

March 5, 2024

MINUTES OF MARCH 5th MEETING

Commissioners were all present. Staff and Commissioner Candidates Joe Sherman and Kathy Kelley recited the pledge at 9:00. Purchase orders and bills were reviewed and signed.

Pending issues were discussed with the following resolutions approved and signed:

V111-149 Minutes of February 29, 2024:

1st-Rush 2nd-Striker Roll Call: Crowe-ABSENT, Striker-yes, Rush-yes

V111-150 Reimbursement of Funds-Annex

1st-Striker 2nd-Rush Roll Call: Rush-yes, Striker-yes, Crowe-yes

V111-151 Payment of Bills from Ditch Maintenance

1st-Rush 2nd-Striker Roll Call: Crowe-yes, Rush-yes, Striker-yes

V111-152 Additional Appropriation 1st half real estate Auglaize/Logan

1st-Striker 2nd-Rush Roll Call: Rush-yes, Striker-yes, Crowe-yes

V111-153 Award Bid Reed Road Packaged WWTP to Norwalk Concrete \$267,783 with an additional PO for \$187,217 for other expenses per County Engineer Luke Underwood

1st-Rush 2nd-Striker Roll Call: Striker-yes, Crowe-yes, Rush-yes

V111-154 Reallocation of Funds- Travel and Computer Licenses

1st-Striker 2nd-Rush Roll Call: Rush-yes, Striker-yes, Crowe-yes

Commissioner Rush moved to approve on the recommendation of the Logan County Engineer the joint ditch maintenance levy for Bell Joint with a 0% maintenance assessment, Southfork with a 0% maintenance assessment, Liggett (Lat) with a 5% maintenance assessment, and Banning Joint with a 5% maintenance assessment for tax year 2024. Commissioner Striker seconded the motion. Roll Call Crowe-yes, Striker-yes, Rush-yes.

Discussion was had about the increased cost from Christmas Garland PO. The original PO needs an additional \$200 to come from the permanent improvement fund. Commissioner Crowe moved to approve the additional \$200, and Commissioner Striker seconded the motion. Roll Call Rush-yes, Crowe-yes, Striker-yes.

Senator Rob McColley came in to give updates and answer any questions and concerns. Commissioner Crowe-where is the Senator at on state funding appropriations? Senator McColley-the deadline is April 8 for submissions. Probably mid-May once they meet with the finance chair and figure out what the inventory is for the projects. The plan is to do it the same way he has always done it and try to make sure the representatives agree but remember that resources are finite. Commissioner Crowe-number one on our list is to match Jon Cross's commitment to the fairgrounds. The fair board has been working for a few years to get this in place and it would be nice to match the \$500,000 to the ag society. County will be using **America Rescue Funds** for drainage and infrastructure at the fairgrounds. Talking about going with four buildings in a quad for multipurpose and multiuse. As they build and replace, they will demolish the old. Keep the old show arena to repurpose, it has a lot of nostalgia. The Senator asked what the estimated total project cost would be. Crowe said probably around \$2 million. The Senator thinks it is a reasonable request since we also have skin in the game and we're covering at least 50% of the cost. Commissioner Striker asked Senator McColley about solar projects coming up regarding PILOT taxation. Is there any change that the state must make because there is a school that has bonds? Senator McColley -this county interprets the revised code differently when it deals with tax than other counties. You can't recoup CAUV if the classification changes as the result of these projects. If it all changes to solar it can be changed. They still owe taxes on the underlying ground. They are not completely relieved from taxation based on the revised code. Our county prosecutor can request Attorney General interpretations of the codes. Senator McColley spoke directly with the Attorney General about this specific issue. He is willing to look at it, but it said would be easier and quicker to get the request from our County Prosecutor. McColley's opinion is it would be worth it to request the attorney general's opinion and have a final say once and for all. No other county is completely removing parcels from the tax. Typically, a provision is made in the contract. Commissioner Striker-is there leverage for commissioners to have that put in the contract? Senator McColley-yes and senate Bill 52 ties into it they can sign MOU with conditions from developer. Make sure the developer knows you have the opinion of the

Attorney General. Commissioner Crowe asked if the existing pilots would revert to the tax. McColley said to ask the Attorney General. He does not think that the code was meant to remove the developers from any tax obligations. Commissioner Striker asked if the state has thought of a cost-of-living increase in the PILOT payments? Senator McColley thinks it is worth a discussion. There is a lot of federal subsidization and something that needs to be revisited. Commissioner Rush asked if there was money available that would help with ongoing water issues in the villages in the county. Senator McColley gave an example of another village using USDA money or H2Ohio. USDA is a great place to start for water improvements. Commissioner Crowe brought up the issue with Forest and their sewage/water issues as an example. Commissioner Striker asked about the state's ideas for future jail funding. We are involved in multicounty which is multiple Representatives and Senators that would need to agree. Senator McColley agrees this is an ongoing issue. They have passed legislation for Issue 2 and are making sure it runs effectively and efficiently and there are discussions every two years on the budget. Part of the discussions is the overcrowding being due to mental health patients. Ideas to find proper placement and care for individuals that don't necessarily need to be in jail.

Representative Jon Cross also brought up the issue in Forest. He met the new Mayor and developed a good working relationship quickly. On Thursday Representative Cross and the Mayor of Forest will be holding a conference call with the EPA Director. They are going to see what they can do in the short term to help them. Will update after the meeting on Thursday. Regarding the Capital budget when the bill is passed it will take 90 days before the checks are sent out. Representative Cross is looking into additional projects that can be funded by the capitol budget. There is approximately \$2million in the capital budget for our district. The House is still working on Issue 2. When back in session in April it will be one of the top priorities along with the budget. Commissioner Striker asked about sales tax. Representative Cross- that is a long-term conversation. They are continuing to monitor. Last budget we cut taxes by \$3 million in our district and business taxes by \$5200 per business. Commissioner Crowe asked if income tax was at zero how will you have money to run small local government? Representative Cross- it's about trying to widen the tax base and bring people here. We must have 0 income tax to attract business. More people here means more buying. Ohio must become more competitive to allow us to increase our population, bring people here, and widen our tax base. Commissioners are concerned because you must make up for it somewhere. Commissioner Rush- what happens first get tax to zero or more people coming in? Representative Cross- it could take 6-8 years to get that tax to zero. If we took it right to zero it would create a \$11-\$20 billion hole in budget. Every budget Representative Cross has served on he has lowered the taxes. Sales tax has helped drive a lot of funding. We are not losing money it is about how we prioritize those dollars. Commissioner Crowe- wants to make sure that while you are making these decisions in Columbus you are thinking about the local governments and the ramifications those decisions will have on them. There have been intersection concerns Cross arranged for a lighted stop sign to be installed at the intersection of SR 235 and SR 67.

Josh Anderson- HHWP/CAC came in to update- Commissioner Rush-How are things looking? Josh- We got our federal award for July 24-June 25. Previously awarded \$500,000. We asked the state if we could leverage those funds to increase the budget for federal funding. They did grant us that. We will have a full-size program once there is a ramp up period. That does not include the capitol purchases of buildings. We have been in discussion with Regional Planning. Funds that might be available. They would like to purchase a property and have an office with space to park vehicles, ideally on the same campus as Head Start. At best it is 50/50 shot. It's based on land/property owner. Public transit will be up and running in JULY. Commissioner Crowe- head start doing well? Josh-Yes, they are doing well with attendance and enrollment. Commissioner Crowe- any more information on America Rescue Funds for transportation? Josh- it's worth trying again to get the funds. Commissioner Striker-have you asked the state Representative or Senator if they have any pull or information on funds that can be available or used? Would be worth exploring.

Kara Brown, Amy Newland, and Cayla Warnock-Board of DD came to discuss long-term short-term cost saving measures. First, our current air conditioner is about 15 years old. It is plumbed incorrectly; and we had an issue. They want to put a side system on the A/C, but it is about a \$14,000 repair. That is a lot for something they are telling us is at the end of its lifespan. Maybe we can use the county **America Rescue Funds** for the replacement. The old one uses old refrigerant that is not even made anymore. We are not in a position for those kinds of funds. We do traditionally pay for our own HVAC systems. Commissioners agreed that ARF money could be used for the project. Kara-What do you need from us? Commissioner Crowe-will need to go out for bid. Kara will contact Richard and start the bid process. Kara- Thank you for letting us put the pinwheels out front. DD really appreciates it. What are we doing to save money? This was one of the things discussed at the last meeting. The last levy was in 2013 and was projected to last 5 years. We have made it last 7 years longer. When I started in 2016 it was projected to be out of funds by 2020, we have pushed that out 5 years based on the big decisions that have been made. There has been a total of \$6,098,236 in savings during that time. This is really about a culture of decision making. How do we plan for the long term not just the short term. We received a \$10,000 Grant towards Crisis Intervention. This will allow two staff members to be trained as trainers in CPI (non-violent crisis intervention). Bulk of our own America Rescue Funds are being used for accessible communities and universal changing tables. There will be 2-3 moveable sensory trailers and adult changing tables for use throughout the county. There will also be universal changing tables put in around the county. The Summer Learning and After school opportunities grant is in its final year. It will end April 18. The after school and summer program will not continue beyond this year unless other grant funds are identified. We are applying for the Nita M. Lowery 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant which would allow for the after school and summer program to continue for the next 5 years. There is a benefit that is a little more tangible and that's the benefit to the people who we serve. We will be using our own **ARF** funds for our Handicap accessible playground addition. We need the commissioner's approval since it is around the building. This will be at no cost to taxpayers. There will be a total of 6 projects that will remove mulch and asphalt, fix and add concrete, and add rubber instead of mulch at no cost to the county fund. Commissioner Crowe moved to approve concrete work around board of DD building. Commissioner Rush seconded the motion. Roll Call: Crowe-yes, Rush-yes, Striker-yes.

Roll call resulted as follows:

_____, YES/NO
 President of the Board-Roger E. Crowe

_____, YES/NO
 Fred M. Rush

_____, YES/NO
 Timothy L. Striker

Attest _____
 Clerk of the Board