

FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF GENERAL SESSION

November 19, 2024

The Franklin County Board of Commissioners convened in the Commissioners Hearing Room at 9:00 A.M. on Tuesday, November 19, 2024.

Present were: Kevin L. Boyce, President  
John O'Grady, Commissioner

Also present on the dais were Kris Long, Deputy County Administrator; Joy Bivens, Deputy County Administrator; Zachary Talarek, Director, Office of Management and Budget; Jeanine Hummer, First Assistant Prosecuting Attorney and Chief Counsel; and Melissa K. Kohler, Deputy Clerk to the Board of Commissioners.

Using hybrid meeting technology, participants were also able to access General Session via Zoom conferencing by dialing (929) 436-2866, Meeting ID:978 8790 2896; Passcode: 628826, or by joining at: <https://franklincountyohio.zoom.us/j/97887902896>

Commissioner Boyce called the meeting to order at 9:12 A.M.

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Commissioner Boyce: Before we begin our regular agenda, I'd like to acknowledge and honor the remarkable work of our first responders. Their bravery, sacrifice, and unwavering commitment to keeping our communities safe are truly inspiring.

I also want to emphasize the importance of mental health, especially for those on the front lines. First responders face unique challenges and often prioritize the needs of others over their well-being. Programs like First Responders' Bridge support their mental health, providing essential resources and a strong community. This support helps first responders return to their roles with renewed mental clarity and readiness to serve when needed.

To share more about this important work, I'm pleased to welcome Mick Yinger, Executive Director of the First Responders' Bridge program. As Mick is coming forward, I want to say that most of us in our lifetime will dial the services of our first responders, and even if you are not part of the dialing experience yourself, you know someone who has. I do not think first responders are truly appreciated. Mick, it is different when you have your own experience. It is different when a crime has happened to you or a family member. These first responders are there to make a difference, not only in your safety and mental health but for you and your loved ones. Please take a minute today, this week, month, or year when you see them and say thank you. Whether you

have used their services and dialed those 3 digits, let them know you appreciate them. We appreciate your service and appreciate what you do to protect the community.

Mick Yinger, Executive Director, First Responders' Bridge Program: Thank you. It is an honor to be here today. I retired from the Columbus Police Department and am now the Executive Director of a nonprofit called First Responders' Bridge and my lifelong friend, Mike Pavelino and I started the Bridge after the tragic murders of Westerville Police Officers, Anthony Morelli, and Eric Joering, on February 10, 2018. The day after the funeral, we got together and talked about Anthony and Eric and the funeral, where first responders came from all over the county. Then, we started to talk about all the friends we have lost over the years, both in the line of duty and by suicide. I had two former partners and close friends die by suicide. I had a former academy classmate that took his life. This weekend, we lost a police officer in Northern Ohio who died by suicide in his cruiser on duty. We are losing more first responders to suicide than in the line of duty, and it is unacceptable. We wanted to do something to make a difference and started this nonprofit. We knew we had to start with the foundation of four things and figure the program out around those four things. First, we had to include the spouses and significant others because they walked with us every step of the way. Second, we knew we had to include our dispatchers and corrections officers because they get forgotten. When I was on the job, I did not think about mental health in any capacity, but I especially didn't think about what they go through. Third, we wanted our attendees to hear the name of Jesus at every retreat. They will hear from a few speakers and discuss what helped them get through the experience. We let our attendees know ahead of time, and if they don't feel comfortable sitting in those sessions, they don't have to. Fourth, Mike Pavelino and I knew it would fail if we led the Bridge. We knew we had to put a great team around us for the Bridge to succeed. The Bridge comprises first responders, clinicians, and business leaders. We provide a three-day confidential, expense-free retreat for active and retired first responders and their significant others who are experiencing depression, anxiety, PTSD, or just feeling the job has changed them or their marriages. We bring in the country's best peer speakers and clinicians regarding first responders' mental health and trauma. We had over 1,600 attend our retreats from 40 different states, 82 of 88 counties in Ohio, and over 400 from Franklin County alone. We pay for lodging, food, and the speakers and clinicians from across the country. We never want finances to be why someone doesn't get the help they deserve. We do four retreats a year and then a follow-up retreat where we bring past attendees together. After the retreat, we pay for six free counseling sessions with clinicians who have experience working with first responders. This year, we have paid for over 300 counseling sessions for first responders and significant others. We track performance and outcome measurements in several ways, including a detailed evaluation form. Of the over 1,600 people who have attended the retreat, 99.5% have rated the retreat either 4 or 5 stars out of 5.

Mick Yinger (cont.): We plan to create a First Responders' Bridge Metro Wellness Center. This will be like the one Columbus has, and it will be in Central Ohio. We will have full-time clinicians who will provide free counseling and a full-time chaplain who will provide spiritual support and respond to critical incidents. We will also have support groups for marriage, addiction, and grief and will do critical incident stress debriefings. We have the support from both Columbus Metro Police and Columbus Metro Fire peer teams. If there is a critical incident in Central Ohio, they will have access to clinicians, chaplains, and facilities to debrief the incident. People ask why you take first responder wellness so seriously. Why is it important? I tell them that the better we are

mentally, the better our interactions with the citizens and public, and the better our decision-making. I was talking to a Central Ohio police chief from a smaller department and half of his department has come to our retreats. He said they are having fewer mark-offs, fewer complaints, and fewer use-of-force issues than they did before attending the retreat. I am going to close with a story. I was talking to an Ohio police chief, and we were discussing first responders' wellness. He told me a story when a new officer got dispatched to an apartment complex on an infant not breathing. He arrived, and the dad handed the officer the baby. He was trying to revive the baby until the medics got there. The baby was blue, and he knew he probably was not alive, and unfortunately, the baby did not make it. The Police Chief arrived and said they were backed up on runs, and he needed to run to a mall where a woman left her purse in her car. The car was broken into, and the purse was stolen. He arrives and gets yelled at, and he starts yelling back. People probably thought he was an insensitive officer. In all reality, 15 minutes earlier, he was holding an infant that he couldn't save. We need to do a better job after critical incidents, pulling our first responders off the street and getting them support. Hopefully, First Responders' Bridge Wellness Center will ensure they are in a good place before interacting with the public again. Thank you for your time.

Commissioner O'Grady: I appreciate you being here and your great work for first responders. I have many relationships and friendships in the first responder community. The community's appreciation for what you and the men and women of this community do on behalf of our residents is phenomenal. I had an incident in Nashville, Tennessee, and the people who showed up were fantastic. Whether you are a police officer or firefighter, how you treat families is not lost in the conversation.

Commissioner Boyce: It is interesting that Commissioner O'Grady zeroed in on family because, in my own experience, that stands out. The calmness of the first responders and it settles the whole scene. I had an incident a few years ago, and when the paramedics walked up calmly and immediately diagnosed the issue. Let me end with this: Don't underestimate how much you are valued, and don't underestimate how much you are needed and appreciated.

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Approval of the minutes for the November 7, 2024, Briefing Session. Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The minutes were approved by roll call vote.

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**Resolution No. 0873-24**, preliminary allocation and final encumbrance of County Motor Vehicle License Fee (\$5) Funds for the City of Columbus (\$2,200,000.00) (Engineer), presented by Brad Foster, P.E., P.S., Engineer, Engineer's Office.

Mr. Foster reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0873-24, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0874-24**, preliminary allocation and final encumbrance of County Motor Vehicle License Fee (\$5) Funds for the City of Columbus (\$1,100,000.00) (Engineer), presented by Brad Foster, P.E., P.S., Engineer, Engineer's Office.

Mr. Foster reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0874-24, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0875-24**, requesting the Ohio Department of Transportation to reduce the speed limit on Hague Avenue, County Road No. 66, Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio (Engineer), presented by Brad Foster, P.E., P.S., Engineer, Engineer's Office.

Mr. Foster reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0875-24, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0876-24**, authorizing a contract with Data Transfer Solutions, LLC., consultant, to provide expert knowledge, software, and services to support the asset inventory program (\$50,000.00) (Engineer), Brad Foster, P.E., P.S., Engineer, Engineer's Office.

Mr. Foster reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0876-24, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0877-24**, authorizing a transfer of General Fund appropriations for the purchase of food, equipment, and supplies (Sheriff), presented by Albert J. Smith III, Assistant Director of Finance, Sheriff's Office.

Mr. Smith reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0877-24, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0878-24**, review of petition to annex 0.5 +/- acres from Blendon Township to the City of Columbus Case #ANX-18-24 (Economic Development and Planning), presented by Emanuel Torres, Assistant Director, Economic Development and Planning.

Mr. Torres reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0878-24, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0879-24**, approving agreements with the Community Mediation Services of Central Ohio and The Legal Aid Society of Columbus for housing stabilization services and legal assistance (\$335,000.00) (Job and Family Services), presented by Carmen Barnes, Assistant Director, Job and Family Services.

Ms. Barnes reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0879-24, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0880-24**, approving a subaward agreement with Momentum-Excellence, Inc. for youth artistic enrichment programming (\$69,999.00) (Job and Family Services), presented by Carmen Barnes, Assistant Director, Job and Family Services.

Ms. Barnes reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0880-24, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0881-24**, approving contracts with the House of Hope for Alcoholics, Inc. and Maryhaven, Inc. for residential and non-residential treatment services (\$205,000.00) (Job and Family Services), presented by Carmen Barnes, Assistant Director, Job and Family Services.

Ms. Barnes reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0881-24, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0882-24**, authorizing the Franklin County Administrator to accept receipt on behalf of Franklin County an FY 2024 Byrne Discretionary Community Project Grant award from the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention to support the One Door initiative. (\$963,000.00) (Justice Policy and Programs), presented by Melissa Pierson, Deputy Director, Justice Policy and Programs.

Ms. Pierson reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

*Joy Bivens, Deputy County Administrator, noted these were the dollars earmarked by Congresswoman Beatty and are still waiting to receive the money, and are working closely with the Juvenile Court so families can come over and receive supportive services and added a soft opening of the One Door center will occur in December.*

*Commissioner Boyce advised that they are thankful for the partners at the federal level and appreciate the advocacy and investment and noted that the grant funds are critical.*

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0882-24, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0883-24**, authorizing the Franklin County Administrator to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the ADAMH Board of Franklin County for the implementation of the Landlord Incentive Program authorized by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (\$40,000.00) (Justice Policy and Programs), presented by Melissa Pierson, Deputy Director, Justice Police and Programs.

Ms. Pierson reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0883-24, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0884-24**, authorizing a subgrant award agreement with The Cornerstone Promise Inc. for the continued support of the BRIDGE respite housing program under the FY 2022 Justice Assistance Grant (\$60,000.00) (Justice Policy and Programs), presented by Melissa Pierson, Deputy Director, Justice Police and Programs.

Ms. Pierson reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0884-24, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0885-24**, authorizing the Franklin County Administrator to sign all acceptance documents and waivers related to the receipt of Franklin County's FY 2023 Title II Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act Formula and Planning grants from the Ohio Department of Youth Services (\$210,000.00) (Justice Policy and Programs), presented by Melissa Pierson, Deputy Director, Justice Police and Programs.

Ms. Pierson reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0885-24, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0886-24**, authorizing Contract Extension #2 and Modification #2 with R & S Halley and Company, Inc. DBA Darby Creek Nursery & Landscaping to provide snow removal services at designated Franklin County Facilities (\$500,000.00) (Public Facilities Management), presented by Darla Reardon, Director, Public Facilities Management.

Ms. Reardon reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0886-24, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0887-24**, authorizing execution of an Agreement with Schooley Caldwell to provide Design Professional Services associated with the planning, design, selective renovation, and new construction of the Franklin County Critical Master Plan Implementation Project Bundle 1 (\$1,675,000.00) (Public Facilities Management), presented by Darla Reardon, Director, Public Facilities Management.

Ms. Reardon reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0887-24, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0888-24**, approving purchases for various Franklin County agencies (\$2,113,617.03) (Purchasing), presented by Megan Perry-Balonier, Director, Purchasing, and Andrena Austin, Economic Equity Administrator, Office of Diversity Equity & Inclusion.

Ms. Perry-Balonier and Ms. Austin reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O’Grady moved to approve Resolution 0888-24, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

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**Resolution No. 0890-24**, appointing William P. DeMora to the Franklin County Parks and Recreation Board of Trustees (Board of Commissioners), presented by presented by Michael Ruehrmund, Assistant Director of Community Appointments, Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Ruehrmund reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O’Grady moved to approve Resolution 0890-24, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

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Melissa K. Kohler, Deputy Clerk to the Board of Commissioners, read one (1) journalization into the record:

Cheryl Penn, Policy Manager to Commissioner Erica C. Crawley, has been named as the Commissioner’s designee on the Franklin County Planning Commission; the Franklin County Emergency Management Agency, and the Franklin County Criminal Justice Planning Board/Community Corrections Board. Cheryl is replacing Autumn Glover on the Franklin County Planning Commission; and replacing Dayla Murphy on the Franklin County Emergency Management Agency and the Franklin County Criminal Justice Planning Board/Community Corrections Board. A copy of this journalization will be filed with the meeting minutes from today’s session and will be forwarded to all interested parties for their information and planning.

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There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:01 A.M.

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**(Signature Page Follows)**



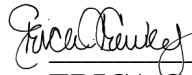
These minutes are a general summary of the Commissioners' General Session for Tuesday, November 19, 2024.



**KEVIN L. BOYCE, PRESIDENT**



**JOHN O'GRADY**



**ERICA C. CRAWLEY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO**

Submitted by:



**Melissa K. Kohler  
Deputy Clerk to the Board of Commissioners**