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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 5, 2023

Fairfield County Board of Commissioners Approves 2024 Budget

Lancaster, Ohio – Today, the Board of Fairfield County Commissioners approved the county expenditure budget for 2024. The 2024 general fund budget, which covers expenditures for daily operations of county services, was approved at \$62.94 M, an approximate 8% *decrease* from the current budget, which included several one-time capital projects, such as the Workforce Center and other capital improvements.

“Sound fiscal policy and a bold vision for the future of Fairfield County are evident in the 2024 budget,” said Commission President, Steve Davis. “The Commission continues to address issues that positively impact county residents like workforce education and housing, transportation, and improved infrastructure while maintaining one of the lowest sales tax rates in the state. We are optimistic on the future of Fairfield County and this budget is sound fiscal evidence of that optimism.”

The “all funds” budget, comprised of multiple fund types, was approved at \$235.81 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 2024 *general fund* budget expenditures:

- \$ 81,897 Increase in support of Ohio State University Extension operations
- \$ 176,050 Capital Plan for Hall of Justice flooring and AV upgrade
- \$ 695,556 Sheriff’s Office increases in training, equipment, and IT investments
- \$ 50,000 Support for Municipal Court Facilities position
- \$ 25,500 Indigent Guardian Services Support increase
- \$ 25,000 Common Pleas drug testing cost increase
- \$ 297,321 Airport Hangar project
- \$ 300,000 Increase in energy cost
- \$ 485,000 Information Technology investments in DUO, MCPC, and Office 365
- \$ 113,731 Support of Children with Medical Handicaps Program increases
- \$ 85,000 County Safety and Security upgrades
- \$ 40,000 Soil and Water in support of departmental operations

A few notable reductions in the 2024 general fund expenditure budget:

- \$ 138,644 Year-over-year vehicle reduction from the Auditor and Sheriff office.
- \$ 141,000 MCJDC Cost reduction
- \$ 710,000 IT computer hardware/equipment reductions as the result of projects completed in 2023



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General fund estimated revenues for 2024 are about \$63.9 M, and the estimated expenditures are \$62.9 M. Sales tax revenues being the largest general fund revenue source with a 2023 original budget of \$25.1 M and 2024 estimate of \$30 M. Carryover cash is estimated at \$37 M for 2023. 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, Dave Levacy, stated, "Our mission continues to be serving, connecting, and protecting the citizens of Fairfield County and we fulfill that mission within our fiscal means. The 2024 budget process yielded a solid path for the future of Fairfield County, while still maintaining an eye on strong fiscal responsibility."

By the Numbers

Total <i>general fund</i> expenditure budget, 2023 (current estimate)	\$ 68.42 M
Total <i>general fund</i> expenditure budget, 2024	\$ 62.94 M
Percentage change of general fund budget, 2024 as compared to 2023, current	8%
Total <i>all funds</i> expenditure budget, 2023	\$ 287.2 M
Total <i>all funds</i> expenditure budget, 2024	\$ 235.8 M
Percentage increase for wages, merit-based (non-bargaining)	up to 5%
Annual increase for employee earning \$50,000 and exceeding performance expectations	\$ 2,500
Estimated annual cost of a family health benefits plan per employee	\$ 22,000
Estimated annual cost of a single health benefits plan per employee	\$ 9,300
Appropriations for the Sheriff's Office and jail	\$19.6 M
General fund estimated revenues for 2024	\$63.86 M
Estimated 2024 expenditures	\$62.94 M
Approximate unencumbered carryover cash, general fund, estimated for 12.31.2023	\$37 M

The county website includes the full 2024 Expenditure Budget as well as reports about county finances. Please visit <https://www.co.fairfield.oh.us/>