

Progress Edition- Shelby County in review of 2017

The Shelby County Commissioners entered 2017 knowing that we would be focused on discussions with our State legislators as it pertained to revenue collected through the Medicaid Managed Care Sales Tax. Federal opinion stated the State could no longer collect this revenue. This source had amounted to approximately \$450,000 in revenue for Shelby County in 2016. While the Commissioners worked diligently with our State legislature we were not successful in finding a permanent solution to this loss in funding. As of September the County stopped receiving this source and saw 2017 sales-tax revenues down by 9% compared to 2016. The County is very reliant on sales tax with it comprising approximately 30% of General Fund Revenues. Sales tax collections into the General Fund totaled \$5,051,383.

In addition, the portion of money received from the State in Local Government Funds did not meet the State's projections falling \$7095 short. Shelby County's receipts from the State in LGF for 2017 totaled \$657,905.

A bright spot in the County's revenues was seen in the Sheriff's contracts with the jail housing out-of-county prisoners and federal prisoners. Those two items contributed \$972,025 to the general fund.

Overall the County General Fund had revenues totaling \$16,351,328.

The Commissioners were able to make some necessary improvements to County infrastructure with the largest project being at the Shelby County Annex. The Annex received upgrades to HVAC, LED lighting, fire detection, security and ceiling tiles. As the process started it became apparent there were other issues. Lead remediation was necessary to the lower level, first and fourth floors and mold remediation was needed in the lower level. The outside of the building was tuck-pointed which was followed by new paint and cement repair at the front entrance. The rear employee entrance received a canopy overhang. New paint, window blinds and carpeting completed the project on several floors as well. The Annex project was paid with funds from the Capital Improvement Fund and the Permanent Improvement Fund totaling \$2.3 million. We would like to thank our local businesses including Area Electric, Ovis, The Floor Store, Brian Bros Painting, Midwest Maintenance, Regal Plumbing & Heating, Slagle Mechanical Contractors, Eck Refrigeration, Westerheide Construction, and Designs by Janice Seger for their assistance with this project.

Other buildings receiving improvements included the Ag Center and Extension office with painting, window replacements, roof repairs, and floor coverings. New ice guards and rain gutters were installed at the Ohio Means Jobs Center. Air conditioning units were replaced at the Board of Elections.

The County continues to work to upgrade our emergency communications infrastructure with work done to Russia, Anna and the Riverside tower locations. Work will continue as systems are upgraded to newer technology.

The Commissioners saw the arrival of electronic signature pads to be used by the Board of Elections and voters began using them in November of 2017 with no issues.

Shelby County, like many other entities, is required to maintain records of all sorts for long periods of time with some records required to be kept forever. This has created a situation where the different departments have struggled to find space to store these records. For many years, the old jail was used for this purpose. Unfortunately this did not store records in such a way that they were easily retrieved or kept from decaying over time. To solve this issue, the Commissioners have contracted with Lane's Storage to hold county records that are not typically needed on a regular basis. Retention, retrieval and disposal of no longer needed records will be handled through this service in a much more efficient manner.

The county land bank, officially named the Shelby County Land Reutilization Corporation, began to acquire properties and saw the demolition of five buildings in 2017 and has accepted bids to demolish 20 others. The goal of the Land Bank is to strategically acquire properties, return them to productive use, reduce blight, and increase property values. Some uses include selling them as side lots to adjacent homeowners, expanding areas for affordable new housing sites, or utilizing them as green spaces or park areas. Per ORC guidelines, the Board consists of John Coffield (Shelby County Treasurer), Robert Guillozet (Commissioner), Julie Ehemann (Commissioner), Mike Barhorst (Mayor of Sidney), and Dave Voisard (Community representative). The Shelby County Land Reutilization Corporation has been awarded a grant for reimbursement of expenses related to the tearing down and reallocation of properties through the Neighborhood Initiative Program. The Board currently owns 38 properties with several others in different processes of acquisition.

The County is in the process of construction of a wastewater collection system in Newport which will transport Newport's sewage to the Fort Loramie Wastewater Treatment Facility. Tom's Construction was awarded the project with a bid of \$2,675,000. The project is approximately 42% complete with tie-ins expected to occur in the spring of 2018.

At the fairgrounds, the new grandstands were completed and used for the first time. The Commissioners and Fair Board look forward to utilizing this facility throughout the year. Drainage issues were addressed at the Horse Arena noting that drainage for the entire fairgrounds will be a multi-step multi-year process. Plans are currently being developed to upgrade electrical systems that will help even out power distribution and alleviate crowding concerns with the camping areas.

Bob Geuy, County Engineer, is working with CSX Railroad to rehabilitate the bridge located on Fair Road at the Middle School and hopes to bid this project late in 2018 for construction in 2019. This project is anticipated to cost approximately \$3.2 million.

Shelby County's Nursing Home, Fair Haven, continues in its plans to renovate the facility. \$9 million in bonds were recently issued to facilitate funding of the project with plans to sell \$4 million in 2018. Fair Haven will have one wing of the facility torn down in Phase 1 with a new wing built and renovations done to portions of the remaining structure. Freytag & Associates, Inc. were retained to develop the plans while Thomas & Marker Construction Co. was awarded the contract for Phase 1 with a bid of \$11,212,000.

The Commissioners continue to work with local entities to address the heroin and opiate addictions crisis in our community. The Opiates Taskforce meets regularly to share best practices and has been

having Community Conversations to keep the public informed. The Tri-County Board of Recovery and Mental Health has been working with the Sheriff's office and the Commissioners to develop plans for the STAR House which will serve as a Transitional Treatment House. The House will assist persons leaving jail with re-entry into the community with the goal that they will become established drug-free working members of the community.

For 2018, the County has projected General Fund revenues of approximately \$17 million. We anticipate being very busy with the numerous building projects that are planned. We will also remain engaged with our legislators keeping them informed of the needs and challenges of our Shelby County community.

Your County Commissioners remain dedicated to serving the needs of the Shelby County residents. We welcome visitors to our sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays and remain available by appointment as well.