County Recorder and staff permission to attend (travel)

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

Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Sheriff

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

2026-01.06.s A Resolution Granting Alex Lape, Sheriff, and Staff Permission to Attend and/or Travel

2026-01.06.t A resolution authorizing the approval of a contract extension with the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners (Fairfield BCC), the Fairfield County Sheriff's Office (Fairfield Sheriff) and the Vinton County Board of Commissioners (Vinton BCC) and the Vinton County Sheriff (Vinton Sheriff) for housing prisoners in the Fairfield County Jail

2026-01.06.u A Resolution to Appropriate from Unappropriated in a Major Expenditure Object Category for Sheriff; 2883, Law Enforcement Cyber

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

Approval of Resolutions from Fairfield County Transit

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

2026-01.06.v A Resolution to Approve Amending Resolution 2025-12.09.pp, the Fairfield County Transit Zero Tolerance Drug and Alcohol Policy

2026-01.06.w A Resolution Authorizing the Approval of a Service Agreement by/between Fairfield County Transit and The Routing Company

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

Approval of a Resolution from the Fairfield County Treasurer

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

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2026-01.06.x A resolution granting Fairfield County Treasurer James N. Bahnsen
Permission during 2026 to Attend.

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

Approval of Resolutions from the Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency

On the motion of Jeff Fix and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolutions from the Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency:

2026-01.06.y A resolution approving authorization to submit the PY 2025 Community Housing Impact and Preservation (CHIP) Program Grant Application and implementation plan to the Ohio Department of Development, Office of Community Development.

2026-01.06.z A resolution to enter into a contract between Fairfield County and the Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency for Recycling and Education Services for 2026.

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

Adjournment

With no further business, on the motion of David Levacy, and the second of Jeff Fix, the Board of Commissioners voted to adjourn at 10:19 a.m.

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

The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, in the Commissioners' Hearing Room located at 210 E. Main St., Lancaster, OH.

Motion by: David Levacy Seconded by: Steve Davis
To approve the January 6, 2026, minutes by the following vote:

YEAS: David Levacy, Steve Davis, and Jeff Fix
ABSTENTIONS: None

NAYS: None

*Approved on January 13, 2026

Approved

Jeff Fik
Commissioner

Steve Davis
Commissioner



David Levacy
Commissioner

Rochelle Menning
Rochelle Menning, Clerk