

FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF GENERAL SESSION

November 7, 2023

The Franklin County Board of Commissioners convened in the Commissioners Hearing Room, at 9:00 A.M. on Tuesday, November 7, 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 Long, 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 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 Boyce called the meeting to order at 9:08 A.M.

Commissioner Boyce: Good morning, and welcome to General Session for November 7, 2023. As you all should know, today is election day, and I hope that if you haven't already voted early, everyone here and everyone in Franklin County will take the time to go vote today and make sure their voice is heard in our government.

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Commissioner Boyce: Before we get to today's agenda, we've got a couple of special guests with us. First, is Retired Army Colonel, Director Buck Bramlish of Franklin County's Veteran Service Commission, to tell us a bit about the resources his agency offers to veterans and to preview our veteran-focused Lunch & Learn program that will be streamed live tomorrow at noon on the Commissioners' Facebook page.

Buck Bramlish, Director, Veteran Service Commission: It is an honor to be here to talk about our agency, and it is important to talk about Veterans Day. Veterans Day started as Armistice Day at the end of World War I. It was a truce.

Mr. Bramlish (cont.): The war was not officially over, but this truce was a time to celebrate. The First World War was obviously a terrible time in world history, and the United States, along with some of its allies, such as France and Britain, decided to celebrate Armistice Day to celebrate the veterans and the families who had sacrificed. There was a renewed thought about world peace and a belief that we could come together and learn from the terrible war that took place so we could go on to a better world. Then World War II happened. Then, the Korean War happened. Towards the end of the Korean War, we realized that the Armistice Day tribute to the World War I veterans would need to continue and include all veterans who fought to defend and protect our freedom and Constitution. In 1954, President Eisenhower made a proclamation to change Armistice Day to Veterans Day. The proclamation said, "In order to ensure proper and widespread observance of this anniversary, all veterans, all veteran organizations, and the entire citizenry will wish to join hands in this common purpose." My father is a Korean War-era veteran, and as he got older, his Navy shirts became more colorful, and his Navy hats became larger. I used to tease him, but I realized that as we age, we start to take stock of our lives. His service in the Navy was a springboard that gave him a bounce towards his future in life. When I was seventeen, I tried to follow in his footsteps, but I went into the Army. Veterans are special. I want to be clear: that does not mean they are better than others. They are not better than teachers, who create opportunities for children to make our world better. Veterans aren't better than police officers and firefighters who put their lives on the line, perhaps daily. But veterans are just a little different. I took an oath when I was seventeen, and I am going to read the oath to you. The oath of enlistment that I took is as follows: "I, Robert Bramlish, do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me according to the regulations of the Code of Military Justice, so help me God." Young people are taking this oath and realizing the importance of this great nation. They are taking this oath, and it is part of their life that they are going to sacrifice. Some will do it for two years, some will do it for four years, and others will do it for many years. Veterans Day is a time to recognize and honor veterans. They may be our neighbors, friends, and relatives. A lot of veterans do not talk about their service much. I would encourage everyone to take a moment this weekend to reach out to veterans in your life to wish them a Happy Veterans Day. If they want to talk about their service, they will; if they do not, they will simply say thank you. Veterans Day is a holiday and a tradition, and it is really important for us to honor that and not be too busy for it. The Board of Commissioners provides funding to the Franklin County Veteran Service Commission to care for veterans who are struggling financially or who need assistance in filing VA claims. We are not too busy; there is a commitment in this county to serve veterans. Speaking as a veteran of 34 years, I have seen that recruiting has never been more difficult than it is now. I believe that when parents see what we do for Veterans Day, and the honor we give to veterans, they are more open and supportive of their children serving in the military. We are a strong nation because we are ready to defend it. To defend it, we need people who are willing to raise their hands and take that oath. I appreciate the time you took to speak about Veterans Day. The Veteran Service Commission provides emergency financial assistance to veterans in need. Many of those veterans are in and out of the poverty cycle. Any veteran in Franklin County can come to the Veteran Service Commission if they have a need, and we will try to help them and connect them to the resources they need. We have a lot of partners that help us care for our veterans. We also help veterans file VA claims, and we are busier than we have ever been.

Mr. Bramlish (cont.): The PACT Act has resulted in roughly \$1.3 million in new claims so far, beyond the normal influx of claims that are seen.

Commissioner Boyce: First, I would like to say to you and Commissioner Crawley thank you for your service. I hope you take a moment to reflect on your own contributions and sacrifices for this great country. In the Gettysburg Address, President Lincoln stated that this new nation, America, was conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. When I think of service, I think of it in so many ways. I think of the very foundation this country was built upon. My father served in the Marines in Vietnam. He died when I was young, so there is a lot I do not remember, but I do remember his service. I remember being proud of the flag that covered him when he was buried. I still have that flag, and it is in my office here in the County. My favorite picture of him is one in which he is in uniform, and I carry it with me almost every day. The symbol of our country is the bald eagle, one of the highest-soaring birds on earth. In our country's seal, there is a bald eagle, and in one talon, it is holding olive branches; in the other, it is holding arrows. The eagle looks at the olive branches to symbolize that we come in peace but are prepared to battle. It means something when people step up for our country and wear any of our military uniforms. It is public service to its fullest extent. Whether you have served during a conflict or not, you are prepared to do that for your country, and I think that says a lot. To those of us who haven't served in the military, service comes in many forms, whether you are a teacher or law enforcement officer, and so on. Voting is also a form of public service that we are all called to do to be a part of this great democracy. We do not always get it right, and it is certainly not perfect, but it is something that we work for and build every single day. That is what makes America beautiful. Again, to all of those who have served and are serving, I simply say thank you.

Commissioner Crawley: I will always champion veterans and advocate for them. When people sign up voluntarily to defend this country, they go to boot camp. Boot camp breaks you down as an individual so that you can get the "I" out of your mind and replace it with "we." That mentality carries on even after you leave the service. No matter what I do, I have a responsibility for the person who is serving right next to me. Their life is in my hands, just as my life is in theirs. I think if more people went into the military, they would have a greater appreciation for the freedom that we have, as well as for each other. We are very privileged here in America. Even though we might not be at war like we were before, there are always threats that we are extinguishing. In the intelligence world, there are always things going on, and people are fighting to keep this country safe, whether you know it or not. I thank them all for their service. To your point about Armistice Day, it was a day to memorialize the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, Veterans Day is always on November 11th. Veterans Day is to celebrate and acknowledge the people who understood the sacrifice they were making. I went into the military after the USS Cole was bombed in October 2000. I entered the Navy in December 2000 and served during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. My father served in the Army during Vietnam, my brother served in the Army during Desert Storm, and he was in Iraq and Afghanistan. When you sign up, you know that there is a possibility that you will go to war and defend this country against all enemies, foreign and domestic. That is why I have a deep appreciation for veterans. We should not have any homeless veterans or veterans who are food insecure. There is also a history of discrimination against Black veterans and veterans of color, and we have tried to make that right over the years. I thank every veteran for their service.

Commissioner O’Grady: Thank you for being here, and thank you for your service. We look forward to tomorrow’s Lunch and Learn and hope everyone listening today will tune in for that tomorrow at noon on the Commissioners’ Facebook page.

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Commissioner O’Grady: Next, we have Executive Director Chip Spinning from Franklin County Children Services here to tell us about National Adoption Month. I understand that there are more than 100,000 children nationwide who are awaiting adoption and that this year’s National Adoption Month theme is “Empowering Youth: Finding Points of Connection.” We are looking forward to hearing more about what Children Services does for our community and how we all can help celebrate National Adoption Month.

Chip Spinning, Executive Director, Franklin County Children Services: Good morning. I also brought Raquel Breckenridge, our Family Service Director of Permanency, with me today. I want to thank this Board of Commissioners for your ongoing support of Franklin County Children Services and our mission to protect children by strengthening families. We know that nobody outgrows the need for a family and a sense of belonging. Part of the work that we do focuses on achieving permanency. When we are unable to return children to their homes, we look for permanent connections through adoption. We do this in partnership with the entire community and all of our community partners to create lasting connections for the children we serve. One of the major challenges we have in creating connections for our youth is that most of the youth who need adoption are tweens and teens, ten years old and older. We hope that National Adoption Day will be a spark for those who are interested or considering adopting. Right now, our agency has about 250 children who are ready for adoption. The good news is that we have already found matches for most of those children, and they are going through the adoption process. We still have about 85 children for whom we want to make permanent connections. It is incredibly important, particularly for our older children, that we are able to connect them with families so that they are able to have lifelong connections, learn life skills, and have healthy relationships that will carry them into the future. Tomorrow, we will be celebrating National Adoption Day right across the hallway in partnership with the Dave Thomas Foundation and Franklin County Probate Court. We have done this for years, and we will celebrate seven children’s adoption this year. What is really exciting about that is that four of those children are teens, and two of them will be eighteen in the next few months. It just shows you never outgrow the need to be connected to a family. If any of the listeners are interested in learning more about the adoption process and the children who are in need of adoption, they can go to our website to meet the children virtually and learn more about their stories. We cannot do this work alone, and we appreciate everyone’s support. Before closing, I also want to recognize that we are celebrating our Holiday Wish program right now. Through this program, we are able to come together as a community to provide gifts for the children that we have in custody. We have done this for over 60 years through the generosity of the entire community. People can provide a toy for a child, host a toy drive, or donate through our campaign at fcs.us. I also want to mention Black Girl Magic, which accentuates the gifts for many of the girls we have in custody so that they can have a doll that looks like them or a book that celebrates their culture and heritage.

Commissioner Crawley: Thank you for being here and thank you for all that you do, especially around adoptions. I started as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer many moons ago. CASA volunteers represent the interests of the child. It pulls at your heartstrings to understand what kids in the foster care system deal with. I do not want to say that teens and tweens are passed over, but it is easier for infants and toddlers to get adopted. When kids grow up in the system, it inflicts trauma. There are children whose parents' rights have been terminated, they age out of care, and then they go on to college or the military without a home to come back to during breaks. Every child deserves a home that is a safe and loving environment. Adopting a child can be a lot, but the reward is so great, and the impact that you would have on a child is intangible. I would ask everyone to consider fostering and adopting to get our kids out of the system.

Commissioner O'Grady: Thank you for all the work that you do at your agency. The work that Franklin County does encompasses so much, but helping families is at the root of what we do. That is what Children Services is all about and what you do day in and day out. The victories and struggles that you have as an agency are the victories and struggles that we have as a county. The work you do is 24/7/365, and we appreciate all that you do for the residents of this county, especially the families and the kids. We have a resolution to present to you.

Mr. Spinning: Thank you. We couldn't do it without the support of an incredible team, the support of the Board of Commissioners, and the support of the community.

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Resolution No. 0849-23, report (1st) of the Franklin County Engineer, establishing sums of compensation for a portion of the owners of property abutting the Cleveland Avenue from Huy Road to Cooke Road Improvement project, Clinton Township, Franklin County, Ohio (\$1,583.00) (Engineer), presented by Brad Foster, Chief Deputy Engineer of Operations, Engineer's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0849-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0850-23, report (15th) of the Franklin County Engineer, establishing sums of compensation for a portion of the owners of property abutting the Elliott Road and Hayden Run Road Drainage Improvement project, Brown Township and Washington Township, Franklin County, Ohio (\$20,999.00) (Engineer), presented by Brad Foster, Chief Deputy Engineer of Operations, Engineer's Office.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0850-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0851-23, authorizing Contracts for Canned, Dry, Frozen and Dairy Food Products for the Franklin County Correctional Facilities (\$1,200,000.00) (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 Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0851-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0852-23, authorizing a consultant contract with Paul Werth Associates, Inc. for employment recruiting advertisement services (\$300,000.00) (Sheriff), presented by Albert J. Smith III, Assistant Finance Director, Sheriff's Office, and Chief Deputy Marvin Hill, Recruitment, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Division, Sheriff's Office.

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

Commissioner Crawley asked which positions need to be filled through these recruitment efforts. Mr. Hill noted that the priority is to fill the Corrections Deputy positions and other positions that impact the corrections facility. Mr. Hill thanked County Administration for their assistance in forming a strategy to target minorities, women, and military veterans in the recruitment efforts. Commissioner Crawley asked how many Corrections Deputy vacancies there are. Mr. Hill replied that there are approximately eighty positions that the Sheriff's Office is trying to fill. The Sheriff's Office is trying to get a class of forty Corrections Deputies trained and started in the jail first, followed by a second class of forty individuals. Commissioner Crawley asked if any civilian positions were available, to which Mr. Hill replied in the affirmative and noted that a host of civilian positions are open in corrections.

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0852-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0853-23, authorizing supplemental appropriations related to the reconciliation of election related expenses from the August special election (Board of Elections), presented by Antone White, Director, Board of Elections.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0853-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0854-23, authorizing a transfer of appropriations for the procurement of equipment (Emergency Management Agency), 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 0854-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0855-23, authorizing a grant agreement with Kingdom Image Arts for support of the Kingdom Image Awards and Entrepreneur Development Program (\$248,905.00) (Office of Diversity Equity & Inclusion), presented by Damika Withers, Chief Economic Equity and Inclusion Officer, Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion, and Ramani Hunter, Executive Director, Kingdom Image Arts.

Ms. Withers and Ms. Hunter reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner Crawley noted that the Board of Commissioners also approved Capital funds earlier in the year for Kingdom Image Arts. The Commissioners continue to invest in local talent, artists, and creatives.

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0855-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0856-23, authorizing a COVID-19 Recovery Grant to Mid-Ohio Food Collective to develop the Mid-Ohio Farm at NBC4 in support of the local food system and in alignment with the Columbus & Franklin County Local Food Action Plan (\$181,270.00) (Economic Development and Planning), presented by Brian Estabrook, Food Systems Planner, Economic Development and Planning; Randy Sokol, Chair, Columbus & Franklin County Local Food Board; and Matt Habash, President and Chief Executive Officer, Mid-Ohio Food Collective.

Mr. Estabrook, Mr. Sokol, and Mr. Habash reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner O'Grady visited the farm last week and noted that there are raised beds, vertical towers, hoop houses, and an orchard at the farm. The area was a food desert, and having this farm in the middle of it now is a godsend for that community. He stated that this work has become a major investment for the residents of Franklin County, and he

appreciates all of the partnerships the County has in this work. Commissioner Crawley commended Commissioner O'Grady on his vision, leadership, and continued advocacy for addressing food insecurity and ensuring no one goes hungry.

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0856-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0857-23, authorizing a COVID-19 Recovery Grant to Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District to develop an urban agriculture critical infrastructure grant in support of the local food system and in alignment with the Columbus & Franklin County Local Food Action Plan (\$166,667.00) (Economic Development and Planning), presented by Brian Estabrook, Food Systems Planner, Economic Development and Planning, and Kyle Wilson, Assistant Director, Franklin County Soil & Water Conservation District.

Mr. Estabrook and Mr. Wilson reviewed information found in documents submitted with the proposed resolution.

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0857-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0858-23, review of petition to annex 59.743 +/- acres from Jackson Township to the City of Grove City Case #ANX-40-23 (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 Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0858-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0859-23, review of petition to annex 0.47 +/- acres from Franklin Township to the City of Columbus Case #ANX-41-23 (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 Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0859-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0860-23, review of petition to annex 5.633 +/- acres from Washington Township to the City of Columbus Case #ANX-42-23 (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 Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0860-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0861-23, approving a subaward agreement with the Derrick L. Owens Group, LLC for adult court diversion alternative services (\$459,000.00) (Job and Family Services), presented by Vivian Turner, Chief Administrator, Job and Family Services.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0861-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0862-23, authorizing Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services Director to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding and related amendments and extensions with Columbus State Community College for case management services (Job and Family Services), presented by Vivian Turner, Chief Administrator, Job and Family Services.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0862-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0863-23, approving and certifying the Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services' Prevention, Retention, and Contingency Plan for the 2024-2025 Biennial period (Job and Family Services), presented by Vivian Turner, Chief Administrator, Job and Family Services.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0863-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0864-23, approving one purchase order for Franklin County Job and Family Services for the Columbus Urban League Inc. (\$638,064.50) (Purchasing), presented by Megan Perry-Balonier, Director, Purchasing.

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

Commissioner Crawley moved to approve Resolution 0864-23, seconded by Commissioner O'Grady. The Resolution was adopted by roll call vote, with Commissioner Boyce abstaining.

Resolution No. 0865-23, approving purchases for various Franklin County agencies (\$3,466,203.23) (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 0865-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0866-23, approving, solely for the purpose of Section 147(f) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, the issuance by the Columbus-Franklin County Finance Authority of lease revenue bonds in one or more series in a total aggregate amount not to exceed \$35,000,000 for The Cornerstone Academy Community School Project (Board of Commissioners), presented by Patty Huddle, President, Columbus-Franklin County Finance Authority.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0866-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Resolution No. 0867-23, reappointing Carlie Boos to the Franklin County designated Tax Incentive Review Councils (TIRCs), and Community Reinvestment Authorities (Board of Commissioners), presented by Brittany A. Razek, Director of Community Appointments, Board of Commissioners.

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

Commissioner Boyce moved to approve Resolution 0867-23, seconded by Commissioner Crawley. The Resolution was unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

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

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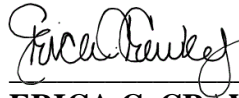
These minutes are a general summary of the Commissioners' General Session meeting on Tuesday, November 7, 2023.



JOHN O'GRADY, PRESIDENT



KEVIN L. BOYCE



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

Submitted by:



Lauren M. Graessle

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