

THE DULY ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, OHIO, MET IN REGULAR SESSION ON NOVEMBER 1, 2018 IN ACCORDANCE WITH OHIO REVISED CODE 305.05, WITH THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS PRESENT: RICK G. WALTERS, PRESIDENT, DAVID A. WHITE, VICE PRESIDENT, AND RONALD L. FEATHERS, MEMBER. THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 9:00 A.M. BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD. MR. WALTERS LED THOSE ATTENDING IN THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO OUR FLAG.

Also attending were Tami Downs, Sarah Pomroy, Konnie Yoho, Tonya Kidder, Allison Hutchings, Brookanne Dixon, Amanda Herron, Chad Adkins from *The Marietta Times*, and Clerk Rick Peoples.

**Washington County Commissioners**  
**AGENDA**  
**9:00 a.m., November 1, 2018**

9:00 Business Meeting  
9:30 David Haught, DLH Design – 311 Third Street Renovations Project  
10:00 Flite Freimann, JFS – Personnel Update

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Addendum to Labor Agreement, Developmental Disabilities  
Bid Specifications and Notice, Terri Lane Lift Station Improvements

**NEW BUSINESS**

Approve Agenda  
Approval of previous meeting's minutes  
Bills from various departments  
Additional Appropriation – 911  
Additional Appropriation – Children Services  
Additional Appropriation – County General, Juvenile Center  
Transfer – Developmental Disabilities  
Transfer – Sheriff (2)  
Transfer – County General (3)  
Then & Now's  
Travel – Job & Family Services (4)  
Travel – Child Support Enforcement Agency  
Travel – Human Resources  
Request from Sheriff for Commissioners to Pay Postage for Juror Notices  
Application to Serve on Behavioral Health Board  
Delinquent Sewer Accounts  
Certification of Delinquent Sewer Accounts  
Engineer – Bid Specifications and Notice for Emergency Repair of Four Landslips

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

Election Day, **Tuesday**, November 6  
Council of Governments, 12:00 p.m., **Monday**, November 5, at Lori's in Caldwell  
Courthouse Closed, **Monday**, November 12, Veterans Day  
Monthly County Home Meeting, 8:30 a.m., **Tuesday**, November 13, at County Home  
Planning Commission, 7:00 p.m., **Monday**, November 19  
Finance Committee, 10:00 a.m., **Tuesday**, November 20  
Court House Closed, **Thursday**, November 22, Thanksgiving Day

**RE: AGENDA**

Mr. White moved and Mr. Feathers seconded a motion to accept the agenda, with the following adjustments:

Add: Additional Appropriation – County General, Security & Transport  
Transfer – County General  
Delete: Transfer – Sheriff

A calling of the roll resulted in the following vote: Rick Walters aye, David White aye, Ron Feathers aye. Motion passed.

**RE: APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Feathers moved and Mr. White seconded a motion to dispense with the reading and approve the minutes of the October 25, 2018 Regular Meeting.

A calling of the roll resulted in the following vote: Rick Walters aye, David White aye, Ron Feathers aye. Motion passed

**RE: BILLS FOR PAYMENT**

Mr. Feathers moved and Mr. White seconded a motion to approve the list of bills from various

departments for payment, as prepared by the County Auditor.

A calling of the roll resulted in the following vote: Rick Walters aye, David White aye, Ron Feathers aye. Motion passed.

**RE: ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS**

Mr. White moved and Mr. Feathers seconded a motion to approve requests for the following additional appropriations:

<u>Department</u>	<u>Account</u>	<u>Amount</u>
911	200-0364-53000	\$ 15,000.00
Children Services	200-0740-51104	\$ 191.00
	200-0743-51104	\$ 5,517.00
	200-0743-53000	\$145,000.00
Co. Gen., Juvenile Ctr.	100-0330-53100	\$ 5,000.00
Co. Gen., S&T	100-0385-51104	\$ 5,000.00
	100-0385-51001	\$ 6,000.00
	100-0385-51101	\$ 87.00
	100-0385-51102	\$ 1,086.00

A calling of the roll resulted in the following vote: Rick Walters aye, David White aye, Ron Feathers aye. Motion passed.

**RE: TRANSFERS**

Mr. Feathers moved and Mr. White seconded a motion to approve the following requests for transfer of funds:

<u>Department</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Dev. Disabilities	200-0620-53000	200-0620-53400	\$ 25,000.00
	200-0620-53000	200-0620-53100	\$ 10,000.00
Sheriff's Sales Tax	100-0384-54300	100-0384-51104	\$ 50,000.00
Co. Gen., Miscellaneous	100-0101-51001	100-0101-53301	\$ 3,550.00
Co. Gen., Maintenance	100-0109-53600	100-0109-53200	\$ 268.05
	100-0109-53202	100-0109-53200	\$ 291.95
Co. Gen., Municipal Ct.	100-0101-51001	100-0240-51102	\$ 2,000.00
Co. Gen., Commissioners	100-0100-53000	100-0100-53500	\$ 955.00

A calling of the roll resulted in the following vote: Rick Walters aye, David White aye, Ron Feathers aye. Motion passed.

**RE: THEN & NOW'S**

Mr. White moved and Mr. Feathers seconded a motion to approve the following Then & Now's:

<u>Dept</u>	<u>Account</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Commissioners	100-0702-53000	Children Services	\$ 150,708.00
Commissioners	100-0109-53600	Schwendeman Agency	\$ 1,618.95
Commissioners	100-0101-53400	Margaret LaPlante	\$ 192.50
Commissioners	100-0101-53400	Margaret LaPlante	\$ 445.50

A calling of the roll resulted in the following vote: Rick Walters aye, David White aye, Ron Feathers aye. Motion passed.

**RE: TRAVEL**

Mr. White moved and Mr. Feathers seconded a motion to approve the following requests for reimbursement of expenses for training and travel pursuant to the policies and procedures and in compliance with the Annual Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2018 and any and all amendments subsequent thereto:

JFS

Nicole Bowling: One-day trips to Union County on the following dates to attend In Person Readiness Meetings:

- January 29, 2019
- February 26, 2019
- March 19, 2019
- April 23, 2019
- May 21, 2019
- June 18, 2019
- July 23, 2019
- August 20, 2019
- September 17, 2019

October 22, 2019  
December 3, 2019

Stephanie Canfield, Tracie Francis: One-day trip to Muskingum County to attend a regional Child Care EDMS training; November 7, 2018.

Kelly Bauerbach, Victoria Masters, Deanna Green: One-day trip to Muskingum County to attend a regional Child Care EDMS training; November 8, 2018.

Dawn Lucas: One-day trip to Columbus to attend PA Cash Analysis Training; November 14, 2018.

#### CSEA

Kim Hinkle, Devin Courtney: One-day trip to Caldwell to attend Fall TPOC Information Session; December 5, 2018.

#### Human Resources

Kathy Thieman: One-day trip to Columbus to attend Winter CCAO/CEAO Conference, December 10, 2018.

A calling of the roll resulted in the following vote: Rick Walters aye, David White aye, Ron Feathers aye. Motion passed.

#### **RE: REQUEST FROM SHERIFF TO PAY POSTAGE FOR JUROR NOTICES**

Mr. White moved and Mr. Feathers seconded a motion to approve a request from Sheriff Larry Mincks for the Commissioners to pay postage, in the amount of \$2,632.50, for mailing notices to prospective jurors, with the Sheriff paying the printing costs.

A calling of the roll resulted in the following vote: Rick Walters aye, David White aye, Ron Feathers aye. Motion passed.

#### **RE: APPLICATION TO SERVE ON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BOARD**

Mr. Feathers moved and Mr. White seconded a motion to approve appointment of John Eric Johnston to the Washington County Behavioral Health Board of Directors for the term November 1, 2018 through June 30, 2022.

Commissioner White said he had the opportunity to talk with Mr. Johnston, who he believes to have appropriate qualifications to serve on the Board, and he will vote in favor of the appointment.

A calling of the roll resulted in the following vote: Rick Walters aye, David White aye, Ron Feathers aye. Motion passed.

#### **RE: DELINQUENT SEWER ACCOUNT**

Mr. Feathers moved and Mr. White seconded a motion to approve sending letters to the following holders of delinquent sewer accounts, requesting them to immediately make payment on those accounts:

Kyle Hodge	Lisa Willey	Scott Tallman	Dave Burt (1)
Kenneth Blanchard	Dave Burt (2)	Scott Fitch	Christopher Carver
Angela Rhodes	Glen Flint	Jeremy Brandjes	Larry Carney
Angela Parker	Joshua Richards	John Smith	Clifford Yost
Dave Burt (1)			

A calling of the roll resulted in the following vote: Rick Walters aye, David White aye, Ron Feathers aye. Motion passed.

#### **RE: CERTIFICATION OF DELINQUENT SEWER ACCOUNTS**

Mr. White moved and Mr. Feathers seconded a motion to approve certification of the following delinquent sewer accounts to County Auditor Bill McFarland, requesting him to place delinquent amounts on property tax bills:

Sally Dickson	Charles Seaman	Karen Anstatt	W.E.E. Fed. Credit Union
Turner's Serv. Ctr.	Randy Norris	John White	Caroline Putnam
Heather Mannix	John Albrecht		

A calling of the roll resulted in the following vote: Rick Walters aye, David White aye, Ron Feathers aye. Motion passed.

#### **RE: BID SPECIFICATIONS AND NOTICE, EMERGENCY REPAIR OF LANDSLIPS**

Mr. White moved and Mr. Feathers seconded a motion to approve bid specifications and notice for the Emergency Landslips Repair of CR 76, CR 8, and CR 133 Project, as prepared and

requested by County Engineer Roger Wright.

The Clerk noted the Engineer's estimate for this project is \$242,537.35, and the required completion date is June 1, 2019. He said this project will be funded 75% from FEMA and 25% from OEMA.

A calling of the roll resulted in the following vote: Rick Walters aye, David White aye, Ron Feathers aye. Motion passed.

**RE: BID SPECIFICATIONS AND NOTICE, TERRI LANE LIFT STATION IMPROVEMENTS**

Mr. Feathers moved and Mr. White seconded a motion to return from Unfinished Business consideration of bid specifications and notice for the Terri Lane Lift Station Improvements project.

A calling of the roll resulted in the following vote: Rick Walters aye, David White aye, Ron Feathers aye. Motion passed.

Mr. White moved and Mr. Feathers seconded a motion to accept bid specifications and notice for the Terri Lane Lift Station Improvements Project, prepared by ADR & Associates, LLC.

Commissioner White said the Commissioners recently took action to halt this project due to uncertainty of funding for it. The Commissioners now, though, intend to apply for a loan from the Ohio Water Development Authority.

A calling of the roll resulted in the following vote: Rick Walters aye, David White aye, Ron Feathers aye. Motion passed.

**RE: COMMENTS FROM VISITORS**

Konnie Yoho said she is a foster parent and expressed her concerns about the recently-approved merger of Children Services with Job and Family Services (JFS). She said she is very disappointed with the notion that children in placement should be returned to their homes, as that can be the worst thing that could happen to some of these kids. She read a letter from a boy thanking his foster parents for being such a big part of his life. Ms. Yoho said inappropriate use of drugs in this area is a major factor in the poor living conditions for many kids. She asked the Commissioners to see the spreadsheet they used to compare costs before and after their planned merging of Children Services and JFS. She noted the Children Services building was built with safety of children, caregivers and staff in mind, and she would hate to lose that security if Children Services is asked to relocate. Ms. Yoho asked why the Commissioners believe they might be able to make better decisions on the placement of children than the trained staff at Children Services. She encouraged both the Commissioners and the Children Services Board to stop the "power struggle" and do what's right for children. She said placements have to be made, as some children simply cannot remain in their homes for a variety of reasons.

Commissioner Feathers said he made that comment about returning kids to their homes, which he believes to have been misconstrued. He said concerns about rising costs of Children Services have been discussed for more than a decade. He noted over two years ago the Commissioners met with members of the Children Services Board to implore them to visit faith-based organizations to solicit both foster parents and placement funds, but none of that has been done. He said he's been told it is easier to place children in Athens County than it is in Washington County. Mr. Feathers thanked the foster parents and Children Services staff for "doing what they do" for our children in need. He said there is no spreadsheet comparing costs before and after merger, as the Commissioners have worked with Ivin Fleenor and have visited other Children Services agencies. Mr. Feathers noted Children Services is now under the wing of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. He said he is frustrated with this "giant public smear campaign" against the Commissioners. He noted members of the Children Services Board of Directors have been invited to serve on an Advisory Committee, and will continue to have input on the care of children. Mr. Feathers said the only changes in responsibilities moving to JFS are those of paying the bills and staffing situations. He said the goal is to manage public funds more strategically.

Tonya Kidder reported she and others at Children Services have indeed reached out to churches and other faith-based organizations to seek out new foster parents and placement funds. She said they attended an ecumenical pastors meeting as well.

Commissioner White said his door is always open, and he welcomes anyone to talk one-on-one with him about concerns and misrepresentations of this merger. He noted he is "thoroughly disgusted" with what he's been reading in the local paper about this decision to merge Children Services and JFS. He said it is the Commissioners' intent to improve services and to find additional funds to be able to do what is needed to be done.

Sarah Pomroy said she has been a foster parent of a 10 year-old for about two and a half months. She noted the child is now in her 8<sup>th</sup> foster home since the age of 5. She said the child actually asked her to be her mom. Ms. Pomroy described the devastating, deplorable conditions the child experienced for a lengthy time. She said she appreciates all that is being done by the Commissioners and by the Children Services Board and staff. She noted it was a very easy process to become foster parents through the Children Services Agency, but it was a challenge for her family to adapt to having a new child in their family.

Commissioner White expressed his appreciation to the foster parents, and said he wished the County had “200 more like them”. He said there is no goal or plan to diminish what the Children Services staff does.

Commissioner Feathers said the Ohio Revised Code allows the Commissioners to appoint members to the Children Services Board, but not to remove them. He said the Commissioners are not trying to micromanage the Agency. He said the Commissioners are responsible for funding the Agency, and that has become increasingly difficult. He noted Ohio law allows the Commissioners to re-assign oversight of the Agency, and the Commissioners after much thought and consideration are opting to re-assign oversight to JFS, with ultimate reporting to the Commissioners. He said Children Services now has a Board that simply refuses to listen to advice and recommendations. Mr. Feathers said he believes the children and staff will be better served by having the current Board in more of an advisory capacity. He said the Agency needs their expertise and their dedication, and the Commissioners want them to continue to advise. Mr. Feathers said the Commissioners are not doing this to demonstrate power, but more to become better stewards of taxpayer funds. He said anything the Commissioners do can be reversed, if warranted.

The visitors noted there will always be placement costs, and there is really no way around that. They said at times these placement costs, by necessity, will be expensive, but caseworkers or the Agency should not be held accountable for that.

President Walters shared a personal experience he had with Children Services and removal of children from their home, describing it as “heartbreaking”. He said one of the goals of this merger is to better leverage funds and secure additional funds. He said he believes working through JFS will be an advantage in applying for more reimbursements the County is eligible for. He said the Commissioners don’t want to “re-invent the wheel” and are not trying to dictate how to run the agency, but are merely interested in securing as much funding as is available through reimbursements, matches, and grants. He noted the Commissioners have been working with the Children Services Board for several years, and finally they put a levy on the ballot that passed in 2017.

The visitors said there have been so many hurtful things said about the staff at Children Services. They suggested the Commissioners haven’t a clue as to what the staff does on a daily basis. They noted employees of the Agency are “the working poor”, having to deal with felons, drug offenders, and abusers. They said it isn’t fair to suggest the Children Services director or staff goes to see if a child in placement can be returned to the home, as that is currently being done through reunification efforts.

Commissioner Feathers apologized for anything he’s said that was misconstrued. He said he has nothing bad to say about the good employees of the Agency.

Ms. Yoho invited the Commissioners to “give us an olive branch” by attending the upcoming Children Services Board meeting at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 8. She said a one-on-one meeting simply won’t result in the Commissioners and the Children Services Board working together for the good of the children. She said attending the meeting might allow the Commissioners to learn more about what the Agency Board, staff, and foster parents do. Commissioners Walters, White and Feathers said they will attend the November 8 meeting of the Children Services Board.

Flite Freimann, Director of Job and Family Services, said he had a very productive meeting with Jamie Vuksic, Executive Director of Children Services Agency. He said they began discussions of children, building and staffing needs. He noted this merger notion has been considered for years, and he is pleased to have provided an additional \$200,000 to Children Services from JFS this fiscal year. He said it is critically important to fund placements, but all options must first be considered. He said he has been assured by the Commissioners there will be no lay-offs as a result of this merger. He said he recently visited Coshocton County JFS with the Commissioners to hear about their comparable merger, and learned it was initially very difficult but has since become very accepted. He noted the merger is intended to integrate available services for the betterment of families. He said it is owed to everyone to proceed with caution, and with the ultimate goal of improved services. He said he will utilize “identification, discussion, deliberation, and input” in developing a plan to collaborate and coordinate functions of both agencies.

The visitors thanked the Commissioners for listening to their concerns and sharing their vision for the future.

Commissioner Feathers said he had a half-hour conversation with a reporter from *The Marietta Times* to discuss the reasons for merging, noting it is most difficult to accurately share an entire message in a brief interview. He said there are indeed things he’s said that he regrets, but there are also things he’s said misrepresented in the press.

Addressing a question as to whether he would guarantee funding for placement of a child in an expensive facility, Mr. Freimann assured that he will first discuss options with the caseworker and if in the end the ultimate recommendation is for placement in that facility, then that is where the child will go and he will find the necessary funding. He said the expense of this placement, though, has to be factored into the decision of placement location.

**RE: 311 THIRD STREET RENOVATIONS PROJECT**

David Haught, architect with DLH Design, updated the Commissioners on the 311 Third Street Renovations Project. He said he has received a number of inquiries from local contractors, and expects to have significant interest in bidding. He shared with the Commissioners his response to an individual asking if this should be a Prevailing Wage project, and how the floodplain regulations might impact the project. Mr. Haught invited the Commissioners to attend a walk-thru he will have on Monday, November 5, for interested contractors. He said he can easily change the project design if the Commissioners opt to use the facility for a different purpose than originally intended.

**RE: JFS PERSONNEL UPDATE**

Flite Freimann, Director of Washington County Department of Job and Family Services, informed the Commissioners he intends to fill a vacancy soon to be created by retirement of a long-time employee, and he is in the process of replacing a member of his I.T. staff.

Mr. Freimann said he is pleased to report a recent meeting with representatives from the Washington County Career Center and Washington State Community College to discuss workforce development and training programs. He said these meetings will continue, hoping to collaborate and provide clear, attainable pathways for local individuals who are seeking job skills and/or opportunities.

**RE: ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Feathers moved and Mr. White seconded a motion to adjourn. A calling of the roll resulted in a unanimous vote in favor. The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

\_\_\_\_\_, President

\_\_\_\_\_, Vice President

\_\_\_\_\_, Member

\_\_\_\_\_, Clerk