

THE DULY ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, OHIO, MET IN REGULAR SESSION ON MARCH 14, 2019 IN ACCORDANCE WITH OHIO REVISED CODE 305.05, WITH THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS PRESENT: DAVID A. WHITE, PRESIDENT, RONALD L. FEATHERS, VICE PRESIDENT, AND KEVIN J. RITTER, MEMBER. THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 9:00 A.M. BY THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD. MR. WHITE LED THOSE ATTENDING IN THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO OUR FLAG.

Also attending were:

Roger Wright, County Engineer
Chris Wilson, Building Official
Flite Freimann, Director, Job and Family Services
Tim Marty, Buildings & Grounds Superintendent
Kim Hinkle, Child Support Enforcement Agency
Rich Hays, EMA Director
Donnie Rader, I.T. Department
Kathy Thieman, Director of Human Resources
Glenn Ray, Board of Elections
Dennis Sipe, Board of Elections
John Halliday, Board of Elections
Charles Wentz, Board of Elections
Mandy Amos, Board of Elections
Peggy Byers, Board of Elections
Emily Webb, Board of Elections
Gary Doan, Muskingum Township Trustee
Karen Doan
Alice Stewart, Children Services
Lisa Ball, Children Services
Kimberly Ensign, Children Services
Yvonne Garvey, Children Services
Jamie Vuksic, Children Services
Dawn Lucas, Job and Family Services
Steve Porter
Teresa Porter
Michael Tatar, WTAP News
Chad Adkins, *The Marietta Times*
Rick Peoples, Clerk

**Washington County Commissioners
AGENDA
9:00 a.m., March 14, 2019**

9:00 Business Meeting
9:30 Flite Freimann, JFS – Merger Update
10:00 Board of Elections – Relocation of Office
10:30 Sandy Lahmers, Soil & Water Conservation District – Program Update

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Approve Agenda
Approval of previous meeting's minutes
Bills from various departments
Additional Appropriation - MVGT
Transfer – Family & Children First
Transfer – County General, Jail
Transfer – County General, Building Dept.
Then & Now's
Travel – Family & Children First (2)
Travel – Job and Family Services
Travel – Engineer (2)
CCMEP Youth Program Contract
Jail Contracts (5)
Resignations from Behavioral Health Board
Engineer – Change Order #1, Landslip Repair Project

DATES TO REMEMBER

Finance Committee, 10:00 a.m., **Tuesday**, March 19, in Annex Conference Room A
Township Association Meeting, 6:30 p.m., **Thursday**, March 28, at Engineer's Office

RE: APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Feathers moved and Mr. Ritter seconded a motion to approve the agenda, with the following

adjustments:

Add: Additional Appropriation – Job and Family Services
Transfer – County General, Jail

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

RE: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Feathers moved and Mr. Ritter seconded a motion to dispense with the reading and approve the minutes of the March 7, 2019 Regular Meeting.

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

RE: BILLS FOR PAYMENT

Mr. Feathers moved and Mr. Ritter 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: David White aye, Ron Feathers aye, Kevin Ritter aye. Motion passed.

RE: ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS

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

<u>Department</u>	<u>Account</u>	<u>Amount</u>
MVGT	200-0540-52006	\$ 1,000.00
JFS	200-0721-57402	\$100,000.00

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

RE: TRANSFERS

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

<u>Department</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Family & Children First	602-2030-52000	602-2030-57400	\$ 250.00
Co. Gen., Jail	100-0381-53020	100-0381-54400	\$ 2,050.00
	100-0381-53405	100-0381-54400	\$ 235.89
Co. Gen., Building Dept.	100-0170-51001	100-0170-51110	\$ 7,488.00

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

RE: THEN & NOW'S

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

Dept	Account	Vendor	Amount
County Home	200-0630-53000	L& P Services	\$ 899.33
JFS	200-0720-59001	Bldg. Bridges	\$ 917.50
Commissioners	200-2050-54000	Speedway	\$ 485.00
Veterans	100-0700-57401	The Lampo Group	\$ 2,343.30
Commissioners	100-0100-57501	Belpre Area Chamber	\$ 191.00
Commissioners	100-0109-53000	Johnson Controls	\$ 350.25
Commissioners	100-0109-53000	Johnson Controls	\$ 250.00
Sewer	400-0112-53000	Force Electric	\$ 390.00
Sewer	400-0112-53000	Force Electric	\$ 320.00
Commissioners	100-0602-53000	Ohio Dept of Health	\$ 3,569.31
JFS	200-0720-59001	Bldg. Bridges	\$ 815.00
Commissioners	100-0107-57400	OSU	\$ 65,126.25
Commissioners	100-0870-53001	OSU	\$ 13,000.00
Commissioners	100-0101-53400	Jay Gerber	\$ 365.00

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

RE: TRAVEL REQUESTS

Mr. Ritter 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 2019 and any and all amendments subsequent thereto:

Family & Children First

Cindy Davis: Three-day trip to Columbus to attend Early Childhood Conference; March 25-27, 2019.

Elaine Corbitt: One-day trip to Chillicothe to attend Southeast Trauma Informed Care Collaborative Conference; April 12, 2019.

JFS

Dawn Lucas, Amanda Sutphin: One-day trip to Athens to attend Fiscal Meeting; March 20, 2019.

Engineer

Justin Chesser, Paul Huck, Lane Curtis, Levi Cochran: Two-day trip to Mt. Sterling to attend 2019 CEAO Bridge Workers, Supervisors and Engineers Conference; April 10-11-2019.

Tim January, Kurt Zimmer: Two-day trip to Columbus to attend 2019 Ohio Ready Mix Concrete Certification Workshop; March 20-21, 2019.

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

RE: CCMEP YOUTH PROGRAM CONTRACT

Mr. Feathers moved and Mr. Ritter seconded a motion to approve a contract with Zachary Treadway to participate in the CCMEP Youth Employment Program of Washington County, during the period March 24, 2019 through May 24, 2019, at the hourly rate of \$9.00, not to exceed 40 hours per week, and to allow Mr. White to sign the Contract.

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

RE: JAIL CONTRACTS

Mr. Ritter moved and Mr. Feathers seconded a motion to approve contracts with the following entities to house their prisoners in the Washington County Jail, during the period May 1, 2019 through April 30, 2020, at the daily rate of \$68.00:

Muskingum County
Vinton County
Morgan County
City of Jackson
Village of Pomeroy

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

Alice Stewart asked why the Commissioners would enter into agreements to house prisoners at the daily rate of \$68.00 if that rate results in a net loss to the County, as reported by President White. Mr. White said it costs \$72.00 per day for each prisoner housed at the County Jail. He said the Sheriff implemented an increase in the rate this year, but it still does not cover expenses. Mr. White said, though, without these contracts the Jail would suffer financially even more than it is now.

RE: RESIGNATIONS FROM BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BOARD

The Commissioners acknowledged receipt of notice from Executive Director David Browne of the resignations of LeeAnn Price and Eric Johnston from the Washington County Behavioral Health Board.

President White said he is disappointed that within about five (5) months there have been about five (5) resignations from the Behavioral Health Board. He noted all of those resigning were appointed by the Commissioners, and this is "extremely indicative of poor leadership at Behavioral Health".

RE: CHANGE ORDER #1, CR-10 LANDSLIP REPAIR PROJECT

Mr. Feathers moved and Mr. Ritter seconded a motion to approve Change Order #1 for the County Road 10 Landslip Repair Project, contractor Bob Lane's Welding, adding \$14,817.25 to the original contract amount of \$36,372.00, for a new contract amount of \$51,189.27, due to specific quantities used during the Project, as prepared and requested by County Engineer Roger Wright.

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

RE: COMMENTS FROM VISITORS

Building Official Chris Wilson informed the Commissioners much good information was received at a recent conference in Cincinnati for inspectors. He reported his department's customer portal is now active for use by customers, contractors, staff, and others. He said he will promote its use to affiliated counties, cities and villages.

EMA Director Rich Hays said Governor DeWine has declared a state of emergency for Washington County due to recent heavy rain damages.

Teresa Porter said she has been following the recent interaction of Friends of Lower Muskingum River (FLMR) with the Commissioners pertaining to the request from FLMR for a letter of support in application for a grant to purchase property near Cutler. She said she is amazed the Commissioners turned down this request. She noted Hocking County has realized financial gain by creating recreational and conservation areas, with approximately 122 businesses directly related to those initiatives.

President White noted each of the Commissioners disapproved the request from FLMR for different reasons.

Ms. Porter asked the Commissioners to reconsider their decision and to support the efforts of FLMR. She said she believes the application deadline is April 12, 2019. President White thanked Ms. Porter for her comments and, responding to a question from her, said "there is a chance for reconsideration".

Steve Porter asked the Commissioners why there are so many resignations from the Behavioral Health Board. President White said this is a very large Board and he believes those who have resigned did so because (1) there is a concerted effort to eliminate Board members appointed by the Commissioners, or (2) they are disgruntled with the leadership of the organization. He said a few of those who resigned have shared in confidence their concerns. Commissioner Ritter said he intends to follow up with both Ms. Price and Mr. Johnston to determine why they resigned from the Board. Commissioner Feathers said he will reserve comment until the Commissioners have the opportunity for discussion with the resigning Board members.

RE: UPDATE ON MERGING OF JFS AND CHILDREN SERVICES

Flite Freimann, Executive Director of Washington County Department of Job and Family Services (JFS), reported a Children Services cash balance of \$304,426 as of March 14, 2019, an amount that will cover expenses through March. He said he will need to ask for an advance of funds later in the month, though, to carry the Agency through until first half tax settlement is made.

Mr. Freimann said the State Employee Relations Board (SERB) has recognized AFSCME as union representative for Children Services staff. He said there will be one union, but two collective bargaining units (one for JFS and one for Children Services).

Mr. Freimann said there has been much misinformation about the consolidation. He noted he began talking with the Commissioners about this merger last November. He reviewed the reasons for merger, including:

- Budget savings based on consolidation, through better leveraging and use of federal funds.
- Reductions of duplicated costs of operations (approximately \$246,089 savings in salaries, benefits, and maintenance).
- Coordination of services offered in one location.

Mr. Freimann said if the agencies aren't relocated into one facility, then he would need an additional \$135,349 to operate Children Services. He said "staying the same is not an option". He shared with the Commissioners why it is advantageous for JFS and Children Services to be housed together, specifically noting possible reduction in travel costs. He said this merger is about improving services to County residents as well as reduction in costs. He noted a single location will provide a one-stop shop – universal, holistic wraparound services. He said TANF funds could appropriately be used for kinship placements, a high priority of Children Services, if the agencies operated together rather than separately.

Mr. Freimann explained why he recommended moving JFS staff to the Children Services facility:

- There is a suitable visitation center at Children Services, which helps to reunite families.
- The Children Services building allows for intensive case supervision.
- TANF funds can be used in placement of children at 100%, as opposed to IVE funds at 50%.
- There are three (3) visitation rooms at Children Services, but only two (2) at JFS.
- There is a training room at Children Services that may allow for regional training events.
- Ohio Means Jobs is currently housed at JFS, and could not easily relocate.
- JFS is now fully occupied.

Mr. Freimann said Washington County currently has the second highest bond rating available. He said construction costs, legal fees and financing over twenty (20) years could all be paid by JFS, resulting in no significant costs to the County. Mr. Freimann said a move of Children Services to JFS would not allow for such cost advantage.

Summarizing, Mr. Freimann said moving JFS to Children Services would result in better services, more likelihood of reuniting families, and reduction in operating costs.

President White thanked Mr. Freimann for his “cogent argument” in favor of relocating JFS to Children Services. He cautioned, though, that there would be additional costs in moving other departments to accommodate the addition of JFS to Children Services. He said he favors moving Children Services to JFS because moving expenses are contained in the one move. He noted if JFS moves to Children Services, the Commissioners’ Office and the Board of Elections would have to be relocated. Noting it would not be much of a burden for the Commissioners to move, Mr. White said moving the Board of Elections is not so simple. He said there are major concerns with both the JFS building and the OSU Extension Office building being used for the Board of Elections.

Mr. White said the timing of relocating the Board of Elections might not be prudent, as extensive testing and training on new voting machines must be done during the summer, and then the staff will need to adequately prepare for the November 2020 general election. He said costs of relocating the Board of Elections will be borne by the County General Fund. Mr. White said total costs for options have not yet been determined, as it is not yet known which departments might have to be moved. He said the Commissioners need to develop a long-range strategic plan, rather than proceed haphazardly. He said he doesn’t believe this consolidation of JFS and Children Services, and resulting relocation of other departments, can be made until 2021. Mr. White said the only logical move at this time is for Children Services to relocate to the JFS building, as it is least disruptive. He noted the agencies might even have to move back into Children Services at some time in the future.

RE: BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Members of the Board of Elections, including Dennis Sipe, Glenn Ray, Charles Wentz and John Halliday, discussed with the Commissioners suggested options for relocating the Board of Elections Offices.

Mr. Sipe said his purpose is not to tell the Commissioners how to operate the County or other departments, including JFS and Children Services. He said his Board’s sole purpose is to provide for legitimate elections in Washington County, and to do so adequate facilities are necessary. He said his Board is not opposed to assisting the Commissioners in providing services.

Mr. Sipe noted the Board of Elections must adhere to specific state and federal guidelines on providing suitable locations for polling places. He asked the Commissioners to not request relocation of the Board of Elections offices on short notice, as there is much that needs to be done with selecting new voting machines and training on those machines. He suggested that if the Board of Elections must move, then that move be undertaken after 2020. Mr. Sipe asked the Commissioners to be strategic and thoughtful in their planning.

Referencing recent articles that suggested the Board of Elections “constantly is moving the goal post”, Mr. Sipe said that is not at all the case. He cautioned, though, that any new space must have adequate storage and training room(s). Mr. Sipe said his Board is not trying to be “obstructionists”.

Mr. Sipe explained why he is not in favor of moving the Board of Elections to JFS, the OSU Extension Office, or to privately-owned rental space. He said access to JFS during times of floods is challenging. He noted the basement of the OSU Extension Office has moisture issues and a different floor plan would need to be created, along with paving of the parking area. He said the County shouldn’t pay for leased space if there is adequate County-owned space available. Mr. Sipe said he has gone so far as to wonder if the JFS facility could house the Juvenile Center, freeing up current space for other use. Or, he said, the Commissioners might consider constructing another building on the Children Services property to house the Board of Elections.

Mr. Wentz said other Board members agree with Mr. Sipe in that they don’t consider it feasible to move the Board of Elections prior to 2021, and they want to ensure that upcoming elections are both fair and honest.

Steve Porter said he has been following this relocation issue, noting simply moving from one building to another won’t create an “instant fix” to problems. He said it is troubling to hear Mr. White suggest that the agencies “might even have to move back into Children Services at some time in the future”. He encouraged the Commissioners to take their time in order to “get it right the first time”. He suggested the agencies certainly can effectively communicate apart from each other in this electronic age. Mr. Porter said he believes Children Services Agency and the Board of Elections should stay in the current Children Services facility. He said he wonders why this issue is just now surfacing, and why the previous JFS Director didn’t pursue this initiative. He said cost savings could be realized simply by re-writing job descriptions.

President White said housing the two agencies under one roof can demonstrably reduce operating costs and generate savings to Children Services. Mr. Feathers said the County cannot be reimbursed to the maximum if the two agencies continue operating in separate locations. He said the previous JFS Director had initiated research into combining the two agencies, but his retirement prompted the Commissioners to postpone action until the new Director was in place. Mr. Feathers said relocation must create efficiencies in operations, and must provide better services. He said the County cannot afford to “leave it as it is”. He said he is surprised to hear President White express his preference in moving Children Services to JFS, as the Commissioners haven’t yet discussed the options available to them.

RE: SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT UPDATE

Sandy Lahmers, Soil Water Conservation District Program Administrator, updated the Commissioners on projects and initiatives. She said the District is now under the Ohio Department of Agriculture, and the newly-named director of that Department will conduct a “listening tour” with a stop in Marietta on April 1. She encouraged the Commissioners to attend.

On April 24, Ms. Lahmers said Soil & Water will sponsor a competition between high school teams at Broughton’s on State Route 821.

The Commissioners reported the disbursement from Buckeye Hills RC&D upon that agency’s termination was applied toward an increase in funding of the Southeastern Ohio Port Authority’s economic development efforts in Washington County.

The Commissioners said it would set a precedent if Ms. Lahmers waived the floodplain variance fee for a proposed Eagle Scout project to install batting cages near the baseball fields. It was suggested the Scout seek out funds from other sources to pay the approximate \$100 fee. Building Official Chris Wilson said the individual will also need to pay his inspection fees of about \$350.

Ms. Lahmers said she is in the process of hiring an Agriculture Technician. She and Mr. Wilson agreed the floodplain management software can now be transitioned from the Building Department to Soil & Water.

RE: ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Feathers moved and Mr. Ritter seconded a motion to adjourn. A calling of the roll resulted in a unanimous vote in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

_____, President

_____, Vice President

_____, Member

_____, Clerk