



P R E S S R E L E A S E

B O A R D O F C O M M I S S I O N E R S

Commissioners:
Steven A. Davis
David L. Levacy
Mike Kiger

County Administrator
Carri L. Brown

Clerk
Rachel A. Elsea

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, December 6, 2016

Fairfield County Commissioners Approve 2017 Budget

Lancaster, Ohio - The Board of County Commissioners approved today the county budget for 2017. The general fund expenditure budget for 2017 is \$45.8 million, an increase of 3.15% over the \$44.4 million budget of 2016. The increase in the budget is largely the result of a \$314,703 increase in salaries and variable fringe benefits, including negotiated increases in salaries for the County Sheriff employees and a 2% increase in salaries for all employees; an increase of \$405,826 for the employee health benefit plan, including employee status changes (such as a change from single to family coverage) and a 2% increase in costs; and an increase of \$78,829 for elected official salaries and related fringe benefits, in accordance with Ohio statute.

Commissioner Dave Levacy, Board President stated, “The appropriations within the general fund reflect the priority of public safety.” Looking at the \$45.8 million general fund budget, 29% of expenditures are for the Sheriff’s Department; approximately 17% of additional expenditures are for the Coroner, Prosecutor, and Courts. An additional approximate 4% is allocated to Child Protective Services and related services, resulting in half of the general fund budget dedicated specifically to public safety.

“We are being conservative with the general fund budget and meeting county needs at this time. A concern for the future is the reduction in sales tax revenue due to the Medicaid managed care issue. An annual \$1.5 million reduction in sales tax revenue is at risk in Fairfield County. We will continue to work with state legislators and our county elected official associations on this issue,” added Levacy.

For 2016, the carry over cash balance is expected to exceed \$10 million. Carry over cash is a balance needed for expenditures planned in the first part of the year and to plan for future expenditures.

Questions about the budget can be directed to Carri Brown, County Administrator, at cbrown@co.fairfield.oh.us

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Highlights from the 2017 general fund budget include:

- A \$314,703 increase in salaries and variable fringe benefits, including negotiated increases in salaries for the County Sheriff employees and a 2% increase in salaries for all employees;
- An increase of \$405,826 for the employee health benefit plan, including employee status changes (such as a change from single to family coverage) and a 2% increase in costs;
- An increase of \$78,829 for elected official salaries and related fringe benefits, in accordance with Ohio statute;
- \$407,000 in the Sheriff's Office equipment expenditures and \$12,000 in Information Technology expenditures to accommodate furniture, fixtures, and equipment (as well as related video conferencing equipment) for the new jail and public safety facility;
- An increase of \$78,911 to the JFS allocation to comply with Department of Labor rules for overtime exempt staff and to match state and federal revenues of the combined agency;
- An increase of \$44,000 to support a laboratory technician and probation officer position for the substance abuse testing conducted at Municipal Court;
- An increase of \$40,000 to pay for staffing and related costs for implementing a new self-funded health benefits plan, with these costs offset by administrative fees;
- A one-time expenditure of \$42,000 for two vehicles for Juvenile Court, replacing fully depreciated vehicles;
- An increase of \$27,000 to support OSU Extension services in partnership with the county;
- In addition to the scheduled appropriation of \$ 187,272, an additional \$20,000 for Sheriff's Office vehicles, to purchase larger vehicles for the Sheriff's Office fleet;
- A \$20,000 investment in technology for compliance and improved efficiency with timekeeping procedures;
- An increase of \$19,000 to accommodate one-time changes in hours and rates for Clerk of Courts employees, bringing the rates in line with a compensation plan;
- An increase of \$16,000 to account for merit based increases for Common Pleas Court probation officers;
- An increase of \$12,000 for the County Treasurer, to pay for banking fees, temporary services, conferences, printing, and office furniture;
- A \$5,000 increase for Recorder's Office salaries, to reflect current market rates; and
- A \$5,000 increase for the Coroner to meet projected autopsy expenses.

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