

REGULAR MEETING Minutes June 25, 2026

Board Members Present: Dean Fadel; Gene Harshaw; Katherine Kelly; Marci Straughter; Becky Swartz; Michael Underwood; Karen Wilkins

Staff Present: Dot Yeager; Shemaine Bakir; Lee Childs; Angie Franke; Gwynn Kinsel; Kathy Lawton; Larry Macintosh; Amy Magginis; Elizabeth Roberto; Jennifer Schueneman

The Regular meeting of the Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities was called to order by **Board President Dean Fadel**.

MINUTES

Ms. Wilkins moved to approve the regular meeting minutes held on May 21, 2026, second by Ms. Swartz. Motion carried unanimously.

Agency Updates by Superintendent/CEO Dot Yeager

Budget & Finance:

Superintendent/CEO Dot Yeager provided agency finance updates through May, 2026. Received the first half of tax revenues, \$105 million, consistent with expectations. The two payments are not equal. We are at 49.8% of revenue estimate through May. We are at 41% of expenditures.

Human Resources Report:

Superintendent/CEO Dot Yeager provided agency Human Resource updates through May, 2026. Minimal activity for the month of May, we will see hiring of Service Coordinators in June. We will be moving down the path for hiring of seasonal staff. Operation Feed campaign has concluded.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Advocacy

Self-Advocacy Advisory Committee

The SAAC will meet on Thursday, June 11, 2026. Ryan Phillips, Director of Communications, Advocacy and Community Relations will lead the group. Representatives from community programs

**Early Childhood
& Family Center**
2879 Johnstown Rd.
Columbus, OH 43219
614-475-0564

**Early Childhood Learning
Community**
4141 Rudy Rd.
Columbus, OH 43214
614-451-6418

Intake
1600 Watermark Dr.
Columbus, OH 43215
614-342-5490

Service Coordination
1600 Watermark Dr.
Columbus, OH 43215
614-464-2743

Transportation
2879 Johnstown Rd.
Columbus, OH 43219
614-475-5910

West Central School
1481 W. Town Street
Columbus, OH 43223
614-276-8231

including ElevateDD, Nisonger, Jillian Ober from Next Chapter Book Club who explained a few programs supported. The Self-Advocates were exposed to different opportunities available in the community.

Inclusion Seekers

Franklin County DD has an agreement with Starfire Council to help create more Inclusion Seekers in our community. Being an Inclusion Seeker isn't a typical volunteer commitment or program activity. It's more about mindset—about believing that we all play a role and can find ways to make sure people with disabilities and their families feel a true sense of belonging in communities that are welcoming, connected and inclusive.

The current phase is underway, which is recruiting individuals for small projects to grow their own community. Please contact Lee Childs and Kathy Lawton if you know someone who might be interested. Starfire Council presented at the May OACB Conference and provided some examples from Hamilton County's projects. One was a block party; one was oriented around a dog park – creative opportunities with good impact.

Franklin County DD Clippers Day at Huntington Park (day game)

If you haven't already, please register for the DD Clippers Day at Huntington Park. *Thanks to County Administrator Wilson for his support.* The game will be held on July 30 at 12:05pm.

2026 Community Star Awards (5:30pm Social Hour/ 6:30pm Awards Ceremony)

October 7 at Mitchell Hall on the Columbus State Community College campus. Accessibility is prime. CSCC does not provide the actual food, not official yet, but we may have lasagna on the menu this year.

Save the Dates:

2026 Franklin County DD Provider Fair

September 9 at the Ohio State Fairgrounds

2026 Trunk or Treat (Oct. 28)

To be held at the Administration building (more details to come!)

Franklin County DD Values

Over recent months, an agency-wide effort has been underway to refresh our agency values. Ryan Phillips, Director of Communications, Advocacy and Community Relations and Jennifer Schueneman, Director of Fiscal Services have led the effort to gather input from across the agency. This included meetings with Franklin County DD's Culture Ambassadors, Transportation, Early Childhood, West Central and the Service Coordination Staff Advisory Council. The final step in the input gathering was an agency-wide staff survey. We look forward to the final results to be shared in the near future and appreciate everyone who participated.

Family Support

Family Support meetings are held by the Superintendent for family members of individuals who are served by Franklin County DD. Recently, we have added alternating evening meetings for those who have difficulty attending the scheduled daytime meetings, Superintendent Yeager held a virtual evening-time Family Support meeting on June 10 at 6 p.m.

2026 Family Support Meetings that remain are:

Daytime (12 p.m.) meetings will be held: 7/1; 9/2 and 11/4.

Evening (6 p.m.) meetings will be held: 8/12; 10/14; and 12/9

Summer Building Projects

Early Childhood Learning Community (ECLC): At the May board meeting, the bid to add exterior doors to two classrooms at ECLC was approved. The plan is for that work to be completed this summer for children under age 2 ½ to be served in the next school year. Thanks to the ECLC and Facilities/Maintenance staff for their support of this investment in our mission.

Parking lot work is planned at West Central and security system replacement is planned at Johnstown Road and Watermark. Also at Watermark, an adult-sized universal changing table will be added on the first floor, once the bidder has been selected.

2026 Accreditation Visit from DODD

County Boards of Developmental Disabilities follow legal and administrative requirements of the State of Ohio. State agencies periodically perform intensive reviews of how well county boards conform to those requirements. This year, the Department of Developmental Disabilities will be on site for our Accreditation review between the dates of August 18 -20, 2026. In addition to the continued emphasis on person-centered planning in our Service Coordination department, a new emphasis for the Accreditation Review will be on the Intake process and on the waiting list assessment process.

Medicaid Program Waste, Fraud and Abuse Concerns

Recently, there has been much national, state and local news about concerns about the extent of waste, fraud and abuse in Ohio's Medicaid programs, especially in the delivery of home health services. Governor DeWine has announced steps being taken by the State of Ohio to address those concerns, including imposing a moratorium on new providers. The Ohio House of Representatives held a hearing yesterday on House Bill 795 which requires new electronic visit verification methods and additional hearings are expected before the bill is presented for passage around June 10. The Ohio Association of County Boards of DD is monitoring the status of this legislation.

If there are specific concerns about Medicaid fraud, there are hotlines to call: Ohio Attorney General at 800-282-0515 and the Ohio Department of Medicaid at 614-466-0722.

Statewide Property Tax Changes

Recent property tax reappraisals across the state have resulted in unusually large increases in home values and in property tax collections. Homeowners and farmers are struggling with these increased costs and a movement to eliminate real estate property taxes in Ohio is underway. The following are some questions and answers about property taxes and county boards of DD:

How much of Franklin County DD's budget is funded by property taxes?

80% of our annual revenue is from local property taxes, collected from two levies. One is continuous, and the other is a fixed-term 10 year levy, expiring December 31, 2028. Planning efforts for the next fixed levy term will begin next year.

Do Franklin County DD's levy revenues increase when property values are reassessed?

No. County boards of DD levies are fixed at the time they are approved by the voters and do not increase or decrease when property values are reassessed. County boards of DD don't have "unvoted" millage.

What is being done about the sustainability of Franklin County DD?

With flat revenues and increasing expenditures over time, this creates a funding gap. Efforts to reduce, if not close this gap are ongoing. Specific suggestions to reduce expenditures and maximize revenue are always welcome. Franklin County DD has adequate funding through the end of the current levy period in December 2028.

What is being done to educate the public about the impact of abolishing property taxes, especially those served by county boards?

A group of various organizations, including the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, the Ohio Manufacturers Association, and the Ohio Association of County Boards of DD, has formed a coalition to educate the public on the magnitude of the services funded through real estate property taxes. For more information, here is a link to their website: [Ohioans to Protect Public Services](#)

RESOLUTIONS

- a. Ms. Wilkins moved to ratify bill payments approved by the Superintendent as presented to the Finance Committee on June 25, 2026, second by Ms. Swartz. Motion carried unanimously.
- b. Ms. Wilkins moved to authorize the submission of the Capital and IT Budget to Franklin County, second by Ms. Straughter. Motion carried unanimously.
- c. Mr. Underwood moved to authorize the Superintendent to renew the Memorandum of Understanding with Franklin County Family and Children First Council (FCFC) for a period beginning July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2028, second by Ms. Swartz. Motion carried unanimously. ESC of Central Ohio is the designated fiscal agent. FCFCFC receives funds from the State and Federal government to support HMG. Franklin County DD contributes to the pooled services fund and administrative fund. This resolution is not a budget type of request.
- d. Ms. Wilkins moved to authorize the Superintendent renew an agreement with Franklin County Family and Children First Council (FCFCFC) 'Resiliency in the Early Years Initiative' (REY) previously for 'Celebrate One', in an amount not to exceed \$100,000 for the period beginning July 1, 2026 and ending on June 30, 2027, second by Mr. Underwood. Motion carried unanimously.
- e. Ms. Wilkins moved to authorize the Superintendent to renew a contract with Alvis House for behavior support services, at specified rates per hour, in an amount not to exceed \$310,000 for the period beginning July 1, 2026 and ending on June 30, 2027, second by Ms. Straughter. Motion carried unanimously. Our team has met with Alvis; they are looking at possible alternative funding streams. This anticipates Alvis doing this and this dollar amount is approximately 50% of previous contracts.
- f. Ms. Wilkins moved to authorize the Superintendent to enter into an agreement with Heinzerling Community and ARC Voyagers for active treatment ancillary services, for up to 42 residents at a time, at a cost of \$178.75 per day for twelve months, from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027, at a total not to exceed \$1,906,905, second by Mr. Underwood. Motion carried unanimously. This is a bridge to assist Heinzerling in developing a plan to provide active treatment for a longer period of time.
- g. Mr. Underwood moved to request funding from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) for the purchase of three homes by Summit Housing Development Corporation, second by Ms. Straughter. Motion carried unanimously. Each has an estimated cost of \$318,000, funded by the capital assistance funds from the state. For many years we have worked with Creative Housing exclusively and by their suggestion we are seeking other options.

- h. Ms. Swartz moved to authorize the Superintendent to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Summit Housing Development Corporation to outline a future collaboration on respite facilities in Franklin County, Ohio, which includes FCBDD intending to reimburse operating costs of said facilities, including monthly utilities and other operating costs, periodic repairs and maintenance, and tenant damage, when that damage is beyond ordinary wear and tear, second by Ms. Straughter. Motion carried unanimously.
- i. Ms. Wilkins moved to approve out of state travel for Kathy Lawton, Director of Early Childhood Education, to present at the Division for Early Childhood Conference in Omaha, Nebraska, from October 26-28, 2026, by the Ohio Revised Code, any out of state travel must be approved by the Board, this is consistent with our travel policy which requires receipts and does not exceed federal government per diem allotments, second by Ms. Straughter. Motion carried unanimously.
- j. Mr. Underwood moved to accept bid for Johnstown Road and Watermark Drive security system improvements, from All Secured Security Services LLC, in an amount of \$241,269 with a contingency of \$36,000, second by Ms. Kelly. Motion carried unanimously.
- k. Ms. Wilkins moved to authorize the Superintendent to approve sponsorship of the Ohio Disability Policy Candidates Forum 2026 to be held on August 20, 2026 from 12-4 p.m. at Ohio State University's Fawcett Center. Sponsorship in an amount not to exceed \$1,000, second by Ms. Swartz. Motion carried unanimously.
- l. Ms. Wilkins moved to authorize the Superintendent to approve sponsorship of Lighthouse Cove (Synergy Conference Sponsorship, previously OADSP) in an amount not to exceed \$2,500, on an annual basis, second by Mr. Underwood. Motion carried with abstention by Mr. Harshaw and Ms. Straughter.

Unfinished Business - none

New Business

- a. Ms. Swartz moved to accept bid for West Central School pavement improvements, from Breck's Paving in an amount of \$127,770 with a contingency of \$15,000, second by Ms. Straughter. Motion carried unanimously.
- b. Mr. Underwood moved to authorize the Superintendent to enter into developmental center agreements with the State of Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities for county board funded placements at the per diem rates for the first 180 days for adults age 18 and over, for the period from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027, second by Ms. Straughter. Motion carried unanimously.

Self-Advocate Update

Christine Brown provided a Self-Advocate update to the board. There is a threat of placing individuals back into institutions, Ohio Olmstead Task Force is taking the lead on fighting for truth and justice. Christine witnessed State Representative Jennifer Gross stated that it was cheaper to institutionalize an individual. ODM Director had 2024 numbers to share, I disputed this based on 2025 data. Thankfully, parents testified and are hopeful.

EVV will not be required for DD families. Possible that anything related to counseling, therapy, and psychiatry will need to do EVV and prior authorization per visit. Christine provided updates on Medicaid Fraud. We are a Technology First state – maybe the state could provide plastic cards instead of paper cards. If guardian or individual signs for each visit, that is proof enough that they were there, they attended the psychology appointment, approving the billing. Or include a person's face on the ID card.

Acton and Ramaswamy are not attending the 2026 Candidates Forum. They have not agreed to send a representative as well. We are asking for a video response.

For budget concerns, Butler County is closing offices on Fridays – to reduce agency costs.

Announcements

Board Member Katherine Kelly shared special commendation to the Special Olympics Team (Megan, Tim, Mike, Avery, and Andrea) summer games were 2 weeks earlier this year, this is a huge event and phenomenal job. Only the typical bumps in the road for the weekend. A huge thank you for all they accomplished. We did our first unified relay (we did not get the gold).

Board Member Marci Straughter shared that she got to be in Minneapolis for the Self-Directed conference with Jeanne Stuntz, Steve Oster, Lisa Combs, GT Independence and Uber. Uber paid Marci's costs.

Hearing of the Public

No requests to address the board were received by 12:00 p.m. on June 25, 2026. (am)

Board President Fadel received a motion to adjourn by Ms. Wilkins.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Wilkins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Karen Wilkins, Secretary

KW/am