

Roundtable Meeting #28 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
July 15, 2025

ROUNDTABLE

The Commissioners met at 1:00 p.m. at the Fairfield Center at 12935 Stonecreek Dr., Pickerington, OH. Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order, and the following Commissioners were present: Steve Davis and David Levacy. County employees present: Aundrea Cordle, Jeff Porter, Rochelle Menningen, Bennett Niceswanger, Dan Neeley, Abby Watson, Jon Kochis, Jason Grubb, Rick Szabrak, Dave Burgei, Michael Guerriero, Bev Hoskinson, Sheriff Alex Lape, Shannon Carter, Corey Clark, Recorder Lisa McKenzie, Nikki Drake, Josh Anders, Engineer Jeremiah Upp, Dr. David Uhl, Treasurer James Bahnsen, Michael Kaper, Judge Terre Vandervoort, Tiffany Wilson, Bart Hampson, Marcey Shafer, Holly Mattei, Scott Duff, Miranda Gray, Leighann Adams, Joe Ebel, Austin Lines, and Kelly Frank. Also in attendance: Kara Lockard and Nathan Dilley

WELCOME

Commissioner Davis opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance.

Commissioner Levacy stated that he always looks forward to the Roundtable meetings and to hearing from everyone in attendance.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

Aundrea Cordle thanked everyone for taking the time out of their schedules to attend and added that she also looks forward to each Roundtable meeting. She invited everyone to reach out to her if they had a topic they would like to discuss, or learn about, at the meetings.

RECORDS RETENTION

Bennett Niceswanger provided a presentation on records management. He defined and explained records retention schedules (RC-2) and how departments should use the schedule as a guide for retaining and disposing of records properly. He explained the sections of the RC-2 and added that each schedule could be updated as often as needed. Mr. Niceswanger advocated for departments to update their schedules to allow records to be stored in electronic format, explaining that it allows for better accessibility, organization, and a faster response time to public records requests.

Commissioner Davis asked if there was a cost associated with having records stored electronically.

Daniel Neeley stated that there would be a cost to increase the storage on the county servers to allow additional room for increased electronic records.

Joe Ebel asked if records that have reached their retention period should be listed on the one-time disposal form.

Bennett Niceswanger explained that the one-time disposal form (RC-1) is used exclusively for obsolete records. The certificate of records disposal (RC-3) is used for all other records that have reached their retention period. Mr. Niceswanger provided the proper procedures for storing and obtaining records from the Fairfield County Records Center. He explained that not all county records are stored at the Records Center and, if an agency needs to access their records or present records for storage, they should contact Records Center staff who would help coordinate. Administrator Cordle stated that the purpose of the Records Center is to have a high-quality storage facility that improves the retention practices of important county records.

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GEOPRO Imaging, LLC

Nathan Dilley introduced himself and spoke about how he began in the documents and spatial imaging industry. He spoke about the preservation of public records, and improved accessibility and space savings of electronic records. Scanning benefits include compliance and transparency, disaster recovery, and operational efficiency. The top reason to scan is preservation of the record.

Kara Lockard stated you should consider the volume and document types, indexing and organization of records, storage needs, and retention schedules when contemplating a scanning project. Various sizes of documents can be scanned, including large format, as well as those contained in bound books, and on microfiche and microfilm.

Nathan Dilley spoke about other services offered by Geopro including those for cemetery lot management.

Kara Lockard spoke about 3D spatial imaging which can be used in museums, concert venues, and theatres to capture building assets.

Commissioner Levacy spoke about the significant change in accounting records since the 1960's.

Commissioner Davis stated that staff could reach out to Bennett Niceswanger for additional assistance pertaining to records.

Engineer Upp stated his office had met with Geopro regarding records.

Sheriff Lape asked if Geopro had heard discussions on legislative changes regarding some of his office's permanent records.

Nathan Dilley stated he had not and thanked everyone for the opportunity to present.

COUNTY UPDATES

State of the County

Aundrea Cordle stated that the 2025 State of the County would be held on September 30th from 11:30 a.m. -1:00 p.m. at the new Sheridan Center facility. She added that the event is expected to sell out, so everyone is encouraged to register early.

Jon Kochis stated that the facility could hold up to 350 individuals.

Aundrea Cordle added that the Liberty Center is still an option but is not often available. She added that there will be times that the community can rent the Sheridan Center event space . Ms. Cordle spoke about capturing the "Serve, Protect, Connect" model at the State of the County Address. The Commissioners' Office, along with Krile Communications, will be reaching out to departments for information. She asked employees to think about initiatives and services that will resonate with county residents and to also consider those things for which their department is the proudest.

Commissioner Davis asked if the room occupancy was 350 with tables.

Jon Kochis replied that the room will hold 350 people with tables and that the county purchased both rectangular and round tables.

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Aundrea Cordle stated there will be a kitchen at the Sheridan Center, but it is not a full kitchen due to the complexity of code requirements. She reminded everyone to share the State of the County event with their stakeholders. A "Save the Date" for the event was to be provided by email.

Centralized Purchasing

Jeff Porter spoke about the County's plans for centralized purchasing. The county is going to start centralized purchasing with copiers. There is a team of four who are currently working on this. When your current copier lease is up, or your copier needs replaced, the County will have options available that have already been negotiated with the vendor. The request for proposals will go out in late August or early September. The county believes this will benefit departments with lower costs and increased efficiency. This also greatly benefits the Prosecutor's Office, which currently reviews approximately fifteen contracts per day.

Daniel Neeley stated that this will ease operations for IT and increase their efficiency in helping County employees with connectivity and other print device related issues.

Aundrea Cordle stated this will be for new contracts.

Commissioner Levacy spoke about the ease of the process with centralized purchasing. This provides departments with the best deal, a variety of options, and a decrease in time invested.

Jeff Porter stated the county will be looking at both lease and purchase options.

New Benefits Administration System

Jeff Porter started by speaking about the August 22nd Employee Appreciation Event. The event will be held for the first time at one of the County Parks. It will be at Smeck Park in Baltimore. He also stated that Jett Dental will be returning to the Records Center and added that the Benefits Fair will also be at the Records Center on October 9th. A new mammography service called Bexa will be coming for county employees. The accuracy of the Bexa service is over 99%. Mr. Porter thanked the payroll staff, IT, and Bev Hoskinson for their assistance implementing a new employee health benefit platform named bswift.

Abby Watson stated the new bswift platform will replace what is currently used in ESS. The platform and the enrollment center will be personalized to employees and their families.

Jeff Porter added that it is a decision support tool. We are working with the bswift platform to ensure it is as robust as possible.

Abby Watson continued by stating that the bswift platform contains Emma, an AI assistant. You can ask as little or as much as you like of Emma. The last screen of the platform is the benefit summary which also shows the amount the county is paying for your benefits.

Jeff Porter added that the system feeds directly to the county's health benefit vendors. It eliminates human intervention, and because of this, grant money can be utilized to pay for the system. He again thanked everyone involved in the integration to bswift. Mr. Porter reported that the county is moving away from Wellbeats and will have another wellness option that will be announced in August.

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Artificial Intelligence

Daniel Neeley spoke about solicited responses regarding using AI in County departments. He added that we understand people are attempting to use AI. The IT department is seeing indications that there are already 100 employees using AI in the county and leadership has voiced interest in additional staff being able to implement the use of AI.

Commissioner Davis asked if there was an overarching guide for the use of AI.

Daniel Neeley said that it is like the onset of the internet, and the use of Google's tools.

Jeff Porter stated the County is focusing on the protection of data. AI is a great tool, but we must ensure we are protecting county data and the data of our citizens. The county is working on available protection options.

Recredentialing Project

Daniel Neeley stated that the recredentialing project is moving along and added that the process was necessary due to technology changes and security requirements.

Vending

Jason Grubb spoke about the county's vending machine contracts and added that departments/buildings need approximately 50 people to have a vending machine in their facility.

Rick Szabrak stated the Workforce Center has the new vending machines and added the machines are very clean and the food in them looks great.

Jason Grubb encouraged departments to fill out the vending surveys because they help the vendor.

Commissioner Davis asked if the vending machines were stocked with any healthy options.

Jason Grubb replied that there were some healthy options such as salads.

Break

Commissioner Davis called for a break at 2:15 p.m. before continuing with Departmental Updates.

DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

Dave Burgei stated that the real estate reappraisal values had been posted. Letters would be sent out to residential property owners before the end of the week.

Commissioner Davis asked what the average property value increase was across the county.

Dave stated that the average increase was approximately 28%, which was based on the county's own numbers and not the State's numbers.

Michael Guerriero spoke about his job duties with GIS and gave his appreciation for the opportunity to work in Fairfield County.

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Bev Hoskinson stated the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, and the Popular Annual Financial Report had been released. She added that the audit was performed in record time, and she is hopeful that next year's audit will be just as successful.

Sheriff Lape provided an update on departmental activities, noting that training efforts are ongoing, with one employee currently enrolled in NACo training. The department is actively working toward full-service jail accreditation and is part of the second cohort under the new Ohio Collaborative standards released in January. Sheriff Lape also reported that they are still in the process of finalizing a contract with the U.S. Marshals Service to hold federal prisoners at the jail; he clarified that these holdings are not related to immigration. Additionally, the department is cross-training employees to ensure operational coverage during staff absences.

Shannon Carter reported that Master Gardeners in the county recently held a plant sale, and 4-H is currently conducting summer project judging. She also noted a concern that the SNAP-Ed program is at risk of losing its funding.

Corey Clark announced that back-to-school clothing vouchers will be offered, with just under \$200,000 allocated for the program. He also encouraged everyone to wear green on August 6th in support of Child Abuse Awareness. Additionally, the department will be celebrating its 25th anniversary on September 25th.

Recorder McKenzie reported that her office is currently seeking a new employee. She also shared that she has begun outreach efforts with homeowners' associations to provide information about fraud alert services.

Nikki Drake noted the contrast between last year's drought and this year's persistent heavy rainfall, including a recent 500-year rainstorm event and a 1000-year rainstorm event within areas of the county. She also reported that the recent household hazardous waste event on Saturday was successful, with a large amount of fuels, chemicals, and batteries collected.

Holly Mattei is assisting communities with the adoption of a model zoning code, noting that Thurston and Millersport have already adopted it. She also mentioned that some Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) activity has slowed, with fewer new projects initiated this year.

Jon Kochis reported that the Emergency Management Agency (EMA) is experiencing significant flooding issues. He encouraged community members to contact Soil and Water or EMA directly for assistance with flooding concerns.

Josh Anders provided an update regarding discounts available for eligible utility customers and spoke about some of the Utility Department projects.

Engineer Upp reported that construction season is underway, with paving projects starting on Airport Road, Old Columbus, Hamburg, Carroll Eastern, and Carroll Northern. He also mentioned upcoming bridge replacements and microsurfacing projects.

David Uhl shared that they are collaborating with the Educational Service Center due to space limitations. Developmental Disabilities (DD) is leasing space at the mall to offer classes for students with significant behavioral needs. The parking lot at Forest Rose has been repaved and is used during concerts in partnership with the festival. To continue summer break support, speech therapists provide in-home services to students. DD has organized a group of property tax-funded entities across the county to engage legislators about the discussions regarding eliminating property taxes.

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Commissioner Levacy asked Jeremiah to explain microsurfacing.

Engineer Upp stated it is a type of pavement that is 1-inch thick and seals the road without having to completely repave it.

Dan Neeley spoke about recent issues with security cameras. The IT department transitioned to a new cloud-based system, but a bug in the system affected users who still had cameras on older systems.

Treasurer Bahnsen reported that the Treasurer's Office has been busy collecting taxes and assisting people in setting up escrow accounts to help budget for tax payments.

Michael Kaper stated that Belinda Nebbergall with the Land Bank will soon retire, and they have hired someone from the Recorder's Office to fill that position.

Judge Vandervoort, who works with trauma-affected youth, expressed strong support for the alternate classroom options provided by ESC and DD.

Tiffany Wilson announced that a full council meeting would be held later that week and spoke about the new parent education calendar. She encouraged parents to attend the programs.

Bart Hampson stated that level three budget entry access will soon end. He also reported that the data for the drainage maintenance districts was ready and on track to meet the deadline.

Commissioner Davis discussed recent state budget vetoes and noted that the county is currently assessing its position in response. He also mentioned concerns regarding the Big Beautiful Bill. The Commission is aware of these issues and is actively working to address them.

Marcey Schafer reported ongoing flooding issues in County parks, noting that several sites have been forced to close due to flooding. She also shared that trail extension projects are underway, including a new trail connecting Liberty Union schools to a heron observation area.

Rick Szabrak reported that the Workforce Center (WFC) had 69 student graduates in 2025, and 35 students were hosted at signing day. The WFC is launching a new semiconductor program this year, with renovations expected to be completed by October. The WFC is also running multiple summer camps and received \$700,000 from the state budget to fund programs for high school students. Nine more Transit buses will be wrapped, and a study will be conducted to explore ways the transit system can better support local businesses.

Scott Duff highlighted recent technological investments and discussed their assistance using cameras with a crime investigation in Buckeye Lake. He noted successful collaborations with Hicks Partners as the Major Crimes Unit is a grant-funded agency. Additionally, they conducted search warrants on three vape shops selling to minors, and the items which were seized are currently being analyzed.

Miranda Gray reported that the STARLight Center is fully operational. They collaborated with the land bank to secure a grant for demolishing buildings. Construction is currently underway at Venture Place, and several upcoming events are planned.

Leighann Adams reported that a new volunteer program is being rolled out at the Dog Shelter. The shelter has experienced an increase in intakes, and efforts are underway to develop new social media initiatives. She also noted a rise in reported dog bites and is collaborating with the prosecutor's office to pursue prosecutions.

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Joe Ebel reported that they have received a couple of new grants and back-to-school vaccinations are being administered.

Austin Lines reminded everyone that the civil team is always available to answer any questions.

Kelly Frank reported that the Coroner's Office has two new employees that attended the Coroners Association conference in May and recently toured SCI.

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 3:42 p.m.

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

The next Roundtable is scheduled for November 4, 2025, from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the Fairfield County Workforce Center.

Motion by: David Levacy

Seconded by: Steve Davis

that the July 15, 2025, Roundtable minutes were approved by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None

*Approved on July 22, 2025


Jeff Fix
Commissioner


Steve Davis
Commissioner


David Levacy
Commissioner


Rochelle Menningen, Clerk

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