

FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF GENERAL SESSION

June 14, 2022

The Franklin County Board of Commissioners convened in the Commissioners Hearing Room, at 9:00 A.M. on Tuesday, June 14, 2022.

Please note: Commissioner O’Grady attended virtually and counted as ‘in attendance’ for the purposes of Ohio’s Open Meetings Laws, pursuant to the Virtual Meeting Authority as outlined in H.B. 51, signed into law on February 17, 2022, and valid through June 30, 2022.

Present were: Erica C. Crawley, President
John O’Grady, Commissioner
Kevin L. Boyce, Commissioner

Also present on the dais were Kenneth N. Wilson, County Administrator; and Brittany A. Razek, 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 Crawley called the meeting to order at 9:09 A.M.

Commissioner Crawley: Good morning. We want to take a minute to recognize the upcoming Juneteenth holiday this Sunday, which commemorates June 19, 1865, the day enslaved African Americans in Texas finally learned of their freedom. Two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect, Union soldiers, many of whom were Black, arrived in Galveston, Texas, to announce the emancipation of the estimated 250,000 enslaved people there. African American families recognized June 19 as a celebration of independence and continued to honor it throughout the centuries. However, it wasn’t recognized by Congress until 1996 and only became a national holiday last year. This year is an opportunity for us to celebrate together – for us to recognize and remember the past, and vow to learn from it and never repeat it. The abolishment of slavery did not mean African Americans gained equal rights. Instead, African Americans have battled to gain equity in fundamental human rights at a painfully slow pace since 1865, with equity moving closer but never within reach.

Commissioner Crawley (cont.): Even several advances in equity that have been made throughout the years are now under attack in areas across the country, including here in Ohio, via dangerous legislation and extremist ideology. We have seen attempts to chip away at voting rights; strip our history books of Black humanity; and further divide us as a nation.

Commissioner Crawley (cont.): It is important that we recognize that the fabric of our country is rooted in racism and it is codified in many of our laws and policies. Racism is indeed a public health crisis, as declared by this Board and other entities. Franklin County recognizes and celebrates Juneteenth because equity and inclusion are an entitlement granted to us all. Therefore, the county offices will be closed on Monday, June 20, recognizing the holiday, which falls on a Sunday this year.

Commissioner Boyce: I once held a focus group in which the participants were asked if they recognized the significance of the year 1865. You would be amazed at how many people did not know the significance of that year in our history. I would like to challenge Franklin County to do our part to address the inequities that still plague our society today. I believe that we have gotten off to a very good start over the last few years, and Commissioner O'Grady has been at the forefront of that. This is a new chapter in Franklin County's history. I was elected in 2016, and I became the first African American in the history of Franklin County to serve as a Commissioner, and only the second or third in the history of the state of Ohio. That suggests that we really have some work to do, and the best place that we can start is right here in the services we provide and the work that we do in Franklin County. Commissioner Crawley mentioned the codified laws and policies that have plagued our society since June 19, 1865, and this is an area in which I am well-versed. I will give you one example, because we often do not connect the dots. The average white family in America today has approximately \$170,000 of median assets, as opposed to the average Black family, which has approximately \$17,000 of median assets. The vast majority of that wealth is in homeownership. When the Federal Housing Administration was created, the idea was to create a middle class through homeownership opportunities. In the policies that were created, there were very specific and deliberate provisions that prohibited the sale of homes to African Americans. This created environments that are known today as the suburbs. These areas are not minority-oriented because when they were first created, there were deliberate policies that prohibited the sale, or even the offering, of a thirty-year mortgage to Black families. Since then, there was a Civil Rights movement, and we changed the laws and policies, but now Black families need to catch up. To provide you with an analogy, if I were racing another person on a track, and I had a 200-meter head start, the chances that my opponent would ever catch me are highly unlikely, regardless of their running capacity. My point is that we have a lot of work to do to begin to change the narrative and allow our country to be the great country that our forefathers intended it to be. I think that they got a lot of things wrong in the very beginning, but they got some things right, and the fundamental thing that they got right is our democracy – the ability to change the laws as we go. That is where we come in as public servants. Piece-by-piece and day-by-day, we have the ability to begin to change the narrative that started long before anyone in this room existed. Here at the Franklin County Board of Commissioners, we have the Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion, and it is not just a title. We challenge all of the departments to do the best they can to be inclusive in their procurements, their hiring practices, and their policies. We want to ensure that everything that we do gives everyone an equal chance at success. Our job is to

provide service, progress, and excellence to every resident, every day. Until we believe that, and until we make that part of our DNA, we will continue to face the challenges that have plagued our society from the very beginning. I really feel deeply that we are at a changing moment in history, and you can see it all across the United States, in every corporation, in Congress, in the White House, on city councils, and on school boards. I believe something is happening in this country for the better, and I do not think that it will end during our lifetime, but I think that we are starting a new chapter that creates a new narrative so that our grandchildren and great-grandchildren will have it a little bit better, just as we have it better than our ancestors. I am grateful that when we set out to make Juneteenth a holiday a couple of years ago, there was no hesitation in terms of support, and that is the Franklin County way. It is an example of the growth that we have made as a county and as an institution. It is easy to do it as an individual, but it is another thing to do it as an organization, and I believe that we are headed in the right direction. When we declared racism as a public health crisis, it shook waves throughout the country. There were many people who challenged us, and politicians who do not agree, but we took that step, and now we are living it. To Commissioner Brown, who retired some months ago, and to Commissioner O'Grady, I am grateful to have colleagues that take action and believe in what we are doing. Commissioner Crawley has joined us and carried the baton with us in this process. I hope that next Monday, you have the opportunity to reflect on the progress that we have made as a country, and the progress that we are still attempting to make in Franklin County.

Commissioner O'Grady: In the roughly 400-year history of the United States, white folks have treated Black folks improperly, to say the least. Now, in the modern-day legislature, there are people who are trying to take away teachers' ability to tell the story of our history in the way that it should be told. The story of Juneteenth is an important one in our country's history, and the ability to teach the real, true history of our country should never be taken away.

Commissioner Crawley: Commissioner O'Grady, could you speak a little about the legislation that is currently in the Ohio House of Representatives that could impact diversity, equity, and inclusion at a local level?

Commissioner O'Grady: There are several pieces of legislation that I could talk about. There is legislation regarding Critical Race Theory (CRT), which could limit teachers' ability to teach the real history of our country. There is also House Bill 616, also known as the "Don't Say Gay" bill, which has been passed in Florida and has been considered or passed in other states. This bill would take away the ability of educators to discuss sexuality in schools. This Board of Commissioners has been opposed to both of those pieces of legislation, not only because we are ideologically and politically opposed to them, but also because we are opposed to the legislature telling educators what they can and cannot teach from an ideological standpoint. Juneteenth is a good day to bring up these issues and to remind people that our past is something from which we should be learning, not covering up or burying.

Kenneth N. Wilson, County Administrator: This Board of Commissioners was a leader in making the declaration that Juneteenth is a holiday that Franklin County recognizes. When that declaration was made, the Board expressed that they wanted this to be an opportunity to educate our employees and our community on the significance of that action. In an effort to do just that, on Friday, June

17, 2022, the Board of Commissioners, through the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, is sponsoring an information session on Juneteenth and African American history here in Franklin County. This event will be available to the public via Facebook.

Commissioner Crawley: In discussing the history of Juneteenth, it is important to note that back in 1865 when the enslaved Africans were told about their freedom, many of them remained on plantations because they had nowhere else to go. They did not have any property, own any land, or have any money to purchase land. There is always an argument that since these enslaved African Americans were now free, they could have left and no longer worked in the fields and labored, but where would they have gone? Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke a lot about being in America and not having access to wealth or the ability to purchase land. After the Emancipation Proclamation, there was a period of Reconstruction, in which African Americans were in elected office positions and were trying to change the course of this country, especially for Black people, but as we have seen, Reconstruction failed. Other laws such as Black Codes and Jim Crow became codified, and such legislation continues to put barriers in the path of African American progress. Today, hundreds of years later, we are still trying to mitigate the negative outcomes that are a result of slavery. These challenges are real and they are generational. We cannot change the course of where we are headed unless we change the laws and policies in our way. We need to ensure that everyone has access to capital to start a business, and access to loans to purchase homes in the neighborhoods in which they would like to live, without high interest rates. As we move forward as a Board of Commissioners, we look at how our laws and policies impact the individuals in this community. We are looking at what we can do to make sure that each individual's path forward is attainable. I would like to thank my colleagues for always being on the forefront, for being progressive, for declaring Juneteenth a holiday, and for declaring racism as a public health crisis. I think we can continue to be leaders in a county that other counties look to for progress and achievement. Thank you to Commissioner O'Grady for all of the work that you do at the County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO), and for being the voice and a champion for the people.

//

Commissioner Crawley: Three times a year we look forward to recognizing the state champions from area high schools and today we have the student-athletes that excelled in their spring sport during the 2022 season. Working with our partners at Greater Columbus Sports Commission and the Ohio High School Athletic Association is always a privilege. Good morning and welcome to all the student-athletes, their coaches, and families that are tuned into this morning's meeting. To kick things off, I'd like to introduce our good friend, Executive Director of Greater Columbus Sports Commissioner, Linda Logan.

Linda Logan, Executive Director, Greater Columbus Sports Commission: This is a big month for us, as we are going to be celebrating the twentieth anniversary of the Sports Commission. It is also the fiftieth anniversary of Title IX, so I know that many of the girls who are represented here today have in their sights the pioneers who made that happen for us. I would like to recognize two female Ohio high school graduates who broke national records this week in Eugene, Oregon, at the NCAA

track and field championships. Abby Steiner, a Dublin Coffman graduate, broke the collegiate record in the women's 200-meter run. She graced our stage four times as a four-time state champion. Finally, Adelaide Aquilla, a Magnificat High School graduate, broke the collegiate record in women's shot put.

Doug Ute, Executive Director, Ohio High School Athletic Association: Congratulations to all of the athletes joining us today. I remember Abby running on the track at Jesse Owens Memorial Stadium a couple of years ago, and she had some great performances. We have also had some young student-athletes follow in her footsteps. There were some great individual and team efforts this spring, particularly in track and field. We congratulate all of our athletes and appreciate all of their hard work.

Commissioner Crawley: Thank you, Linda and Doug. When your high school and sport is announced, if the coach or school representative could please unmute your microphone, introduce yourself and your athletes, and share a few words about your season. If there are one or two students available to highlight their experiences, that would be great, as well. Finally, we always enjoy hearing from seniors about their next steps following high school.

School	Sport	Athlete(s)	Coach(es)
New Albany	Girls Lacrosse	Team	Elaina Enich
Upper Arlington	Boys Lacrosse	Team	Kyle Olson
St. Francis DeSales	Boys Lacrosse	Team	Matt Triplet
Pickerington Central	Boys Track & Field	Troy Lane	Jason Roach
		Ethan Pinkins	Darrin Green
		Kaleb Holloway	
		Xavier McCoy	
Thomas Worthington	Boys Track & Field	Shohaam Singh	Bill Darling
		Camden Beatty	
		Daniel Assoku	
		Eli Hitzhusen	
Olentangy Orange	Boys Track & Field	Joel Addo	Adam Walters
		Josephine Davis	
	Girls Track & Field	Ava Musgrove	
		Cassidy Shimp	
		Teresa Christian	
Grandview Heights	Boys Track & Field	Collin Haj Abed	Brian Schoch

			Patrick McHugh
Africentric	Girls Track & Field	Ashtan Winfrey	Clayton Wrighter
Gahanna Lincoln	Girls Track & Field	Camden Bentley Amryne Chilton Ayanna Stafford Keena Sanders	Roger Whittaker
Hilliard Davidson	Boys Track & Field	Jack De Francesco	Ryan Aleshire Matt Beatty

Each Commissioner shared brief remarks.

Commissioner Crawley: Again, we want to congratulate all of these athletes. You are welcome to stay with us and see how county government works, but we know you are busy. You are free to log off now and enjoy the rest of your day.

//

Approval of the minutes for the June 7, 2022, General Session; and the June 9, 2022, Briefing Session. Commissioner Boyce moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner O’Grady. The minutes were unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0450-22, authorizing an agreement with Paul Werth Associates, Inc. to provide public relations consulting (\$25,000.00) (Coroner), presented by Amanda Alvarez Wright, Director of Operations, Coroner’s Office.

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

Commissioner O’Grady moved to approve Resolution 0450-22, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote, with Commissioner Boyce abstaining.

Resolution No. 0451-22, authorizing the Sixth Amendment to the Intergovernmental Agreement between the Franklin County Board of Commissioners, the Franklin County Engineer’s Office, and the Franklin County Transportation Improvement District (\$185,546.50) (Board of Commissioners), presented by Nick Soulas, Government Affairs Liaison, Engineer’s Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0451-22, seconded by Commissioner O'Grady. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0452-22, TranSystems, Inc., consulting engineers, appointed to assist the Franklin County Engineer by providing general engineering services (\$100,000.00) (Engineer), presented by Nick Soulas, Government Affairs Liaison, Engineer's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0452-22, seconded by Commissioner O'Grady. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0453-22, Stantec Consulting Services, Inc., consulting engineers, appointed to assist the Franklin County Engineer by providing preliminary engineering design services for the Alum Creek Drive Widening Improvement project, Hamilton Township, Franklin County, Ohio (\$1,632,954.00) (Engineer), presented by Nick Soulas, Government Affairs Liaison, Engineer's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0453-22, seconded by Commissioner O'Grady. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0454-22, authorizing the Franklin County Engineer to enter into a contract modification with Anser Advisory, LLC., for construction inspection services, an increase of (\$100,000.00) for a revised contract amount of \$200,000.00 (\$200,000.00) (Engineer), presented by Nick Soulas, Government Affairs Liaison, Engineer's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0454-22, seconded by Commissioner O'Grady. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0455-22, authorizing the Franklin County Engineer to enter into a contract modification with Woolpert, Inc., for the Sunbury Road at Woodward Avenue project, an increase

of (\$37,369.00) for a revised contract amount of \$258,718.00 (\$258,718.00) (Engineer), presented by Nick Soulas, Government Affairs Liaison, Engineer's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0455-22, seconded by Commissioner O'Grady. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0456-22, report (1st) of the Franklin County Engineer, establishing sums of compensation for a portion of the owners of property abutting the Norton Road, County Road No. 3, and Kropp Road-Grove City Road, County Road No. 135, Improvement project, Pleasant Township, Franklin County, Ohio (\$27,005.00) (Engineer), presented by Nick Soulas, Government Affairs Liaison, Engineer's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0456-22, seconded by Commissioner O'Grady. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0457-22, authorizing a contract with City of Columbus, Department of Municipal Court Judges to provide police services (\$15,000.00) (Sheriff), presented by Albert J. Smith III, Assistant Finance Director, Sheriff's Office.

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

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0457-22, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0458-22, authorizing the acceptance of a Violent Crime Reduction Grant for the Central Ohio Violence Eradication Response Team (\$332,732.89) (Sheriff), presented by Albert J. Smith III, Assistant Finance Director, Sheriff's Office.

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

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0458-22, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0459-22, approving a subaward agreement with the St. Vincent Family Center to support transportation services for Medicaid eligible youth participating in day treatment programs (\$569,850.00) (Job and Family Services), presented by Vivian Turner, Assistant Director, Job and Family Services.

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

Commissioner O’Grady moved to approve Resolution 0459-22, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0460-22, authorizing Third Contract Modification with Universal Work and Power, LLC dba Kemper Shuttle Services for Consolidated County Transportation Services (Lift, Non-Lift and Escort) (\$1,299.81) (Purchasing), presented by Traci Mathew, Assistant Director, Purchasing, and Matthew Zelnik, Assistant Director, Services, Veterans Service Commission.

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

Commissioner O’Grady moved to approve Resolution 0460-22, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0461-22, approving purchases for various Franklin County agencies (\$1,800,072.21) (Purchasing), presented by Traci Mathew, Assistant Director, Purchasing, and Marleise Ryan, Economic Equity Administrator, Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion.

Ms. Mathew and Ms. Ryan reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O’Grady moved to approve Resolution 0461-22, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0462-22, authorizing the County Administrator to approve and execute contract modifications to all existing and future construction contract agreements where the modification does not involve an increase to the contract price, and authorizing the County Administrator to take any further actions necessary to effectuate the approval and execution of such modifications, as originally granted under, and subject to the same terms and limitations as described in, Resolution 0340-21, through December 31, 2023 (Board of Commissioners), presented by Jesse Armstrong, Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Prosecuting Attorney’s Office.

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

Commissioner O'Grady moved to approve Resolution 0462-22, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

//

Brittany A. Razek, Clerk to the Board of Commissioners, read one (1) journalization into the record:

The Franklin County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing on the 2023 Franklin County Tax Budget. This hearing will be held on Tuesday, June 28, 2022, at 9:00 am at General Session in the Commissioners' Hearing Room, 369 South High Street, Main Lobby, Columbus, Ohio 43215, and via Zoom conferencing. Additional information may be obtained by contacting the Clerk of the Franklin County Board of Commissioners at 614-525-5387.

//

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:34 A.M.

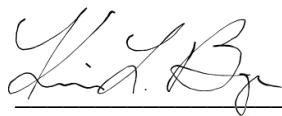
(Signature Page Follows)

These minutes are a general summary of the Commissioners' General Session meeting on Tuesday, June 14, 2022.

ERICA C. CRAWLEY, PRESIDENT



JOHN O'GRADY



**KEVIN L. BOYCE
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO**

Submitted by:



Lauren M. Graessle

//bar