

The Knox County Regional Planning Commission
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October 16, 2025

The regular meeting of the Knox County Regional Planning Commission (RPC) was held on Thursday, October 16, 2025 at 7:30 p.m. in the Knox Services building, 117 E. High St., Mount Vernon.

Vice chairman Steve Bratton called the meeting to order. Darrel Severns, Secretary for the Commission, called the roll.

The following voting representatives were present:

James DeChant	Berlin Township	Larry Schunke	Middlebury Township
Joe Fritz	Brown Township	Dave Marietta	Monroe Township
Christa Ciotola	Butler Township	Brian Frazier	Morris Township
Roger Yarman	College Township	Tim Smith	Morris Township
John Moore	Hilliar Township	Curt Bechtel	Pike Township
Aaron Gray	Hilliar Township	Jim Hughes	Pleasant Township
Greg Lawson	Howard Township	Ashton Walls	Wayne Township
Monica Severns	Jefferson Township	Ray Brewer	Fredericktown
Marta Hill	Liberty Township	Robert Collins	Martinsburg

Others present:

Darrel Severns	Knox RPC	Daniel Hardwick	Centerburg Council
Rob Clendening	KSWCD	Cheryl Splain	Knox Pages

**Alternate*

A quorum was present with 18 voting representatives.

Approval of Minutes – Roger Yarman

Mr. Bechtel moved to approve the September 2025 minutes. Ms. Severns seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken with a unanimous aye vote. Motion carried.

Financial Report – Marta Hill

Ms. Hill presented the Financial Report for September 2025. The expenses were \$2,556.88. Income for the month was \$1,210.00. The month began with \$104,062.41 and ended with \$102,715.53.

Mr. Hughes moved to approve the September 2025 financial report as presented. Mr. Brewer seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken with a unanimous aye vote. Motion carried.

Old Business

Null

New Business

Executive Committee Report – Darrel Severns

We met on Thursday, October 9th and discussed the 2026 budget and did employee evaluations. The budget has no dramatic changes. Membership dues, lot splits continue to be the main revenue source for the RPC along with the funding from the Commissioners. The carryover numbers are down this year as expected because of RPC's

contribution to the Comprehensive Plan Update earlier in the year. We will continue to budget conservatively in anticipation of another Comprehensive Plan update in 2030-2031.

Employee evaluations for both the Administrative Secretary and Executive Secretary received favorable evaluations by the Executive Committee.

Secretary's Report —Darrel Severns

Mr. Severns stated that nothing really changed in the proposed 2026 budget. We will try to recover some of the money spent on the Comprehensive Plan over the next few years and be ready to do it again when the time comes. Hopefully it will not be as expensive as it was this time around. There will be work on the Comprehensive Plan implementation. Right now, we are trying to get our Subdivision Regulations updated. It is being worked on by our consultant. The goal is to have that back into the hands of the Land Use Committee next month, ready to start going through it, getting any additions or subtractions that we need in it so we can start having public hearings. Hopefully we will be ready to put it in place early in the new year. Mr. Severns sent the proposed budget out in the mailing so that you would have a chance to look at it. We can go ahead and vote on it tonight if you feel comfortable with it, if not we can table it until the next meeting.

Mr. Bechtel moved to approve the proposed 2026 Budget as presented. Mr. Schunke seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken with a unanimous aye vote. Motion carried.

The other item we need to take care of the is the Population Estimates. If you recall last year, there was a little bit of a hiccup in some of the numbers. Jefferson Township, specifically, were way over on the estimate. Mr. Severns had a conversation with the demographer at the State office. They went back and checked their numbers and revised it. Last year they had Jefferson Township up around 1,500 people and the prior one was 700. It has increased substantially from what it had been because they are getting inundated heavily with Amish. The Population Estimate was sent out with the packet too so you could take a look at it. If you are comfortable with the numbers on it we can vote on it tonight. The estimates are how we derive our membership dues. It is computed as \$0.25 per capita population. When these get approved, we will send out our annual invitation for membership and on the form, you will have the opportunity to put your regular representative as well as an alternate. It is up to the townships to appoint whomever they want to represent their township.

Ms. Ciatola moved to approve the Population Estimates as presented. Ms. Hill seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken with a unanimous aye vote. Motion carried.

Land Use – Steve Bratton

Null

Social Improvement and Economic Development Committee – Darrel Severns

Null

Education and Outreach Committee – Darrel Severns

We put out an email to the committee and we are going to try and meet to talk about a speaker for our orientation dinner coming up in January. Last year we had Kyle Brooks from the Ohio Township Association, and he was very informative. We will try and come up with a person of that caliber. We have a speaker, John Moore, Owner of Herd Media and Hilliar Township Trustee. He volunteered to inform everyone about the public notice issues that are important to all the townships and anybody that is having public meetings. He is also a website developer.

Transportation Committee – Jim Hughes

Null

Knox County Commissioner – Barry Lester

Null

Knox Public Health – Landon Magers

Null

Knox Area Development (ADF) – Sam Filkins

Null

Knox Soil and Water Report – Rob Clendening

Jeremiah Fowler and Melvin Doup were elected to the KSWCD Board in September at the annual meeting. They will be starting in January, 2026. We are wrapping up the second round of the H2Ohio Program. We have about 5,000 acres of cover crops to check on around the county.

County, City and Village Reports

Brinkhaven/Gann – Christopher Wyant

Null

Centerburg – Daniel Hardwick

There is a fire levy renewal on the ballot this November. At the corner of Updike Road and State Route 314, there is a large housing development being proposed to go in, about 300 houses. We welcomed our new Administrator Rick Dzick. The new housing development is in the process of being annexed into Centerburg. The development will tap into Centerburg's sewer system.

Danville – Jeff Furay

Null

Fredericktown – Ray Brewer

We are working on South Main Street right now for the next phase of the improvement project.

Gambier – Elizabeth Bonaudi

Null

Martinsburg – Robert Collins

The water line loop is done.

Speaker – John Moore, Owner of Herd Media and Hilliar Township Trustee

Mr. Moor, Trustee of Hilliar Township, gave an overview of his company Heard Media, web sites and House Bill 315 (HB315). At least in Hilliar Township, HB315 can make communication a lot simpler and more streamlined. For decades, townships communicated the same with the public through newspapers. Times have changed, most people are online 24/7. HB315 gives us that chance to bridge the gap turning county web sites into more of a communication platform and resource for the community. Not every township has their own web site. What is HB315? It was passed by the Ohio General Assembly last year. It allows townships to publish official notices on their websites and social media. This allows the use of this as a legitimate tool for official communication and is a pretty big deal. Newspapers are hard to come by in the physical sense. In Hilliar Township it has been a huge benefit having a website for this reason. The current website landscape and challenges townships having many township websites that are outdated if they even have one.

Most people if they need something from the county will Google it to get the information. They will then be taken to a county website or something that wasn't what they intended to go to, and there will be a level of frustration. This is a disconnect. People today expect instant access. Townships are judged by how easy it is to find information. What can be done now is we can publish a lot of information online, streamline and save money for the township. The solution is creating a modern, dynamic website that is built for 2025. We created a website for Hilliar and Liberty Township is purpose built township websites that include a platform for public notices, a resource for you today and also in the future. You can store everything on the back end of the website, things like public notices, meeting, public road closures, etc. and are easily managed.

Herd Media builds very simple and highly effective websites. Adding forms to the pages is a huge benefit, by sending a link where someone can be able to print it off or go and fill out the form online, and have it emailed or submitted online. The pages can be updated and built upon and used as a continual resource to the public. Websites don't cost what they used to cost and are a more economical resource now.

Others from the floor

Mr. Schunke stated that the Middlebury Township house has been completed. Voting in the township will be in the new building in November. The new building is around the corner from Yankee Street on Waterford Road by the building for the trucks. The old building is being renovated back to the original and is being painted.

Ms. Hill moved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

The next meeting of the Knox County Regional Planning Commission will be November 20, 2025, in the Knox County Service Center 117 E. High St., Mount Vernon, OH at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darrel Severns', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Darrel Severns
Executive Secretary

Attachments: