September 3, 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:

V116-183	Minutes of September 1, 2026			
1st-Rush	2nd-Striker	Roll Call: Rush-yes	Sherman-yes	Striker-yes
V116-184	Transfer of Funds			
1st-Striker	2nd-Rush	Roll Call: Striker-yes	Rush-yes	Sherman-yes
V116-185	Payment of Bills			
1st-Rush	2nd-Striker	Roll Call: Striker-yes	Sherman-yes	Rush-yes

Commissioner Sherman attended the Fair Board meeting Wednesday evening. Despite setbacks from the recent tornado, preparations continue to progress well and organizers anticipate a successful fair.

Commissioner Striker led a two-hour Courthouse tour on Wednesday afternoon for 52 visitors from Toledo. Deb Phillips of the Hardin County Chamber also participated. The tour was well received by attendees.

Commissioner Striker also attended the Fair Board meeting Wednesday evening.

Holli Underwood, HCCBA - Economic & Community Development Report

Business Attraction

- Comprehensive Land Use Plan is in progress.
    - Coordinating promotion efforts for the Community Survey, which will remain open through September 30.

Business Retention & Expansion (BRE)

- Scheduling remaining BRE meetings throughout the fall.

Workforce Development

- Hardin Career Task Force / 3E Program updates:
    - Maddie Stotler has been named the new coordinator for the 3E Program through the Midwest Regional ESC.
    - Hardin Northern has joined the participating school districts, resulting in participation from all county districts.
    - Reviewing the Business Advisory Council (BAC) agreement with the Midwest Regional ESC.

Small Business & Entrepreneurship

- Economic development resources are available in the Economic Development Quarterly Newsletter.

Community Development

- Village of Forest Council Business & Industry Committee:
    - Continuing efforts to revitalize downtown Forest.
    - Received a referral regarding a historic downtown building and continues outreach efforts aimed at restoring the building to productive use and occupancy.
- Housing Coalition:
    - Organized the Villages Committee meeting.
    - Working to develop a housing focus group as part of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan process.
- Conducted consultation meetings with Kenton Eagles representatives, realtors, and mortgage industry stakeholders.

Other / Alliance Operations

- Coordinated a roundtable discussion at the courthouse with Ohio Auditor of State Keith Faber.

- Hosted Economic Development Breakfast presentations featuring:
    - Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority representatives Jason Bartschy, Craig Teamer, and Dana Clark.
    - Apollo Career Center workforce development presenters Tara Shepherd and Nick Sammetinger.
- Distributed the Economic Development Quarterly Newsletter.

Executive session – Holli Underwood requested Executive Session pursuant to Ohio revised Code 121.22 (G) (8)(1) to discuss Economic Development Assistance. Motion to enter Executive Session was made by Commissioner Rush at 9:28 am and seconded by Commissioner Striker. Roll Call: Striker-yes, Rush-yes, Sherman-yes. Commissioner Sherman announced the end of Executive Session at 9:39 am. No action was taken.

Director Jennifer Ulmer - Hardin County Museum Report

- Museum collection catalog increased from 1,303 to 1,353 artifacts since August 20.
- Planning underway for the annual **Save America's Treasures Grant** application with members of the Scioto Junction Model Train Club and community volunteers. Bob Simmons with the Train Club was present and joined the discussion.
- Continuing focus on museum capacity building and fundraising; museum remains ineligible for many state and federal building restoration grants.
- Requesting financial account information from the nonprofit board to assist with governance transition and financial oversight.
- ARP staff continue collection management efforts, including cataloging artifacts, scanning and organizing records, completing scope and contents work, implementing procedural updates.
- Collections research updates:
    - Follow-up planned regarding the Willi Wolfschmidt painting**s** provenance inquiry.
    - Additional direction established for Log Cabin provenance research.
- Discussion ongoing regarding nonprofit board lease termination, including transfer/closure of utilities, internet, service contracts, and accounting for nonprofit assets and accounts.
- Community engagement activities:
    - Ohio Open Doors participation planned during Fair Week.
    - Planning underway for the annual Haunted Museum event.
    - Two promotional videos are in production with River Radio and the Hardin County Chamber & Business Alliance at no cost to the museum.

Josh Anderson, HHWP Update

- Thanked the Board for the opportunity to provide an update.
- Reported that from January through August 2026, local transportation match support declined approximately 9%.
- HHWP continues utilizing one-time state funds and is seeing positive progress in both Hardin and Hancock counties.
- Hancock County has significantly increased its local match contribution and may receive additional transportation resources as funding allocations are tied to local support.
- No transportation service cuts are currently planned for Hardin County, and driver recruitment has not presented significant challenges.
- Transit ridership and utilization continue to increase, indicating strong community acceptance and use of the service.
- Local match funding remains a statewide challenge, although the state's funding percentage has increased.
- Discussed the need to evaluate operations and staffing levels to maintain a balanced budget while continuing service delivery.

- Commissioners requested a breakdown of transportation costs by county, including a pie chart showing each county's share of overall costs.
- Reported that Head Start is operating for the current school year but has not yet reached full enrollment in Hardin County.
- Noted ongoing federal discussions regarding Head Start reform, including efforts to reduce administrative burdens and address rising program costs.
- Stated that staffing shortages, particularly in hiring teachers who compete with public school wages and benefits, remain a primary barrier to serving all funded enrollment slots.
- HHWP continues helping vulnerable residents during periods of extreme summer heat, including access to fans, air conditioning units, and related support services.
- There was discussion regarding the Eagles' request to connect to the Head Start water line. Josh will present the request to his board for further consideration.

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

_____, YES/NO
Fred M. Rush

_____, YES/NO
Timothy L. Striker

Attest_____
Deputy Clerk of the Board

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