

**Regular Meeting #6 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
February 11, 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, Steven Darnell; Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown; Clerk of Courts, Branden Meyer; Engineer, Jeremiah Upp; Recorder, Lisa McKenzie; Chief Deputy Treasurer, Michael Kaper; Interim RPC Director, Holly Mattei; FCFC Director, Tiffany Wilson; JFS Deputy Director, Heather O'Keefe; Economic Development Specialist, Vince Carpico; and Sheriff Deputies, Romine and Neal. Also in attendance: Isaac Berry, Sherry Pymmer, Scott Barr, Melissa Connor, Robert Slater II, Keith Conroy, and Savannah Allen.

Virtual attendees: Jeanie Wears, Joe Ebel, Park Russell, Baylie Blevins, Barb Martin, Jane Harf, Beth Cottrell, Deborah, Lori Hawk, Lisa, Greg Forquer, Nicole Schultz, Shannon, Abby King, Alisha Hoffman, Jeff Barron, Jessica Murphy, Zach, Colleen Cook, Tony Howard, Ashley Arter, Lynette Barnhart, Shelby Hunt, Marcy Fields, Jerry Starner, Britney Lee, Andy Boystel, Jennifer Morgan, and Jim Bahnsen.

Welcome

Commissioner Fix opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance.

Listen and Learn, Hicks Partners

Keith Conroy, a Vice President with Hicks Partners, ("Hicks") spoke about the county funded grant writing program for townships, municipalities, villages and county agencies. Hicks is a government relations firm that does grant writing nationally. He introduced the Hicks team. (The PowerPoint presentation is available in the minutes, which contain the names of the team members.) Mr. Conroy continued by stating that a grant portal was created for Fairfield County; and emails are supplied which highlight available grants opportunities. Hicks has facilitated submission of 30 grants on behalf of Fairfield County entities in 2024; and county entities have been awarded over \$3 million over the last three years.

Commissioner Davis asked for clarification regarding the grants awarded and grants submitted.

Mr. Conroy stated that there has been an interest in body camera grants and spoke about other grants that were applied for such as the Bicentennial Grant for the Village of Baltimore. Liberty Township had an inoperative tornado siren, and Hicks helped obtain a grant for repairing and replacing the siren. He added that they also assisted with a grant for the Berne Township Fire Department.

Commissioner Davis asked about the contract between Hicks and Fairfield County, and about fees for additional work performed.

Mr. Szabrak stated that the current contract is for \$150,000 per year. Additional work may be performed on an as needed basis for an additional fee.

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Mr. Conroy stated that the first year of the contract between the county and Hicks was only for assistance with townships and villages; and added that a lot of communities do not have the resources to work on a grant.

Ms. Cordle spoke about Hick's helpfulness in looking for upcoming opportunities.

Commissioner Fix expressed his gratitude for Hicks and spoke about the importance of the service provided for entities that may otherwise not have the same opportunities. He added that he is very proud of this investment.

Commissioner Levacy spoke about the relationship between the county, entities in the county, and Hicks, and added that it has been a good experience.

Commissioner Davis asked if there is a metric that shows what similar sized counties do in this arena.

Commissioner Fix stated that he believes Fairfield County is the only county in the State of Ohio that is currently working with professional grant writers on behalf of other entities.

Mr. Conroy used Cuyahoga County as an example and stated that they use in-house grant writers, but they are not helping townships, villages, non-profits, or other agencies in their area.

Dr. Brown stated that the comprehensive annual report and the Hinkle report may both supply some similar data.

Mr. Szabrak thanked Vince Carpico for taking the lead on this, and for working with Hicks and County entities.

Commissioner Davis stated he had inquired about an update and thanked Hicks for providing it.

Public Comments

Issac Berry of Pleasantville stated that his comments during last week's meeting were not intended to be a personal attack and apologized for his remarks against specific individuals. He urged the Commission to advocate for the townships and citizens of the county and oppose solar energy farms.

Melissa Connor of Walnut Township spoke on the petitions that the Ohio Power Siting Board ("OPSB") circulated during the public hearings in Pleasantville. She stated that there were only 20 people on the petition in support of the project who live in Fairfield County.

Robert Slater II of Walnut Township stated that he wished he had been notified sooner by the OPSB regarding his duties as the Ad Hoc member for Walnut Township. He recalled an initiative he was a part of for the dam at Buckeye Lake and the impact it had on property owners. He added that he is concerned about the impact on property values of homes near the proposed solar project.

Legal Update

There was no legal update provided.

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County Administration Update

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

Week in Review

We Love Transit

Fairfield County Transit will host a ride-along this Friday at 10:00 a.m. The ride-along will last approximately one hour as the bus travels along the Ety Road loop. To experience our transit system, and learn about the possibilities for everyone in our county, meet at the Family Services Lobby at Fairfield County Job & Family Services at 9:45 a.m.

Administrator Cordle stated the county will be doing a branding event later in the year.

Highlights of Resolutions

Administrative Approvals

The review packet contains a list of administrative approvals.

Resolution Review

There are 13 resolutions on the agenda for the Regular voting meeting.
Resolutions of note:

- There is a resolution on the agenda to appropriate a perpetual easement for a section of roadway in Greenfield Township. This section of road does not currently meet design requirements, and the County Engineer has determined that hazard protection, shoulder widening, and a culvert replacement are needed. The owners of the property, Mr. and Mrs. Wagner, were noticed. Mrs. Wagner is willing to convey the requested easement, but Mr. Wagner's interests have not been probated. Under R.C. 163.06 (A), the county must file a petition to appropriate the property, and receive a title, for the easement.

Engineer Upp stated there are probate issues with the property and the family is aware of, and in agreement with, the work that will be performed.

- Economic and Workforce Development has a resolution to authorize an amendment to the agreement between Fairfield County and Hocking College. The amendment extends the agreement for pre-apprenticeship programs throughout Area 20 for one year.
- A resolution from EMA for appropriations and an advance for grant dollars received from the Central Ohio Trauma System Grant Award. The grant award was originally \$8000 and an additional \$1000 was received after the budgeting process. The advance of monies from the General Fund would be for \$8000.

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- A resolution from Regional Planning for a change order for the CDBG PY2022 Village of Pleasantville Otte Park Concessions and pavilion restrooms project. This change order is for necessary furnishing, delivery, and installation of concession stand equipment and bathroom partitions. The change order increases the contract price by just over \$10,000.

Ms. Mattei stated that Regional Planning and the Village of Pleasantville are working to get everything submitted by February 28th and thanked Mayor Henderson for his work on the grant. She also spoke about the invaluable assistance of the Hicks Partners group.

- Regional Planning also has a resolution to approve a replat of the Valley View Farms subdivision, section 1, lots 6 and 7, in Pleasant Township. The plat for this subdivision was originally recorded in 2005.

Ms. Mattei stated the property owner is in attendance and is excited to get the plat signed.

Budget Review

There was no budget review provided.

Calendar Review/Invitations Received

Items Requiring Response

Informational Items

- Transportation Improvement District Meeting, February 11, 2025, 1:00 p.m., Fairfield County Records Center, 138 W. Chestnut St., Lancaster
- Google Meeting, February 12, 2025, 11:00 a.m., Fairfield County Workforce Center, 4465 Coonpath Rd. NW, Carroll
- Lancaster's State of the City Address, February 13, 2025, 9:45 a.m., Crossroads Ministry Center, 2095 W. Fair Ave., Lancaster
- Fairfield County Transit Ride Along, February 14, 2025, 9:45 a.m., Fairfield County Job & Family Services Lobby, 239 W. Main St., Lancaster
- Save the Date, Friends of ADMAH Annual Dinner, April 29, 2025, Time to be Determined, Crossroads Event Center, 2095 W. Fair Ave., Lancaster

Correspondence

- Ohio Department of Taxation, January 24, 2025, Journal Entry for the Status of Reappraisals and the Tax Year for Next Reappraisal and Next Triennial Update of Real Property Values
- March for Meals with Meals on Wheels, January 30, 2025, Regarding 24th Annual March for Meals Community Champion's Week, March 17-21, 2025
- Correspondence from the Office of the County Auditor
- Fairfield County Municipal Court, Criminal/Traffic Division Fee Report, January 2025
- Correspondence Regarding Industrial Solar Projects

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Updates from Elected Officials and Department Heads

Clerk of Courts Meyer stated that he, Recorder McKenzie, and Judge Vandervoort would be doing a presentation about the Good Deeds program to the Fairfield County Bar Association.

Recorder McKenzie stated FIDLR, her technology provider will be presenting to central Ohio Recorders at a meeting hosted in the hearing room at the Administrative Courthouse.

Engineer Upp stated his staff is conducting maintenance while winter weather is mild, and within the next two months they will be bidding out some road work.

Auditor Brown spoke about an entrance conference with new auditors and asked everyone for grace as the auditors will likely have many questions. She spoke about property tax reform and the Homestead Program, and about replacement levies. The Auditor's Office has been visiting municipalities and talking about the auditor's office strategic plan and the lot split process. They are also testing the new doc link program with Walnut Township, which the auditor indicates will increase internal controls. The auditor will also be attending a conference in Washington DC where she will be a keynote luncheon speaker.

Mr. Szabrak spoke about manufacturing percentages in Central Ohio and added that Fairfield County has jumped up to 70% when most of the region only has 20% manufacturing. He also spoke about Pickerington School administrators touring the Workforce Center and about their level of enthusiasm regarding the facility.

Old Business

Commissioner Davis had a meeting with MCJDC and is encouraged by what they are doing to help youth at the facility.

Commissioner Fix attended the Greenfield Township Land Use Plan meeting. Many in the township were originally resistant to a land use plan but have come to understand how a plan benefits and protects the area.

New Business

Commissioner Levacy stated he would be meeting again with the committee looking to establish a Fairfield County Veterans Hall of Fame.

Commissioner Fix was approached by representatives from Google who requested to meet with officials in the county regarding Google's vision for the future. He continued by speaking about concern regarding energy consumption in the area and impacts on development.

Regular (Voting) Meeting

The Commissioners continued to their voting portion of the meeting and Commissioner Fix called the meeting to order. 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, Steven Darnell; Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown; Clerk of Courts, Branden Meyer; Engineer, Jeremiah Upp; Recorder, Lisa McKenzie; Chief Deputy

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Treasurer, Michael Kaper; Interim RPC Director, Holly Mattei; FCFC Director, Tiffany Wilson; JFS Deputy Director, Heather O'Keefe; Economic Development Specialist, Vince Carpico; and Sheriff Deputies, Romine and Neal. Also in attendance: Isaac Berry, Sherry Pymmer, Scott Barr, Melissa Connor, Robert Slater II, Keith Conroy, and Savannah Allen.

Virtual attendees: Jeanie Wears, Park Russell, Baylie Blevins, Barb Martin, Jane Harf, Beth Cottrell, Deborah, Lori Hawk, Lisa, Greg Forquer, Nicole Schultz, Shannon, Abby King, Jeff Barron, Jessica Murphy, Zach, Colleen Cook, Tony Howard, Ashley Arter, Lynette Barnhart, Shelby Hunt, Marcy Fields, Jerry Starner, Britney Lee, Jennifer Morgan, and Jim Bahnsen.

Announcements

Ms. Cordle stated that the correct time for the Lancaster State of the City Address is 11:15 a.m.

Approval of Minutes for February 4, 2025

On the motion of David Levacy and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Minutes for the Tuesday, February 4, 2025, meeting.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Approval of a Resolution 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:

2025-02.11.a	A resolution to appropriate a perpetual easement for highway purposes from Parcel No. 013-00285-00 for the Stringtown Road Culvert Replacement Project (FAI-TR273-3.315)
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Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

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:

2025-02.11.b	A resolution authorizing the First Amendment to the subgrant agreement between Hocking College and the Fairfield County Board of County Commissioners.
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Mr. Szabrak stated this is authorize the use of grant funds to cover costs at the Workforce Center.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

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Approval of a Resolution 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 resolution from the Fairfield County Emergency Management Agency:

2025-02.11.c A resolution to request for appropriations for receipts for EMA Central Ohio Trauma System Grant Award Fund 2090 and advance (8221)

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:

2025-02.11.d A resolution to approve a reimbursement for share of costs for Monthly Postage paid to Fairfield County Commissioners as a memo expenditure for fund County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle

2025-02.11.e A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle to engineering consulting services.

2025-02.11.f A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle for compensation and damages

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

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

2025-02.11.g A Resolution Approving an Account-to-Account Transfer into a Major Expenditure Object Category – 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 Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolutions from Fairfield County Job and Family Services:

2025-02.11.h A Resolution to Approve a Reimbursement for Share of Costs for Postage as a Memo Expenditure for Fund# 2018

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- 2025-02.11.i A resolution to approve a memo exp./ memo receipt for the costs of Transportation paid to Lancaster-Fairfield Public Transit as a memo expenditure for fund# 2018 Public Assistance Fund
- 2025-02.11.j A Resolution to Approve a Memo Expense/Memo Receipt for the Costs of Transportation Paid to Lancaster-Fairfield Public Transit, Fund #2599, Workforce Fund

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 Regional Planning Commission

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 Regional Planning Commission:

- 2025-02.11.k A Resolution to Approve a Change Order #2 for the CDBG PY2022 Village of Pleasantville – Otte Park Concessions + Restroom Pavillion Project.
- 2025-02.11.l A resolution to approve the Replat of Valley View Farms, Section 1 Lots 6 & 7

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:

- 2025-02.11.m A resolution authorizing the approval of payment of invoices for departments that need Board of Commissioners' approval.

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 David Levacy and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to adjourn at 10:05 p.m.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 18, 2025, in the Commissioners' Hearing Room, 210 E. Main St., Lancaster, OH.

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Motion by: David Levacy

Seconded by: Steve Davis

that the February 11, 2025, minutes were approved by the following vote:

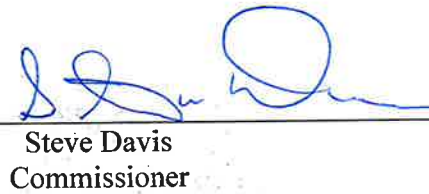
YEAS: David Levacy, Steve Davis, and Jeff Fix
ABSTENTIONS:

NAYS: None

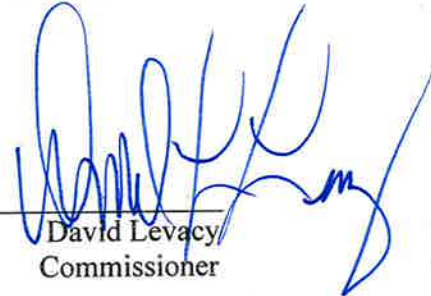
*Approved on February 18, 2025



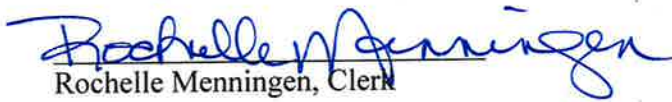
Jeff Fix
Commissioner



Steve Davis
Commissioner



David Levacy
Commissioner



Rochelle Menningen, Clerk

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