

The Knox County Regional Planning Commission
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February 15, 2024

The regular meeting of the Knox County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) was held on Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 7:30 p.m. in the Knox County Service Center, 117 E. High St., Mount Vernon.

Chairman Roger Yarman called the meeting to order. Darrel Severns, Secretary for the Commission, called the roll.

The following voting representatives were present:

James DeChant*	Berlin Township	Chad Sims	Pleasant Township
Steve Bratton	Brown Township	Darryl Frazier	Union Township
Joe Fritz	Brown Township	Ashton Walls	Wayne Township
Christa Ciotola	Butler Township	Andy Fox	Fredericktown
Roger Yarman	College Township	Ray Brewer	Fredericktown
Bob Elliott	Harrison Township	Elizabeth Bonaudi	Gambier
Monica Severns	Jefferson Township	Robert Collins	Martinsburg
Marta Hill	Liberty Township	Amber Keener	Mount Vernon
Kris Caldwell	Milford Township	Matt Starr	Mount Vernon Mayor
David McMahon	Monroe Township	Ahmad Takrauri	Mount Vernon
Brian Frazier	Morris Township	Thom Collier	Commissioner
Tim Smith	Morris Township		

Others present:

Darrel Severns	Knox RPC	Dave Heithaus	KC Parks Director
Rob Clendenning	KSWCD	Sheila Adams	Guest: Brinkhaven
Cheryl Splain	Knox Pages	Jeff Gottke	ADF
Bob Phillips	Commissioner Candidate		

**Alternate*

A quorum was present with 23 voting representatives.

Approval of Minutes – Roger Yarman

Mr. Bratton moved to approve the January 2024 minutes. Ms. Keener seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken with a unanimous aye vote. Motion carried.

Financial Report – Roger Yarman

Mr. Yarman presented the financial report for January 2024. The expenses were \$3,412.20. Income for the month was \$30,913.50. The month began with \$131,062.13 and ended with \$158,563.43.

Mr. Fox moved to approve the January 2024 financial report. Mr. D. Frazier seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken with a unanimous aye vote. Motion carried.

Old Business

Nomination Committee – Matt Starr

The slate of officers and additional nominations will be taken from the floor. Mr. Yarman nominated Steve Bratton for Chairman for the Land Use Committee Chairman, who accepted the nomination. No other nominations were submitted, and the nominations were closed. Officers Slate were: RPC Chairman – Roger

Yarman, RPC Vice Chairman – Matt Starr, RPC Treasurer – Amber Keener, and Land Use Chairman – Steve Bratton.

Mr. Starr moved the nominations to be closed and to vote on the slate of officers as presented. Mr. D. Frazier seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken with a unanimous aye vote. Motion carried.

New Business

Executive Committee Report—Roger Yarman

Null

Secretary's Report —Darrel Severns

We are getting close to the deadline date for submissions for memberships and dues paid of March 1st. We have a couple of townships and a couple of villages that have not submitted their resolution and membership dues. We encourage you to send that into our office. The following that we are still missing are Butler, Clinton, and Pike Townships, Danville, and Fredericktown. Clinton Township that is neighboring the city hasn't been a member for a while, so if you have any pull with anyone that is a trustee, please encourage them to join.

You will see on the handout, lot split totals for the year 2023 and you will see how busy we really were. The third quarter was above average activity. We had several large parcels that were split and sold at auction. This added to the larger amount of activity in lot splits and transfers. We usually average about 150-160. Many of the splits were for about five (5) acres. The relevant point is over what acreage is coming out of agriculture under CAUV. These are lots coming out of production. There is recoupment that comes out of taxes and other things. This is more for your information. The columns listed for Township Roads, County Roads and State Routes is where the road frontages is located. Each one of the townships that are zoned has a different minimum requirement for road frontage. All of the building lots, at some point, will have to have a soil evaluation done by a private soil scientist to make sure they will support sewage treatment systems on site and have room for a well. It keeps the KPH and soil scientists busy. The requirement came out a couple of years ago that if the lot is under five (5) acres, they will have to have a soil scientist come and do a soil evaluation. That is a major part of the lot split evaluation process that we have to deal with the KPH, soil scientist, county engineer, and KSWCD. This is to make sure that any lot that is split will meet all the requirements for a buildable lot before it is sold.

Land Use – Roger Yarman

Null

Social Improvement and Economic Development Committee – Matt Starr

Mr. Starr had a handout regarding the Community Health Assessment that is available through the Knox Public Health (KPH) with the links available for the survey. This is something we do every few years and we need your help getting the word out to the county. This is to find out what is preventing people from getting the health care they need, among other things. Most of this will be used to create the Knox County Community Health Improvement Plan. Mr. Starr has been told that to make it statistically significant, there needs to be a minimum of 400 responses. We would like to get well beyond 400. Please pass this around to everyone in the county.

Education and Outreach Committee – Darrel Severns

We do have a committee and are in the process of setting up a meeting. The members are Ashton Walls, Elizabeth Bonaudi, Sharon Gearheart and Darrel Severns. Steve Bratton was on the committee but switched to the Land Use Committee. Our biggest push will be to come up with speakers to be informative and entertaining. If you read the Bylaws, this committee is also in charge of putting together the orientation program, which Ms. Gearheart and Mr. Severns has been carrying the load the past several years. We would love to have help with it.

Transportation Committee – Jim Hughes

Null

Knox County Commissioner – Thom Collier

We are always open to questions. The Commissioners did ask to address some false information that is out there, regarding solar. Many people are circulating that the Commissioners passed, without any notice, a resolution regarding solar, and the need to explain this. After the passage of Senate Bill 52, the Commissioners to put any regulations on for solar or wind, had to hold a public meeting, which was held in May of 2022. Within 90 days of the meeting, we were required by the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) to pass our resolution. There was no one in the midst of those meetings who spoke in favor of or opposed to wind, so we eliminated wind altogether. There were about 50 percent of the people who opposed solar and about 50 percent who were for solar. We decided our resolution allowed to consider solar projects on a case-by-case basis and at a number of restrictions. We outlined four (4) in our resolution. What people refuse to acknowledge is that resolution, was for the purpose of allowing us to do restrictions, not to encourage it or to pass it. We had no say, at that time, on the Frazier Solar project which was proposed in Clinton and Miller Townships. They are two totally separate issues. All three of the Commissioners find it frustrating when you hold public meetings and you put it out to the public, according to the law, and people turn it to say something else. The Commissioners will be responding to some of these things. Mr. Collier stated he and the other Commissioners would be happy to answer any questions regarding the resolution.

Since that public meeting, after the 90 days, there are still about 50 percent for both positions for solar. The Commissioners have no interest or particular position towards solar. We do not think it is really effective in Ohio and don't really like it, but it is not their determination. We all three are very solid on the personal property rights and that is why they passed what they did. If future solar projects are proposed, we will put them under that resolution with the restrictions. In addition, if any of the township trustees that are here, you know that in the last couple of months you have received, under our direction and the prosecutor, a template to fill out for a resolution passed that your township wants to be in the exclusionary zone for solar. We believe that is better made at the local level. There are some townships, not necessarily in Knox County but in other counties, where they have welcomed it and wanted it. We don't feel that we, three people, should make the decision for the entire county. If the townships want to hold a public meeting and ask their constituents and want to pass that, we can put them in an exclusionary zone just as we said we would. So far, only five or six townships have sent it in out of 22 townships. We asked for this back before the end of February. We hope that you will do that if that is what you wish. If there is need for clarification, any one of us is available to answer questions.

We, the Commissioners, did not hear about the Frazier project until they had already entered into contracts with private citizens. We have been completely transparent and followed the law. We found out about the project about the same time that everyone else did. Mr. Gottke, ADF may be able to give us a date. The Frazier solar project is what the state calls 'partially grandfathered,' meaning they are grandfathered from what we could do under Senate Bill 52, but they still have to meet certain regulations, setbacks and etc. We couldn't put solid restrictions and prevent them from moving forward because they were partially grandfathered. There are two (2) votes, which are called ad hoc. There are a total of 9 votes total. The seven could be the Department of Natural Resources, the EPA, Department of Development, Department of Agriculture, an engineer, and can't recall the others, all state agencies, one (1) township trustee, and one (1) County Commissioner (Bill Pursel). It is also very clear from the Ohio Power Siting Board that states that no voting member of this committee should make any public comments or give the impression that they've made up their mind prior to the hearing in April and prior to their vote, which could be up to a year or more after that.

Ms. Ciotola made remarks about a well going into Coshocton County where wastewater from the East Palestine disaster was placed. Are our commissioners saying they weren't aware, citizen wise, is that how are in Knox County, with say an injection well too? Is that something we need to be thinking about too? Because that can come here too just as easy. Her question is, are we making enough provisions for potential things that might help. Mr. Collier stated that they are in the process of making additional provisions for solar. Injection wells fall under the Department of Natural Resources and the EPA and not under the county commissioners. Mr. Collier stated that under state law, solar fits in the agriculture zone. It was told that there was some word that there are already some

injection wells in Knox County. The citizens fought them, but there was nothing they could do.

Knox Public Health – Kyle Shackle

Null

Knox Area Development (ADF) – Jeff Gottke

Mr. Gottke received an email this afternoon from friends in Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission. They are pursuing a RAISE Planning Grant. It is going to do a number of things, economic analysis, and impact analysis, one is about planning recommendations for trail town communities. This information will be sent to Mr. Severns, and he can get the email out to everyone. If your trustees want to write support letters for the grant and they are always taking those if it is important to your community. There is a template, so all you have to do is print it off and mail it in.

During the Comprehensive Plan process, we received six (6) proposals, all very qualified planners from some local ones to some big regional ones. We formed a review committee made up of Mr. J. Gottke, Mr. D. Severns, Commissioner T. Bemiller, Mayor M. Starr, Mr. R. Clendening, Mr. C. Keaton, Mr. R.C. Wise, Mr. Z. Green. We reviewed those six (6) and interviewed three (3). We still need to negotiate for the scope and the scale and a final price on all of this. We picked Planning Next, which is the same group that did the Licking County framework plan that was just passed last year. They have also done Wayne County's Comprehensive Plan, which is weird because the RFP we put together was copied off of theirs. We are excited because it is a high performing, high quality group that is going to give us some really good stuff. They have some pretty innovative public engagements strategies too.

Mr. Severns added that people in the townships that have been working on the land use maps to keep working on them. They will be usable and valuable information for us. Several of the townships have turned them in, but there are several that are still working on them.

Knox Soil and Water Report – Rob Clendening

For the last two (2) years, most of the counties in Ohio have been on the outside looking in terms of the Governor's H2O Bio Clean Water Initiative. We received notification at a meeting and will be rolled out to the rest of the state now. They will be looking to develop ag conservation incentive contracts with a number of growers and each of those remaining, about 57 counties, below the Lake Erie watershed. Primarily looking at things like nutrient management planning. Their goals for each county are based roughly on total crop and acres and so for Knox County there are hoping we can develop or initialize contracts on around 10,000 acres in a relatively short time period. Decent money, as far as incentives crop programs go. You won't get rich off of it but will certainly be worth the producers while to look into it. But you are going to have to be willing to make sure you are taking those next steps from a nitrogen, phosphorus, and potash nutrient management standpoint. It will be the measuring stick for participating in the program. They will be leaning heavily on conservation districts in all those counties.

County, City and Village Reports

Brinkhaven/Gann – Sheila Adams

Null

Centerburg – Daniel Hardwick

Null

Danville – Jeff Furay

Null

Fredericktown – Ray Brewer

We will be meeting next month for the kickoff of the streetscape project to begin in March.

Gambier – Elizabeth Bonaudi

The trash contract will be up soon so will be advertising for bids. There has been discussion on increasing the water bill in commiseration with the Mount Vernon increase as it has not been raised in quite a while. Electronic recycling is done through Kenyon College and they are releasing that, so they are likely to be talking to the county about participating in the electronics recycling program.

Martinsburg – Robert Collins

Null

Mount Vernon – Matt Starr

We will have our State of the City address at a Knox Chamber event on February 29, 9:00 am at the Ramser 4H center. Sign up with the Chamber of Commerce.

Speaker – David Heithaus, Director of Knox Parks District

Mr. Heithaus gave a presentation on what the parks district is doing in his six weeks of being director. He gave highlights in the three major areas they are responsible for and updates on the parks, multi-use trails and the water trail. There are several projects in the works. Centerburg is on its way to becoming a trail town. The Developmental Center woods, 165 acres, hopefully will be discussed in the April legislation session, at the state level, and if it does happen, we are looking at getting public access, and hiking trails. We will try and get the money to build a one (1) mile paved trail for the clients at the DD Center. We are reaching out into the community to see what they want and what kind of programs. If you have any questions, feel free to ask.

Others from the floor

Ms. Severns stated that in no form is this an advertisement for any business, but she had just discovered that she came upon a business on the east side of Danville. It is an Amish owned business that has been there for a year and a half. It is called Maysville Harness Shop. There is no reason an English person would stop in at a harness shop. She just wanted to see what the business was about. The reason this is mentioned is for the sake of our community as a county it is a resource for special projects, i.e. 4-H programs, and things like this. This business offers products that would blow you away when you walk into the shop. It's not just a harness shop. It carries all kinds of equine items and other kinds of items for animals and livestock on farms. It also carries all kinds of boots and shoes etc. She was blown away that Knox County has a facility that sells items you can no where close to here. You would have to go to Columbus, to Rod's Western World or somewhere far away. No one knows about this so she's not advertising for them, but just wanted our community to know that we have access to a facility that offers a lot of products that we do not know about. It is located on Highway 62, east of Danville on the other side of Brinkhaven. They do have a sign with Maysville Harness Shop. For anybody who has kids or community members that are in 4-H or in the 4-H program they have supplies that would blow your mind. If you could pass the word on to your people that it would be great to have that kind of access.

It has been mentioned previously and that Mr. Starr has brought it up before about the time slot for the RPC meeting to be changed. Spring and summertime, there are farmers in the fields until dark. We would need a motion to change the time. It was suggested to change to 6:30 in the off months of winter. There are a lot of organizations like this that do have split schedules. There are a lot of moving parts to this. Let us think about it and we can bring this up for discussion at the next meeting in March. It will be put on the agenda and Mr. Starr will help create a presentation of this and what has been done and a summary and what the questions are and what we need to answer.

Mr. Yarman moved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

The next meeting of the Knox County Regional Planning Commission will be March 21, 2024, in the Knox County Service Center 117 E. High St., Mount Vernon, OH at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Darrel Severns

Attachments:

[2023 4qtr Yr End Totals.pdf](#)

[KPH Survey.pdf](#)

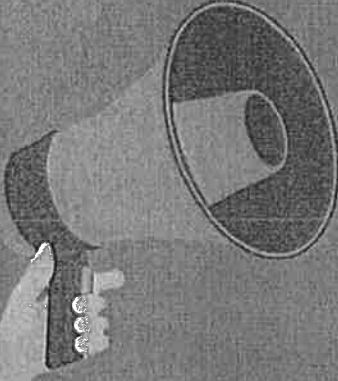
[2024 Web Minutes\RPC 2024-02-15 Attachments.pdf](#)



Hey, Knox County...

Tell us what you think!

Community Health
Assessment Survey



Scan me to go to the survey!



Knox Public Health and the Knox Health Planning Partnership are conducting a short, 15-minute (or less!) survey to understand health needs in Knox County.

Share your thoughts on community health needs and how we can help make Knox County a healthier place to live!

Or, visit:

surveymonkey.com/r/knoxcountyCHA



 Knox
PUBLIC HEALTH
PROTECT • PROMOTE • PREVENT

Lot split 2023 Year End Totals All Townships

<u>Total Splits</u>	<u>Total Acres Split</u>	<u>Combined Parcels</u>	<u>Combined Ac</u>	<u>Buildable</u>	<u>Twp Roads</u>	<u>County Roads</u>	<u>State Routes</u>	<u>CAUV</u>	<u>CAUV Acres</u>
265	2850.647	89	0.000	190	102	84	36	148	421.19

First Quarter Totals

<u>Total Splits</u>	<u>Total Acres Split</u>	<u>Combined Parcels</u>	<u>Combined Ac</u>	<u>Buildable</u>	<u>Twp Roads</u>	<u>County Roads</u>	<u>State Routes</u>	<u>CAUV</u>	<u>CAUV Acres</u>
39	549.678	18	0.000	28	14	14	4	26	32.781

Second Quarter Totals

<u>Total Splits</u>	<u>Total Acres Split</u>	<u>Combined Parcels</u>	<u>Combined Ac</u>	<u>Buildable</u>	<u>Twp Roads</u>	<u>County Roads</u>	<u>State Routes</u>	<u>CAUV</u>	<u>CAUV Acres</u>
60	489.448	18	0	42	18	15	11	29	124.483

Third Quarter Totals

<u>Total Splits</u>	<u>Total Acres Split</u>	<u>Combined Parcels</u>	<u>Combined Ac</u>	<u>Buildable</u>	<u>Twp Roads</u>	<u>County Roads</u>	<u>State Routes</u>	<u>CAUV</u>	<u>CAUV Acres</u>
95	1208.083	35	0	67	41	23	16	50	133.15

Fourth Quarter Totals

<u>Total Splits</u>	<u>Total Acres Split</u>	<u>Combined Parcels</u>	<u>Combined Ac</u>	<u>Buildable</u>	<u>Twp Roads</u>	<u>County Roads</u>	<u>State Routes</u>	<u>CAUV</u>	<u>CAUV Acres</u>
71	603.438	18	0	53	29	32	5	43	130.776

Total Splits = New parcels split from acreage not including leftover acreage.

Total Acres Split = Total acreage that make up new split(s).

Combined Parcels = How many parcels contributing to new split(s).

Combined Acres = How many acres contributing to new split(s).

Buildable = How many of the new splits are buildable lots.

CAUV = Whether or not original acreage was in CAUV. 1 = yes; 0 = no.

CAUV Acres = Total acreage of new split(s) being removed from CAUV.