

Regular Meeting #33 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
August 19, 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; Utilities Director, Tony Vogel; JFS Director, Corey Clark; EMA & Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; IT Director, Dan Neeley; ADAMH Executive Director, Marcy Fields; ADMAH Grant Coordinator, Dylan Sanders; ADAMH Program and Quality Manager, Miranda Gray; Interim RPC Director, Holly Mattei; Economic & Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabrak; Urban Technician, Chad Lucht; Deputy, Kevin Romine; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Steven Darnell; FCFC Manager, Tiffany Wilson; Fairfield County OSU Extension Manager, Shannon Carter. Also in attendance: Chris Snider and Ray Stemen.

Virtual Attendees: Ashley Arter, Joe Ebel, Cale Burke, Shannon Ward, Toni Ashton, Baylie Blevins, BGM, Alex Lape, Lisa, Ralph, Lori Lovas, Mariluz Maldonado, Michael Navin, Deborah, Jessica Murphy, David Uhl, Lynette Barnhart, Nathan Hall, Jared Collins, Shelby Hunt, Jeff Barron, Michael Kaper, Stacy Hicks, Anthony Iachini, Andy Robberts, Britney Lee, Jennifer Morgan, Jason Grubb, Josh Horacek, Lisa McKenzie, and Holly Lybrook.

Welcome

Commissioner Fix opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance.

ADAMH Opioid Settlement Funding Conversation

Miranda Gray, Fairfield County ADAMH Program and Quality Manager, shared a presentation on Recovery Community Organizations (RCO). She spoke about the principals and strategies of an RCO and how they are led by Peer Recovery Support (PRS) individuals. People receiving PRS services often experience improved relationships, increased treatment retention, housing stability, decreased criminal justice involvement, and reduced substance use. Ms. Gray spoke about a 1950's experiment called, "The Power of Hope and Resilience Project". The project demonstrated how an animal would continue to survive as long as it still felt there was hope. Survival through hope can lead to community leadership with the help of an RCO and a PRS. A PowerPoint included in the minutes provides some examples of RCOs, statistics and programs of current RCOs, and the social enterprise and sustainability of the organizations.

Cale Burke, Senior Project Manager for the first RCO in Appalachia Ohio, Southeast Ohio Hope Center, joined the meeting virtually. He stated he grew up in a group home and would not be where he is if not for long-term recovery. He spoke about a continuum of care and the importance of getting someone in recovery past the first 24 months after treatment.

Miranda Gray spoke about events and the economic and social contributions that RCOs bring to a community. The Yellow Balloon Project provides a safe place for those in recovery at events. Yellow balloons indicate a save space to meet and interact. Ms. Gray stated that RCOs have different funding streams and that an investment in recovery is an investment in community.

Commissioner Fix thanked Ms. Gray and Mr. Burk for presenting and asked if there was a current request.

Regular Meeting #33 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
August 19, 2025

Aundrea Cordle stated she had invited ADAMH to share options. She added that she had been in conversations with Jeff Porter regarding community needs.

Commissioner Davis asked if there are timing requirements associated with the Opioid funds.

Aundrea Cordle stated there are no timing requirements but that there are use restrictions.

Commissioner Davis stated the approach for the RCO, the sustainability of future operations, and operational support would all need to be considered. He stated he would also like to see the idea structured with a cost timeline.

Miranda Gray stated that ADAMH often hears that there is nothing for individuals to get involved in after they receive treatment.

Commissioner Levacy asked which treatment management was the most difficult to maintain.

Miranda Gray answered that it is contingency management, which is a system of reward for sobriety. She added that individuals are welcome no matter what substance they are recovering from, with the RCO.

Commissioner Levacy stated his support for an RCO.

Commissioner Fix also stated his support and added that the Board would continue to advocate for prevention.

Marcy Fields stated the recovery community is also supportive of awareness and prevention.

Commissioner Davis asked if there is evidence of adverse consequences for marijuana use.

Miranda Gray replied that the ADAMH board believes there is but does not have the evidence yet.

Cale Burk added the RCO is more of a clubhouse model and not really a drop in model which makes it self-policing.

National Center for State Courts Presentation

Mari Maldonado, Nathan Hall, and Michael Navin from the National Center for State Courts presented virtually. Nathan Hall spoke about a court based need assessment for Fairfield County and explained that the National Center for State Courts is a non-profit agency that helps with courthouse design, security, and planning. The agency has completed over 300 assessments in Ohio.

Mari Maldonado provided a presentation about the project background, scope, timeline, and next steps for a project and added that the county's courthouse was finished in the early 1970s.

Commissioner Davis stated that he had understood that the agency was just assessing the courthouse.

Nathan Hall replied that the data is not predetermined.

Commissioner Davis stated that the Board does not know what the current needs are and they are supportive of an assessment but are sensitive to any preordained conclusion.

Regular Meeting #33 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
August 19, 2025

Mari Maldonado stated that the project scope would analyze growth and building space and would provide visual concepts. The project timeline would take 24 weeks from start to the final report.

Michael Navin spoke about assessing the long-term needs based on the county's population and analyzing the historical case filing trends.

Mari Maldonado added there are four things being assessed regarding operational issues including adjudication, administration, public access, and sustainability.

Commissioner Davis stated that during the Commissioners collective history a jail was built, and operational efficiency was promised, and any new plan promising efficiency should be accurate.

Nathan Hall stated that the National Center for State Courts would provide some best practices and that they are aware that not one size fits all. The agency will provide proposals for space that can change over time and facilities that can change with technology. He added that they will want to hear and understand the county's experience with the jail to ensure there are no parallels.

Mari Maldonado added that they would develop a court space program with conceptual blocking and stacking of courtrooms and chambers.

Nathan Hall added that they are not designing but showing design trends. He stated they have seen that not all courthouses are secure. Courthouses are unique and there are some contentious things that happen in courthouses. We are looking at best practices.

Mari Maldonado stated that "next steps" would include review and analysis, facility tours, preliminary projections, and developing a preliminary space program.

Commissioner Fix thanked the presenters and added that the Board is not comfortable with being so far down the path that conclusions are being determined.

Commissioner Levacy stated that he looks forward to the completed assessment.

Jon Kochis stated the goal is to see how to organize, be more efficient, and design better. He added that he would like to use the tool to be safer and more customer friendly and that he would be present when the National Center for State Courts is onsite.

OSU Extension Update

Shannon Carter, OSU Extension Educator and Consumer Sciences Area Leader, spoke on the SNAP education program and the effects from federal and state budget changes. She added that SNAP Ed is a national program and in Ohio the funds come from the Ohio Farm Bill and are funneled through JFS. OSU Extension has two-¾ time SNAP assistance staff. It is a bit of a shock for the Extension that the program is no longer funded. In 2024, OSU Extension worked with 10,000 youth and adults through health fairs, farm markets, and educational materials. When the Extension learned the program would no longer be funded, they reached out to the state. Ms. Carter stated she now administers 7 counties and when the SNAP ED program ends, two of the Extensions' staff will lose their jobs. She added she will be actively seeking funding.

Commissioner Davis stated the county does not know what cuts are coming from the state and federal government. Some legislation has already been passed and some threatened. He commended her for her approach to the situation.

**Regular Meeting #33 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
August 19, 2025**

Commissioner Fix added that the Board appreciates that she is getting ahead of the issue.

Shannon Carter replied that the grant had a carry-over and JFS released that carry-over, extending the program into November.

Commissioner Fix stated the Boards support of the Extensions programs and efforts.

Public Comments

Ray Stemen of Lancaster spoke about the use of the word “hope” in the earlier presentation and added that hope without faith will not work.

Legal Update

There was no legal update.

County Administration Update

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

Week in Review

Commission Meetings

The meeting schedule in the coming weeks has some variations of note:

- Employee Recognition event to follow today's meeting at 11:30 a.m.
- 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 16 resolutions on the agenda for the Regular voting meeting.

Resolutions of note:

- The Commissioners have a resolution to adjust the meeting times for the October 28th Review and Regular Meeting and the Budget Hearings. The Review and Regular Meeting will begin at 1:00 p.m. and the Budget Hearings will begin at 9:00 a.m. that day.
- There is a resolution to authorize the repayment of an advance. This is reimbursing the General Fund for \$250,000 from the State Energy Grant Fund.

Regular Meeting #33 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
August 19, 2025

- The Airport Authority Board approved a land lease agreement at their meeting on August 11th for an annual payment of \$191,500. This is a 5-year lease commencing January 1, 2026, with an automatic renewal for five subsequent five-year terms.
- There is a resolution to accept the amounts and rates determined by the Budget Commission for the necessary tax levies and authorizes certifying them to the County Auditor.
- The Health Department has a resolution to authorize the submission of the 2026 CFLP Litter Law Enforcement and Solid Waste Enforcement Grant Application to CFLP.
- Regional Planning has a resolution to establish a Drainage Maintenance District for the Sycamore Grove subdivision in Violet Township.

Budget Review

Budget Director, Bart Hampson, stated that the level three budget entry access for general fund departments will end soon.

Calendar Review/Invitations Received

- *Provided by the Clerk to the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners, Rochelle Menningen*
 - Fairfield County Ag Update, August 20, 2025, 11:30 a.m., Fairfield County Agricultural Center, 831 College Ave., Lancaster
 - CCAO Summer Symposium, August 25, 2025, 7:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m., and August 26, 2025, 7:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Hocking Hills State Park Lodge & Conference Center, 20020 State Route 664 S., Logan
 - Kingsbury Senior Living Grand Opening, August 27, 2025, 11:00 a.m., 1572 Timbertop St., Lancaster
 - Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency Annual Dinner, September 18, 2025, Auction – 5:00 p.m., Dinner – 6:15 p.m., Alley Park Lodge, 2805 Old Logan Rd. SE, Lancaster

Correspondence

- *Provided by the Clerk to the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners, Rochelle Menningen*
 - Lancaster City Council Public Hearing Notice, September 22, 2025, 6:30 p.m., Council Chambers, 111 S. Borad St., Property Map Amendment of 163.434 +/- Acres from Greenfield Township to the City of Lancaster
 - Fairfield County Municipal Court, Criminal/Traffic Division Fee Report, July 2025
 - Birge and Held Development, JDS Communities, July 24, 2025, Notice of Sycamore Ridge Affordable Housing Development, Project Address: 450 Ety Rd., Lancaster

Regular Meeting #33 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
August 19, 2025

- Marian Development Group and Vivera Fairfield GP, LLC, July 21, 2025, Notice of Development of Senior Assisted Living Facility, Project Address: 0 Slocum Ave., Lancaster

Updates from Elected Officials and Department Heads

Tiffany Wilson stated the Family and Children First Council will have a family resource guide that will be distributed soon.

Chad Lucht spoke on the upcoming DEA drug take-back and tech equipment drop-off.

Auditor Brown stated her office continues to conduct informal hearings with residents and has received positive feedback. Her office is working to update the property tax cards to show the breakdown by levy. She spoke about payroll changes related to the Big Beautiful Bill Act, information provided in her weekly memo, information distributed by her office in the "Wednesday Word to the Wise" and announced that she will be receiving the 2025 Excellence in Government Achievement Award.

Commissioner Fix congratulated Auditor Brown on the award.

Commissioner Davis asked if it would be beneficial to look at federal, state, and local funding to see whether the appropriations aligned with the funding are mandated or discretionary.

Auditor Brown stated that those conversations have happened in the past, and that sometimes local priorities do not always align with mandated expenses.

Rick Szabrak stated that the Workforce Center will hold parent-student meetings for the pre-apprenticeship program and added he hopes that all school districts will participate again this year.

Commissioner Fix offered his deep appreciation for Kenny McDonald, CEO of One Columbus, for what he has contributed to central Ohio. Mr. McDonald's presence is not exclusive to the Columbus area.

Jon Kochis stated that EMA conducted their storm damage assessment on Thursday. They visited each major damaged location and were confident that they met the minimum requirements to submit the application.

Commissioner Davis reported rumors that Fairfield County could receive support from FEMA and asked if that was factual.

Jon Kochis affirmed that the rumor was incorrect, explaining that FEMA support typically only occurs when multiple counties are impacted.

Old Business

Commissioner Davis stated his intent to attend the hearing for the Eastern Cottontail solar project.

Commissioner Levacy reported meeting with Congressman Balderson and added he was encouraged to hear how much Balderson and his staff appreciate the partnership with Fairfield County for their office space at the Fairfield Center in Pickerington.

**Regular Meeting #33 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
August 19, 2025**

New Business

None.

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; Utilities Director, Tony Vogel; JFS Director, Corey Clark; EMA & Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; IT Director, Dan Neeley; ADAMH Executive Director, Marcy Fields; ADMAH Grant Coordinator, Dylan Sanders; ADAMH Program and Quality Manager, Miranda Gray; Interim RPC Director, Holly Mattei; Economic & Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabrak; Urban Technician, Chad Lucht; Deputy, Kevin Romine; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Steven Darnell; FCFC Manager, Tiffany Wilson; Fairfield County OSU Extension Manager, Shannon Carter. Also in attendance: Chris Snider and Ray Stemen.

Virtual Attendees: Ashley Arter, Joe Ebel, Cale Burke, Shannon Ward, Toni Ashton, Baylie Blevins, BGM, Alex Lape, Lisa, Ralph, Lori Lovas, Mariluz Maldonado, Michael Navin, Deborah, Jessica Murphy, David Uhl, Lynette Barnhart, Nathan Hall, Jared Collins, Shelby Hunt, Jeff Barron, Michael Kaper, Stacy Hicks, Anthony Iachini, Andy Robberts, Britney Lee, Jennifer Morgan, Jason Grubb, Josh Horacek, Lisa McKenzie, and Holly Lybrook.

Pledge of Allegiance

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

Announcements

None

Approval of Minutes for August 12, 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 12, 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 resolutions from the Fairfield County Commissioners:

2025-08.19.a	A Resolution Amending Resolutions 2024-12.03.a, 2025-04.22.a, 2025-06.24.a, 2025-07.29.a, and 2025-08.05.a, Establishing the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners' 2025 Review Session and Regular Meeting Dates, and Special Meeting Dates
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**Regular Meeting #33 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
August 19, 2025**

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| 2025-08.19.b | A resolution authorizing the approval of repayment of an advance to the General Fund from the State Energy Program Grant Fund# 3904. |
| 2025-08.19.c | A resolution to approve the land lease agreement with the Fairfield County Airport Authority Board |
| 2025-08.19.d | A resolution accepting the amounts and rates as determined by the Fairfield County Budget Commission and authorizing the necessary tax levies and certifying them to the County Auditor |

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

Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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 Board of Developmental Disabilities:

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| 2025-08.19.e | A resolution to approve a reimbursement for share of costs for Ethernet Services paid to AT&T as a memo expenditure for fund# 2060 - Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities |
| 2025-08.19.f | A resolution to approve a memo exp./ memo receipt for the cost of transportation for individuals paid to Fairfield County Transit as a memo expenditure for fund# 2060 - Fairfield County Board of Developmental Disabilities |

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:

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| 2025-08.19.g | A Resolution to Approve Additional Appropriations by Appropriating from Unappropriated into a Major Expense Object Category – 7865, Port Authority, and authorizing a fund to fund transfer |
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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 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:

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| 2025-08.19.h | A resolution to approve a memo expenditure from EMA fund Local Emergency Planning Committee 2091 to EMA fund 2090 for agreed service. |
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**Regular Meeting #33 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
August 19, 2025**

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:

2025-08.19.i A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle for contractual 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 Health Department

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 Health Department:

2025-08.19.j A resolution approving the submission of the Fiscal Year 2026 CFLP Litter Law Enforcement and Solid Waste Enforcement Grant Applications to CFLP

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:

2025-08.19.k A Resolution to Appropriate from Unappropriated in a Major Expenditure Object Category for Fairfield County JFS; Fund # 2018, Public Assistance Fund

2025-08.19.l A resolution authorizing the approval of a service agreement by and between Fairfield County Job & Family Services, Child Protective Services Division and Anchored Immense Movement (AIM)

2025-08.19.m A resolution for the Purchase of Service Agreement between Job & Family Services, Child Protective Services Department and Integrated Services for Behavioral Health.

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:

Regular Meeting #33 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
August 19, 2025

2025-08.19.n A resolution to Establish a Drainage Maintenance District (DMD) for Sycamore Grove Subdivision.

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:

2025-08.19.o A resolution authorizing the disposal of a vehicle by the Fairfield County Sheriff's Office

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:

2025-08.19.p 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 10:28 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 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 26, 2025.

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