



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Commissioners:

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Jeffrey M. Fix

David L. Levacy

County Administrator

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Deputy County Administrator

Jeffrey D. Porter

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Rochelle Menningen

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 6, 2022

Fairfield County Board of Commissioners Approves 2023 Budget

Lancaster, Ohio – Today, the Board of Fairfield County Commissioners approved the county expenditure budget for 2023. The 2023 general fund budget, which covers expenditures for daily operations of county services, was approved at \$59.65 M, an approximate 2.9% *decrease* from the current budget, which included several one-time capital projects, such as the Workforce Center and other capital improvements.

The appropriations include authorization of merit-based increases for employees, up to 3.5%, as well as negotiated increases for law enforcement.

Commission President, Jeff Fix, stated, “the Commission is again pleased to show that we can live within our means by spending less than we bring in, while investing in the future of our county by addressing issues like workforce housing, transportation, and other challenges faced by members of our community. We are excited about the opportunities that lie before us and look forward to addressing many of them head on through this budget.”

Commissioner, Dave Levacy, stated, “the 2023 budget is consistent with Fairfield County’s priority of supporting law enforcement. Over 1/3 of the general fund budget is dedicated to Sheriff’s Office operations and related capital improvements. We are investing in law enforcement for the safety and good of our community.”

The “all funds” budget, comprised of multiple fund types, was approved at \$218 M. Multiple grants are received for defined purposes at different points in a year, and the “all funds” budget includes these grants and funds for departments of the county.

A few highlights of the 2023 *general fund* budget expenditures:

- \$ 362,000 Capital Plan for safety, roof and gutter replacements, paving, HVAC, and remodeling
- \$ 86,000 Overdose Death Crimes Investigator
- \$ 50,000 One-time grant support for Municipal Court
- \$ 465,000 Information Technology server upgrade
- \$ 781,000 Purchase of Sheriff vehicles including four additional vehicles for transport
- \$ 175,000 Contribution to Lancaster Fairfield Public Transit (150,000 increase)
- \$ 81,370 Transportation Improvement District funding for the Engineer’s office
- \$ 75,000 Purchase of weights and measure vehicle
- \$ 48,383 System conversion for Domestic Relations Court
- \$ 13,500 Fairfield Center real estate tax payment kiosk for Treasurer’s Office

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- \$ 100,000 Purchase of Veteran service transportation vehicles
- \$ 210,000 Purchase of security equipment
- \$ 18,400 Codified increases for Elected Official salaries
- \$ 572,000 Allocations to match state or federal grants, such as for Soil and Water, FFA, ODOT, and Workforce Center (Ohio University)

A few notable reductions in the 2023 general fund expenditure budget:

- \$ 287,000 Reduction in Telecom budget as a result of upgrades in 2022
- \$ 273,000 Reduction in equipment needs for 2023 for Board of Elections
- \$ 50,000 Reduction in Regional Planning allocation for 2023
- \$ 57,000 Overall reduction in year-over-year debt transfers
- \$ 73,000 Reduction in training cost
- \$1,918,000 Reduction in one-time purchases, such as investments in the Workforce Center and the county building improvement projects from 2022 that are not planned in 2023

Looking at estimated revenues of the general fund, sales tax revenues are the largest general fund revenue source, with more than \$27.9 M collected in 2022. The following factors were included for the 2023 revenue estimates:

- For sales tax, a decrease of 11% annually, for about \$25.1 M
- An increase in general property taxes of 9%, for about \$11.8 M
- Homestead fees of about \$1.4 M
- Conveyance fees over \$4.2 M
- An increase of 2.2% in charges for services or fees, based on activity, for about \$5.5 M
- Casino revenues held flat at \$1.75 M
- Interest income increase of over 1.3 M over 2022, totaling \$3 M based on our current market conditions
- Jail rental income increase of \$1.1 M over 2022, for a total over \$1.5 M.
- \$1.5 M of shared local governmental funds from the state.

General fund estimated revenues for 2023 are about \$56.6 M, and the estimated expenditures (at 94% of the appropriation level) are \$56.1 M. Carryover cash is estimated at \$32 M for 2022. Carryover cash is required for planned expenditures and future projections.

However, with the uncertainty of market conditions and inflationary pressures, the leadership remains cautious with increases in expenditures. The carryover cash balance of the general fund supports the county's ability to maintain flexibility.

Commissioner, Steve Davis, stated, "For the twelfth straight year in a row, the County's financial position has improved over the prior year. Fairfield County is well positioned to respond to economic headwinds while still preparing the County for the future."



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By the Numbers

Total <i>general fund</i> expenditure budget, 2022 (current estimate)	\$ 61.41 M
Total <i>general fund</i> expenditure budget, 2023	\$ 59.65 M
Percentage change of general fund budget, 2023 as compared to 2022, current	-2.9%
Total <i>all funds</i> expenditure budget, 2022	\$ 211 M
Total <i>all funds</i> expenditure budget, 2023	\$ 218 M
Percentage increase for wages, merit-based	up to 3.5%
Annual increase for employee earning \$50,000 and exceeding performance expectations	\$ 1,750
Estimated annual cost of a family health benefits plan per employee	\$ 21,000
Estimated annual cost of a single health benefits plan per employee	\$ 8,800
Appropriations for the Sheriff's Office and jail	\$18.3 M
General fund estimated revenues for 2023	\$56.6 M
Estimated 2023 expenditures (at 94% of the appropriation level)	\$56.1 M
Approximate unencumbered carryover cash, general fund, estimated for 12.31.2022	\$32 M

The county website includes the full general fund budget as well as reports about county finances.

Please visit <https://www.co.fairfield.oh.us/>