

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES PUBLIC
HEARING/SPECIAL MEETING FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2026, 9:01
A.M.**

The Fairfield Township Trustees held a Public Hearing/Special Trustee Meeting Friday, June 26, 2026, at the Administration Building, 6032 Morris Road, Fairfield Township, OH 45011, for conducting Township business. Meeting was called to order by Mr. Berding, Board Chairperson at 9:01 AM.

ROLL CALL: Kim Lapensee

Trustee Chairperson, Michael Berding	Present
Trustee Vice Chairperson, Shannon Hartkemeyer	Present
Trustee, Joe McAbee	Present

Motion made by Mr. Berding, second by Mr. McAbee to appoint Kim Lapensee as clerk pro tem.
All in favor.

ROLL CALL: Kim Lapensee

Trustee Chairperson, Michael Berding	Present
Trustee Vice Chairperson, Shannon Hartkemeyer	Present
Trustee, Joe McAbee	Present

Pledge of Allegiance

RESOLUTIONS

Mr. Berding – Just to let the public know, for procedural purposes we will be opening up a public hearing talking about the permissive motor vehicle license plate fees and during that time we will get a presentation from our administrator and then we will open it up to public comments. Then we will close the public hearing and open up a special meeting where the trustees will take action on that resolution.

Motion made by Mr. Berding to open public hearing for permissive motor vehicle license tax hearing, second by Mrs. Hartkemeyer.
All in favor.

Public hearing is open at 9:03 AM.

- A. Mrs. Lapensee – At the last trustee meeting we talked about doing a proposed two \$5.00 permissive motor vehicle license fees, which would total \$10.00. I'll explain our current funding challenges and outline how additional funds would be used. And then we're also here to gather community feedback. The public works department is funded by several funds: (1) Road and Bridge, (2) Motor Vehicle License Tax, (3) Gas Tax, (4) Permissive Motor Vehicle License Tax (30% of the county license plate fee) and (5) the RID (which we

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES PUBLIC
HEARING/SPECIAL MEETING FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2026, 9:01
A.M.

have been using for paving). There are still not enough funds for this department to operate from even with that number of funds. There is no dedicated source of paving for township roadways or storm water projects. We respectfully request that you all consider placing two (2) \$5.00 license plate fees on all motor vehicle license registrations. Collections for the PMVL Tax would begin in January of 2027. Paving and storm water projects affect 100% of the population here in the township. We would collect \$225,500.00 which could be earmarked for paving/storm water projects. It will fill our immediate deficit projected for 2027 but is not a long-term fix for funding. Please keep in mind we will lose the RID in 2038 so a road levy will be needed in the short future to fix the gaps in long term funding for the public works department. In 2025, we received \$77,390.44 in permissive motor vehicle license tax, which is 30% of the share of the county's \$15 license plate fees. The proposed township \$10 permissive motor vehicle license tax would bring us roughly \$225,200 annually. Fairfield Township would retain 100% of this new tax. So, the revenue per vehicle would rise from \$4.50 to \$14.50. Here you can see our budget shortfalls. This is a five-year projection. In our public works department, for 2026, the revenue was \$1.44 million and this was due to a transfer that we made from the general fund to help fund the public works department. So that's why we have an estimated \$200,000 in carryover for the year. And as you can see as you go down to 2031 pretty much the revenue stays flat because with levies you really don't get any new money. There may be a 1% increase for new construction, but our new construction is kind of winding down and we don't really expect to see any more revenue. You can see that our expenditure goes up by five 8 to 10% every year. We have increased utilities and fuel costs just like everyone else but by 2031 we will be in the red by \$483,000. This is our township infrastructure in a snapshot; we have 81 plus miles of roadway that is not on a regular schedule for maintenance. We try like crazy to make sure that we're paving the roads. Usually, you have a 15-to-20-year cycle for road pavement, but we have too many roads and not enough money, and we can't get to that 20-year cycle. We have the third largest road inventory in Butler County. We have deferred paving and we have deferred storm water projects, and we have significant curb and gutter deterioration all through the township. This slide shows how our funds will be used. When it comes to the funds that I mentioned earlier, the only fund that can really pay for public works salaries and benefits would be the road and bridge fund, but all of the other funds I mentioned previously can only pay for capital cost. So, what does that mean to the community, it would be safer and smoother roads, faster storm water response. We would start to replace our ageing

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES PUBLIC
HEARING/SPECIAL MEETING FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2026, 9:01
A.M.

infrastructure. We would reduce long-term repair costs and obviously would be a better quality of life and property values for our residents

Mrs. Hartkemeyer – I want to talk a little bit about what we've done as far as paving goes. Typically, since I've been a trustee and others here too have been very supportive of paving. There were a number of years when we did extra paving. We put extra money from the general fund and other funds to do accelerated paving because we've got 81 road miles. And the problem with that is that roads by the time we would have money to go back and pave all of those roads it would be years before we can make that complete cycle. We could pull the data on what we've spent on paving over the years. We've added to that because paving is a hot button for many residents. We want nice roads. We were able to use some of the money that we received during COVID to escalate some of the paving and the county also gave us some money for paving too. But a lot of that money that we receive from those things is not necessarily long-term. It's not going to be coming back. So, we put this off and the concern is that you know people want roads plowed and that's kind of what we're looking at.

Mr. McAbee – How soon would we be getting the extra money?

Mrs. Lapensee – Collections will begin in January 2027. We would get a monthly check.

Mr. McAbee – You know we used the cash cow for years and that's going to change drastically in a couple of years. The RID's will expire in 2038. So we got a few more years on that but without additional funding we'll be driving on dirt roads. We've put this off as long as we can. I don't want to pay it either and I might renew mine for five years to save \$40 bucks for a car.

Fund 2027	Road & Bridge	Motor Vehicle	Gas Tax	Permissive MVL	Total
Revenues	\$599,828.90	\$40,804.00	\$379,462.05	\$75,487.40	\$1,095,582.35
Expenditures	\$774,045.60	\$42,420.00	\$394,490.25	\$96,558.00	\$1,307,513.85
Variance	(\$174,216.70)	(\$1,616.00)	(\$15,028.20)	(\$21,070.60)	(\$211,931.50)
Revenues 28	\$605,827.00	\$41,212.00	\$383,256.00	\$76,242.00	\$1,106,538.00
Expenditures	\$819,598.00	\$44,541.00	\$414,214.00	\$101,385.00	\$1,379,738.00
Variance	(\$213,770.00)	(\$3,328.00)	(\$30,958.00)	(\$25,143.00)	(\$273,200.00)
Revenues 29	\$611,885.00	\$41,624.00	\$387,089.00	\$77,004.00	\$1,117,602.00
Expenditures	\$868,135.00	\$46,768.00	\$434,925.00	\$106,455.00	\$1,456,283.00
Variance	(\$256,249.00)	(\$5,143.00)	(\$47,836.00)	(\$29,450.00)	(\$338,681.00)
Revenues 30	\$618,004.00	\$42,040.00	\$390,960.00	\$77,774.00	\$1,128,778.00
Expenditures	\$919,877.00	\$49,106.00	\$456,671.00	\$111,777.00	\$1,537,431.00
Variance	(\$301,872.00)	(\$7,066.00)	(\$65,711.00)	(\$34,003.00)	(\$408,653.00)
Revenues 31	\$624,184.00	\$42,460.00	\$394,869.00	\$78,552.00	\$1,140,065.00

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES PUBLIC
HEARING/SPECIAL MEETING FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2026, 9:01
A.M.**

Expenditures	\$975,062.00	\$51,561.00	\$479,505.00	\$117,366.00	\$1,623,494.00
Variance	(\$350,877.00)	(\$9,100.00)	(\$84,635.00)	(\$38,814.00)	(\$483,429.00)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jason Perviance, - 3606 Millikin Road I'm not sure that I believe this is the best course of action. And you have already mentioned you're going to put the police levy back on the ballot. We're being nicked and dined. I understand the TIF and the RID is going to run out. We must come up with our own ways to fund our own budget with the money that we have. I would ask the township to do the same. I would ask you to find a different way, not take it out of our pockets. You mentioned that you have taken money out of the general fund this past year to cover costs. I would ask why that couldn't continue. You mentioned the residents want nice roads. I want lots of nice things. I must settle for what I can afford. Is there any sort of information you have of what roads would be nice to pave vs. what roads have a safety concern that truly do need to be repaved? I understand storm water in that same vein. What other long-term issues or long-term funding have you come up with to fund this? Again, without taking it out of the voters' pockets. When companies are repaving what kind of warranty do you have? Are they being held accountable for their work? The voters just passed the fire department's levy. In the last meeting you had mentioned restricting fire department staffing. I am 100% behind getting the financials for the township in order, making sure that we have a clear vision of what's going to happen in the future. But we just gave the fire department money and the ask from trustees right now is to restrict the fire department. So, if you're going to enact an extra \$10 on this what are the optics of that, right? We just passed that and you're asking for restrictions on the fire department. Then you brought up the program for sidewalks, which I am 100% in favor for. I wish this township was more walkable, more biker friendly. Especially with the number of eBikes that are becoming popular and I would enjoy having a bicycle path. I tried to go back and look up what the original costs were. I found one that said close to \$500,000 and you're talking about \$700,000 now. That seemed like it was a surprise in the last meeting. So, long-term is this \$10 even worth covering the cost? If this doesn't fix the issue, I would suggest not voting to pass today and figuring out something else.

Craig Kessler, 6042 Springlake Drive I want to thank you first off before I give any kind of record for being here notifying the public at large in our township of the shortfalls that we have. And I know that's not unique to the township. That's an issue that everyone inside our township is facing right now, including our family. So, I'm going to start with just who I am. Up until a month ago, I was employed for almost 10 years by an aerospace engineering company. I lost my job as part of a large round of layoffs. So, the optics of this for our family are quite profound. When it comes to that, because I no longer have a job now. I'm actively looking, searching, and I'm in a job transition. We have a son with a medical complex, special needs, and a service

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES PUBLIC
HEARING/SPECIAL MEETING FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2026, 9:01
A.M.

dog to go with it. So my background and eyesight on this might be slightly different than everybody else here today. So, I'm not a fan of adding any extra cost now. This past May we had two four different levy and ballot issues. Two of which passed, one of which was the police, one of which was the fire department, another was the Butler County DD program. And two others that didn't pass. The subdivision that I'm a part of, they're looking to expand, I believe, and add another 30 plus homes in. That was originally supposed to be done under a rezoning that failed. And as soon as that rezoning failed for that individual and that planner, I believe his name was Donald Dixon. He went and submitted to the Butler County Engineering a different set of plans that just went straight through. and we've seen survey markers go up in their subdivision and we expect to see additional traffic from that. I'm not going to talk about that, but I know that there's some additional funds that'll be coming in probably from that. Um, this is the second time I've seen the permissive vehicle tax come up in the last 6 to 12 months. This is not the first time I've seen this. The first time I saw this, this was shot down, I believe. I spoke to you, Michael, on the phone maybe about 6 to 12 months ago regarding this issue when we saw it come up. And I know I spoke to you then and said, "You know, this is going to affect our family, I know \$10 per vehicle may not seem like a lot. Our house has two vehicles, a motorcycle and a motor home. Two of those vehicles I'm looking at potentially selling in the next couple of months if I don't get another job. We've had to tell our son no on a lot of things over the last month to two months that we would otherwise say yes to. And this looks like no longer eating out, no longer going to get ice cream, no longer doing those just average things that you would like to do as a family. And so, if we add another \$10 per vehicle to the four I have, I'm looking at \$40 per year in increase in cost. I know that may not sound like a lot to you. Gas prices are high right now. We've all seen them. We've all been affected by them. The police levy is going to come back on the ballot in another couple of months. I have not seen any plans right now on what road miles are critically in danger. There's no information here. It just says we have a budget downfall, which I get, and I know that we have a lot of road miles, 81 according to the slides that was presented just a few minutes ago, but if we're in a need of them, we should be identifying and prioritizing and phasing them in that manner. I would love to see some of that here. Um, I don't see that. All I see is we're short. We need the money. We need to resurface the roads and plow them, but there's no clear plan as to which roads need to be done first. If we're saying they're bad, then all of them are bad. Just a few bad, just a few of the road miles. Where are the problems and pain points at? We can target those specific areas potentially and develop a plan to pinpoint certain areas over others. And I've not seen target those specific areas potentially this morning. I appreciate the information that you're giving us and the downfalls and what the projections look like. I wanted to share that with you. In closing, I'm not going to be

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES PUBLIC
HEARING/SPECIAL MEETING FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2026, 9:01
A.M.

a fan of adding any additional costs that will affect our residents now. I come from the west side of Cincinnati. The roads there are in much worse shape than here. I have been in some areas where we've had much, much worse roads and we've been dealing with them for many years. Does it stink? Yes. Is it the end of the world? No. I would rather have fire department and police show up if I called 911 than have to worry about a road. You know, that's my two cents there. So, in closing, that's kind of where I want to go with that. And I'm not really a fan of it now. Thank you, guys, for doing what you're doing. I appreciate that. I know this is a hard thing for you all to do. You guys have a wonderful morning. Thank you.

Bruce Yaeger, 6674 Creekside Way – My biggest question was just to get it, it's \$10 per vehicle and then there's another \$4.50 and that goes with the county. Is that what this is? Do areas like the shopping centers like Walmart and Kohl's are they covered under this also or do they have to pave their own places.

Mrs. Hartkemeyer – Some of these are private roads.

Bruce Yaeger – If they have some bad places that hurt your car do you have anything to do with that or do they have to do that?

Mr. Berding – Mr. Goins I think you often have communication with those institutions about their roads or driveways. So, while we don't specifically repair them, we do discuss that with them.

Mr. Goins - Yes. Correct.

Mr. McAbee – They don't move as fast as we'd like for them to, but we can't fix them and they are theirs. That intersection behind the bank, the way back into Walmart is just terrible. And apparently there's two or three different groups that own parts of that. The main roads that we take care of Morris, we don't do Millikin, we don't do Tylersville and we don't do Hamilton-Mason But we do Morris Road, we do section of Vintage, Tuley Road and then all the residential roads that you see, the cul-de-sacs, all those neighborhood roads are ours.

ITEMS FOR BOARD DISCUSSION

Mrs. Hartkemeyer – Do we have a paving plan? Maybe you can get with Mrs. Lapensee or Mr. Goins and talk about that process for that. And you had some questions too. You could probably follow up with Mr. Goins or Mrs. Lapensee after the meeting to get some clarity about the questions.

Mr. McAbee – We do evaluate the roads on a regular basis to decide which ones need to be done. As I stated the other night, we're more likely to pave the roads that get the most traffic before we do five or six houses on a cul-de-sac. We do catch grief about that from the people that live on the short cul-de-sac but that's just the way it is. Back in the good old days we could do a mile for \$50,000. We can't do that anymore. Price of gas and petroleum affect everything we do on the roads. I don't even know, it's probably closer to \$100,000 to do a road. Some of our roads don't have storm gutters so those are a little cheaper because we don't have to fix the concrete and things like that. There is some method to the madness that we've been

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES PUBLIC
HEARING/SPECIAL MEETING FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2026, 9:01
A.M.

doing, and we've tried just about everything we can. The only alternative we had would be another property tax put a half a mill on and that was part of my question a year ago when we debated this. We didn't have a real number, we were estimating somewhere around \$100,000 which wasn't enough then and I said that, but a half a mill would generate \$350,000 to \$400,000 but again that's on the property tax. So we opted not to do that because of some of the reasons you guys are talking about. But those are our two choices. Add something on the license fee where every car pays to drive on the road vs. putting another property tax on and then you pay it by the millage. Neither are any great choices and that's why we haven't made it in the past. We're at a point now, we're fortunate as a township, we have RID money TIF money and JEDD money, but our general fund has continued to go down. And while we're not saving up for any other rainy day other than normal work that we have to do and need to do, it's down to where we're all very concerned about it. So, from that standpoint, I don't think we have any other choice. You're right, it's not enough, but at least we can do another two miles a year to try to do that and try to have a regular maintenance program. You never know what is going to happen with the road. We have drainage issues right now. Those have to be addressed for safety. We're at this point and we need to take some action.

Mr. Berding – Someone brought up the fact that we just recently had a fire levy and there's been some things out on social media that in our last meeting we cut personnel and that's just simply not true. First, we don't start collecting that levy tax until January 2027 and we won't receive any of those funds until April. So obviously we can't spend money in 2026 that we don't get until 2027. What we did the other day was just explain to our fire department that we need to cut back a little bit on all the overtime that is being spent. I think we're on track to spend \$500,000 in overtime in the fire department. We were asking them to just cut that back a little bit. We weren't cutting any jobs. We're fully in support of our fire department and look forward to the day we start collecting those levy funds to help get them fully staffed again.

Mr. McAbee – We paid that and continue to pay that out of the general fund. They don't have the money to do that either. So this takes away from everything else.

Mrs. Hartkemeyer – We transferred \$2.9 million to fire and that was to the detriment of some of the other departments. And we did that because they're important and all we did was ask them to please be very prudent with your overtime because of that general fund, we worked very hard to get that built up. General funds are important. If our general fund drops below a certain level, Moody's the rating agency can downgrade Fairfield Township. I think now we're AAA, which is a very good bond rating. Why does that matter? When we go to take debt to say to remodel the fire department, which is leaking and has lots of issues, we will have a higher interest rate which will cost us more money and I don't want that. I don't even really want to take debt but if we have to, I'd like to get the lowest interest rate possible. So that's why preserving a good balance in the general fund is important. If something catastrophic happens in Fairfield Township and we don't have the ability to collect some things, this will help us to make it so that Fairfield Township can continue on with our services and with the things that we provide. So having a healthy general fund is very very important. It pained me greatly to transfer that \$2.9 million over to

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES PUBLIC
HEARING/SPECIAL MEETING FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2026, 9:01
A.M.

the fire department and I expect them to be very prudent and frugal with that money, especially given the fact that it impacts what we can do in the police department and with our roads department.

Mr. Berding – While we do want our residents to have nice roads to drive on, we don't pave them to make them nice, we pave them to keep them together. I mean, literally, we are repaving roads when they are falling apart. When there's so many cracks, it makes more sense to repave them than to try to just fill every single crack that only lasts a short amount of time. It's more of a band-aid. We do need to repave those roads, so we don't do them to make them nice we do them to make them passable. And we have to protect our investment in our vehicles, our safety service vehicles, our salt trucks, things like that for those roads. We don't want these roads to come apart and ruin our vehicles. Just like it was brought up about the shopping center and how bad those roads are, we don't want our roads to be that way. That's why we really rely on our public works director to show the trustees what roads he's recommending being paved. We went out there with him. He shows us what needs to be done. For many years, he's shown us more roads that need to be paved than we've actually funded just because we just didn't have the money. And so, we're really kind of behind the ball right now with our paving. We're hoping to catch up a little bit this year, but we're still going to be behind where we should be.

Motion made by Mr. McAbee to close the public hearing, second by Mr. Berding. The roll call vote was as follows: Mr. McAbee – 'aye', Mr. Berding - 'aye', and Mrs. Hartkemeyer - 'aye'. Motion passes.

Mr. Berding called special meeting to order.

ROLL CALL: Kim Lapensee

Trustee Chairperson, Michael Berding	Present
Trustee Vice Chairperson, Shannon Hartkemeyer	Present
Trustee, Joe McAbee	Present

Resolution #26-65 – A Resolution authorizing the levy of a township motor vehicle license tax pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 4504.18. The roll call vote was as follows: Mr. McAbee made a motion to approve Resolution #26-31, Mr. Berding seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows: Mr. McAbee – 'aye', Mr. Berding - 'aye', and Mrs. Hartkemeyer - 'aye'. Motion passes.

Mrs. Hartkemeyer - I do want to say that this is something that the board of trustees could have done years ago. This has always been an option for us, and we could have done this at any point. I know within many recent years, and we chose not to do this until we absolutely had to and if we find a windfall of money, we can always take it back off. Well, and that's something that we did three years ago? There were some extra monies available, and it was with the whole property tax and there were some

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES PUBLIC
HEARING/SPECIAL MEETING FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2026, 9:01
A.M.

things collected in countywide and we were one of 13 townships and two townships gave money back to citizens. I think it was like \$100,000 along those lines. We gave a little bit of relief back to our citizens. We do what we can when we can.

Mr. Berding – I know there was a comment also this morning that we should try to find alternate sources of revenue instead of going to the residents. Unfortunately, as a government, our only way that we can generate revenue is to ask our citizens to do that. Recently we did a special project with the pickleball courts where we sought individual donations for that, a one-time expense. So, we were able to get enough residents and local businesses to donate enough money for us to renovate the tennis courts to add pickleball courts. No township dollars were spent on that project. This is something year after year we have to ask our residents for help.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Fourth of July Holiday observed – Friday, July 3, 2026. All township offices will be closed.
- B. Regular Trustee Meeting – Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 7 PM at the administration building.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Berding	Yes
Mrs. Hartkemeyer	Yes
Mr. McAbee	Yes

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Mr. Berding, second by Mrs. Hartkemeyer to adjourn at 9:40 AM. All in favor.

Minutes submitted by:

Shelly Schultz, Fiscal Officer

Michael Berding, Trustee Chairperson

Shannon Hartkemeyer, Trustee Vice-Chairperson

Joe McAbee, Trustee