

Regular Meeting #31 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
August 5, 2025

Review Meeting

The Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room, 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; Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown; Utilities Director, Tony Vogel; Economic Development Specialist, Anthony Iachini; EMA & Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; JFS Director, Corey Clark; Deputy, Kevin Romine; Budget Officer, Staci Knisley; Recorder, Lisa McKenzie; Soil & Water Manager, Nikki Drake; Clerk of Courts, Branden Meyer; Engineer, Jeremiah Upp; Interim RPC Director, Holly Mattei; IT Director, Dan Neeley; Deputy JFS Director, Heather O'Keefe; and MORPC Intern, Ryan Erikson. Also in attendance: Sherry Pymer, Ray Stemen, Chris Snider, Stephanie Bosco, Betty Bennett, and George Bennett.

Virtual Attendees: Tony Vogel, Lisa, Justin Messinger, Beth Cottrell, Jim Bahnsen, Tyler, Abby Watson, Colleen Cook, Jason Grubb, BGM, Tim, Jerry Starner, Greg Forquer, Shelby Hunt, Deborah, Austin Lines, Jennifer Morgan, Steven Darnell, Andy Boystel, Andy Robberts, Jeff Barron, Britney Lee, Josh Horacek, Lauren Vires, Brian Wolfe, Joe Ebel, Stacy Hicks, and Lori Hawk.

Welcome

Commissioner Fix opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance.

Budget Update, Budget Director, Bart Hampson

Bart Hampson provided a 2nd quarter update and spoke about federal and state funding and the importance of analyzing the County's revenues. He also spoke about the county's funding of continued security measures, building updates, and the Workforce Center. The county continues to watch for possible federal funding changes. Mr. Hampson provided a financial forecast which is available in meeting minutes, along with the PowerPoint he presented at the meeting. In his presentation he also provided details about general fund revenues and expenditures and the 2026 budget process.

Commissioner Davis stated he met with Mr. Hampson and appreciates the work he has done on the budget forecasts and the analysis of income and expenditures.

Commissioners Levacy and Fix also thanked Mr. Hampson.

Update, County Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown

Dr. Brown provided an update from her office and spoke about the experiences of the informal meeting regarding the reappraisal held by her office and the emerging themes in from those meetings. Many seniors do not qualify for the Homestead Reduction and property owners are feeling property tax fatigue. There are a lot of questions regarding school funding. The housing market is a demand driven market. Dr Brown provided fact sheets on the the roles of the County Auditor's Office (the fact sheets are available in the minutes). She also showed a video during her presentation on the roles of her office.

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Commissioner Davis asked if the Homestead Exemption is based solely on income.

Dr. Brown replied that the exemption is based on age and income and that there are a few individuals that are still grandfathered from rules that applied under the Kasich administration.

Commissioner Fix thanked Dr. Brown for continuing to set the bar high for the Auditor's Office.

Dr. Brown added that Fairfield County is the only county in Ohio that is so far along with the sexennial update. She also added that Fairfield County property increases are at 28% and other counties, such as Clark County, are at 32%.

Airport Update, Facilities and EMA Director, Jon Kochis

Mr. Kochis spoke about a land lease proposal for the Commissioners and Airport Board's consideration. The land lease would allow for repayment of construction costs.

Commissioner Fix asked if the land lease proposal would be a variation of the rental of the airport hangars. He also asked when the proposal would be before the Commission.

Mr. Kochis stated that a land lease may be a more consistent way to rent the hangars, and the proposal would be before the Commissioners when the construction of the hangars was nearing completion.

Public Comments

Ray Stemen of Lancaster spoke about the work being done in the county and prayed for guidance for county and government leadership.

Sherry Pymer of Walnut Township stated that the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) will soon provide a decision on the Eastern Cottontail solar project. She added that many township residents reside within a mile of the project area and urged the Commissioners to write a letter of opposition to the OPSB.

Betty Bennett of Pleasantville urged the Commissioners to write a letter to the OPSB in opposition to the Eastern Cottontail solar project.

Legal Update

None.

County Administration Update

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

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Week in Review

Business-Education Leader Awards for Excellent Business Advisory Councils

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce presented the 2025 Business-Education Leader Awards at their annual Business Advisory Council Townhall on July 21, 2025. The Business-Education Leader Awards for Excellent Business Advisory Councils recognizes two-, three- and four-star rated Business Advisory Councils throughout the State of Ohio for their exceptional work building strong partnerships to instill professional skills for future careers and coordinating experiences for students. The Fairfield County Education Service Center received a 3 Star Rating.

Highlights of Resolutions

Administrative Approvals

The review packet contains a list of administrative approvals.

Resolution Review

There are 24 resolutions on the agenda for the Regular voting meeting.

Resolutions of note:

- The first resolution on the agenda is to amend the time and location for the September 16th meeting. This resolution would make this an evening meeting and Rushcreek Township has graciously agreed to host the Commissioners at their Fire Department in Bremen at 7:00 p.m.
- The next resolution on the agenda is to approve an Expedited Type II Annexation of 163.434 acres from Greenfield Township to the City of Lancaster.
- Facilities has a resolution for a change order to the Gutknecht Construction contract for the Workforce Center. This is for additional work totaling \$39,012.
- JFS has 11 resolutions on the agenda including several memo receipts, a couple of network placement contracts, and the disposal of a salvage vehicle.
- And Major Crimes has a resolution to approve a partial repayment of a Violent Crimes Reduction Grant. There were two cash advancements from the General Fund for the Grant and MCU has collected \$90,000 toward that repayment.

Budget Review

Budget Director, Bart Hampson, had nothing additional to report.

Calendar Review/Invitations Received

- *The Review of the Calendar, Invitations Received, and Correspondence was provided by the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners, Rochelle Menningen, unless otherwise noted.*

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- Fairfield County Board of Commissioners' Meetings for August and September– To be Held in the Commissioners' Hearing Room Unless Otherwise Noted: August 12, 2025, 9:00 a.m.; August 19, 2025, 9:00 a.m.; August 26, 2025, 3:00 p.m.; September 4, 2025, 10:00 a.m.; September 16, 2025, 7:00 p.m., Rushcreek Township Fire Department, 201 Marietta St., Bremen; September 23, 2025, 9:00 a.m.; September 30, 2025, 9:00 a.m.; The State of the County Address, September 30, 2025, 11:30 a.m., The Sheridan Center, 1550 Sheridan Dr., Lancaster
- Regional Planning Commission Meeting, August 5, 2025, 6:00 p.m., Fairfield County Records Center, 138 W. Chestnut St., Lancaster
- Lancaster Fairfield County Chamber of Commerce Athena Awards Banquet, August 7, 2025, 5:30 p.m., The Mill Event Center, 431 S. Columbus St., Lancaster
- MCJDC Board of Trustees Meeting, August 8, 2025, 9:00 a.m., MCJDC, 9236 Liberty Dr., Lancaster
- MCJDC Joint Board of Commissioners Meeting, August 8, 2025, 10:30 a.m., MCJDC, 9236 Liberty Dr., Lancaster

Correspondence

- Correspondence Regarding Large Scale Solar Facilities
- Correspondence Regarding the Sexennial Property Tax Update

Updates from Elected Officials and Department Heads

Nikki Drake stated that Soil and Water has received many calls from residents concerning flooding on their property.

Holly Mattei stated that the Regional Planning Commission will hold a special meeting for floodplain regulations. Increased standards for the North Bank and West Bank areas of Walnut Township will be discussed at the meeting.

Engineer Upp stated that his road crews are currently chipping and sealing roads, as well as cleaning up roadway areas from debris due to the recent storms.

Commissioner Fix stated he heard positive feedback from both Pleasant and Greenfield Townships about the assistance they received from the Engineer's Office.

Engineer Upp also thanked Jon Kochis for EMA's involvement with the storm aftermath.

Auditor Brown reported that the Budget Commission increased the local budget commission fund.

Mr. Iachini reported that the Workforce Center's summer camps concluded and were a success with over sixty students.

Commissioner Fix stated he also heard great feedback regarding EMA's storm efforts.

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Mr. Kochis stated that he will be submitting the report for disaster assistance and will be scheduling an on-site assessment.

Commissioner Fix asked if the entire county had been declared an emergency.

Mr. Kochis stated that the state declaration would be county-wide.

Mr. Neeley stated he met with the Board of Elections and the Secretary of State's office for a cybersecurity audit. The audit consultant was very complimentary to the county's preparedness.

Mr. Clark stated that August is Child Abuse Awareness Month and invited everyone to wear green on Wednesday, August 6th in observance.

Deputy Administrator Porter stated that Human Resources will communicate to employees that the wellness clinic will reopen this week at a temporary location while flood damage is repaired.

Old Business

Commissioner Levacy reported that he attended the Pickering House ice cream social and that Virginia Pickering had requested that the event be held annually.

New Business

None.

Regular (Voting) Meeting

The Commissioners continued to their 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; Treasurer, Jim Bahnsen; Engineer, Jeremiah Upp; Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Amy Brown-Thompson; Utilities Director, Tony Vogel; Economic Development Specialist, Vince Carpico; EMA & Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; IT Director, Dan Neeley; JFS Director, Corey Clark; Budget Officer, Staci Knisley; FCFC Manager, Tiffany Wilson; Planner, Josh Hillberry; Urban Technician, Chad Lucht; Deputy JFS Director, Heather O'Keefe; Transit Director, Aaron Kennedy; DD Superintendent, Dr. David Uhl; Deputy EMA Director, Garrett Blevins; Sheriff, Alex Lape; Chief Deputy, Scott Ervin; Deputy, Kevin Romine; and MORPC Intern, Ryan Erikson. Also in attendance: Ray Stemen, Chris Snider, Jerry Starner, Beth Cottrell, Sherry Pymer, Barb Martin, Frank Martin, Jim Cottrell, Betty Bennett, and George Bennett.

Virtual Attendees: Lisa, Justin Messinger, Beth Cottrell, Jim Bahnsen, Tyler, Colleen Cook, Jason Grubb, Tim, Jerry Starner, Greg Forquer, Shelby Hunt, Deborah, Austin Lines, Jennifer Morgan, Steven Darnell, Andy Robberts, Britney Lee, Lauren Vires, Brian Wolfe, Joe Ebel, Stacy Hicks, and Lori Hawk.

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Announcements

None.

Approval of Minutes for July 29, 2025

On the motion of David Levacy and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Minutes for Tuesday, July 29, 2025, meeting.

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 Commissioners

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

2025-08.05.a A Resolution Amending Resolutions 2024-12.03.a, 2025-04.22.a, 2025-06.24.a, and 2025-07.29.a, Establishing the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners' 2025 Review Session and Regular Meeting Dates, and Special Meeting Dates

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

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

2025-08.05.b A Resolution to Approve the Expedited Type II Annexation of 163.434 +/- Acres from Greenfield Township to the City of Lancaster, Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code (R.C.) 709.023, Petitioners Zac Walker, Craig Moncrief, and Jeffrey Vandervoort

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

Voting aye thereon: David Levacy and Jeff Fix

Abstaining: Steve Davis

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:

2025-08.05.c A resolution to request for appropriations for additional unanticipated receipts of memo receipts and memo expenses for fund 3445 Bridge Load Rating Project

2025-08.05.d A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle for construction in progress

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2025-08.05.e A resolution to approve a Change Order for the 2025 Micro surfacing 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 Fairfield County Facilities

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 Facilities:

2025-08.05.f A resolution for a Change Order #1 to the Contract with Gutknecht Construction and the Fairfield County Commissioners for the Workforce Center

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 & 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 & Family Services:

2025-08.05.g A resolution authorizing the approval of a service agreement by and between Fairfield County Job & Family Services, Child Protective Services Division and Champion Life House LLC

2025-08.05.h A Resolution regarding an amendment for a previously approved Network Placement and Related Services Agreement between Unk's Place and Child Protective Services Department.

2025-08.05.i A resolution to approve a memo exp./ memo receipt for the costs of Bus Passes paid to Lancaster-Fairfield Public Transit as a memo expenditure for fund# 2072 Public Children's Services

2025-08.05.j 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

2025-08.05.k A Resolution to approve FCJFS' share of cost for postage as a Memo Expenditure for Fund# 2018

2025-08.05.l 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

2025-08.05.m 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# 2599 Workforce Fund

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| 2025-08.05.n | A resolution to approve a memo receipt and expenditure for Fairfield County Job & Family Services, Fund 2072 reimbursing Fund 2018 |
| 2025-08.05.o | A resolution to approve a memo receipt and expenditure for Fairfield County Job & Family Services, Fund 2758 reimbursing Fund 2018 |
| 2025-08.05.p | A resolution to approve a memo receipt and expenditure for Fairfield County Job & Family Services, Sub Fund 8056 reimbursing Fund 2018 |
| 2025-08.05.q | A Resolution regarding the disposal of a salvage vehicle for Fairfield County Job and Family Services. |

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:

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| 2025-08.05.r | A resolution to approve the purchasing of a gun by a retiring officer |
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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 the South Central Major Crimes Unit

On the motion of David Levacy and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution from the South Central Major Crimes Unit:

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| 2025-08.05.s | A resolution authorizing the approval of a partial repayment of an advance to the General Fund from MCU 7911 Violent Crimes Reduction Grant. |
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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 Resolutions from Fairfield County Utilities

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 Utilities:

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| 2025-08.05.t | A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category for Utilities; 5044, Contractual Services. |
| 2025-08.05.u | A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category for Utilities Water Fund 5046. |
| 2025-08.05.v | A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category for Utilities; 5841, Construction in Progress. |

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2025-08.05.w A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category for Utilities fund 5842.

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

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:

2025-08.05.x 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 10:04 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, August 12, 2025, Commissioners' Hearing Room, 210 E. Main St., Lancaster, OH.

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Motion by: David Levacy

Seconded by: Steve Davis

that the August 5, 2025, minutes were approved by the following vote:

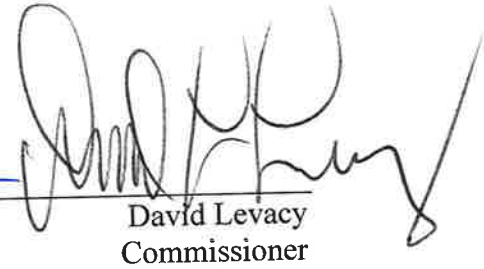
YEAS: David Levacy, Steve Davis, and Jeff Fix
ABSTENTIONS:

NAYS: None

*Approved on August 12, 2025


Jeff Fix
Commissioner


Steve Davis
Commissioner


David Levacy
Commissioner


Rochelle Menningen, Clerk
