

Regular Meeting #32 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
August 12, 2025

Review Meeting

The Commissioners met at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room located 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. Also present: County Administrator, Aundrea Cordle; Deputy County Administrator, Jeff Porter; Commissioners' Clerk, Rochelle Menningen; Information and Communications Coordinator, Bennett Niceswanger; Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown; Sheriff, Alex Lape; Assistant Prosecutor, Steven Darnell; Budget Director, Bart Hampson; JFS Director, Corey Clark; IT Director, Dan Neeley; EMA and Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; Economic and Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabrak; Utilities Deputy Director, Josh Crawford; DD Superintendent, Dr. David Uhl; FCFC Manager, Tiffany Wilson; Interim RPC Director, Holly Mattei; Urban Technician, Chad Lucht; Deputy, Kevin Romaine, and Wildlife Specialist, Lauren Vires. Also in attendance: Ray Stemen and Jerry Starner.

Virtual Attendees: Lisa McKenzie, Lori Hawk, Michael Kaper, Jeff Barron, Joe Ebel, Nikki Drake, Staci Knisley, Beth Cottrell, Vince Carpico, and Shelby Hunt.

Welcome

Commissioner Fix opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance.

Listen & Learn, Update,

Soil and Water Conservation District's (Soil & Water) Education and Wildlife Specialist, Lauren Vires, spoke about the agency's 82nd Annual Meeting. She provided the date, time, and location, along with other important details about the meeting. These details are in the agency's newsletter and in the minutes' packet. Lauren added that the meeting will also include a presentation from a Buckeye Lake Historian, and a conservation award ceremony.

Commissioner Levacy commended the relationship of the Buckeye Lake region and Soil & Water, primarily in regard to the destruction caused by geese in the area.

Lauren Vires stated that geese are migratory animals, but milder winters cause them to stay in the area longer and cause prolonged destruction.

Public Comments

Ray Stemen stated that the issues that typically occur in cities are not exclusive to urban areas and can be experienced in rural communities as well. He closed his remarks with prayer.

Jerry Starner of Amanda Township was appreciative of the county leadership that was in attendance at the Carnation solar project public hearing.

Legal Update

There was no legal update.

County Administration Update

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

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Week in Review

CCAO Post Budget Briefings

The CCAO policy team will host 5 regional meetings to bring Commissioners together to discuss pertinent policy issues and funding included in the state operating budget. There will be 5 separate sessions, with the central region's event to be held on October 3rd in Delaware.

Commission Meetings

The Commissioners' meeting schedule contained several variations as follows:

- August 19 – 9:00 Commission Meeting and Employee Recognition event to follow at 11:30
- August 26 - Commission Meeting at 3:00 pm
- September 4 - Commission Meeting at 9:00 am with no meeting on the regular day of September 2
- The week of September 8 – No meeting

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 voting meeting.

Resolutions of note:

- There are two resolutions to approve the grant agreement between the Fairfield County America 250-Ohio Committee and the America 250-Ohio Commission for the Fairfield County Veterans Hall of Fame, and to appropriate the grant funds. The Fairfield County America 250-Ohio Committee applied for and will receive \$5000 in grant funding.
- The Sheriff's Office has a resolution to approve an agreement with the Board of Commissioners, the Sheriff's Office, and the U.S. Department of Justice United States Marshals Service for housing Federal prisoners in the Fairfield County Jail.
- And Soil & Water has a resolution to sign the Title Services Agreement for the Myers Farm through the Clean Ohio Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program.

Budget Review

- Budget Director, Bart Hampson, stated that he continues to monitor the sales tax revenue.

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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.*
 - Community Action Meeting with Commissioner Levacy and Representative LaRe, August 13, 2025, 9:30 a.m., LFCAA, 1743 E. Main St., Lancaster
 - Mike Oatney Children's Playground Dedication, August 14, 2025, 10:00 a.m., LFCAA, 1743 E. Main St., Lancaster
 - Family and Children First Council Executive Committee Meeting, August 15, 2025, 8:30 a.m., Fairfield County Agricultural Center, 831 College Ave., Lancaster
 - County Commissioners Association of Ohio, Email Bulletin, August 11, 2025, "2025 Post Budget Briefings", Central Region, October 3, 2025, 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., Delaware County Byxbe Meeting Room, 1610 State Route 521, Delaware
 - Fairfield County 4-H Summerfest Awards Program, August 17, 2025, Old General Sherman Middle School, 625 W. 5th Ave., Lancaster
 - Violet Township Board of Zoning Appeals, Variance Application for Property Located at 7415 Diley Rd., Canal Winchester, Case VAR-25-13, Public Hearing, August 21, 2025, 7:30 p.m., Violet Township Administrative Offices, 10190 Blacklick Eastern Rd., Pickerington

Correspondence

- CFLP Solid Waste District, August 1, 2025, Combined Education & Recycling 2nd Quarter Report
- Expedited Type II Annexation Petition Filed 8/8/2025, 70.765 Acres +/- from Walnut Township to the Village of Baltimore, Agent for the Petitioner - Jeffrey Feyko

Updates from Elected Officials and Department Heads

Dr. David Uhl stated that staff from the Board of Developmental Disabilities have been preparing to return to school with a weeklong "boot camp."

Chad Lucht thanked the commissioners for their support of the Clean Ohio Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program application.

Holly Mattei stated that a meeting was held with Walnut Township to discuss creating and adopting language related to a "no fill" policy in the area.

Sheriff Lape thanked Administrator Cordle for her assistance with the NACo Leadership program and added that two employees from his office recently completed the program. He added that his office will have the final inspection for the Ohio Collaborative credentialing at the end of the month. He expects his office to become one of thirty credentialed agencies in the entire state. Ohio has over 900 law enforcement agencies.

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Commissioner Fix asked if there were benefits for the Sheriff's Office being accredited.

Sheriff Lape stated there are revenue streams made available to those agencies with accreditation.

Auditor Brown stated that her office continues with the sexennial update informal hearings, adding that residents have been appreciative of the information. Additionally, the Walnut Local School District had an emergency resolution which the Auditors were able to accommodate.

Commissioner Davis asked if there were remaining spots available for the informal hearings.

Auditor Brown confirmed that her office can add people to the schedule. Her office will also provide training to townships and school districts to help improve ways they receive and exchange information. She thanked Chief Collins for the tour of the training center where she also participated in a simulation. The federal audit has concluded with no major issues to report. Lastly, she mentioned an upcoming fundraiser for FIDO.

Josh Anders reported that the Utilities Department has been working with the Village of Millersport and the Village of Rushville on various projects.

Rick Szabrak spoke about being the President of the Ohio Development Exchange and added that it is impressive in Central Ohio how well development groups work together.

Commissioner Davis asked if Rick is aware of any trends that indicate a decrease in the labor shortage.

Rick Szabrak stated office jobs are becoming more competitive, but there are still many opportunities for blue collar jobs.

Commissioner Fix asked if AI was beginning to replace office jobs.

Rick Szabrak stated that it is already impacting jobs. He stressed the importance of building the workforce and believes that the Columbus region is outpacing most.

Commissioner Fix stated that a Greenfield Township resident had called him regarding his culvert being washed out during the recent storms.

Jon Kochis stated that this will be the county's first attempt at State disaster relief funds. He added that he will meet with the state to do assessments prior to submitting the application for relief funds.

Dan Neeley thanked the staff at the Workforce Center for their patience in tech related outages due to the construction.

Corey Clark stated that ODJFS Director Damschroeder will be visiting his office to shadow the public assistance employees to witness firsthand the services they provide.

Jeff Porter stated that HR is undergoing the insurance carrier renewal processes and continues to experience high utilization. He and his staff are working to address the increase as best they can.

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Old Business

Commissioner Levacy stated that he attended the ATHENA Awards ceremony and believed Jennifer Sitterly to be very deserving of the recognition.

Commissioner Fix stated that he was invited by the County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO) to speak at a meeting of regional planners to explain what Fairfield County is doing to address growth. He also met with Director Szabrak, the Department of Development, One Columbus, Congressman Balderson and State Representative LaRe. Lastly, he reported attending the Carnation solar project public hearing in Amanda.

New Business

Commissioner Fix will begin meeting with villages and townships again to discuss establishing New Community Authorities (NCA).

Commissioner Levacy reported meeting with Congressman Balderson and offered his appreciation for the Congressman choosing to locate his regional office in Fairfield County out of all the 12 Ohio counties that he represents.

Commissioner Davis stated that he had attended the public hearing for the Carnation solar project where he was asked by the attorney present if he was providing comment in his capacity as a commissioner, to which he answered that he was not.

Regular (Voting) Meeting

The Commissioners continued to the Regular/Voting portion of the meeting, and the following Commissioners were present: Jeff Fix, Steve Davis and David Levacy. Also present: County Administrator, Aundrea Cordle; Deputy County Administrator, Jeff Porter; Commissioners' Clerk, Rochelle Menningen; Information and Communications Coordinator, Bennett Niceswanger; Auditor, Dr. Carri Brown; Sheriff, Alex Lape; Assistant Prosecutor, Steven Darnell; Budget Director, Bart Hampson; JFS Director, Corey Clark; IT Director, Dan Neeley; EMA and Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; Economic and Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabrak; Utilities Deputy Director, Josh Crawford; DD Superintendent, Dr. David Uhl; FCFC Manager, Tiffany Wilson; Interim RPC Director, Holly Mattei; Urban Technician, Chad Lucht; Deputy, Kevin Romaine, and Wildlife Specialist, Lauren Vires. Also in attendance: Ray Stemen and Jerry Starner.

Virtual Attendees: Lisa McKenzie, Lori Hawk, Michael Kaper, Jeff Barron, Joe Ebel, Nikki Drake, Staci Knisley, Beth Cottrell, Vince Carpico, and Shelby Hunt.

Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Fix asked everyone to rise as able and lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements

None

Approval of Minutes for August 5, 2025

On the motion of David Levacy and the second of Steve Davis, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Minutes for Tuesday, August 5, 2025, meeting.

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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 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 resolutions from the Fairfield County Commissioners:

- 2025-08.12.a A Resolution to Amend Resolution 2024-06.25.b, Which Accepted the Transfer of Governance from the City of Lancaster for the Department then Known as Lancaster Fairfield Public Transit
- 2025-08.12.b A resolution to approve a Grant Agreement between the Fairfield County America 250-Ohio Committee and the America 250-Ohio Commission for the Fairfield County Veterans Hall of Fame.
- 2025-08.12.c A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated funds in a major expense object categories for the General Fund# 1001, American 250 Grant
- 2025-08.12.d A resolution to approve a memo transactions for interest allocation reimbursements for Fairfield Department of Health, Fairfield County Parks, & Fairfield County Port Authority – Fund #7012, #7321, #7308, & #7865.

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 Board of Elections

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 Board of Elections:

- 2025-08.12.e A Resolution to Appropriate from Unappropriated in a Major Expenditure Object Category for Board of Elections; Fund # 2884 SOS 2025 Primary Election Funding

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 Court of Common Pleas

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 Court of Common Pleas:

- 2025-08.12.f A Resolution to Appropriate from Unappropriated in a Major Expenditure Object Category for Fairfield County Adult Probation; Fund # 2365, County Probation
- 2025-08.12.g A Resolution Approving an Account-to-Account Transfer into a Major Expenditure Object Category – Fund # 1001, Common Pleas – Admin

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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:

2025-08.12.h A resolution authorizing the approval of repayment of an advance to the General Fund – Fund #7831, WIOA 20/21

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:

2025-08.12.i A resolution to request for appropriations from unappropriated for EMA Public Utilities Commission of Ohio Grant Fund 2898/8374

2025-08.12.j A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category EMA Fund 2091 Local Emergency Planning Committee

2025-08.12.k A resolution to approve an Agreement between Fairfield County Board of Commissioners and Central Ohio Trauma System.

Jon Kochis stated that the resolution was to provide training to dispatchers.

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 Engineer

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 Engineer:

2025-08.12.l A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle for materials & supplies

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:

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2025-08.12.m A Resolution to approve a Contract Amendment between Steed Hammond Paul, Inc., d/b/a SHP Architects, Inc., and the Fairfield County Commissioners

Jon Kochis stated that the resolution was for the Building Trades classroom at 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:

2025-08.12.n 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

2025-08.12.o A Resolution regarding an amendment for a previously approved Network Placement and Related Services Agreement between Champion Life House LLC and Child Protective Services Department.

2025-08.12.p A Resolution regarding an amendment for a previously approved Network Placement and Related Services Agreement between NECCO, Inc. and Child Protective Services Department.

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 Sheriff

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 Sheriff:

2025-08.12.q A resolution authorizing the approval of an agreement with the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners (Fairfield BCC), the Fairfield County Sheriff's Office (Fairfield Sheriff) and the U.S. Department of Justice United States Marshals Service for housing Federal prisoners in the Fairfield County Jail

2025-08.12.r A Resolution to Appropriate from Unappropriated in a Major Expenditure Object Category for Sheriff; 2909, Marine Patrol Grant

2025-08.12.s A Resolution to Appropriate from Unappropriated in a Major Expenditure Object Category for Sheriff; 2442, Commissary

2025-08.12.t A resolution to approve the purchasing of a gun by a retiring officer

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2025-08.12.u A resolution authorizing the approval of a contract extension with the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners (Fairfield BCC), the Fairfield County Sheriff's Office (Fairfield Sheriff) and the Hocking County Board of Commissioners (Hocking BCC) and the Hocking County Sheriff (Hocking Sheriff) for housing prisoners in the Fairfield County Jail

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:

2025-08.12.v A resolution to authorize the Fairfield County Commissioners to sign the South Central Ohio Major Crimes Unit Subgrant Award Agreement for the Attorney General Drug Abuse Response Team (DART) 2025 Grant

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 and 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 and Water Conservation District:

2025-08.12.w A resolution to sign the Title Services Agreement for the Myers Farm through the Clean Ohio Local Agricultural 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:

2025-08.12.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

Commissioner Fix called for a ten-minute recess at 9:50 a.m.

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State of the County Planning Session

Remaining in attendance: Jeff Fix, Steve Davis, David Levacy, and Aundrea Cordle.

The meeting continued with a discussion regarding plans for the September 30, 2025, State of the County Address. The agenda, possible themes, future concepts and ideas, and the Commissioners' presentation were all discussed.

The next planning meeting was scheduled for August 19, 2025 at 8:00 a.m.

Adjournment

With no further business, on the motion of David Levacy, and the second of Jeff Fix, the Board of Commissioners voted to adjourn at 10:31 a.m.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

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

The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 19, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.

Motion by: David Levacy Seconded by: Steve Davis
that the August 12, 2025, minutes were approved by the following vote:

YEAS: David Levacy, Steve Davis, and Jeff Fix
ABSTENTIONS: None

NAYS: None

*Approved on August 19, 2025

Jeff Fix
Commissioner


Steve Davis
Commissioner


David Levacy
Commissioner


Rochelle Menningen, Clerk