

**Regular Meeting #2 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
January 14, 2025**

Review Meeting

The Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. at 210 E. Main St., Lancaster, OH. Commissioner Fix called the meeting to order, and the following Commissioners were present: Jeff Fix, Steve Davis, and David Levacy. County employees present: County Administrator, Aundrea Cordle; Deputy County Administrator, Jeff Porter; Clerk to the Board of Commissioners, Rochelle Menningen; Communications & Information Coordinator, Bennett Niceswanger; Budget Director, Bart Hampson; JFS Director, Corey Clark; IT Director, Dan Neeley; Facilities & EMA Director, Jon Kochis; Economic & Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabrak; Utilities Director, Tony Vogel; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Amy Brown-Thompson; Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown; Clerk of Courts, Branden Meyer; Engineer, Jeremiah Upp; Recorder, Lisa McKenzie; DD Superintendent, Dr. David Uhl; FCFC Manager, Tiffany Wilson; Planner, Josh Hillberry; Deputy Director Protective Services, Sarah Fortner; Human Resources Coordinator; Ashley Fahner; and Sheriff's Deputy, Gary Hummel. Also in attendance: Melissa Hoover, Sherry Pymer, and Lyne Kennedy-Starnier.

Virtual attendees: Virtual attendees: Shelby Hunt, Tony Vogel, Park Russell, Michael Orland, Colleen Cook, Jennifer Morgan, Michael Kaper, Baylie Blevins, Jessica Murphy, Barb Martin, Belinda Nebbergall, Shannon, Amberly Hannum, Nick, Deborah, Jeff Barron, Marcy Fields, Greg Forquer, Britney Lee, Ashley Arter, BGM, Joe Ebel, Jeanie Wears, Josh Horacek, Jane Harf, Stacy Hicks, Vince Carpico, Tiffany Daniels, Andy Boystel, and Bev Hoskinson.

Welcome

Commissioner Fix opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance.

Public Meeting to Rehire Retiree, Aundrea Cordle

Commissioner Fix stated that during the public meeting there would be time for people to support the impending February 1, 2025, rehire of Ms. Cordle, as well as time to state reasons against or provide comments.

Auditor Brown encouraged the Commissioners to vote favorably in their decision to rehire Ms. Cordle as County Administrator. She recalled the promotion of Ms. Cordle to the position of Deputy County Administrator and subsequent move to County Administrator, and stated she believes it is in the best interest of the Commissioners to rehire Ms. Cordle.

Engineer Upp seconded the sentiments of Auditor Brown.

Clerk of Courts Meyer stated that he had signed the letter to support the rehiring of Ms. Cordle and added that Ms. Cordle has been very helpful to him over the years, especially when he first assumed the duties of the office of the Clerk of Courts.

Commissioner Davis stated that he is supportive of the rehiring of Ms. Cordle and added that the Commissioners are very fortunate to have her as the County Administrator.

Commissioner Levacy stated that Ms. Cordle has done a wonderful job since stepping into the role of County Administrator over three years ago.

Commissioner Fix spoke about a conversation with former congressman Steve Stiver who said that Fairfield County has an amazing team. Commissioner Fix added that the county has been fortunate to have a great team for several years including the leadership of the previous County Administrator, Dr. Carri Brown.

Regular Meeting #2 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
January 14, 2025

Commissioner Fix closed the public hearing at 9:08 a.m.

Public Comments

Melisaa Hoover of Walnut Township stated that 12 out of 13 townships have asked the commissioners to oppose the Eastern Cottontail project. She read a piece of the OPSB staff report. She stated she would have liked for the Commissioners' opposition to have been voiced in the staff report but it is not too late as the hearing is yet to occur and asked for the Commissioners' support.

Legal Update

Amy Brown-Thompson and Commissioner Fix spoke about leaving the section for a Legal Update on the Agenda.

County Administration Update

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

Week in Review

Governor DeWine signs the County Omnibus Bill, will take effect in April

On Wednesday, Governor DeWine signed House Bill 497 (Representatives Brian Stewart and Roy Klopfenstein). The language in HB 497 will become effective 90 days after the Governor's signature, which places the bill's effective date on April 8, 2025.

A full list of the bill's provisions can be found in last week's Statehouse Report. Some of them include:

Approval of plans for courthouse or jail projects

The bill adds a \$75,000 threshold for boards of commissioners to approve courthouse or jail renovation/repair projects without the approval of the clerk of the court of common pleas, the sheriff, the probate judge, and the appointee of the judge of the court of common pleas. The board of commissioners may seek the advice of these elected officials. If the project exceeds the \$75,000 threshold, the current approval process in R.C. 153.36 remains in effect.

Contracts submitted to the prosecuting attorney

The bill increases the dollar threshold for contracts the board of commissioners must submit to the county prosecutor for approval to \$20,000. This statute was last updated in 1953.

County contract terms and conditions

The bill makes certain terms and conditions unenforceable if they are included in county contracts, including an indemnity clause, a requirement for binding arbitration, and the naming of a court or venue for legal action outside of the county. The language is based on an existing law that applies to state contracts.

Electronic notice requirements

The bill modifies notice requirements for county competitive bidding to allow publication in a newspaper, a newspaper's website, the state public notice website, or the county's

**Regular Meeting #2 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
January 14, 2025**

website and social media account.

Children services caseworker educational requirements

The bill provides more flexible educational requirements upon hiring a children services caseworker and gives a PCSA director the permissive authority to waive the requirement that an employee in good standing obtain a job-related bachelor's degree within five years of employment.

CCAO will release a County Advisory Bulletin (CAB) on the bill prior to its effective date. Additionally, the policy team will release CABs on other bills passed and enacted during the 135th General Assembly Lane Duck Session.

February 4, 2025, Commissioners' Review and Regular Meeting

The February 4th Commissioners' Meeting will be our first evening meeting for 2025. The meeting will be held in the Commissioners' Hearing Room at 7:00 p.m.

Highlights of Resolutions

Administrative Approvals

The review packet contains a list of administrative approvals.

Resolution Review

There are 33 resolutions on the agenda for the Regular voting meeting.

Resolutions of note:

- The first resolution on the agenda is regarding our 9:00 a.m. public meeting. I will be retiring on January 31st and would like the Commissioners to consider my rehire.
- We have two resolutions appointing members to the Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities. Jason Boothe for a four-year term, expiring December 31, 2028. And Becky Schaade will be filling an unexpired term which ends December 31, 2025. Both appointees were interviewed at the Commissioners' January 14th meeting along with two additional candidates. All four candidates were highly qualified.
- We have a resolution declaring the necessity to place a renewal of the existing levy on the May 6th primary/special election ballot.

Dr. David Uhl offered his enthusiasm for the two new Board of DD appointments and thanked the Commissioners for taking the time to interview such strong applicants.

- Economic Development has a resolution to amend the agreement with Hicks Partners for grant writing services. This amendment will continue the service contract through December 31, 2025.
- A resolution from EMA to approve the 2025 Emergency Operations plan and the signing of the Promulgation Statement.

Regular Meeting #2 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
January 14, 2025

- A resolution from the Engineer's Office to approve weight reductions on eleven county and township roads.
- There are two resolutions from Regional Planning regarding Heron Crossing in Violet Township. The first resolution is to approve a development agreement with MI Homes, and the second is to approve the final plat.
- We have several financial resolutions today, including four resolutions from Utilities regarding debt service bond transfers.

Budget Review

There was no Budget Update.

Calendar Review/Invitations Received

Items Requiring Response

Informational Items

- Family and Children First Council Meeting, January 16, 2025, 8:30 a.m., Fairfield County Agricultural Center, 831 College Ave., Lancaster
- Lancaster Fairfield Community Action Agency, Board of Director's Meeting, Recycling Center, 1761 E. Main St., Lancaster
- Decorative Arts Center of Ohio, Member Reception, "The Nearest Faraway Place Ohio's Painters, Makers & Their Mentors", January 24, 2025, 5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., DACO at the Reese-Peters House, 145 E. Main St., Lancaster

Correspondence

- Letter of Support for the Rehiring of Aundrea Cordle as County Administrator, January 2, 2025
- Press Release, Fairfield County Health Department, January 10, 2025, "The Fairfield County Health Department Announces the 2024 Public Health Guardian Award"
- Fairfield County Prosecuting Attorney, R. Kyle Witt, Furtherance of Justice Report, January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024
- Fairfield County Recorder, Lisa McKenzie, Letter Regarding Filing Fees for Zoning Resolutions, January 8, 2025
- Correspondence from the Office of the County Auditor
- Correspondence Regarding Industrial Solar Projects

Updates from Elected Officials and Department Heads

Engineer Upp stated the salt barn is near completion and will have a big impact on the services provided by his office. He also spoke about the importance of properly storing salt.

Auditor Brown spoke about the November sales tax, the update on the website of the Tax Estimator tool, and the mailing of the CAUV applications. She also thanked the Treasurer's Office for their work on the Tax Estimator tool, and added that during the Auditor's Office retreat, NACO graduates were recognized, as well as Kayla Speakman for completing the Leadership Academy.

**Regular Meeting #2 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
January 14, 2025**

Commissioner Fix stated that he attended the BOR Reorganization Meeting and added that the county's BOR is another example of how Fairfield County continues to lead.

Mr. Szabrak spoke about a grant that the City of Lancaster received for a feasibility study to improve traffic through the downtown corridor.

Commissioner Fix spoke about the family of Jack Sawyer and added he was thrilled about his performance in the Cotton Bowl and wished the entire team the best of luck in competing for the National Championship.

Mr. Kochis spoke about the impending new conference center at the Sheridan Center.

Mr. Neeley stated he attended the AI leadership program and that the IT team will look at implementing AI policies.

Mr. Clark provided a brief update on the end of SNAP benefit replacements due to theft and reported Fairfield County has replaced \$180,000 which is about \$10,000 a month.

Mr. Porter thinks it is important to mention Aunie has 35 years of public service experience. This is something from the perspective of Fairfield County that is not unique because there are many employees that have dedicated their lives to public service in Fairfield County. He also reminded everyone to obtain your dog licenses before January 31st.

Old Business

Commissioner Levacy stated the first meeting for the Fairfield County Veterans Hall of Fame would take place later that day.

Commissioner Fix was interviewed by MORPC about the land use plan and how to assist other counties with their plans. He met with Jeff LaRe to discuss daycare in the county. Daycare is a current barrier to work for many people. He added that Marie Ward has an idea for a program to train students in childcare at Eastland Fairfield Career Center. The Commissioner read an email response into the record that was sent to a constituent regarding industrial solar. The email will be included in the minutes packet.

Commissioner Levacy stated that daycare is a priority topic for the Governor's Workforce Transformation Board.

New Business

Commissioner Levacy stated January 20th will be a wonderful day with the inauguration, remembering Martin Luther King Jr., and the OSU Buckeyes playing for the championship.

Commissioner Fix stated he is meeting with MORPC regarding infrastructure needs and added he will be attending a roundtable meeting with the Ohio Business Gateway.

Regular Meeting #2 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
January 14, 2025

Regular (Voting) Meeting

The Commissioners continued to their Regular Meeting and Commissioner Fix called the meeting to order with the following Commissioners present: Jeff Fix, Steve Davis, and David Levacy. County employees present: County Administrator, Aundrea Cordle; Deputy County Administrator, Jeff Porter; Clerk to the Board of Commissioners, Rochelle Menningen; Communications & Information Coordinator, Bennett Niceswanger; Budget Director, Bart Hampson; JFS Director, Corey Clark; IT Director, Dan Neeley; Facilities & EMA Director, Jon Kochis; Economic & Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabrak; Utilities Director, Tony Vogel; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Amy Brown-Thompson; Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown; Clerk of Courts, Branden Meyer; Engineer, Jeremiah Upp; Recorder, Lisa McKenzie; DD Superintendent, Dr. David Uhl; FCFC Manager, Tiffany Wilson; Planner, Josh Hillberry; Deputy Director Protective Services, Sarah Fortner; Human Resources Coordinator, Ashley Fahner; and Sheriff's Deputy, Gary Hummel. Also in attendance: Melissa Hoover, Sherry Pymer, and Lyne Kennedy-Starnier.

Virtual attendees: Virtual attendees: Shelby Hunt, Tony Vogel, Park Russell, Michael Orland, Colleen Cook, Jennifer Morgan, Michael Kaper, Baylie Blevins, Jessica Murphy, Barb Martin, Belinda Nebbergall, Shannon, Amberly Hannum, Nick, Deborah, Jeff Barron, Marcy Fields, Greg Forquer, Britney Lee, Ashley Arter, BGM, Joe Ebel, Jeanie Wears, Josh Horacek, Jane Harf, Stacy Hicks, Vince Carpico, Tiffany Daniels, Andy Boystel, and Bev Hoskinson.

Announcements

Ms. Menningen announced that the voting agenda had been updated from the agenda published at 5:00 p.m. on January 13, 2025.

Approval of Reorganization Minutes for January 7, 2025

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Reorganization Minutes for the Tuesday, January 7, 2025, meeting.

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

Approval of Minutes for January 7, 2025

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of David Levacy, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Minutes for the Tuesday, January 7, 2025, meeting.

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

Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Commissioners

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

2025-01.14.a A Resolution to Approve the Rehiring of Aundrea Cordle as County Administrator

Commissioners Davis and Fix reiterated their support for the rehiring of County Administrator, Aundrea Cordle.

**Regular Meeting #2 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
January 14, 2025**

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

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

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| 2025-01.14.b | A resolution approving the appointment of Mr. Jason Boothe to the Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities |
| 2025-01.14.c | A resolution approving the appointment of Ms. Becky Schaade to the Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities |
| 2025-01.14.d | A Resolution Declaring it Necessary to Levy a Tax Outside the Ten-Mill Limitation and Further Stating the Intent to Proceed to Place a Renewal of an Existing Levy on the May 6, 2025, Primary/Special Election Ballot on Behalf of Fairfield County DD Board |
| 2025-01.14.e | A resolution approving to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category relating to the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Fiscal Recovery Fund# 2876 |
| 2025-01.14.f | A resolution authorizing fund to fund transfers for intergovernmental agencies for 2025 Allocations |
| 2025-01.14.g | A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated, memo transactions, and repayment of an advance for Fund# 3034, FY2023 ODOT Grant, sub fund# 8320 |
| 2025-01.14.h | A resolution authorizing a fund to fund transfer to the Fairfield County Family Adult Children First Council for Multi-Youth Committee, 1st payment for the 2025 Allocation |
| 2025-01.14.i | A resolution authorizing fund to fund transfers for Fairfield County Job and Family Services , 1st Quarter 2025 Allocation |
| 2025-01.14.j | A resolution authorizing a fund to fund transfer for the 1st Quarter 2025 Allocation for the Multi County Juvenile Detention Center |
| 2025-01.14.k | A resolution authorizing fund to fund transfers for intergovernmental agencies for the 1st half 2025 Allocations |
| 2025-01.14.l | A resolution to approve a Memo Receipt & Expense for reimbursement for salt supplied to County Facilities from the County Engineer. |

The Commissioners stated that they are in a very fortunate position to have such strong candidates apply for these boards.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

**Regular Meeting #2 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
January 14, 2025**

Approval of a Resolution from Fairfield County Economic & Workforce Development

On the motion of David Levacy and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution from Fairfield County Economic & Workforce Development:

2025-01.14.m A resolution to authorize an amendment to the agreement for grant writing services

Commissioner Levacy stated that Hicks Partners provides a great service to entities in the county.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Emergency Management Agency

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

2025-01.14.n A resolution authorizing an account to account transfer for EMA Fund ` 2890 HMEP Grant 2024/2025

2025-01.14.o A resolution to approve the 2025 Fairfield County Emergency Operations Plan and signing of the Promulgation Statement.

Administrator Cordle offered her appreciation for EMA staff who always step up to do what needs to be done.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Engineer

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

2025-01.14.p A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle for vacation time payout

2025-01.14.q A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle to engineering consulting services.

2025-01.14.r A Resolution to Allow Weight Reductions on County and Township Roads for 2025.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

**Regular Meeting #2 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
January 14, 2025**

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

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

- 2025-01.14.s A resolution to approve a memo exp./ memo receipt for the costs of Check Deposited from Nationwide Children's Hospital paid to Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities as a memo expenditure for fund# 7521 Family Children First Council

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of Resolutions from Fairfield County Job and Family Services

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

- 2025-01.14.t A resolution to approve a memo receipt and expenditure for Fairfield County Job & Family Services, Fund 2015 reimbursing Fund 2018
- 2025-01.14.u A Resolution to Approve a Reimbursement for Share of Costs for Postage as a Memo Expenditure for Fund# 2018
- 2025-01.14.v A resolution to approve a memo exp./ memo receipt for the costs of Birth Certificates paid to Fairfield County Health Departments as a memo expenditure for fund# 2072 Public Children's Services
- 2025-01.14.w A resolution to approve a memo exp./ memo receipt for the costs of Birth Certificates paid to Fairfield County Health Departments as a memo expenditure for fund# 2072 Public Children's Services
- 2025-01.14.x A resolution to approve a memo receipt and expenditure for Fairfield County Job & Family Services, Fund 2072 reimbursing Fund 2018
- 2025-01.14.y A resolution to approve a memo receipt and expenditure for Fairfield County Job & Family Services, Fund 2599 reimbursing Fund

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Regional Planning Commission

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

- 2025-01.14.z A resolution to approve a Development Agreement for the Heron Crossing South subdivision
- 2025-01.14.aa A resolution to approve the Heron Crossing South, Final Plat

**Regular Meeting #2 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
January 14, 2025**

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

Approval of a Resolution from the Fairfield County Sheriff

On the motion of David Levacy and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution from the Fairfield County Sheriff:

2025-01.14.bb A resolution approving an account-to-account transfer into a major expenditure object category.

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

Approval of Resolutions from Fairfield County Utilities

On the motion of David Levacy and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolutions from Fairfield County Utilities:

2025-01.14.cc A resolution authorizing fund to fund transfer from the Greenfield Water Fund #5841 to #5846 Debt Service Payments for 2025

2025-01.14.dd A resolution authorizing a fund to fund transfer from Greenfield Sewer Fund #5842 to #5847 Debt Service Payments for 2025

2025-01.14.ee A resolution authorizing fund to fund transfers from the Sewer Fund #5044 to: #5533, #5554, #5776, #5817, #5823 Debt Service Payments for 2025

2025-01.14.ff A resolution authorizing fund to fund transfers from the Water Fund #5046 to: #5534, #5556, #5776, #5818, #5823, #5849 Debt Service Payments for 2025

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

Approval of the Payment of Bills

On the motion of David Levacy and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution for the Payment of Bills:

2025-01.14.gg A resolution authorizing the approval of payments of the vouchers without appropriate carry-over purchase orders and the cash disbursement for all departments that are approved by the Commissioners

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

Adjournment

With no further business, On the motion of Levacy and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to adjourn at 9:55 a.m.

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