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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 10, 2019

Commissioners:
Steven A. Davis
Mike Kiger
David L. Levacy

Fairfield County Board of Commissioners Approves 2020 Budget

County Administrator
Carri L. Brown

Clerk
Rachel A. Elsea

Lancaster, Ohio – Today, the Board of Fairfield County Commissioners approved the county expenditure budget for 2020. The “all funds” budget, comprised of multiple fund types, was approved at \$190 M, approximating the current “all funds” budget. Multiple grants are received for defined purposes at different points in a year, and the all funds budget includes these grants and other funds for all departments.

The 2020 general fund budget, which covers expenditures for daily operations of county services, was approved at \$49.9 M, an approximate 1% increase over the current budget and 3% above the original 2019 budget. In 2019, there were one-time additional expenditures approved for a radio tower in Walnut Township and transfers for the Workforce Center.

Increases in the 2020 budget are largely due to the 27th pay in the year (a timing difference within a calendar year), merit-based increases up to 3% for employees, a 2% increase in health benefits, additional investment in the Workforce Center, additional contracted services for the Board of Elections, and additional vehicles for the Sheriff.

Commission President, Dave Levacy, stated, “The expenditure budget is consistent with Fairfield County priorities of supporting public safety while fighting the drug epidemic, valuing employees who provide critical services, and improving economic and workforce development opportunities.”

The 2020 general fund budget included \$16,425,351 for the Sheriff’s Office and jail operations, the largest functional area within the general fund.

Actual reductions in the budget included the planned reduction of \$135,962 in the effort to “right size” the contribution to the Multi-County Juvenile Detention Center and a reduction of \$343,000 based on newly negotiated contracts for electronic monitoring services.

When considering the *general fund expenditures*, the following was approved for 2020:

- \$743,000 for the 27th pay within the year, a timing difference for payroll
- \$380,000 for merit-based salary increase and negotiated increases, such as for law enforcement
- \$275,000 for increases in the health benefit plan
- \$250,000 for improvements to the Workforce Center (furniture, fixtures, and equipment)
- 148,700 for additional contracted services for the Board of Elections

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- \$144,904 for additional vehicles for the Sheriff, beyond planned replacements
- \$139,000 for Juvenile Court staffing and new Probate Court Guardianship Services
- \$120,000 for the Workforce Center operations, such as utilities and property management
- \$115,000 for additional IT equipment
- \$100,000 for additional Workforce Training Grants
- \$100,000 for facilities improvements
- \$ 56,000 for an MIS Specialist for the Courts
- \$ 38,000 for additional MORPC dues
- \$ 25,000 for additional service provision for the Coroner

With **general fund revenues**, sales tax (estimated at \$22.8 M for 2020) is the largest general fund revenue source. The following factors were included for the 2020 projection:

- An increase of 2.5% in sales tax, based on market activity
- An increase in general property taxes of ½%, based on history
- An increase of 3% in conveyance fees, based on market activity
- An increase of 1% in charges for services or fees, based on history
- Casino revenues of \$1.75 M annually (a flat estimate over time)
- Interest income of \$1.9 M annually, based on market conditions
- \$1.4 M of shared local governmental funds from the state
- A transfer of \$800,000 from the Clerk of Courts Certificate of Title Fund

The transfer from the Clerk of Courts Certificate of Title Fund supports multiple improvements.

Overall, the 2020 revenues are expected to exceed \$46.7 M. The carryover cash balance of 2019, available for use in 2020, is expected to exceed \$12.5 M. Carryover cash is required for planned expenditures and future projections.

The county website includes the full general fund budget as well as reports about county finances. Please visit <https://www.co.fairfield.oh.us/>

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By the Numbers

Total <i>general fund</i> expenditure budget, 2019 (current estimate)	\$ 49.4 M
Total <i>general fund</i> expenditure budget, 2020	\$ 49.9 M
Percentage change of general fund budget, 2020 as compared to 2019	+1%
Actual expected general fund expenditures, based on history	\$ 47.4 M
Total <i>all funds</i> expenditure budget, 2019	\$ 190 M
Total <i>all funds</i> expenditure budget, 2020	\$ 190 M
Number of employees (paid on a County Auditor warrant)	900+
Number of <i>general fund</i> employees	335
Percentage increase for wages, merit-based	up to 3%
Amount for salary increases, employees	\$ 380,000
Total of general fund budget dedicated to wages	\$ 18 M
Total of general fund budget dedicated to health insurance benefits	\$5.2 M
Average salary of a general fund employee, November 2019	\$ 48,000
Percentage increase for health benefit plan rate	2%
Amount for increased costs of employees' insurances, general fund, including changes in coverage	\$275,000
Annual cost of a family health benefits plan per employee	\$ 22,000
Annual cost of a single health benefits plan per employee	\$ 9,000
Appropriations for the Sheriff's Office and jail	\$ 16.4 M
Annual expenditure for MAGNA Workforce Training Grant	\$100,000
One-time expenditure for Workforce Center Improvements	\$250,000
Operational expenditures for Workforce Center Services	\$120,000
Unencumbered carryover cash, general fund, estimated for 12.31.2019	\$ 12.5 M+

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