

**Regular Meeting #48 - 2025
Fairfield County Commissioners' Office
October 28, 2025**

Review Meeting

The Commissioners met at 1:00 p.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 and Steve Davis. Also present: County Administrator, Aundrea Cordle; Deputy County Administrator, Jeff Porter; Commissioners' Clerk, Rochelle Menningen; Budget Director, Bart Hampson; Budget Officer, Staci Knisley; Budget Clerk, Taylor Forquer; EMA and Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; Sheriff's Deputy, Kevin Romine; IT Director, Dan Neeley; JFS Director, Corey Clark; Real Estate Assessment Director, Dave Burgei; Engineer, Jeremiah Upp; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Amy Brown-Thompson; Economic & Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabrak; FCFC Manager, Tiffany Wilson; Planner, Joshua Hillberry; and Economic Development Specialist, Anthony Iachini. Also in attendance: Garrett Davis, Betty Bennett, George Bennett, Deb Connell, and Sherry Pymmer.

Virtual attendees: Joshua Horacek, Leighann Adams, Lori Hawk, Shannon Ward, Jeffrey Barron, Lisa McKenzie, Deborah, Austin Lines, Nikki Drake, Andy Robberts, Lynette Barnhart, Shelby Hunt, Brian Wolfe, Steven Darnell, Jason Grubb, Ashley Arter, and Britney Lee.

Welcome

Commissioner Fix opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance.

Listen & Learn, Emergency Preparedness

Garrett Blevins spoke about the role of the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC). The LEPC plays a critical role in emergency preparedness and response and is designed to develop emergency response plans, provide information to the public, and coordinate local governments and first responders. Blevins provided a history behind the LEPC and explained that LEPC boards consist of individuals from multiple disciplines. Fairfield County's LEPC meets bi-annually. The LEPC enacts an administrative agreement annually to allow EMA to perform administrative duties on its behalf. The LEPC also ensures compliance with the State Emergency Response Commission and provides training and exercises.

Commissioner Fix asked if Fairfield County has ever had a leak or hazardous materials spill.

Blevins stated that the county has had various incidents.

Jon Kochis stated the most recent incident was a battery fire.

Public Comments

Sherry Pymmer of Walnut Township stated the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) denied rehearing of the Eastern Cottontail Solar project proposal and added that the Citizens for Fair Fields committee plans to file with the Supreme Court.

Legal Update

None.

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County Administration Update

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

Week in Review

November 11, 2025, Commissioners' Meeting

The Commissioners will not meet in two weeks, on November 11th, in observance of Veterans' Day. Please note that Fairfield County Offices will be closed on that day.

Highlights of Resolutions

Administrative Approvals

The review packet contains a list of administrative approvals.

Resolution Review

There are 21 resolutions on the agenda for the Regular voting meeting.

Resolutions of note:

- The first resolution on the agenda establishes the 2026 Commission meeting dates. There are 53 meetings scheduled, including 4 evening meetings which will take place at 6:00 p.m. throughout the county.
- The 2026 Holiday Schedule is also on the agenda for the Commissioners' approval.
- There is a resolution for a change order with Gutknecht Construction for the Workforce Center.
- Family and Children First Council has a resolution to identify responsibilities and membership of their executive committee. This also appoints the Chair and Vice Chair of the committee.
- The Prosecutor's Office has a resolution to approve an agreement for legal services between the Commissioners, the Fairfield County Prosecuting Attorney, and the Park District Board.
- RPC has a resolution to approve a bid award to Snider Recreation Inc. for the CDBG2024 Fairfield Beach Park Improvements project.

Budget Review

There was no Budget Review.

Calendar Review/Invitations Received

Informational Items

- Generative AI Hands-On Workshop, October 30, 2025, 9:00 a.m., Fairfield County Job & Family Services, 239 W. Main St., Lancaster
- Bremen Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting, November 13, 2025, 6:30 p.m., Bremen Community Methodist Church, 205 N. Mulberry St., Bremen

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Correspondence

- Fairfield County Clerk of Courts, Branden C. Meyer, October 17, 2025, Letter of Appreciation
- Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency, October 17, 2025, Letter Stating Intent to Submit Application for 2026-2027 Community Services Block Grant
- ONCS Credit Notice of Furnishing, Fairhaven Place, 1681 E. Main St., Lancaster
- Ohio Public Utilities Commission, October 14, 2025, Journal Entry, Case No. 24-881-EL-BGN
- Thank You Card from the Lancaster High School Cross Country Program
- The Senior Hub, Meals on Wheels of Fairfield County, October 2025, prepared by Anna Tobin, Executive Director, White Paper: Why the Fairfield County Senior Services Levy is Foundational, Not Supplemental
- Ohio Association of Senior Centers, October 15, 2025, Letter Regarding Senior Service Levies

Updates from Elected Officials and Department Heads

Garrett Davis from United Way of Fairfield County stated that United Way Worldwide is now focusing on demographics that were not once considered at risk. The focus is on those who are working and still unable to purchase essential goods and services.

Tiffany Wilson spoke about a Family and Children First program designed to keep babies safe in utero.

Engineer Upp stated the salt barn is almost full and his office is preparing for winter.

Dave Burgei provided a report for the Auditor's Office and spoke about the "Making Numbers Count" seminar, Tyler Technology updates, and property tax reform.

Rick Szabrak spoke about a Drive to Succeed Grant and stated the grant will help remove a major workforce barrier.

Corey Clark spoke about the federal government shutdown and its affect on SNAP. He stated there are 7500 individuals in Fairfield County that will be affected by the hold on SNAP benefits.

Commissioner Fix stated that food banks across Central Ohio are bracing for the impact.

Jeff Porter stated Open Enrollment for 2026 health benefits will begin next week.

Dan Neeley stated we are nearing the end of Cybersecurity Month and that cybersecurity training is now a state mandate.

Old Business

Commissioner Davis spoke about the 2025 Lancaster Festival and the flood that decimated the festival. The festival is eligible for a disaster relief loan from the SBA, but the federal government shutdown has delayed such loans indefinitely. He asked the Commission to consider a low interest bridge loan to the festival until the federal loan is processed.

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Deb Connell, Executive Director of the Lancaster Festival, stated the festival is very appreciative of the support and the board is working to get the festival back on track.

Commissioner Fix spoke about meeting with representatives from the Columbus Partnership, and about a meeting with Greenfield Township and the City of Lancaster regarding a CEDA agreement.

New Business

There was no new business.

Regular (Voting) Meeting

The Commissioners continued to the Regular/Voting portion of the meeting, and the following Commissioners were present: Jeff Fix and Steve Davis. Also present: County Administrator, Aundrea Cordle; Deputy County Administrator, Jeff Porter; Commissioners' Clerk, Rochelle Menningen; Budget Director, Bart Hampson; Budget Officer, Staci Knisley; Budget Clerk, Taylor Forquer; EMA and Facilities Director, Jon Kochis; Sheriff's Deputy, Kevin Romine; IT Director, Dan Neeley; JFS Director, Corey Clark; Real Estate Assessment Director, Dave Burgei; Engineer, Jeremiah Upp; Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Amy Brown-Thompson; Economic & Workforce Development Director, Rick Szabrak; FCFC Manager, Tiffany Wilson; Planner, Joshua Hillberry; and Economic Development Specialist, Anthony Iachini. Also in attendance: Garrett Davis, Betty Bennett, George Bennett, Deb Connell, and Sherry Pymer.

Virtual attendees: Joshua Horacek, Leighann Adams, Lori Hawk, Shannon Ward, Jeffrey Barron, Lisa McKenzie, Deborah, Austin Lines, Nikki Drake, Andy Robberts, Lynette Barnhart, Shelby Hunt, Brian Wolfe, Steven Darnell, Jason Grubb, Ashley Arter, and Britney Lee.

Pledge of Allegiance

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

Announcements

None.

Approval of Minutes for October 21, 2025

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Jeff Fix, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Minutes for the Tuesday, October 21, 2025, meeting.

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

Approval of Budget Hearing Minutes for October 21, 2025

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Jeff Fix, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the Budget Hearing Minutes for the Tuesday, October 21, 2025, meeting.

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

Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners

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On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Jeff Fix, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolutions:

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| 2025-10.28.a | A Resolution Authorizing the Approval and Establishment of the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners' 2026 Meeting Dates |
| 2025-10.28.b | A Resolution to Approve the Holiday Schedule for Fairfield County Offices for 2026 |
| 2025-10.28.c | A resolution to approve a memo expense and memo receipt for reimbursing Fairfield County Dog Shelter. |
| 2025-10.28.d | A resolution approving an account to account transfer in a major expenditure object category - Fairfield County Commissioners |
| 2025-10.28.e | A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in major expenditure object categories for the General Fund# 1001, Information Technology - IT |
| 2025-10.28.f | A resolution to approve to appropriate from unappropriated into a major expense category for the Self-Funded Health Insurance Fund# 5376. |
| 2025-10.28.g | A resolution to approve a memo receipt and expense for Stop Loss Pool Sub fund & the Self-Funded Healthcare Fund |

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

Voting aye thereon: Steve Davis and Jeff Fix

Approval of a Resolution from the Fairfield County Court of Common Pleas

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Jeff Fix, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution from the Fairfield County Court of Common Pleas:

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| 2025-10.28.h | A resolution authorizing acceptance of the Community Corrections Grant Agreement Addendum with ODRC for State Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027 |
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Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

Voting aye thereon: Steve Davis and Jeff Fix

Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Engineer

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Jeff Fix, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolutions from the Fairfield County Engineer:

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| 2025-10.28.i | A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle for equipment |
| 2025-10.28.j | A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category County Engineer 2024-Motor Vehicle for comp-time payout |

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2025-10.28.k 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: Steve Davis and Jeff Fix

Approval of a Resolution from Fairfield County Facilities

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

2025-10.28.l A resolution for a Change Order #2 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: Steve Davis and Jeff Fix

Approval of a Resolution from Fairfield County Family and Children First Council

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Jeff Fix, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution from Fairfield County Family and Children First Council:

2025-10.28.m A Resolution to identify the responsibilities and membership of the Family and Children First Council Executive Committee

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

Approval of a Resolution from Fairfield County Job and Family Services

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Jeff Fix, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution from Fairfield County Job and Family Services:

2025-10.28.n A resolution authorizing the approval of a service agreement by and between Fairfield County Job & Family Services, Child Protective Services Division and Christian Children's Home of Ohio

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

Approval of a Resolution from Fairfield County Juvenile Probate Court

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Jeff Fix, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution from the Fairfield County Juvenile Probate Court:

2025-10.28.o A Resolution to Appropriate from Unappropriated in a Major Expenditure Object Category for Fairfield County Probate Court; Fund # 2316 Computer Fund

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

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Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Prosecutor

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Jeff Fix, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolutions from the Fairfield County Prosecutor:

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| 2025-10.28.p | A resolution approving a Fund to Fund transfer from the Prosecutor's Local Match Allocation to Fund 2784 |
| 2025-10.28.q | A resolution to approve the execution of an Agreement for Legal Services between the Fairfield County Board of County Commissioners jointly with the Fairfield County Prosecuting Attorney and the Fairfield County Park District Board of Park Commissioners |

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 Regional Planning Commission

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Jeff Fix, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution from the Fairfield County Regional Planning Commission:

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| 2025-10.28.r | A resolution to approve an award of bid to Snider Recreation Inc for the CDBG - PY2024 - Walnut Township – Fairfield Beach Park Improvements |
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Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Steve Davis and Jeff Fix

Approval of Resolutions from the Fairfield County Treasurer

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Jeff Fix, the Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolutions from the Fairfield County Prosecutor:

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| 2025-10.28.s | A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated in a major expenditure object category Treasurer's office Fund 2804 DTAC |
| 2025-10.28.t | A resolution to appropriate from unappropriated funds in major expenditure object category Treasurer's office Fund 2804 DTAC |

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

Approval of the Payment of Bills

On the motion of Steve Davis and the second of Jeff Fix, the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners voted to approve the following resolution for the Payment of Bills:

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| 2025-10.28.u | A resolution authorizing the approval of payment of invoices for departments that need Board of Commissioners' approval. |
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Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:
Voting aye thereon: Steve Davis and Jeff Fix

Commissioner Fix called a recess at 1:38 p.m.

Budget Hearing Follow Up, Sheriff

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Commissioner Fix reopened the meeting at 2:00 p.m. and the following Commissioners were in attendance: Steve Davis, David Levacy, and Jeff Fix. Also in attendance: Aundrea Cordle, Jeff Porter, Rochelle Menningen, Bennett Niceswanger, Bart Hampson, Staci Knisley, Taylor Forquer, Sheriff Lape, Elisa Dowdy, and Chief Irvin.

Sheriff Lape spoke about allocations and expenditures and stated his office has revenue streams that are not clearly reflected in the budget. The Civil Division, Commissary Fund and inmate agreements all create revenue.

Commissioner Fix spoke about recognizing revenue streams and asked if the Sheriff's Office is charging for body and dash cam video footage. Sheriff Lape stated his office has started charging for the footage. If the requestor is a county resident and they provide their name and address, they get the video for free. Implementing the fee has helped increase revenue and has decreased the number of requests for footage.

Sheriff Lape spoke about the 2026 budget request increase and added that using revenue streams to offset the budget puts the increase at 3.3%, which includes adding the new positions.

Commissioner Levacy stated the Sheriff's Office has the largest budget in the county and the current trajectory of that budget could have alarming future outcomes.

Sheriff Lape stated he understands and feels that the last contract negotiations were fair.

Commissioner Davis updated Commissioner Fix on budget hearings from that morning. He spoke about appropriations for the EMA mobile command unit and the funding to OSU Extension for the nutrition program.

Commissioner Fix stated he understood that the money for the command unit is being encumbered in 2025, and that the money to the OSU Extension program was only for 2026.

Commissioner Davis asked Bart Hamson to compile an analysis of the 5-year outs for the Sheriff's budget.

Commissioner Fix stated the 2026 budget process is the smoothest budget he has ever experienced.

Jeff Porter stated that the health benefit plan stop loss insurance renewal will be in the coming month and added that the pharmacy rebates were up for the 3rd quarter reflecting the new rebate percentages.

The Commissioners discussed the impact of the federal shutdown.

Commissioner Davis asked if there is a list of potential areas of impact to the budget regarding the current closing of the federal government.

Aundrea Cordle stated that the biggest issue is SNAP benefits. She also spoke about the requirement of the state to have a cybersecurity plan. Jeff Porter has been working with Dan Neeley and the Prosecutor's Office to get the plan on the meeting agenda.



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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 2:26 p.m.

Roll call vote of the motion resulted as follows:

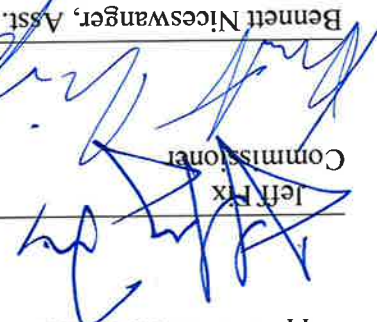
Voting aye thereon: David Levacy, Steve Davis and Jeff Fix

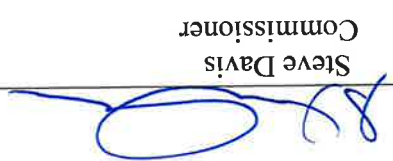
The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, November 4, 2025, in the Commissioners' Hearing Room, 210 E. Main St., Lancaster, OH.

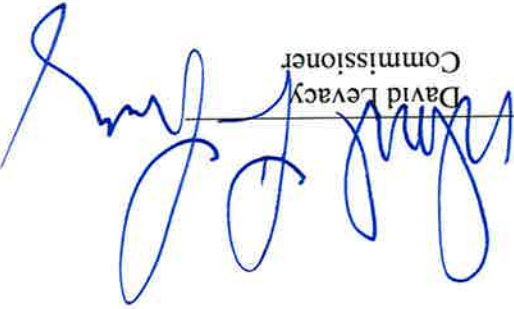
Motion by: David Levacy
Seconded by: Steve Davis
To approve the October 28, 2025, minutes by the following vote:

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

*Approved on November 4, 2025


Jeff Fix
Commissioner


Steve Davis
Commissioner


David Levacy
Commissioner

Bennett Niceswanger, Asst. Clerk