

The Board of County Commissioners, Highland County, Ohio, met this day for a Special Meeting/Department Head Meeting with David Daniels, Brad Roades and Terry Britton present.

Mr. Daniels called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. All documents referenced in the minutes are filed in the Commissioners' office and are available for review upon request.

NOTE Dave Bushelman, Jeremy Ratcliff, Larry Gray, Tonya Sturgill, Tammy Newsome, Vickie Warnock, Anneka Collins, Ike Hodson, Chad McConaughy, Alex Butler, Rocky Coss, Jared Warner, Amy Bradley, Karen Faust, Michelle Swallen, Chris Fauber, Brett Geary, Mary Remsing, Nicole Oberrecht were present for the meeting.

1. Instances of Potential Loss

Commissioner Daniels started out by stating “over the course of the last year we have had several different incidents where we have had some potential losses not only here, but within our liability insurance. One of the things that happens when we call CORSA is they want to know what policy and procedures we have in place.”

- Caution was given last time we contacted CORSA that we needed to tighten up our policy and procedures or they could potentially drop our coverage
- *Identify one person from your office to attend monthly compliance meetings in 2025. This would identify CORSA updates and making sure we are doing our part when it comes to loss control and policies and procedures.*

2. Right Stuff Software

Time keeping software. “Last year the state auditors came into our post audit meeting and let us know our accruals are un-auditable.”

- Sheriff's Office and Job and Family Services to start in June of 2025
- *Feedback if it would be advantageous within your department. Would this be beneficial countywide?*

3. Budget Shortfall / JFS Levy

JFS Renewal did not pass – additional burden on General Fund – will lose \$750,000.00 out of our revenue stream for that.

- Jeremy Ratcliff on cost saving measures “\$1.5-million-dollar request from general fund. if the cost stays the same. Costs are anticipated to rise 10%. Currently we are working to recruit and retain local foster homes and local foster parents. Currently they have 15 in which they are working on.”
- Commissioner Daniels asked if he thought they would go back to the ballot in the future.
- New tax based on new evaluations, will have to decide what millage they will run it on, will have to think where they will be in 2028-2029.
- No singular funding source for foster care directly – the levy was the only source for that.

4. Capital Improvement Projects

Currently 30 days from our ARPA deadline. We are starting to look at current Capital Improvement Balances – Court House needs repairs.

- Commissioner Daniels asked Nicole Oberrecht to speak on the current Capital Improvement Projects:

- o New OSU Extension Building
- o Records Storage Building
- o Carpeting Improvements throughout County Buildings
- o Jail Intercom/HVAC Improvements
- o Admin Building Improvements
- Expressed that we want to hear from other department heads and buildings we are not necessarily in all of the time to know what improvements need made.
- Nicole Spoke on ARPA Projects – Money has to be obligated by the end of 2024 and expended by 2026.
 - o 97% Encumbered Currently, 60% of funds spent.
 - o 1/3 to Sewer Projects, 1/3 to Engineer's Building, 10% to Livestock Building at Fairgrounds, 10% to broadband, and other misc. senior citizens/library projects.
- **Start a group with courthouse folks, get an idea of what we need to address, and a project scope for what we could hopefully start next year.**
- We have started a new process with the Admin Building to just go out and hire a general contractor...bringing them in at the beginning and working with the office holders.

5. 2025 Wages

- 3.5% raises added to the 2025 Budgets that were submitted for general fund employees, Commissioners will add that money into the budgets when it is sent back to the Department Heads.

- Commissioner Daniels added that we would not be making one-off adjustments.
 - Commissioner Daniels highlighted the need for a Compensation Plan that is comparable with other counties.
 - Ask everyone to stick with a 3.5% at the beginning of the year
 - o **Working with Clemans & Nelson to do a Compensation Plan/Wage Study and want to be done by April of 2025. All Department Heads will need to submit detailed job descriptions.**
 - Brett Geary of Clemans and Nelson spoke on the process along with going over the handout that represented what they had done at Job and Family Services in 2020.
 - o In order to get a compensation plan created that we can use among departments, we have to start with good accurate Job Descriptions.
 - o Internal Comparisons of jobs within the county and External Comparisons.
 - o Point Factor Values for Jobs -Based off of the job, not necessarily the person. Points would be assigned based off of entry level descriptions, degree/education, supervision, etc.
- **Group discussion among various elected officials or office holders regarding long term employees making less than new hires. Also discussed were longevity bumps/increases. Another topic of discussion was allowing a few sick days to be turned to personal days as well as changing the vacation accrual policy or doing vacation pay-outs. ****

6. Open Discussion – Updates from Department Heads

Anneka Collins – RISE Program, Task Force Updates, and Salaries within her office. She also gave encouragement to Jeremy to re-run the levy.

Larry Gray – BWC Levy Passed, Echoed Salaries and the need for a re-evaluation of certified employees.

Dave Bushelman – Has been working with Schools and keeping them informed with Emergency Plans.

Judge Coss – Courthouse maintenance and renovations, emphasized the need for building updates at probation. He also encouraged Levy to be re-run, and for department heads and elected officials to get behind it and campaign more. Encouraged door to door campaigning.

Tammy Newsome – Soil and Water was awarded a new grant which will help fund an additional employee.

Amy Bradley – Handbook / Policies and Procedures.

Michelle Swallen – Deputy Director position is still open, voter turnout/election help.

Vickie Warnock – Payroll/Salaries and the importance of a longevity policy. Also highlighted her new tax delinquency program.

Chris Fauber – Noted that he allows his employees to use three personal days in the first year of employment instead of waiting a year to get vacation. Highlighted the Solar money they have received (\$1.2 million) that should be able to be used next year.

Jared Warner – Highlighted that his levy also failed and because of that they will not be doing any raises. He recommended a private sector comparison as he stated we need to be able to compete.

Also he noted the vacation schedule, to make the probationary period shorter and to get a few personal days.

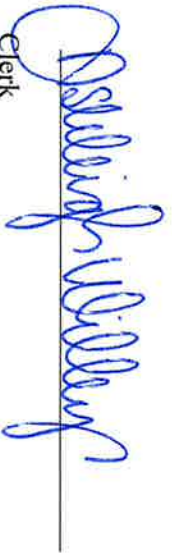
Chad McConaughy – Senate Bill 94, Salaries, asked about a group home for JFS, asked to think about changing the vacation policy.

Ike Hodson – Spoke on courthouse repairs that are needed and also salaries and comparisons with like structured jobs within the county.

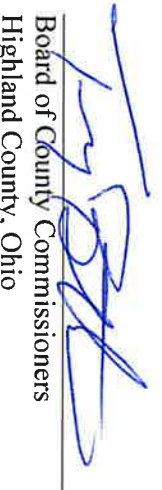
Tonya Sturgill – Probation Department upgrades/painting, policy and procedures, vacation policy.

Alex Butler – Discussed the levies and also the incoming solar money for 2025.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:25 p.m.



Clerk



Board of County Commissioners
Highland County, Ohio