

Regular Meeting #12 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
March 18, 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, Daniel Neeley; EMA & Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; Economic & Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabrak; Utilities Director, Tony Vogel; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Austin Lines; Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown; Operations Administrator, Jeff Camechis; Treasurer, James Bahnsen; Recorder, Lisa McKenzie; Deputy JFS Director, Heather O'Keefe; Interim RPC Director, Holly Mattei; FCFC Manager, Tiffany Wilson; Also in attendance: Sherry Pymmer, Bryan Everitt, Samantha Meadows, Beth Cotrell, Jim Cottrell, Ray Stemen, and Bob Slater II.

Virtual attendees: Shelby Hunt, Tony Vogel, Belinda Nebbergall, Jessica Murphy, Charlie Schindler, Barb Martin, Lori Hawk, Nicole Schultz, Britney Lee, Park Russell, Deborah, Abby King, Toni Ashton, David Uhl, Jeff Barron, Lori Lovas, Steven Darnell, Ashley Arter, Jane Harf, Vince Carpico, Jennifer Morgan, Jeanie Wears, Louie, Marcy Fields, and Brian Wolfe.

Welcome

Commissioner Fix opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance.

Introduction of New Staff

Dominic Troiano, Transit OPS Manager

Mr. Kennedy introduced Mr. Troiano and shared that Transit is very happy to have the Operations Manager position filled.

Mr. Troiano shared key roles of his position and spoke about the opportunities provided by the position, and the importance of the local community to his family.

Listen & Learn, Severe Weather Awareness Week

Jon Kochis, EMA and Facilities Director, and Garrett Blevins, EMA Deputy Director

Mr. Blevins spoke about severe weather and how weather events are changing in Central Ohio and provided the following information. There has been a shift to the eastern U.S in tornadoes and in 2024 there were 74 tornadoes in Ohio. Spring 2025 weather patterns are already active, and it is important to be prepared and have a severe weather emergency plan. Being a volunteer with the Community Emergency Response Team or American Red Cross Disaster Services will also help you know how to best respond to weather emergencies. After you devise a plan, you should build an emergency kit with items for your family and your pets. You should have at least three ways in which you receive weather warnings, and you should know the difference between a tornado watch and warning. You should also know how to identify possible dangers after a storm. It is important to keep your homeowner's insurance updated and you should investigate purchasing flood insurance. Mr. Blevins also spoke about home and community safe rooms and added that the state of Ohio has a residential safe room rebate program. Walnut Township has a newly constructed community safe room that was designed to withstand up to 250 mile per hour winds and will hold 733 members of the Fairfield Beach community.

Commissioner Davis asked when the Walnut Township shelter became operational.

Regular Meeting #12 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
March 18, 2025

Mr. Kochis and Mr. Blevins stated that the community safe room is operational, and the EMA team is working on ways to communicate information about the safe room to the community.

Mr. Blevins provided a QR code to sign up for weather alerts.

Ms. Cordle asked if employees who signed up through the county's ESS system for alerts would receive the weather alerts provided by the QR code.

Mr. Blevins replied that the weather alert provided by the QR code differs from that provided by the ESS system.

Dr. Brown asked how emergency weather information is provided to schools.

Mr. Blevins stated it is a requirement in Ohio for schools to practice fire and tornado drills. He added that EMA does help push information out to school districts.

Mr. Kochis added that when invited the Fairfield County EMA staff will provide education in schools.

Ms. McKenzie spoke about a news story which distinguished the difference between watches, warnings, and emergencies.

Mr. Kochis stated that the "emergency" level is not always heard about and indicates the greatest threat.

Mr. Blevins stated there were 1700 tornadoes across the United States in 2024 and that the U.S. has twice the number of tornadoes than any other country.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Blevins and Mr. Kochis for their presentation and for working on the Walnut Township safe room.

Public Comments

Ray Stemen of Lancaster thanked those who acknowledged his attendance at the prior meeting and provided a prayer.

Beth Cottrell of Amanda Township spoke in opposition of utility scale solar projects in her community. She added that the Amanda Township trustees unanimously opposed the Carnation Solar project and asked the Commissioners to do the same.

Robert Slater II of Walnut Township stated that Walnut Township has finer soil than other areas of the county. He also thanked Commissioner Davis for attending the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) evidentiary hearings in their entirety. He offered his concerns for the lack of participation from other community stakeholders in the hearing process and is bothered that the Farm Bureau is not more involved.

Sherry Pymer of Walnut Township spoke about the internet sites of PJM and OPSB. She added that the Eastern Cottontail name can be found throughout the PJM documents. She stated that the Ripley Solar project would be another 100 acres of solar farms in Walnut Township and that there would be approximately 5000 acres in total with all of the proposed solar projects in Fairfield County. She also spoke about a proposed data center in Walnut Township and added that there is a non-disclosure statement regarding the name of that data center's parent company.

Regular Meeting #12 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
March 18, 2025

Samantha Meadows of Chillicothe stated she is a community advocate for National Grid Renewables. She added that her goal is to provide information at meetings regarding the project.

Legal Update

None.

County Administration Update

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

Cpl. David A. Johnston Memorial Highway

State Senator Tim Schaffer (R-Lancaster) sponsored Senate Bill 145, which named a portion of Refugee Road in Fairfield County as the "Cpl. David A. Johnston Memorial Highway."

Johnston was killed in action during Operation Taylor Common in South Vietnam. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star, and American Legion Post 283 in Pickerington bears his name in remembrance today.

"The stretch of highway stated in Senate Bill 145 fronts our Post home and is important to not only our members, but to the only living immediate family members, a sister and brother, of David A. Johnston," according to David England of the American Legion. "It would be a great sense of pride to the veterans of the Post who honorably served our country and most certainly his sister and brother."

"Corporal Johnston was a remarkable Marine who sacrificed his life serving our nation in the Vietnam War," Schaffer said. "This son of Fairfield County deserves to be remembered for his courage and selfless service."

Highlights of Resolutions

Administrative Approvals

The review packet contains a list of administrative approvals.

Resolution Review

There are 23 resolutions on the agenda for the Regular voting meeting.

Resolutions of note:

- Economic and Workforce Development has submitted a resolution to reappoint Matt Claypool, Missy Clum, Jennifer Friel, Chelsie Huffman, Nathan Hale, Kim Jeffers, and Todd Hoffman to the Area 20 Workforce Development Board. These re-appointments will commence July 1, 2025, and expire June 30, 2028.

Mr. Szabrak stated the board is a fully engaged five-county board and stated his appreciation for the commitment of the board members.

Regular Meeting #12 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
March 18, 2025

- The Engineer's Office has a resolution to reduce truck engine noise on SR 188 in Amanda Township from approximately Creek Road to Cedar Hill Road. The Commissioners received several complaints regarding excessive noise from trucks and the Engineer's Office has worked to create a designated noise reduction zone.

Commissioner Fix asked about enforcement of the noise reduction zone.

Mr. Camechis stated that law enforcement will enforce the noise reduction and ODOT will install signs regarding the noise reduction zone.

- JFS has 13 resolutions. Eight of their resolutions are for amendments to previously approved network placement agreements where children were placed at a higher rate than the original agreement and two are to authorize service agreements.
- Regional Planning has a resolution for a change order for the CDBG Sugar Grove Rocket Way Sewer Improvements Project. This change order eliminates a manhole replacement, due to the ability to repair the existing manhole. This change will decrease the contract price by \$850.
- The Sheriff's Office has a resolution to approve the Fairfield County 9-1-1 Plan. The Fairfield County 9-1-1 Program Review Committee has provided a comprehensive plan as called for in R.C. 128.06. Section 128.08 of the R.C. requires a resolution to approve the plan. Commissioner Levacy does serve on this committee, as well as Mr. Kochis and Mr. Blevins.

Commissioners Levacy and Fix spoke about the importance of this new life-saving technology.

- Soil & Water has a resolution of support regarding property for the Clean Ohio Local Agriculture Easement Purchase Program with the Ohio Department of Agriculture. There are six farms being nominated for purchase of agricultural easements through the program, and as part of the program, the landowners must commit to donating at least 25% of the agricultural easement value. I appreciate Tony Vogel's help with this.

Budget Review

- Budget Director, Bart Hampson

Calendar Review/Invitations Received

- *The Calendar and Correspondence review were provided by Ms. Menningen.*

Informational Items

- United Way of Fairfield County Annual Awards Banquet, March 19, 2025, 8:00 a.m., Olivedale Senior Center, 253 Boving Rd., Lancaster
- Career Expo, March 20, 2025, 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Fairfield County Workforce Center, 4465 Coonpath Rd. NW, Carroll

Regular Meeting #12 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
March 18, 2025

- Retirement Party in Honor of Ginger Caito, March 24, 2025, 2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m., Fairfield County Records Center, 138 W. Chestnut St., Lancaster
- Lancaster City State of the Schools Address, March 27, 2025, 11:30 a.m., Stanbery Career Center, 345 E. Mulberry St., Lancaster
- Fairfield County 4-H Achievement Awards Program, April 10, 2025, 7:00 p.m., Fairfield County Fairgrounds, Ed Sands Building, 157 E. Fair Ave., Lancaster
- Canal Winchester 2025 State of the Schools & Networking Luncheon, April 23, 2025, CW Community Center, 45 E. Waterloo St., Canal Winchester
- Transit Rebranding Ribbon Cutting, April 29, 2025, 3:30 p.m., 239 W. Main St., JFS Parking Lot, Lancaster
- Save the Date, The Friends of ADAMH Annual Dinner Meeting, April 29, 2025, Crossroads Event Center, 2095 W. Fair Ave., Lancaster
- Fairfield County Grant Workshop for Nonprofits, April 30, 2025, 8:30 a.m., Fairfield County Workforce Center, 4465 Coonpath Rd. NW, Carroll
- Lancaster Fairfield County 2025 Chamber Awards & Annual Trade Show, May 8, 2025, Trade Show 4:30 p.m.-6:00 p.m., Dinner & Awards, 6:30 p.m., Fisher Catholic High School, 1803 Granville Pk., Lancaster

Correspondence

- Explore Summer Camps Flyer 2025, Fairfield County Workforce Center, 4465 Coonpath Rd. NW, Carroll
- Ohio Department of Taxation Letter Acknowledging Receipt of Application for Real Property Tax Exemption and Remission, March 6, 2025
- Fairfield County Municipal Court, Fees Collected Report for Criminal/Traffic Division, February 2025
- Correspondence Regarding Industrial Solar Projects

Updates from Elected Officials and Department Heads

Treasurer Bahnsen stated his office is in the process of completing the first half tax settlement.

Dr. Brown stated the Auditor's website is being updated so that residents can estimate taxes, and she provided the following information. There will be press and news releases for Sunshine Week, county-wide levies, and vendor licenses. The office is receiving good feedback from the Auditors. The review folder contains information on the Madison Township fiscal emergency status, and she believes the township will be able to get out of that status. The Board of Revision (BOR) efficiencies have reduced the number of BOR hearings needed. She also spoke about serving on the CLE subcommittee with the Ohio Supreme Court.

Mr. Szabrak stated the Workforce Center hosted legislative aides and 40 educators from across the county and southeast Ohio. He added that the Workforce Center is expecting about 250 students at the upcoming Career Expo and that all the apprenticeship students had been placed in jobs.

Mr. Kochis stated that the bid opening for the next renovation at the Workforce Center came in at \$500,000 below the estimate, and that bid was from the company who just completed Phase I.

Regular Meeting #12 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
March 18, 2025

Mr. Neeley thanked Sheriff Lape and his staff for taking actions which resulted in significant savings at the Workforce Center. He also spoke about information provided by NACo that would impact local organizations.

Mr. Clark stated that there were two bills introduced in the House that would require chip technology and benefit replacements for customers who had benefits stolen from them.

Old Business

Commissioner Davis spoke about a Major Crimes Unit meeting with Administrator Cordle and Interim Commander Duff regarding reestablishing appropriate protocols and controls for fiscal management.

Commissioner Levacy spoke about attending the groundbreaking for Emerald Place and added that the housing complex was the first development in the area under the low income tax credit program. He further added that developments are often built to minimum standards, but Emerald Place had many amenities not typically seen.

Commissioner Fix stated that he is continuing to meet with townships and villages regarding partnerships and the comprehensive plan.

New Business

Commissioner Levacy stated he will hold a meeting with the Fairfield County Veterans Hall of Fame committee and that the group has made significant progress.

Commissioner Fix spoke about the upcoming MORPC State of the Region Address.

Regular (Voting) Meeting

The Commissioners continued to the voting portion of the meeting 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, Daniel Neeley; EMA & Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; Economic & Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabrak; Utilities Director, Tony Vogel; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Austin Lines; Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown; Operations Administrator, Jeff Camechis; Treasurer, James Bahnsen; Recorder, Lisa McKenzie; Deputy JFS Director, Heather O'Keefe; Interim RPC Director, Holly Mattei; FCFC Manager, Tiffany Wilson; Also in attendance: Sherry Pymmer, Bryan Everitt, Samantha Meadows, Beth Cotrell, Jim Cottrell, Ray Stemen, and Bob Slater II.

Virtual attendees: Shelby Hunt, Tony Vogel, Belinda Nebbergall, Jessica Murphy, Charlie Schindler, Barb Martin, Lori Hawk, Nicole Schultz, Britney Lee, Park Russell, Deborah, Abby King, Toni Ashton, David Uhl, Jeff Barron, Lori Lovas, Steven Darnell, Ashley Arter, Jane Harf, Vince Carpico, Jennifer Morgan, Jeanie Wears, Louie, Marcy Fields, and Brian Wolfe.

Announcements

None.

Regular Meeting #12 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
March 18, 2025

Approval of Minutes for March 11, 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, March 11, 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:

2025-03.18.a A Resolution to Approve an Account-to-Account Transfer in a Major Object Expense Category

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:

2025-03.18.b A Resolution to Approve the Reappointment of Board Members to the Area 20 Workforce Development Board

Commissioner Fix thanked the board members for their willingness to be reappointed and for the work they do on the Area 20 Workforce Development Board.

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:

2025-03.18.c A Resolution to Approve Advertising for the FAI-CR54-0.555 GRE-22 Campground Road Bridge Replacement Project

2025-03.18.d A Resolution to Approve Advertising by the County Engineer to Sell Scrap Metal and Aluminum

2025-03.18.e A Resolution Establishing a Truck Engine Brake Noise Reduction Zone on a Designated Portion of Lancaster-Circleville Road (SR 188)

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

Regular Meeting #12 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
March 18, 2025

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 (FCFC):

2025-03.18.f A Resolution Authorizing the Approval of Repayment of an Advance to the General Fund, Fund #7521, Sub-Fund #8307, Ohio Children Trust Fund – Multi System Youth Grant

Ms. Wilson thanked Morgan Fox from JFS for her assistance with FCFC funds.

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:

2025-03.18.g A Resolution Regarding an Amendment for a Previously Approved Network Placement and Related Services Agreement between Advantage Family Outreach and Foster Care and Child Protective Services

2025-03.18.h A Resolution Regarding an Amendment for a Previously Approved Network Placement and Related Services Agreement between Family Wellness Solutions, Inc. and Child Protective Services

2025-03.18.i A Resolution Regarding an Amendment for a Previously Approved Network Placement and Related Services Agreement between Just Like Us Enrichment Agency and Child Protective Services

2025-03.18.j A Resolution Regarding an Amendment for a Previously Approved Network Placement and Related Services Agreement between Sojourners Care Network and Child Protective Services

2025-03.18.k A Resolution Regarding an Amendment for a Previously Approved Network Placement and Related Services Agreement between The Bair Foundation and Child Protective Services

2025-03.18.l A Resolution Regarding an Amendment for a Previously Approved Network Placement and Related Services Agreement between The Village Network and Child Protective Services

2025-03.18.m A Resolution Regarding an Amendment for a Previously Approved Network Placement and Related Services Agreement between Unk's Place and Child Protective Services

2025-03.18.n A Resolution Regarding an Amendment for a Previously Approved Network Placement and Related Services Agreement between Victory House LLC and Child Protective Services

Regular Meeting #12 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
March 18, 2025

- 2025-03.18.o A Resolution Authorizing the Approval of a Service Agreement by and Between Fairfield County Job & Family Services, Child Protective Services Division and Reflections Group Home LLC
- 2025-03.18.p A Resolution Authorizing the Approval of a Service Agreement by and between Fairfield County Job & Family Services, Child Protective Services Division and the Ohio Teaching Family Association
- 2025-03.18.q A Resolution to Approve a Memo Expense/Memo Receipt for the Costs of Birth Certificates Paid to the Fairfield County Health Department as a Memo Expenditure, Fund #2072, Public Children's Services
- 2025-03.18.r A Resolution to Approve Additional appropriations by Appropriating from Unappropriated into a Major Expense Object Category, Fund #2758, Protective Service Levy
- 2025-03.18.s A Resolution to Approve a Memo Receipt and Memo Expenditure for Fairfield County Job & Family Services' Children Services Fund and Protective Services Levy Fund, Respectively

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 Regional Planning Commission

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 Regional Planning Commission:

- 2025-03.18.t A Resolution to Approve Change Order #1 for the CDBG PY2023 Village of Sugar Grove – Rocket Way Sewer Improvements Project

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 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:

- 2025-03.18.u A Resolution to Approve the Fairfield County 9-1-1 Plan

Commissioner Levacy thanked those at the Sheriff's Office who worked on the plan, and Jon Kochis, for their diligence and hard work on the 9-1-1 Plan.

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 Soil & Water Conservation District

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 Soil & Water Conservation District:

Regular Meeting #12 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
March 18, 2025

2025-03.18.v A Resolution of Support of Property for the Clean Ohio Local Agriculture Easement Purchase Program with the Ohio Department of Agriculture

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:

2025-03.18.w A Resolution Authorizing the Approval of Payments of 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 David Levacy and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to adjourn at 10:04 a.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, March 25, 2025, in the Commissioners' Hearing Room, 210 E. Main St., Lancaster, OH.

Motion by: David Levacy

Seconded by: Steve Davis

that the March 18, 2025, minutes were approved by the following vote:

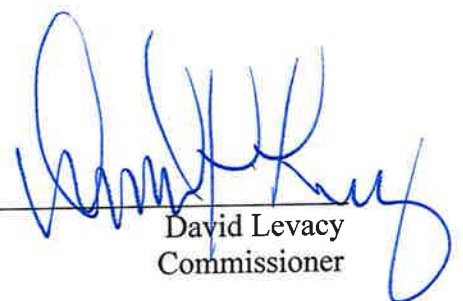
YEAS: David Levacy, Steve Davis, and Jeff Fix
ABSTENTIONS:

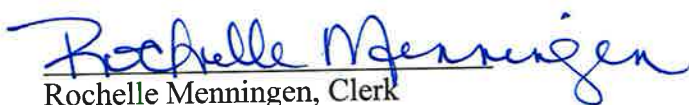
NAYS: None

*Approved on March 25, 2025


Jeff Fix
Commissioner


Steve Davis
Commissioner


David Levacy
Commissioner


Rochelle Menningen, Clerk