



# P R E S S   R E L E A S E

## B O A R D   O F   C O M M I S S I O N E R S

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**December 11, 2018**

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

### **Fairfield County Board of Commissioners Approves 2019 Budget**

**County Administrator**  
Carri L. Brown

**Lancaster, Ohio** – Today, the Board of Fairfield County Commissioners approved the county expenditure budget for 2019. The “all funds” budget, comprised of multiple fund types, was approved at \$180 M, or about 9.4% below the current “all funds” budget. The change is largely due to the timing of grant awards. Multiple grants are received for defined purposes at different points in a year.

**Clerk**  
Rachel A. Elsea

The 2019 general fund budget, which covers expenditures for daily operations of county services, was approved at \$48.4 M, an approximate 2% decrease from the current estimated general fund budget of \$49.4 M. The decrease is largely based on a one-time expenditure planned at the end of 2018 for elections equipment. The election equipment is expected to be ordered in 2018 at a cost of \$2.1 M, with the state covering \$1.4 M of that cost.

Commission President, Steve Davis, stated, “The expenditure for the elections equipment is a significant budget factor for the county. In December of 2018, we received new information about contracting for equipment; we examined that information and accommodated the Board of Elections with its desire to purchase equipment in December.”

When considering the *general fund expenditures*, the following was approved for 2019:

- \$447,000 for a 5% increase in health benefits costs and employee changes in coverage
- \$300,000 for additional building renovations, furniture, fixtures, and equipment
- \$300,000 for a 2% salary increase and negotiated increases, such as for law enforcement
- Approximately \$135,000 so Juvenile Court can continue services while experiencing reductions in state revenues
- \$62,000 for radio repeaters for law enforcement and first responders
- \$50,000 for the County Prosecutor to hire an additional Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for the Juvenile division of the County Prosecutor’s Office
- \$42,000 for pre-trial services at Common Pleas Court
- An increase of \$26,800 for operations of the Multi-County Juvenile Detention Center, bringing the Fairfield County total for the joint venture to \$922,130 annually
- An increase of \$24,694, representing a 3% increase in elected official salaries according to the Ohio Revised Code (as of December 6, 2018)
- \$20,000 for unmanned aerial vehicles for law enforcement

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- An increase of \$18,000 for a Domestic Relations Court liaison who will be serving as a supervisor for JFS Protective Services
- An increase of \$17,000 for Municipal Court to continue a Community Services Program for probationers at work
- An increase of \$17,000 for the Treasurer to maintain support staff

The 2019 general fund budget included \$13,868,182 for the Sheriff's Office, the largest department within the general fund.

Four additional Sheriff's Office employees were previously approved to staff a transport unit. The main priority of the budget continues to be law enforcement and public safety, such as with the Sheriff's Office and related jail expenditures.

With *general fund revenues*, sales tax (estimated at \$22 M for 2019) is the largest general fund revenue source. No revenue factors were included to increase estimated sales tax receipts based on internet sales because state action has not yet been taken on this matter. In addition, no revenue factors were included for restoration of local government funds from the state.

The following factors were included for the 2019 projection:

- 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 3% in sales tax, 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 M annually, based on current market conditions
- \$1,366,130 of shared local governmental funds from the state
- A transfer of \$1,000,000 from the Clerk of Courts Certificate of Title Fund

Overall, the 2019 revenues are expected to exceed \$44.9 M. The carryover cash balance of 2018, available for use in 2019, is expected to exceed \$11.5 M. Carryover cash is required for planned expenditures and future projections.

The county website includes the full general fund budget as well as multiple 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, 2018 (current estimate)	\$ 49.4 M
Total <i>general fund</i> expenditure budget, 2019	\$ 48.4 M
Percentage change of general fund budget, 2019 as compared to 2018	-2%
Total <i>all funds</i> expenditure budget, 2018 (current estimate)	\$ 198.7 M
Total <i>all funds</i> expenditure budget, 2019	\$ 180.1 M
Percentage change of all funds budget, 2019 as compared to 2018	-9.4%
Number of employees (paid on a County Auditor warrant)	962
Number of <i>general fund</i> employees	333
Percentage increase for wages, standard	2%
Amount for salary increases, employees	\$ 300,000
Amount for salary increases, elected officials by ORC	\$ 24,694
Total of general fund budget dedicated to wages	\$ 15 M
Average salary of a general fund employee, November 2018	\$ 46,800
Percentage increase for health benefit plan rate	5%
Amount for increased costs of employees' insurances, general fund, including changes in coverage	\$447,000
Total of general fund budget dedicated to employees' insurances	\$ 5,155,000
Annual cost of a family health benefits plan per employee	\$ 20,569
Annual cost of a single health benefits plan per employee	\$ 8,631
Appropriations for the Sheriff's Office, the largest general fund department	\$13.868 M
One-time expenditure for radio repeaters	\$ 62,000
One-time expenditure for unmanned aerial vehicles	\$ 20,000
Unencumbered carryover cash, general fund, estimated for 12.31.2018	\$ 11.5 M+

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