

FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF GENERAL SESSION

August 1, 2023

The Franklin County Board of Commissioners convened in the Commissioners Hearing Room, at 9:00 A.M. on Tuesday, August 1, 2023.

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

Also present on the dais were Kenneth N. Wilson, County Administrator; Kris J. 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, Prosecuting Attorney's Office; and Lauren M. Graessle, 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 O'Grady called the meeting to order at 9:12 A.M.

Commissioner O'Grady: We work hand-in-hand with the Prosecutor's Office, which has a new Deputy Chief Counsel. I would like to introduce the new Deputy Chief Counsel of the Criminal Division, Anthony Pierson, who started in May of this year. Mr. Pierson, would you like to say a few words?

Anthony Pierson, Deputy Chief Counsel, Criminal Division, Prosecuting Attorney's Office: Thank you for having me. I am part of the Criminal Division, but I wanted to come here to observe this process and learn about it. I work closely with Jeanine Hummer. I have been a Franklin County prosecutor off and on for about twenty years now. Prior to a couple of years ago, I did not understand the full breadth of what the Civil Division of the Franklin County Prosecutor's Office did. I am glad to observe and see all of the work that is being done here.

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Commissioner O'Grady: As I'm sure you all know and as I hope everyone watching is aware, we've got an election underway in this state. In this morning's paper, an article states that around 66,000 Franklin County residents will be displaced from their voting locations on August 8<sup>th</sup>. Make sure you check to see where your voting location is so that you know where to go to vote.

Commissioner Boyce: I will be out of the country on election day, so I voted early, but there is nothing like the feeling of election day. When you vote on election day, it feels like you are there for a reason. For elected officials, it is a big deal. This is an interesting election because I have been in politics for a long time, and I am not sure I have ever seen a special election at such an odd time. Seeing the lines of people voting early inspires me because people are paying attention.

Commissioner O'Grady: The legislature was counting on us not paying attention. I like to take my family to vote on election day, but I also like to go out to the early voting center a couple of times to take food and refreshments to the volunteers who are out there. For this special election, Ohioans are already voting on a proposed constitutional amendment that will make it harder to change the Constitution in the future if approved. I understand that turnout for early voting has been high, which is good, as we always encourage everyone to vote in every election, and I think this one is especially important. You can vote early by mail or in person at the Board of Elections, or you can vote in person at the polls on August 8<sup>th</sup>. Visit [Vote.FranklinCountyOhio.gov](http://Vote.FranklinCountyOhio.gov) to learn more about requesting an absentee ballot, voting early in person, how to find your polling place, and how to volunteer to work at the polls. As I mentioned, many Franklin County residents have been displaced from their polling locations for this special election in particular, so be sure to verify where you should go to vote.

Commissioner Crawley: I think that is why it is so important for us to inform the public about this special election and the changes in polling locations, as well as how that can affect people in November for the general election. When we create confusion, especially for people who already feel disenfranchised, this only exacerbates that problem. For those of you who are waiting until August 8<sup>th</sup> to vote, like myself, please check your polling location so you and your family and friends can make a plan to get to the polls.

Kenneth N. Wilson, County Administrator: For elections, residents of Franklin County should have a plan and find out in advance where their polling place is. If they decide to vote early, they should have a plan to receive their ballot. Residents should take the same care with this as they do with flying on an airplane; you need to know your proper gate number. As Commissioner O'Grady stated, you can go to [Vote.FranklinCountyOhio.gov](http://Vote.FranklinCountyOhio.gov) to get the information you need to exercise your right to vote. This Board always stresses that every election matters; you should not sit out any election.

Commissioner Boyce: Is today the last day you can request an absentee ballot?

Commissioner Crawley: I believe so; yes.

Commissioner Boyce: I know that is important because I have two kids who live out of state. If you know someone who needs an absentee ballot, today is the last day to request one.

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Approval of the minutes for the June 13, 2023, General Session; and the June 15, 2023, Briefing Session. Commissioner Boyce moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The minutes were unanimously approved by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0578-23**, authorizing a one-year memorandum of understanding with the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Board of Franklin County from January 1, 2023 to November 3, 2023 for the Reception Center (\$675,957.00) (Domestic Relations), presented by Barb Reeves, Deputy Director, Court of Common Pleas, Domestic Relations Division.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0578-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0579-23**, authorizing contracts for attendance services with Canal Winchester Schools, Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools, Groveport Madison Schools, Hilliard City Schools, New Albany Plain Local Schools, Reynoldsburg City Schools and South Western City Schools (\$290,490.00) (Domestic Relations), presented by Julie Troth, Director of Programs, Court of Common Pleas, Domestic Relations Division.

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

Commissioner Crawley: Are the attendance services specifically for truancy officers to be placed at each school?

Ms. Troth: That is correct.

Commissioner Crawley: How many truancy officers are there for each school?

Ms. Troth: There is a total of ten.

Commissioner Crawley: Ten at each school?

Ms. Troth: No, there is a total of ten truancy officers. Canal Winchester has one, Gahanna Jefferson has one, Groveport Madison has two, Hilliard has one, New Albany has one, Reynoldsburg has one, and South-Western City has three.

Commissioner O'Grady: Is that because South-Western City has a much larger district?

Ms. Troth: That is correct. When we proposed the program to South-Western City, they wanted truancy officers in all their high schools.

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0579-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0580-23**, authorizing a transfer of funds for the Stormwater Management Program (Drainage Engineer), presented by James Ramsey, Riparian and Environmental Engineer, Engineer's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0580-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0581-23**, approving a ditch maintenance petition for Zubkevych Village, Pleasant Township, Franklin County, Ohio (Drainage Engineer), presented by James Ramsey, Riparian and Environmental Engineer, Engineer's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0581-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

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James Ramsey, Riparian and Environmental Engineer, Engineer's Office: Commissioners, I have with me today Collin Hoffner. Collin is a senior at New Albany High School. He is participating in their senior seminars, which is a program in which students have the opportunity to choose a different self-learning path. Collin chose to spend his time with us, so he will be spending eighty hours with our office, learning as much as he can about the Engineer's Office and the work that we do. He has been able to interview most of the department heads in the county, and he has a few more to go. This week, we hope to get him to your office to see the bigger picture and how the Engineer's Office fits into that. We will be working with the Administration, and hopefully, he will have a chance to meet some of you while he is visiting. He is a fine student and it has been a good experience having him here. I am sure he will do good things in the future, and hopefully, he will choose engineering.

Commissioner Crawley: Welcome, Collin!

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**Resolution No. 0582-23**, amending Resolution 0561-23, which declared necessary the establishing, altering, and widening of Waggoner Road, County Road No. 106, from East Main Street, US 40, to East Broad Street, SR16, Truro Township and Jefferson Township, Franklin County, Ohio, by establishing new dates for the viewing and final hearing (Engineer), presented by Brad Foster, Chief Deputy Operations Engineer, Engineer's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0582-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0583-23**, awarding contract and approving contract bond to Newcomer Concrete Services, Inc. for the Plain Township Fire Station No. 121 Site Improvements (\$449,943.90) (Engineer), presented by Brad Foster, Chief Deputy Operations Engineer, Engineer's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0583-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0584-23**, E.L. Robinson Engineering of Ohio Company, consulting engineers, appointed to assist the Franklin County Engineer by providing detailed engineering services for the Frank Road, County Road No. 125, at Brown Road, County Road No. 142/Hardy Parkway Street, and Frank Road, County Road No. 125, at Brown Road, Township Road No. 142 Improvement project, Franklin County, Ohio (\$675,829.00) (Engineer), presented by Brad Foster, Chief Deputy Operations Engineer, Engineer's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0584-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0585-23**, Smoot Construction Company, consulting engineers, appointed to assist the Franklin County Engineer by providing construction inspection services for bridge maintenance projects, Franklin County, Ohio (\$69,864.37) (Engineer), presented by Brad Foster, Chief Deputy Operations Engineer, Engineer's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0585-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0586-23**, requesting the Ohio Department of Transportation to reduce the speed limit on Harlem Road, County Road No. 111, Plain Township, Franklin County, Ohio (Engineer), presented by Brad Foster, Chief Deputy Operations Engineer, Engineer's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0586-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0587-23**, requesting the Ohio Department of Transportation to reduce the speed limit on Havens Road, Township Road No. 203, Jefferson Township, Franklin County, Ohio (Engineer), presented by Brad Foster, Chief Deputy Operations Engineer, Engineer's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0587-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0588-23**, requesting the Ohio Department of Transportation to reduce the speed limit on Walnut Street, County Road No. 19, Plain Township, Franklin County, Ohio (Engineer), presented by Brad Foster, Chief Deputy Operations Engineer, Engineer's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0588-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0589-23**, approval of the Zubkevych Village, subdivision plat, Pleasant Township, Franklin County, Ohio (Engineer), presented by Brad Foster, Chief Deputy Operations Engineer, Engineer's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0589-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0590-23**, authorizing the County Administrator and the County Prosecutor to execute an amendment to the FY 2022-2023 Victim of Crimes Act (VOCA) grant from the Ohio Attorney General's Office (Prosecuting Attorney), presented by Jeanine Hummer, First Assistant Prosecuting Attorney and Chief Counsel, Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0590-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0591-23**, authorizing a twelve-month extension of the Service Agreement with AT&T for Centrex Communication Services (\$239,830.00) (Franklin County Data Center), presented by Julie Lust, Chief Financial Officer, Data Center.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0591-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0592-23**, authorizing a contract with Mapsys Inc. for the upgrade of the IBM iSeries operating system (\$9,945.00) (Franklin County Data Center), presented by Julie Lust, Chief Financial Officer, Data Center.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0592-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0593-23**, authorizing Franklin County Child Support Enforcement Agency to enter into a IV-D contract with the Franklin County Data Center (\$379,313.94) (Child Support Enforcement), presented by Susan Brown, Director, Child Support Enforcement.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0593-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0594-23**, authorizing a grant agreement with the YWCA Columbus to support family shelter employees (\$250,000.00) (Community Partnerships), presented by Curtis Brown, Community Partnerships Administrator, Community Partnerships.

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

Elizabeth Brown, President and Chief Executive Officer, YWCA Columbus: I appreciate the support of the County at every turn for our families who are served at the Family Center, as well as for our employees. We know that when wages don't keep pace with the economy, the very employees who are there to serve our homeless residents are indeed at risk of housing insecurity themselves. That is why we are investing in them with your help.

Commissioner Crawley: I just want to be clear. Is this to supplement wages right now, or is this for a study to be done to see what wages should be?

Ms. Brown: This is a direct supplement to wages right now. The two-year study is an investment in our employees, so it is directly related to wages. The concurrent homelessness assessment that the Community Shelter Board (CSB) is doing, due to the urging and support of the Commissioners, is what will determine not just the expected homelessness population in our community, but what it takes to serve them. This includes paying housing wages to employees. The two years that we are focused on raising our wages right now is to bridge the results of that study. Commissioner Crawley, you and I sit on the Strategic Assessment Committee, and we both hope that will get us towards a more permanent solution.

Commissioner Crawley: Thank you. What are the wages currently for the teachers at the Y, and then what will they be?

Ms. Brown: There is a mix, depending on how long individuals have been with us. We have found that the wages we pay our Family Center employees lag behind what other shelter employees earn. We need to get closer to parity. The lowest starting pay is \$15.50 per hour for our employees at the Family Center, which is not a housing wage. As you know, the Franklin County housing wages are closer to \$20 per hour, and that is where we want to get our Family Center employees. Our organization consists of our Family Center, our Permanent Supportive Housing, and our twenty-two childcare centers. Across our organization, we need to invest in our employees so that they can make living wages in this economy. We are starting with our employees who are serving our most vulnerable.

Commissioner Crawley: I appreciate that. I know that the average wage across the state of Ohio for teachers is around \$11-\$12 per hour. Obviously, that is far from a living wage.



Commissioner Crawley (cont.): I know with Franklin County RISE, the County looked at subsidizing wages for all of our teachers in Franklin County, but it is unsustainable. We were able to commit resources for rent and utility assistance, understanding that our teachers find themselves in situations where they experience more monthly than money and struggle to keep a roof over their heads. That should not be the case. My colleagues and I have continued investing in emergency rental assistance, and we are getting ready to do another round. Our teachers are going through Job and Family Services for our resources, which should not be that way. I am happy to support this resolution. Franklin County is always trying to ensure that every resident has the opportunity to thrive and not just survive. I know that our neighbors in your shelters are literally surviving, but the teachers who care for children all across your centers are just surviving, too, and we do not want that. This aligns with our Poverty Blueprint Plan by ensuring people can move up the economic mobility ladder and be self-sustaining. The concern after these two years is sustainability, so I hope that this is a bridge to what is next. I would love to talk to you as we conduct the study with CSB and look at the results. What is the plan to sustain these wages long term and to continue to increase those wages over time to keep up with the housing costs that we see in the county? I would love to continue that conversation with you, but I absolutely support this resolution today.

Ms. Brown: Thank you for your commitment to our frontline workers.

Commissioner Boyce: Commissioner Crawley hit the nail on the head about wage sustainability. To that point, is two years enough time to really figure that out? We are in a very contracting economy right now, and we do not really know what the economy will look like in the future with current inflation and interest rates. We do not know how it is going to settle. Is two years enough to make sure that we are not just putting a Band-Aid over the problem? Then two years from now, you will be standing in front of us saying the same thing? You do not have to answer those questions, they are somewhat rhetorical. I want Franklin County to think about impactful and deep investments. This issue is at the core of what we are fighting in terms of poverty. Women and children are on the frontlines. Those in your facilities are on the frontlines, but servicing them is as important as providing them with resources. I want to challenge the administration to get ahead of thinking long term about sustainability. To me, that is where we can turn the corner on some of these issues. This is a good investment in a good agency, but when I see this type of investment, I know it will be difficult to sustain. Central Ohio is a very competitive environment for non-profits; many are doing great work. But this sustainability issue is serious, and if we are committed to it, we have to think about longevity and the ability for agencies to become sustainable on their own. The CSB study is important, but it is such a big conversation that I fear it will only produce a new system or direction. It will be a long-term, inch-by-inch, minute-by-minute, day-by-day type of grind, and I do not know if that will drive immediate impact on the folks you're serving. I am supportive of this resolution, but I am not satisfied with this appropriation.

Commissioner Crawley: I would be remiss if I didn't talk about our early learning strategy.

Commissioner Crawley (cont.): We have started this conversation and continue to have this conversation in Franklin County regarding our early learning strategy going forward. We did not see what we wanted to see in the budget bill to really support early care and learning. Part of early care and learning and stabilizing that foundation is making sure that our teachers are paid living wages. There is more work that the State can do, but instead of waiting for the State, we will be the leaders in this space. We have to talk about what a new early learning strategy looks like over the next few years in Franklin County. We need to make sure wages are a part of that and ensure there is an opportunity for them to be increased over time to compensate for inflation or just the rising cost of living. That is not lost on me or our administration as we work with our partners and consultants. We want early care and learning to be seen as a birthright, and if it is seen as such, we will make significant investments every day to support that.

Joy Bivens, Deputy County Administrator: For the purview and education of the audience, I presented a resolution at the National Association of Counties (NACo) on Commissioner Crawley's behalf to urge Congress to stabilize the workforce in the education space. It is going to require more than the Commissioners and more than the State. We have to make a tremendous investment in order to fill this gap. We agree with Commissioner Boyce's statements regarding sustainability, and we are trying to figure out what that looks like. I am requesting that in 2024, we have more strategic alignment and frequent conversations with our partners so that we can stay ahead, project, and anticipate ways to redirect budget dollars to support some of the things our partners on the frontlines are dealing with. We appreciate the work that you are doing, Ms. Brown, and we will be in touch to figure out how we can be more aligned with you and your team. We want to ensure your staff knows we will support them in any way we can.

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0594-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0595-23**, authorizing a grant agreement with the African American Male Wellness Agency to support the African American Wellness Educational Initiatives and events and the Real Men Real Talk and Doula Programs (\$450,000.00) (Office of Diversity Equity & Inclusion), presented by Tameca Bumper, Economic Equity Administrator, Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion.

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

Joy Bivens, Deputy County Administrator: We have other partners who provide doula services. To support the Poverty Blueprint Plan, we want to ensure that providers are aligned. Are we convening and cultivating these partners in the doula space? Are we aligning with all of our partners in this space, such as CelebrateONE, so that they are all working towards a common goal? Is there ever a time when these partners come together to have these conversations?

Ms. Bumper: We have spoken to Perry Gregory, Vice President of the African American Male Wellness Agency, about this. He stated that there is a partnership between providers that they are cultivating.

Commissioner Boyce: I want to congratulate and thank the African American Male Wellness Agency for all of the work that they do. It is quite amazing, and I have seen their work nationally. They have really started a movement to change lives. I love that you provided statistics about how many people discovered they had high blood pressure, hypertension, or diabetes while they were at the walk. This event is a celebration in the community. It takes a lot of skill to combine health and wellness with a good time, and this event feels like a festival. There are no other events like that in Central Ohio. It is something to look forward to every year, and you all do an amazing job promoting wellness and mental health. I love the Uplift Her program, and Commissioner Crawley is this year's honorary chair. These events get bigger each year. To the Gregory family, Kenny Hampton, and all of the leadership at the African American Male Wellness Agency, you all are doing tremendous work, so please do not stop. Keep striving to get bigger, do more, and be better. You have started a movement, and it is making a difference.

Commissioner Crawley: Thank you for all of the work you all continue to do, whether in Ohio or across the country. It is transformational and impactful. With programs like Real Men Real Talk or Cooking with Dads, you are helping to break stigmas in the Black community. You are helping change what mental health looks like, underscoring that it is okay to not be okay, and acknowledging that we should talk about the things going on in our lives so that we can have support. As someone who continues to champion investments and resources in this space, I could not do the work that I do and feel good about myself if I was not honest about what I have struggled with regarding depression and anxiety. I have talked about what I have experienced over my life and what I am experiencing now, and I can still be in a leadership position and live a full, healthy, fun life. I hope that gives someone else the motivation and encouragement to believe they can do these things, too. I appreciate the continued effort to have Black men or men of color in the community come out in a safe space to talk about the things they are dealing with because you never know whose life you are saving. Cooking with Dads is another opportunity to break the stigma of how Black men are viewed within our community. We know that we have dads in our community who love their families and show up for them every day. It is great for them to be in a space where they can bond with other men and get their needed support. Regarding the Doula Program, when we look at the data from 2009 to 2019, it underscores what we already know about maternal death, especially for Black women and the indigenous population. We have seen that for Black women, the maternal mortality rate has gone from 2.5-3 times the rate of white women to 4-6 times the rate of white women. The disparity continues to increase. We do not have legislation that provides Medicaid reimbursement for doulas, which is why this Board continues to invest in this space with other community partners. We know that when there is access to doulas and midwives, there is a decrease in maternal deaths by 50% and a decrease in infant mortality by 50%. In Ohio, because we do not have legislation regarding this, we do not have an oversight board to look at credentialing.

Commissioner Crawley (cont.): Can you talk to me about the certification process for the doula you are training through this program? How long will the training be? How many live births do the participants need to be a part of to become certified?

Natalie Donnally, Vice President, African American Male Wellness Agency: We will have an 18-week program, which is a total of 120 hours of instructional competencies, as well as five live births and two C-sections, for a total of 35 hours. We will partner with Mercy Hospital, which will provide a nurse practitioner licensed in midwifery to instruct our students.

Commissioner Crawley: So, the 18 weeks and 120 hours is just instructional, and the live births and C-sections are an additional 35 hours?

Ms. Donnally: Correct, that is an additional 35 hours of clinical competency. We will also be focusing on OSHA competencies so our students are trained in enhanced sterile and safe clinical practices to decrease infection rates. The training also includes the incorporation of entrepreneurship and business planning for the doula who will be self-employed.

Commissioner Crawley: How many doula are being used for this one-year grant agreement?

Ms. Donnally: It would be up to 50, with about 15 per cohort.

Commissioner Crawley: When do you anticipate your first cohort?

Ms. Donnally: October 1<sup>st</sup>.

Commissioner Boyce: How do you train the doula?

Ms. Donnally: We have a curriculum. We have partnered with trained doula in the community, Ashauna Mathews and Erica Lane, who are the owners of SunshineFLO Doula Services. We have a competency curriculum that we have created that is for community-based, culturally competent doula birthing services.

Commissioner Boyce: Commissioner Crawley, are you a certified doula?

Commissioner Crawley: No, I do not have time to be certified because I am trying to champion legislation. After we get some laws passed in the state and significant investment at the state and federal levels, I will happily sign up to become a doula to save someone else's life.

Commissioner Boyce: She has been a super champion for doula services. She seems like the type of person who would be really great at that, unlike Commissioner O'Grady and myself.

Commissioner Crawley: We need male doulas. There are doulas for different things, and I do not think people know that. There are doulas who provide emotional and social support. We know that in this state, there is an attack on choice. Even outside of choice, it is important to understand that people and families experience medical issues when trying to conceive. Some conceive a child born with medical issues, and there can be a loss of life for different reasons. There are doulas who support families when they have had to make difficult decisions or deal with difficult situations. Some doulas specialize in the grief process and family planning.

Ms. Donnally: I want to add that with my policy and government affairs work on Capitol Hill, we have created a steering committee for midwifery, and we have created a post-competency exam, which we will implement in our program, as well.

Kenneth N. Wilson, County Administrator: This has been a great conversation. I think educating the general public about doulas and culturally competent care is extremely important in combatting the maternal mortality epidemic. Commissioner Crawley has been a champion in this area. Last month at the National Association of Counties (NACo) conference, your resolution to improve maternal health outcomes, urge Congress to extend postpartum coverage beyond where it is today, and create incentives for physicians and maternity care professionals of color so that our Black mothers are heard, was approved and will be part of the NACo agenda. On August 23<sup>rd</sup>, there will be a Columbus Metropolitan Club conversation, Black Mothers Matter, which will dig deep into combatting maternal health outcomes. There will also be a screening of the documentary *Aftershock*, in partnership with COSI. We want to encourage the entire community to turn out in large numbers to have a significant conversation and keep that conversation going in our community. The maternal health outcomes for Black mothers in Franklin County are unacceptable. We can and must do better.

Commissioner Crawley: Thank you for presenting that resolution for me at NACo in my absence. This is just a testament to the great work being done in Franklin County. I cannot advocate on behalf of children and families without the support of my colleagues and County Administration.

Commissioner O'Grady: We have the Gregory family with us today, and I would like to thank them for all of the work that they have done in the community. Thank you for all that you have done for men and women in Central Ohio around these topics. Please continue to grow this work. The Walk gets bigger each year, creating more awareness and removing the stigma from so many issues. It saves so many lives in many different ways.

Perry Gregory, Vice President, African American Male Wellness Agency: We just had a baby girl, and we utilized a doula. At first, I did not think I was a fan of doulas, but I can tell you that the doula service is so awesome and powerful to have.

John Gregory, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, African American Male Wellness Agency: This morning, we brought a young man with us who is with our Real Men Real Talk program. Can you please speak about the Real Men Real Talk program you are participating in?

Larry Hudson, Jr., Participant, Real Men Real Talk: I am a Columbus native, but I have never been in this room. This experience is amazing and special to me, so thank you for having me. Thank you to the Board of Commissioners for the work that you do. It is amazing to see men who look like me in your positions. Real Men Real Talk is very special to me. I give credit to my church, family, and therapist, but the safe space Real Men Real Talk provides is different. To be around men who take off their masks and share in a space without guilt, shame, or embarrassment is amazing because we deal with a lot of stuff. Many of the resolutions I have heard today affect me as a resident of this community, especially the resolution from Child Support Enforcement. My kids attend Groveport Madison, so many of these resolutions have been near and dear to me. But this resolution for Real Men Real Talk has allowed me to let down the mask I often wear as a dad and as a community activist working for a non-profit. This space has allowed me to cry, to be vulnerable, and to share. Dealing with child support and the family court system is tough. The men in this program have allowed me to come and let the weight of all of that off. There are spaces in which you cannot do that as a Black man, and this space is one of the only ones I have found in the last couple of years that has allowed me to do that. I hope you continue to support this program and the community continues to support it. We want to see more men come out so that Real Men Real Talk grows in the same way the Walk has. We need a spotlight on how important us discussing our mental health is.

Mr. John Gregory: I like to bring people here who we are impacting. I am so grateful that we have three County Commissioners who are so powerful in ensuring equity happens in Franklin County. A couple of years ago, you all declared racism to be a public health crisis, and it is. It is a crisis around mental health, physical health, workforce, and education. We recently had a graduation, and one of the graduates was a 74-year-old woman who could not get her high school diploma because of Jim Crow. But she came back to us and was able to get her high school diploma. We try to impact the community, but we cannot do that unless we have people in political positions who understand what it means to invest money in the community. We are working with daycare centers to raise their star rating, but the first complaint that the daycares have is that they cannot find good workers because they cannot pay them enough. If you pay people low wages, they will leave as soon as they find an opportunity that pays more. So, when we talk about improving the quality of our childcare centers, we have to talk about increasing the income that we pay our childcare workers. I want to thank you all for being real, true legislators who keep their word and put money where it belongs in the community. The Poverty Blueprint is wonderful, but it will only work if we work together as a community. We just had Adam “Pacman” Jones come to speak for our Real Men Real Talk program, and hundreds of Black men attended to have real conversations. It was tremendous to hear that it was the first time some of those men had the opportunity to open up and talk.

Mr. John Gregory (cont.): Many of them cried for the first time because they were able to talk about things they could not talk about before. We have African-American therapists who we can refer men to. We can also refer them to employment training programs, or education programs to get their high school diplomas or certified credentials. Thank you for your support, for doing your jobs, and for representing people who look like me.

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0595-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0596-23**, authorizing a grant agreement with Ghana Festival Ohio for support of the Ghana festival events (\$25,000.00) (Office of Diversity Equity & Inclusion), presented by Tameca Bumper, Economic Equity Administrator, Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0596-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0597-23**, authorizing an Affordable Housing Development agreement with Woda Cooper Companies Inc, to receive funding through the Magnet Fund Program to assist the development of an affordable housing project (\$1,350,000.00) (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 Crawley moved to approve Resolution 0597-23, seconded by Commissioner O'Grady. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote, with Commissioner Boyce abstaining.

**Resolution No. 0598-23**, approving a contract extension for on-site case management services between the Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services and the OhioHealth Corporation (\$211,388.47) (Job and Family Services), presented by Carmen Barnes, Deputy Director, Community Contracts and Programs, Job and Family Services.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0598-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0599-23**, approving a contract for case management services between the Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services and The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center (\$203,847.12) (Job and Family Services), presented by Carmen Barnes, Deputy Director, Community Contracts and Programs, Job and Family Services.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0599-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0600-23**, approving a COVID-19 Recovery Grant with the United Way of Central Ohio on behalf of the Boys and Young Men of Color Collective. (\$200,000.00)(Job and Family Services), presented by Carmen Barnes, Deputy Director, Community Contracts and Programs, Job and Family Services.

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

Joy Bivens, Deputy County Administrator: Because this resolution is in conjunction with the Resolution that the Commissioners passed regarding gun violence and some other work we are doing, I would like to see more of an aligned conversation as this information is being gathered.

Commissioner Crawley moved to approve Resolution 0600-23, seconded by Commissioner O'Grady. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0601-23**, authorizing a contract with The Cornerstone Promise, Inc. for the provision of transitional recovery housing for justice involved females with identified substance use disorders who are preparing for release from incarceration (\$25,000.00) (Justice Policy and Programs), presented by Melissa Pierson, Chief Operating Officer, Justice Policy and Programs.

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

Commissioner Crawley moved to approve Resolution 0601-23, seconded by Commissioner Boyce. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0602-23**, authorizing a Contract Extension and Modification between Franklin County and USI Insurance Services, LLC (USI) for general consulting services for the Franklin County Cooperative Health Improvement Program (Cooperative) (\$579,500.00) (Human Resources), presented by Jodi Leis, Assistant Director, Benefits and Wellness, Human Resources.



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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0602-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0603-23**, approving and authorizing the County Administrator to execute a contract modification between WEX Health, Inc. dba WEX as successor in interest to Benefit Express Services, LLC and the Franklin County Cooperative Health Improvement Program and authorizing the County Administrator to take additional actions necessary to effectuate the agreement not inconsistent with this Resolution (Human Resources), presented by Jodi Leis, Assistant Director, Benefits and Wellness, Human Resources.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0603-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0604-23**, approving purchases for various Franklin County agencies (\$3,652,021.81) (Purchasing), presented by Megan Perry-Balonier, Director, Purchasing, and Tameca Bumper, Economic Equity Administrator, Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0604-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0605-23**, submitting names to the State Emergency Planning Commission for final approval and appointment to the local emergency planning committee, known in Franklin County as the Chemical Emergency Preparedness Advisory Council (CEPAC) (Board of Commissioners), presented by Jeffrey J. Young, Director, Emergency Management Agency.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0605-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0606-23**, reappointing Elizabeth Martinez to the Franklin County Children Services Board of Trustees (Board of Commissioners), presented by Lauren M. Graessle, Assistant Director of Community Appointments, Board of Commissioners.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0606-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0607-23**, reappointing Elon Simms to the Franklin County Children Services Board of Trustees (Board of Commissioners), presented by Lauren M. Graessle, Assistant Director of Community Appointments, Board of Commissioners.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0607-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0608-23**, appointing Niki L. Hampton to the Franklin County Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services Board (Board of Commissioners), presented by Lauren M. Graessle, Assistant Director of Community Appointments, Board of Commissioners.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0608-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0609-23**, appointing Tamara M. Howard to the Franklin County Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services Board (Board of Commissioners), presented by Lauren M. Graessle, Assistant Director of Community Appointments, Board of Commissioners.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0609-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

**Resolution No. 0610-23**, appointing Robert V. Morris, II to the Franklin County Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services Board (Board of Commissioners), presented by Lauren M. Graessle, Assistant Director of Community Appointments, Board of Commissioners.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0610-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

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Lauren M. Graessle, Deputy Clerk to the Board of Commissioners, read one (1) journalization into the record:

Case #ANX-30-23, an expedited type 2 annexation petition, ANX-30-23, was filed with the Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department on July 24, 2023. The petition is requesting to annex 22.7-acres from Prairie Township to the City of Columbus. The petition will be considered by the Board of Commissioners on August 29, 2023. Site: Galloway Road, PID #240-000192.

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There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:48 A.M.

**(Signature Page Follows)**

These minutes are a general summary of the Commissioners' General Session meeting on Tuesday, August 1, 2023.



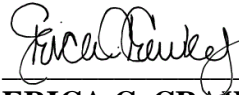
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**JOHN O'GRADY, PRESIDENT**



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**KEVIN L. BOYCE**



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

Submitted by:



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Lauren M. Graessle

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