

CERTIFICATE OF THE RICHLAND COUNTY  
COMMISSIONERS RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

In accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 305.11, the Clerk of the Board of Richland County Commissioners hereby submits the following record of the Commissioners' March 28, 2024 meeting, for recording into the Commissioners' Journal, Volume 96, under the same date.

RICHLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
Regular Meeting, March 28, 2024  
COMMISSIONERS' BOARDROOM  
COUNTY ADMIN. BLDG., MANSFIELD, OHIO

Call to Order:	9:05 a.m.
In Attendance:	Commissioners: Banks, Vero, Mears
Clerk:	Belinda Fulton
Guests:	See listed below
Tape:	MAR2824

Topic: Common Pleas - Compensation

Tape: 01

Present: Andrew Keller, Judge Robinson, Judge Naumoff, online Al Lawrence, and Carl Hunnell

Discussion: The two Common Pleas Court Judges are here to discuss compensation with the Commissioners. The Commissioners need to move into executive session to discuss this issue.

**Motion: Mr. Mears moved to go into executive session to discuss compensation with the Common Pleas Court Judges seconded by Mr. Vero.**

Other: Carl Hunnell, Richland Source asked the Commissioners if this was a legitimate reason to go into executive session and if there would be action taken when done. Mr. Vero explained yes it is a legitimate reason. The Judges are asking for Common Pleas employees to be compensated for an hour lunch unlike the Commissioners employees, along with compensation for a certain pay grade position per a letter that was given to the board in December of 2023.

Vote: Mr. Banks, yes; Mr. Vero, yes; Mr. Mears, yes. Motion carried.

Into executive session at 9:06 a.m. Out of executive session at 9:48 a.m.

Topic: Common Pleas Court - Compensation

Tape: 01

Present: Andrew Keller, Judge Robinson, Judge Naumoff, online Al Lawrence, and Carl Hunnell, Employees from Children Services and Greg Kahl, WMFD

Discussion: Out of executive session and the Commissioners will take action on the compensation issue they discussed.

**Motion: Mr. Vero made a motion to assign a pay grade of 18 to the court administrator of the Richland County Common Pleas General Division seconded by Mr. Mears.**

Other Comments: None.

Vote: Mr. Banks, yes; Mr. Vero, yes; Mr. Mears, yes. Motion carried.

Topic: Common Pleas Court General Division

Tape: 3.51

Present: Andrew Keller, Judge Robinson, Judge Naumoff, online Al Lawrence, and Carl Hunnell, Employees from Children Services and Greg Kahl, WMFD

Discussion: Out of executive session and the Commissioners will take action on the compensation issue they discussed.

Discussion: Mr. Vero stated the next topic does not require action from the Commissioners and we will let the Judges speak to that issue. First it was asked if anyone had questions and Carl asked questions about pay grade 18 and its meaning. Mr. Vero explained it is two pay grades higher than Probate Court and we do not have Juvenile Court wage scale study yet. Domestic Court is a pay grade 15. The approximate pay range starts at minimum of \$35.45, mid - \$42.55 and max \$49.63. Carl asked the Judges if this is what you were looking for Judge Naumoff replied considering the load and a heavy docket they feel it should have been a little more compared to other courts since they only have one court administrator Tammy Wurthmann.

Judge Robinson proceeded to discuss the topic of their employees not getting a paid lunch and only getting paid for 36 hours of work. Judge Robinson claims they work 41 hours and said they are getting paid 10% less than other county employees. They are concerned with keeping their employees from going to work for another court because of this pay discrepancy. He also has a request for one particular magistrate that has more experience to get her salary bumped up about \$3,000 in order to keep her in line with other magistrates. Mr. Vero noted these topics will not need formal action. Carl asked some questions on the hours worked. Judge Robinson explained their employees work 8-4 Tuesday, Thursday and Friday with an unpaid hour lunch every day but on Monday and Wednesday they work 8-4:30 which gives them a total of 36 hours pay per week. Unlike the other courts that get a 40 hour paycheck. This then made it hard to compare wages for the wage study. Naming the offices along with the other County Probate and Domestic Courts that get an hour of paid lunch: Prosecutor, Treasure, Auditor, and the City Municipal Court offices all get paid lunches. The news media asked a few more questions regarding the budget amount for the court which possibly would cover this request, however; it will be looked at again closer to the end of the year.

Topic: Children Services – Proclamation

Tape: 16.07

Present: Andrew Keller, Nikki Harless, Jerry Snay, Kevin Goshe, Brigitte Coles, Paula Caldwell, Greg Kahl - WMFD, online Al Lawrence, and Carl Hunnell

Discussion: Nikki Harless, Director of Children Services introduced the group with her today and thanked the Commissioners for their support of this Child Abuse Prevention Month. Nikki stated the best way to prevent child abuse is to report it to Children Services Agency which takes calls 24/7 and can be done anonymously if needed. Out of the reports made in 2023 they did 1,150 investigations taking custody of some children and now have a total of 133 children in foster and residential care. Kindship families are greatly appreciated and the #1 reason for calls is parental drug abuse. Nikki also noted of the 279 children tested 137 were positive for drugs. Some of those children were as young as four days old to four years old. They even had a case of 2 year old twins overdose on fentanyl. They assume the children get exposure due to residual exposure from the parents using drugs. The question was asked if they expect an increase of reports due to the legalization of marijuana and Nikki responded they believe that will happen. The news media asked questions about training of mandated reporters and Nikki said they have training and will help anyone that wants it. She said 67% of their calls are from mandated reporters. Nikki asked Brigitte Coles to speak about their planned events. Brigitte noted

they brought Buckeye Bakery blue ribbon cookies in for the Commissioner and a box of blue ribbons to hand out for display. They are placing blue ribbons all around town to raise awareness of child abuse prevention month. She is asking people to wear blue on April 10<sup>th</sup> and if you go to Buckeye Bakery wearing blue you can receive a free cookie. Many communities will be hanging blue lights and they will be having multiple activities during the month of April.

Mr. Banks read the proclamation for Child Abuse Prevention Month and thanked them for all the services their agency provides for Richland County. Tape at 31.05

Recessed at 10:17 a.m. Reconvened at 10:25 a.m.

Topic: Dog Warden

Tape: 31.05

Present: Andrew Keller, Dog Warden Missy Houghton, and two interviewees, online Al Lawrence, News Journal

Discussion: Missy introduced Aubrey and Susie as the two applying for the potential Deputy Dog Warden position.

**Motion: Mr. Mears moved to go into executive session for the interviews with the two candidates applying for deputy dog warden seconded by Mr. Vero.**

Other Comments: None.

Vote: Mr. Banks, yes; Mr. Vero, yes; Mr. Mears, yes. Motion carried.

Into executive session at 10:26 a.m. Out of executive session 10:45 a.m.

Topic: Dog Warden

Tape: 32.29

Present: Andrew Keller, Missy Houghton, Susan Reiff, Aubrey Jeffrey, and online Al Lawrence, News Journal

Discussion: Out of executive session after conducting interviews with the ladies applying for the deputy dog warden position and the board has come to a decision.

**Motion: Mr. Vero moved to hire Susie Reiff and Aubrey Jeffrey to the positions of part time deputy dog warden at the rate of \$19.40 per hour with an effective of April 11, 2024 seconded by Mr. Mears.**

Other Comments: None.

Vote: Mr. Banks, yes; Mr. Vero, yes; Mr. Mears, yes. Motion carried.

Topic: Dog Warden

Tape: 35.28

Present: Andrew Keller, Missy Houghton, Susan Reiff, Aubrey Jeffrey, and online Al Lawrence, News Journal

Discussion: Dog Warden Missy Houghton also asked for an increase in their office manager's pay. She would like to increase her hourly wage to \$20 per hour.

**Motion: Mr. Vero moved to increase the office manager rate of pay to \$20 per hour effective March 28, 2024 seconded by Mr. Mears.**

Other Comments: Al Lawrence asked what the current office manager pay is and it was reported at \$18.30 per hour. Also, the deputy positions are filling a vacancy while also hiring a new position due to the increase of abandoned dogs.

Vote: Mr. Banks, yes; Mr. Vero, yes; Mr. Mears, yes. Motion carried.

Topic: Record of Proceedings

Tape: 37.02

Present: Andrew Keller, online AI Lawrence, News Journal

Discussion: The Commissioners reviewed the record of proceedings for March 21, 2024 and Mr. Vero had a list of some corrections.

**Motion: Mr. Vero moved to certify the amended record of proceedings for March 21, 2024 seconded by Mr. Mears.**

Other Comments: None.

Vote: Mr. Banks, yes; Mr. Vero, yes; Mr. Mears, yes. Motion carried.

Topic: Requisitions

Tape: 38.03

Present: Andrew Keller, online AI Lawrence, News Journal

Discussion: The Board reviewed the list of requisitions before them today and had no questions.

**Motion: Mr. Mears moved to approve the list of requisitions submitted for approval seconded by Mr. Vero.**

Other Comments: None.

Vote: Mr. Banks, yes; Mr. Vero, yes; Mr. Mears, yes. Motion carried.

Topic: Month End Appropriations and Transfer

Tape: 38.17

Present: Andrew Keller, online AI Lawrence, News Journal

Discussion: The Board reviewed the two month end appropriations: one from the Park Board for new levy monies and the other from the Health department and had no questions.

**Motion: Mr. Vero moved to approve the month end appropriations and transfers for the month of March seconded by Mr. Mears.**

Other Comments: None.

Vote: Mr. Banks, yes; Mr. Vero, yes; Mr. Mears, yes. Motion carried.

Topic: Regional Planning – CDBG Grant

Tape: 38.39

Present: Andrew Keller, online AI Lawrence, News Journal

Discussion: The Commissioners asked Andrew to explain this MOU from Jotika Shetty, Executive Director of Region Planning. Andrew stated this \$20,000 CDBG project has been spearheaded by Jotika. Andrew said Jotika has done her due diligence and is recommending the Commissioners award this \$20,000 CDBG Grant for the Housing Development Reentry and Recovery Work Force Program Plan to NECIC.

**Motion: Mr. Vero moved to award the \$20,000 CDBG grant for Housing Development Reentry and Recovery Work Force Program Plan to NECIC seconded by Mr. Mears.**

Other Comments: None.

Vote: Mr. Banks, yes; Mr. Vero, yes; Mr. Mears, yes. Motion carried.

Topic: Engineer – Utility Permit Application

Tape: 39.45

Present: Andrew Keller, online AI Lawrence, News Journal

Discussion: The Commissioners reviewed Adam Gove's utility permit application submitted from Columbia Gas to replace a leaking gas main under the roadway to connect

back to the existing main on Orchard Park Road. Adam is asking the board for their approval of this application.

**Motion: Mr. Vero moved to approve the utility permit application from Columbia Gas for replacement of a gas line underneath Orchard Park Road seconded by Mr. Mears.**

Other Comments: None.

Vote: Mr. Banks, yes; Mr. Vero, yes; Mr. Mears, yes. Motion carried.

Topic: Engineer – Forbes Road Bridge Replacement

Tape: 40.13

Present: Andrew Keller, online Al Lawrence, News Journal

Discussion: The Commissioners read Adam Gove's letter recommending the award of Forbes Road bridge replacement box culvert to Adena Corporation. Adena was the only bid submitted with their bid amount over the Engineer's estimate of \$137,145 but not more than 20% over that estimate. The project should start mid-July with the road being closed for 60 days.

**Motion: Mr. Vero moved to award the Forbes Road Bridge replacement of a box culvert project to Adena Corporation of Mansfield in the amount of \$148,890.28 seconded by Mr. Mears.**

Other Comments: None.

Vote: Mr. Banks, yes; Mr. Vero, yes; Mr. Mears, yes. Motion carried.

Topic: ARPA – Bike Trail Tunnel Project Subgrant Agreement

Tape: 41.04

Present: Andrew Keller, online Al Lawrence, News Journal

Discussion: Andrew explained this is an ARPA sub-grant funding for a sub-recipient agreement with the City of Mansfield on the tunnel project going under Trimble Road which completes the B & O Bike Trail connecting it to the multi-purpose trail along Trimble. Originally, the Commissioners contributed \$500,000 towards the project then once it was determined the tunnel was needed they allocated another \$200,000 of ARPA funds to help complete this portion.

**Motion: Mr. Vero moved to approve the ARPA Bike Trail Tunnel Agreement between the Richland County Commissioners and the City of Mansfield for a total of \$700,000 seconded by Mr. Mears.**

Other Comments: None.

Vote: Mr. Banks, yes; Mr. Vero, yes; Mr. Mears, yes. Motion carried

Topic: CSEA – IV-D Contract w/Sheriff

Tape: 42.43

Present: Andrew Keller, online Al Lawrence, News Journal

Discussion: The Commissioners reviewed the CSEA annual IV-D between Child Support and the Sheriff. Janet Brock, Dir. of Child Support is asking for the board's approval of this contract.

**Motion: Mr. Vero moved to approve the IV-D CSEA contract with the Richland County Sheriff seconded by Mr. Mears.**

Other Comments: AL asked if this contract is for security or serving papers. The Commissioners replied the contract is for security.

Vote: Mr. Banks, yes; Mr. Vero, yes; Mr. Mears, yes. Motion

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further county business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m. Tape at 43.44

Submitted by: Belinda Fulton, Clerk

BE IT RESOLVED the Richland County Board of Commissioners hereby accepts the foregoing as the correct record of proceedings of the board meeting held March 28, 2024 in Mansfield, Ohio.

Mr. Vero moved adoption of the foregoing resolution. Mr. Mears seconded the motion. The roll, being called upon adoption, resulted as follows: Mr. Banks, yes; Mr. Vero, yes; Mr. Mears, yes.

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ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
CLERK

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BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
RICHLAND COUNTY, OHIO

CERTIFICATE

The foregoing is hereby certified as the official record of proceedings of the Richland County Board of Commissioners meeting March 28, 2024.

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Darrell E. Banks, Chairman

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Belinda Fulton, Clerk  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
RICHLAND COUNTY, OHIO

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