October 22, 2026

MINUTES

Staff and Commissioners 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:

V116-271 Minutes of October 20, 2026
1st- Rush 2nd-Striker Roll Call: Rush-yes, Sherman-yes, Striker-yes
V116-272 Additional Appropriation
1st-Striker 2nd-Rush Roll Call: Striker-yes, Rush-yes, Sherman-yes
V116-273 Bills
1st-Rush 2nd-Striker Roll Call: Striker-yes, Sherman-yes, Rush-yes
V116-274 Airport Grant Application Approval
1st-Striker 2nd-Rush Roll Call: Sherman-yes, Striker-yes, Rush-yes
V116-275 RPC Twp Rd 225
1st-Rush 2nd-Striker Roll Call: Rush-yes, Sherman-yes, Striker-yes
V116-276 RPC CR 90
1st-Striker 2nd-Rush Roll Call: Sherman-yes, Striker-yes, Rush-yes

Commissioner Rush moved to approve a quote from Assa Abloy to install 4 handicap push button entry points at the Carrol Street Annex (old Oaklief). There will be 3 interior for each office and 1 exterior on the north doors in the parking lot for a total of $14,000 to come from the 4000-1100-504145 permanent improvement fund. Commissioner Striker seconded the motion. Roll Call: Sherman-yes, Striker-yes, Rush-yes. V116-277

Hardin County Auditor Mike Bacon stopped in to discuss a potential 2025 audit finding, and an upcoming additional audit cost that is an unknown amount at this time.

Budgets are due by end of October; all departments have been advised that there is no workers comp to be added to their 2027 budgets.

Kenton City Administration Update
Cindy Murray, Safety Service Director, provided the following updates:

- Construction of the roundabout is expected to begin in mid-November, with initial work focused on drainage improvements and the center section of the project.
- No road closures are anticipated during work on the center section.
- Following completion of the center work, construction will move to the Detroit Street side, followed by the Main Street side.
- Perry Street will remain closed during construction. Upon inquiry from Commissioner Rush regarding the extent of the closure, Cindy stated the closure is at Perry Street and noted that Perry Street will ultimately be eliminated as part of the project.
- Commissioner Sherman commented that the new lighting looks very nice. Cindy agreed and stated that the lights turned out well.
- Commissioner Sherman reported that a member of the public had inquired about cameras mounted on top of the new lights. Cindy clarified that these are

not Flock cameras and are used solely for traffic signal synchronization purposes.

- Commissioner Sherman advised that discussions have taken place with the Sheriff and Judge Tudor regarding additional security measures for the court area within the City Building. The County intends to complete those improvements by the first of the year. He noted that there has also been discussion regarding securing the entire building and that further conversations with the Commissioners would occur if that option were pursued. Lynn and Chief Musser have been coordinating those efforts.
- Commissioner Striker inquired about the status of the Verizon store. Cindy stated she was uncertain but would obtain additional information.
- Commissioner Rush asked about the future use of the former Rite Aid building. Cindy reported that the owner is seeking tenants to lease the property.
- Cindy stated that ODOT will fund the two traffic signals on Detroit Street.
- Improvements to Franklin Street are anticipated in 2027.
- The Detroit Street waterline project is expected to be completed by the end of 2027. ODOT is then expected to continue roadway improvements in 2028, completing work on that end of town.
- Commissioner Rush summarized that, based on the current timeline, all major project work should be completed by the end of 2028.
- Cindy reported that ODOT plans to pave West Lima Street next summer, from the western limits to the bridge and ending at Market Street. The City plans to complete paving from Market Street to Wayne Street through the downtown area.

JFS Update

Julie Gossard, JFS Director, provided the following update:

- Two Social Service Worker positions remain vacant. Two new Child Welfare employees are scheduled to begin employment, and current new employees are progressing well.
- Julie reported receiving a broad public records request that appears unusual in scope. She noted that Wood County is reviewing a similar request through its prosecutor's office and that the request will be forwarded to Prosecutor Brad Bailey's office for review.
- The agency's SNAP error rate is currently 5.22%.
- Hardin County also experienced SNAP errors, and additional information regarding the county's specific error percentage and findings will be provided at a future meeting following further review.
- Regarding Children Services placements, Julie reported that one child's placement cost has been reduced from $614 per day to $378 per day due to an improvement in the child's behavior and reduced need for a higher level of care. She emphasized that placement decisions are based on the child's best interests and needs rather than cost alone. When asked by Commissioner Rush what constituted a better fit, she explained that the child's behavioral improvements supported a lower level of care.
- Julie discussed a new state initiative requiring residential facilities and group homes to provide standardized information regarding levels of care and associated costs. The initiative is expected to take effect in January and will be conducted annually.
- Another child was successfully transitioned from a $92 per day placement to a kinship care placement.

- Two children currently remain in high-cost placements at approximately $575 per day. The agency is evaluating whether lower-cost placements may be more appropriate, as their current assessed level of care may exceed their actual needs.
- Placement decisions also take into consideration reunification timelines. If reunification is expected soon, the agency seeks to avoid unnecessary placement disruptions. If reunification is expected to take six months or longer, alternative placement options may be considered.
- Commissioner Sherman asked whether placement costs include housing, food, and care. Julie confirmed that those costs are included, while Medicaid covers therapy services. She explained that placement rates are largely determined by the level of supervision and care required for children with significant behavioral or other challenges.
- Julie emphasized that placement decisions are made by considering the overall needs and circumstances of each child.
- Through OhioMeansJobs, the department is working with Durez regarding its planned facility closure and approximately two-year transition period. Current estimates indicate approximately 45 employees may be affected.
- The CCMEP program has been renamed Ohio Career Launch. During the summer, 12 students were enrolled in work experience opportunities, doubling participation from the previous year. All participating students successfully completed their work experiences. Ten of the twelve participating employers submitted evaluations, resulting in an average score of 4.88 out of 5, representing 97.6% positive feedback.
- Julie requested reimbursement for hotel and parking expenses associated with a training conference attended in Columbus. She specified that reimbursement would be paid from JFS funds rather than the County General Fund.
- Commissioner Sherman signed the reimbursement request for processing through the JFS fiscal department with JFS funds.
- Julie stated that she would also review potential future meeting dates.
- Commissioner Rush welcomed Julie and expressed appreciation for her service and leadership.

Commissioner Sherman moved to go into executive session per ORC 121.22 (G)(1) to consider the performance evaluation and compensation of a public employee at 10:44. Commissioner Rush seconded the motion. Roll Call: Striker-yes, Rush-yes, Sherman- yes Commissioner Sherman announced the end of executive session at 10:48. No action was taken.

Farmland Preservation Project

Deena Clem-Hardin SWCD is seeking certification as a local sponsor for the Ohio Department of Agriculture Farmland Preservation Program.

- Several Soil and Water Conservation Districts throughout Ohio are currently serving as certified sponsors.
- The district is requesting the Board's support for its application and approval of a resolution supporting certification.
- No additional staff will be required as a result of becoming a certified sponsor.

- While there will be some increase in administrative and paperwork responsibilities, any associated costs are expected to be minimal and not noticeable within the district's overall budget.

Commissioner Sherman moved to approve soil and water districts application to become a local sponsor for the farmland preservation project. Commissioner Rush seconded the motion. Roll Call: Striker-yes, Sherman-yes, Rush-yes. V116-279

Jennifer Blaser Partner with Dinsmore & Shohl LLP-

- Jennifer specializes in public finance and governmental legal matters
- Discussed the issuance of $5,000,000.00 in bonds for the construction of the new Event Center at the Hardin County Fairgrounds
- Jennifer presented the necessary bond financing documents and reviewed the proposed resolution with the Commissioners
- no additional tax levy will be placed on the ballot as part of this financing

Commissioner Rush moved to approve the bond resolution authorizing the $5,000,000.00 Fairground event center bond anticipation note agreement. Commissioner Striker seconded the motion. Roll Call: Sherman-yes, Striker-yes, Rush-yes. V116-278

Fairground Event Center Design Review Meeting
General Discussion

- Reviewed and discussed items from the previous meeting minutes.
- Interior finishes will primarily be white.

Floor Plan Review

- Floor plan was reviewed in detail.
- Two overhead doors were reduced to one overhead door.
- Masonry walls will be utilized in the group restroom areas due to building size and load requirements.
- Drinking fountains with bottle fillers will be installed.
- Janitor sink previously shown in the office area was eliminated.
- Door locations were adjusted for convenience and building functionality.
- Jason noted that man doors align on the east and west ends of the building.
- Overhead door size will be 20' x 14'.
- Project criteria call for insulated coiling overhead doors.
- Clear windows were selected.
- Brick wainscot remains part of the design.
- Roof pitch discussed at approximately 6:12.
- Additional exterior restroom access door has been added.
- Snow guards will be included on roof areas above personnel and overhead doors.
- No changes were made to the event space layout.

Interior Layout and Building Systems

- Sound control measures for the boardroom and outdoor mechanical systems will be addressed.
- Floor sink will be included in the janitor room.
- Corridors will be eight feet wide.
- Interior walls will be masonry construction.
- Serving kitchen is intended for limited food service and will include:
    - Two-compartment sink
    - Handwashing sink

- Restrooms meet code requirements and include:
    - ADA-compliant stalls
    - Ambulatory stalls in both men's and women's restrooms
    - One adult changing station in the event space restroom area
- Water and drainage services are needed near the center of the storage area.
- Dedicated floor-cleaning supply storage was discussed.

Storage and Office Areas

- Kitchen area is being reduced in size to create additional storage space.
- Double doors will be installed at the new storage room.
- Judy's office remains a larger office configuration.

Schedule and Permitting

- Project remains on schedule to submit permits by November 23.
- Construction mobilization is anticipated for January.
- Site work remains a critical component of the schedule.
- Site work was originally planned to be performed by the Commissioners.
- Soil boring locations are expected to be identified within two weeks.
- Geotechnical results are anticipated approximately two weeks after sample collection.
- Structural design work will continue concurrently.
- Updated concrete pricing will be obtained once structural quantities are finalized.

Site Work Discussion

- Timeline for grading and site preparation must be established as soon as possible.
- Building pad elevation and final grading need to be determined.
- Team expressed preference that downspouts be tied directly into the storm system to prevent standing water around the building.
- While a January groundbreaking is feasible, winter conditions may create challenges.
- Site stripping and building pad preparation should occur as soon as permits are obtained.
- Significant fill material may be required depending on final floor elevations.
- Due to the project schedule and fairgrounds calendar, substantial completion remains targeted for July 12.

_____, YES/NO
President of the Board-Joseph C. Sherman

_____, YES/NO
Fred M. Rush

_____, YES/NO
Timothy L. Striker

Attest_____
Clerk of the Board

V116-280