

Minutes

October 17, 2018-Sales Tax Hearing

Commissioners Present: Brian Robertson and Mark Gazarek.

Also Present: Please see the attached attendance sheet.

Commissioner Robertson opened the hearing at 6:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' 1st floor conference room. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Commissioner Robertson began the meeting by going over the estimated revenue for a 1/4% sales tax and the expenses that the revenue would be used for. That includes facility maintenance, non-mandated entity budgets, Juvenile/Probate Court building construction, and Justice Center Expansion. Brian then invited the non-mandated entities to speak about their impact on the County and why County funding is critical to their operations.

Chad Carroll, representing Hancock Soil & Water Conservation, stated if County funding is cut for their department, the match from State funding is also cut. They work on drainage projects throughout the County.

Ed Lentz, representing the OSU Extension Office, said they are also matched with other funds. Last year their funding was cut due to the County providing fewer funds. This resulted in the Family Consumer Science Program ending. He also stated that if OSU Extension Office would continue to see cuts in funding, their education programs would be cut, causing the Agriculture community to go out of the County to receive education which means less money coming into Hancock County. The OSU Extension Office works with the 4-H Program and Leadership Programs. He stated that the children that participate in 4-H are rarely seen on the docket and to lose those programs would greatly hurt the community.

Paul Maekask, representing the Public Defender's office, informed those in attendance of the significant savings his office brings to the County. If his office did not exist, the Courts would be forced to appoint outside counsel to each case which drives up the cost plus slows down the process. The Public Defender's office provides counsel for indigent defendants at a fixed cost to the County. They were involved in 847 cases from January-June; there would not be enough local attorneys to handle that caseload.

Matt Cordonnier and Aleta Boecker spoke on behalf of Hancock Regional Planning Commission. They are funded from three sources: the County, the City, and grant administration in equal parts. If funding would decrease from the County, they would have to cut staff. Cutting staff would result in less grants coming into the County. Over the last 8 years, they have been awarded over \$10,000,000 in grants. Matt provided a handout that provided more detail. It is attached.

Commissioner Robertson then invited the Elected Officials in attendance to speak.

Sheriff Michael Heldman stated there has been an increase in indictments which leads to an increase in prisoner housing needs which in turn has put a strain on their budget. He estimates in the near future they will need approximately \$600,000 for outside housing. That number does not include the increased costs to transport the prisoners as well.

Prosecutor Phillip Riegle said in 2017 the Prosecutor's office broke the record with 408 total cases for the year. As of October 16, 2018, there have been 397 total cases. He predicts upwards of 475 total cases for 2018.

Judge Kristen Johnson spoke on the dangers of her building. It is not big enough, and the building is not secure. She sees a lot of anger in her courtroom and the area is very small. There have been several incidents in the last few years and with only one entrance/exit from her courtroom, they may be trapped by the scuffle. She has seen an increase in mental health disorders and children are impulsive leading to an increase in Sheriff Deputy involvement. She also fears that children are being kept in unsafe situations because the County can't afford to pay placement costs for those children.

Judge Jonathon Starn reiterated the importance of the Public Defender's office. He also stated that what the Elected Officials that have spoken all have in common is their work is out of their control. They can't control how many people commit crimes or their caseloads. They deal with the hand they have been dealt.

Commissioner Robertson said the tax would not be to put money in a savings, but to spend what is necessary for safety and security of the community. He then invited the public to speak.

Dave Martaus, a Marion Township resident, expressed his unhappiness with the fact that two Commissioners can impose a tax on thousands of people.

Dave Wobser questioned the \$600,000 that is estimated for the Justice Center assessment. Commissioner Robertson stated that estimate includes design and bid document preparation. Dave suggested a clearer representation of what exactly the tax revenue would be spent on.

Dave Martaus asked if the County has contacted other Commissioner offices to discuss how they are funding non-mandated entities. Commissioner Robertson said each of the surrounding counties receive a greater percentage of sales tax for their operating budgets, therefore they do not struggle with funding the non-mandated. Judge Johnson also stated that several other counties have a Human Services levy to help fund children in care. Hancock County voters were presented with the same type levy in the spring and it was denied. Judge Starn explained the base formula for funding most of the non-mandated entities would be the same, but not each of the entities do the same thing. Chad Carroll said that each Soil & Water performs work based on the needs of their county. For example, Hancock Soil & Water does a lot of drainage work because of the Agriculture Industry located here, but Lucas County does not have as much agriculture. Ed Lentz said if you were to compare Hancock County's OSU Extension Office with Wood County's OSU Extension Office, they are funded 150-200% more than Hancock County. Matt Cordonnier explained that the funding for all Regional Planning Offices is outlined in the Ohio Revised Code.

Commissioner Gazarek thanked everyone in attendance for their input.

Respectfully submitted,



Sarah Mutchler, Clerk


Reviewed and approved by:



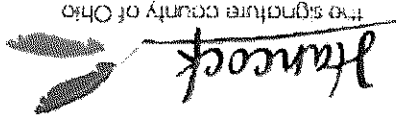
Brian J. Robertson



Timothy K. Bechtol



Mark D. Gazarek



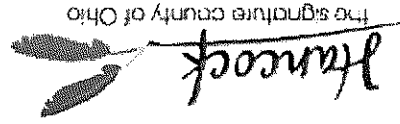
Tax Neutral 1/4% Estimated Utilization

“Strengthen Safety and Security”

Budget Items	Revenue	Operations	Capital	Notables
Estimated Projection	\$3,400,000.00			
Current Facility Maintenance	\$ 450,000.00			
Non-Mandated General Entities	\$ 200,000.00			-Maintain Level Funding
Non-Mandated Kids-in-Care	\$ 500,000.00			
Juvenile/Probate Court House		\$ 5,000,000.00		
Juvenile/Probate Debt Service	\$ 286,449.00			-Assume 4% / 30-Year
Sheriff's Vehicles	\$ 200,000.00			
Justice Center Assessment		\$ 600,000.00		-Current or New Location
Justice Center Expansion		\$ 14,000,000.00		
Justice Center Debt Service	\$ 802,058.00			-Assume 4% / 30-Year
	\$3,400,000.00	\$2,438,507.00	\$ 19,600,000.00	
Excess Equals		\$ 961,493.00		-Debt Reduction/Criminal Justice Operations

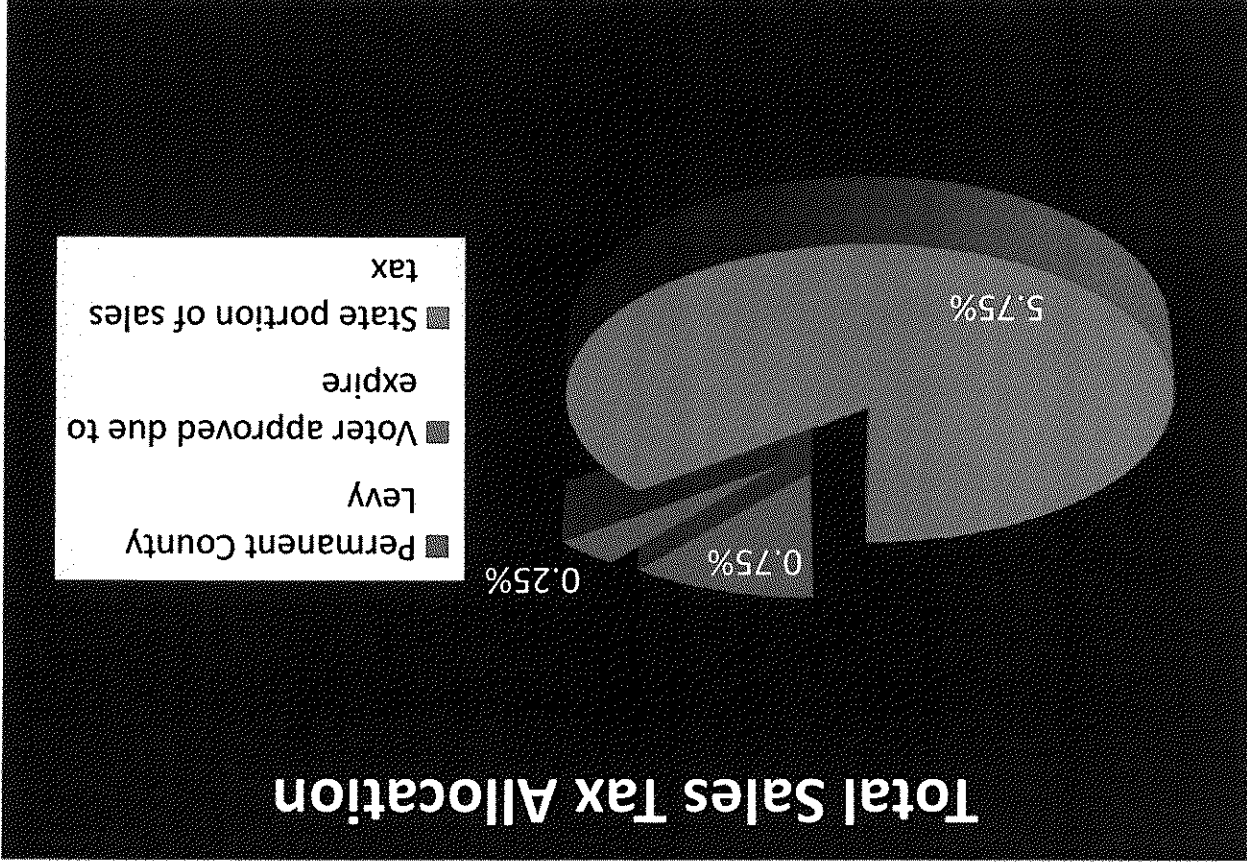
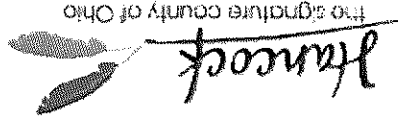
Non-Mandated Entities Input

“Unintended Consequences of Defunding”



- Children Services
- Public Defender's Office
- Raise the Bar
- Ag Extension Office
- Soil & Water
- CASA
- BRWP
- Economic Development
- Regional Planning

CURRENT SALES TAX OVERVIEW



Total Sales Tax = 6.75%
State Portion = 5.75%
Hancock County = 1.00%

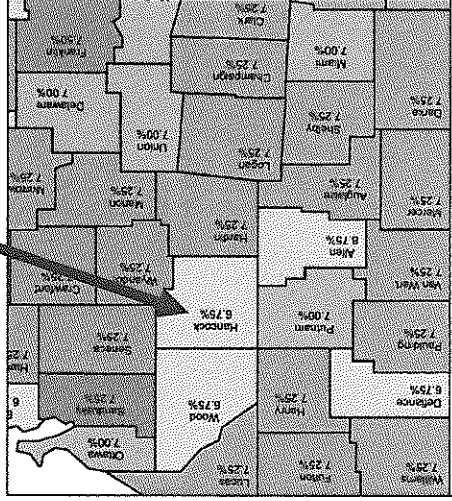
3/4 % = Permanent
1983-1/2%

2017-1/4%

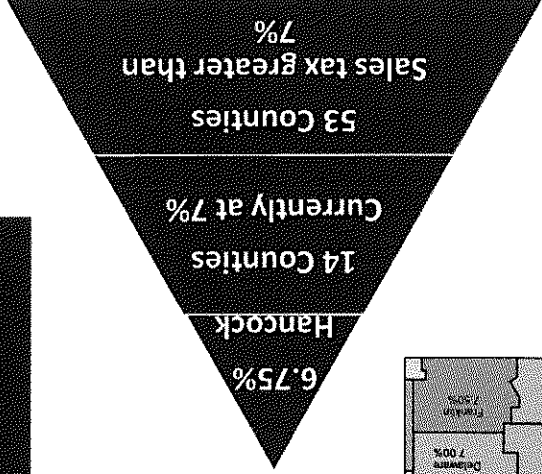
1/4 % = Voted 10 years
(1/1/2009-12/31/2018)

(1/4% for Flood Mitigation)

SALES TAX COMPARISON



Rate	Number of Counties
8.00%	1
7.50%	1
7.25%	51
7.00%	14
6.75%	18
6.50%	3
Total	98



Hancock County is the only county in Ohio dedicating a portion (1/4%) of tax to a non-operational fund.

County	Rate	%	State Portion	Flood	Operating
HANCOCK	6.75%	6.75%	5.75%	0.25%	0.75%
SURROUNDING COUNTIES					
Allen	6.75%	5.75%	0.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Hardin	7.25%	5.75%	0.00%	1.50%	1.50%
Wyandot	7.25%	5.75%	0.00%	1.50%	1.50%
Seneca	7.25%	5.75%	0.00%	1.50%	1.50%
Wood	6.75%	5.75%	0.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Henry	7.25%	5.75%	0.00%	1.50%	1.50%
Putnam	7.00%	5.75%	0.00%	1.25%	1.25%
WHERE WE SHOP					
Lucas	7.25%	5.75%	0.00%	1.50%	1.50%
Franklin	7.50%	5.75%	0.00%	1.75%	1.75%

Hancock Regional Planning Commission

RESPONSIBILITIES

- **About**

HRPC was formed in 1961 as way to efficiently address the County and City duplication of planning and zoning duties as outlined in the Ohio Revised Code. 22 Board Members consisting of 12 from the County and 10 from the City.

- **General Duties**

County Subdividing Authority, Coordinate County Zoning Committee, County Transportation Committee and County Subdivision Committee, Township Zoning Inspector, maintain Township zoning and land use maps. Assign mailing addresses.

- **Grants**

County HRPC searches and applies for many different types of grants on behalf of Hancock County.

- **Projects**

Update of Land Use Plans, County Housing Study, Update of County Subdivision Regulations, Fiscal Agent for projects funded by multiple sources, GIS Mapping, Property Acquisition.

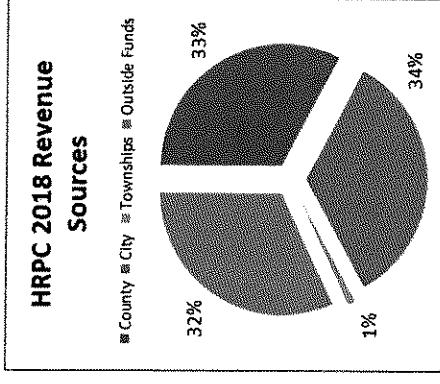
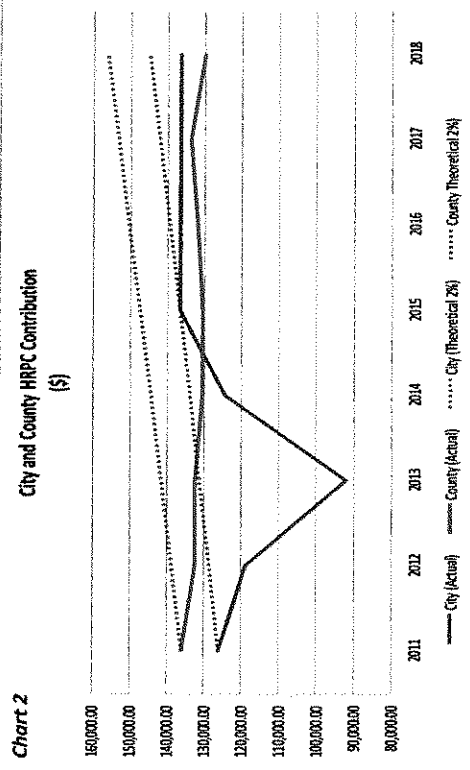


Chart 1

FINANCES

ISSUES

- With reduced revenue we will be forced to cut staff, which will reduce the offices capacity.
- HRPC may need to reduce the number of hours worked by each employee.
- Reduced hours and staffing could lead to delays in real estate transactions that involve lot splits, reduced availability to assist citizens, townships, and villages.
- Reduced the number of grants we can apply for and administer for the County.



FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

- We have been able to keep the County's contribution at approximately the same level for 8 years. 2011 the County paid \$136,127. 2018 the County paid \$129,841. See Chart 2
- Salaries have remained low. Wage increases have only occurred in 2 of the last 4 years and are highly unlikely in 2019.
- 1/3 of our funding comes from sources outside of the City and County. See Chart 1

