

2020 Annual Report



Law Director & City Prosecutor

Randall T. Ullom

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ANNUAL REPORT

2020

I. Civil Report

A. CIVIL ACTIVITIES

1. Legal Counsel

- a. Under the Ohio Revised Code, the Law Director is legal counsel for all City departments, City Administration, City Council, City Boards, and the Lancaster Board of Education. The Law Director's Office attends all council and board meetings, as well as special meetings when requested. The Law Director also serves as legal counsel for the Lancaster Port Authority.

2. Legislation Services Provided

- a. Yearly Statistics

YEAR	ORDINANCES	RESOLUTIONS
1996	57	221
1997	94	134
1998	76	146
1999	70	177
2000	42	167
2001	43	186
2002	59	146
2003	82	157
2004	85	214
2005	91	179
2006	57	180
2007	65	184
2008	64	175
2009	42	182
2010	29	159
2011	30	182
2012	33	199
2013	38	188
2014	34	149
2015	38	138
2016	36	136
2017	41	146
2018	30	100
2019	32	152
2020	35	140

b. Ordinances/Resolutions of interest.

1. Ordinance authorizing emergency measures in response to COVID-19. (Ordinance 5-20)
2. Ordinance accepting annexation, zoning and boundary conformance of 76.877 acres into the City. (Ordinances 3-20, 4-20 and 7-20)
3. Ordinance to approve editing and inclusion of all LCO changes from 2020. (Ordinance 35-20)
4. Two ordinances amending the City Tax Code regarding new requirements of the Ohio Revised Code and local economic development incentives. (Ordinances 25-20 and 27-20)
5. Ordinance to upgrade city intersections with traffic management cameras and updated processing units. (Ordinance 26-20)
6. Ordinances to vacate portions of platted roads in furtherance of economic development in the City. (Ordinances 8-20 and 10-20)
7. Several ordinances accepting easements and rights-of-way or accepting acreage by the City. (Ordinances 6-20, 9-20, 17-20 and 22-20)
8. Ordinance to accept property for Ety Road Improvement Project. (Ordinance 34-20)
9. Several ordinances amending the city zoning map in furtherance of economic development in the City. (Ordinances 11-20, 12-20 and 13-20)
10. Ordinance accepting the final plat for the Overlook Section 2. (Ordinance 20-20)
11. Ordinance accepting the final plat for Wesley Woods Subdivision, Phase 2. (Ordinance 18-20)
12. Several ordinances for the issuance and sale of notes. (Ordinances 21-20, 23-20 and 24-20)
13. Ordinance to deed Anchor Hocking Plant 2 brownfield clean-up site to Lancaster Port Authority for marketing and sale. (Ordinance 14-20)
14. Various pay and benefit ordinances. (Ordinances 1-20, 2-20, 28-20, 29-20, 30-20, 31-20, 32-20 and 33-20)
15. Ordinance to help facilitate the dissolution of the Lancaster CIC. (Ordinance 19-20)
16. Ordinance authorizing the annexation of Bowers Park into the City. (Ordinance 16-20)

17. Numerous resolutions were passed to perform infrastructure improvement projects for sanitary sewer rehabilitation and extension, street paving and improvement, gas line extensions, and facilities evaluations/improvements. (Resolutions 3-20, 14-20, 15-20, 16-20, 17-20, 26-20, 35-20, 45-20, 56-20, 60-20, 70-20, 71-20, 77-20, 79-20, 80-20, 88-20, 93-20, 94-20, 99-20, 104-20, 108-20, 118-20, 121-20, 122-20, 127-20, 128-20, 131-20, 132-20, 136-20, 137-20 and 139-20)
18. Numerous resolutions to purchase materials, supplies, equipment and vehicles for the provision of services by the City. (Resolutions 6-20, 31-20, 32-20, 34-20, 39-20, 51-20, 53-20, 60-20 and 95-20)
19. Numerous resolutions seeking grant funding from VAWA, JAG, FTA, OEPA, CDBG, NOPEC, ODOT, FTA and others to off-set use of taxpayer money to fund and operate City departments, community programs, and infrastructure costs. (Resolutions 18-20, 29-20, 40-20, 41-20, 42-20, 59-20, 67-20, 68-20, 90-20, 91-20, 102-20, 103-20, 113-20 and 138-20)
20. Resolution to auction unneeded City property by internet or otherwise. (Resolution 30-20)
21. Resolutions to participate in the State Cooperative Purchasing Program, the SourceWell Cooperative Purchasing Program f/k/a National Joint Powers Alliance (NJPA) Cooperative Purchasing Program, and the Omnia Partners Public Sector Master Intergovernmental Cooperative Purchasing Program to save costs on purchases. (Resolutions 8-20, 9-20 and 27-20)
22. Resolutions to continue operation of the Lancaster Public Transit System. (Resolutions 40-20, 41-20, 42-20 and 43-20)
23. Resolution to pursue an income tax levy for police and fire services. (Resolution 87-20)
24. Resolutions to negotiate new prosecution contracts in the Law Director and City Prosecutor's Office. (Resolutions 105-20 and 106-20)
25. Resolutions regarding annexation of land into the City. (Resolutions 48-20 and 49-20)
26. Resolution approving renewal of contract with the Fairfield County Health Department. (Resolution 135-20)
27. Resolutions approving the 2021 tax budget and City operations budget. (Resolutions 76-20 and 133-20)
28. Resolutions accepting, budgeting and appropriating CARES Act COVID-19 funding. (Resolutions 75-20, 81-20, 89-20, 119-20 and 123-20)

29. Resolution approving Enterprise Zone Agreement with Blue Label Packaging Company d/b/a One Write Company. (Resolution 117-20)
30. Resolution to accept the One Ohio MOU in regard to settlement of the State of Ohio Opioid Litigation. (Resolution 37-20)
31. Resolution to purchase utilities billing software for the Utilities Collection Department. (Resolution 58-20)
32. Resolution to negotiate and enter into a new Hauling and Disposal of Municipal Solid Wastes contract for the Sanitation Department. (Resolution 66-20)
33. Resolution to engage CBIZ to evaluate and negotiate new City health insurance coverage contract. (Resolution 62-20)
34. Resolution to adopt a revised investment policy of public funds for the City. (Resolution 85-20)
35. Resolution to negotiate and enter into a Cooperative Services Agreement with the LPA. (Resolution 86-20)

3. **Legal Opinions**

The Law Director & City Prosecutor issues oral and written legal opinions upon request of Council, City Administration, City Departments, City Boards, City Schools, and the Lancaster Port Authority. The Law Director encourages written opinions so that the City develops an archive to assist the City on complex legal issues now and in the future.

Many legal opinions were sought and issued in 2020, both oral and written, involving numerous and varied topics most extensively involving operational and situational issues brought about by the COVID-19 global pandemic and the presentation of new legal issues and implications for the City and its various departments and boards. We are happy to report the City is still operating successfully through the COVID-19 pandemic with little to no interruption of services to the community while maintaining the health and safety of City personnel and citizens.

B. ADMINISTRATION

1. Contact with Administration

The Law Director & City Prosecutor and his staff provided legal services to the Mayor, Service-Safety Director, Engineer, Auditor, Treasurer, Income Tax Commissioner, and all department heads upon request. Our office also provided legal services to the Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Historic Lancaster Commission, City Council, Lancaster Port Authority, and the Lancaster City Schools on a broad range of legal issues. The Law Director & City Prosecutor's Office meets regularly with City Administration to assist in the handling of day-to-day operations of the City.

2. Outside Counsel

a. Bond and Tax Counsel – Squire, Patton & Boggs

The City utilizes the bond counsel expertise of Attorney Allison Binkley and the tax law expertise of Attorney Michael Cullers on an as-needed basis.

b. Labor Counsel – Fishel, Downey, Albrecht & Riepenhoff, LLP

The City partners with outside counsel to handle the labor negotiations and labor contract disputes for the City. The Law Director & City Prosecutor's Office continues to consult and advise City departments and City Administration on daily labor issues, i.e. payroll, status of contracts, layoffs, benefits, and family leave.

The City utilizes Attorney Marc Fishel for assistance and expertise on questions and procedures involving employment and labor issues.

c. Construction Law Counsel – Bricker & Eckler

Bricker & Eckler are retained to work on all aspects of City construction law issues on an as-needed basis. In particular, Attorneys Mark Evans, Jeff McSherry, Doug Shevelow, and Jack Rosati in Bricker's construction law division have provided construction law expertise to the City.

d. Energy Counsel – Bricker & Eckler

This firm is retained to provide special energy counsel for the re-negotiation of the Lancaster Port Authority pre-pay gas transaction with the expertise of Attorneys Glenn Krassen and Caleb Bell. The pre-pay gas transaction provides gas for Lancaster Municipal Gas customers and revenue to the Lancaster Port Authority to pursue economic development activities beneficial to the City.

- e. Workers Compensation Counsel – Fishel, Downey, Albrecht & Riepenhoff, LLP

Attorney Dave Riepenhoff has been retained to represent and defend the City of Lancaster in Bureau of Workers' Compensation cases.

- f. Special Prosecutor – Various

Special Prosecutors were retained in several criminal cases/investigations in which the Law Director & City Prosecutor's Office had a conflict of interest that prevented us from investigating and prosecuting the case. In an effort to save taxpayer money, we trade special prosecution services with other jurisdictions and utilize the Ohio Attorney General's Office as needed.

- g. Insurance Carrier Appointed Outside Counsel - Various

The City's insurance carriers appoint various outside legal counsel to litigate lawsuits filed against the city in which the insurance carrier is providing coverage on the claim.

- h. Right-of-Way and Telecommunications Law – Ice Miller

The City utilizes the expertise of Attorney Chris Miller for assistance on questions and procedures involving creation, implementation, and enforcement of the City's right-of-way ordinance and other telecommunication matters.

- i. Income Tax Litigation – Frost, Brown, Todd, LLC

This firm was retained by the City to litigate the unconstitutionality of HB 5 and HB 49 involving State legislature changes to municipalities' rights to administer and collect local income tax. The firm represents numerous Ohio municipalities in this lawsuit against the State of Ohio.

The Frost, Brown, Todd attorneys handling this complex litigation are Eugene Hollins, Stephen Smith, Frank Reed, Yazan Ashrawi, and Thad Boggs.

- j. Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) - Bricker & Eckler

With the increase of economic development in the City, TIFs are one tool that can be utilized to pay for public infrastructure improvements needed for future development. Bricker and Eckler is retained to provide legal expertise in this specific and detailed area of the law and make sure the interests and finances of the City remain protected. In particular, attorneys Caleb Bell and Price Finley in Bricker's Public Finance practice group provide TIF law expertise to the City.

C. BOARD OF EDUCATION

Pursuant to Section 3313.35 of the Ohio Revised Code, the Law Director is authorized to represent the Board of Education of the Lancaster City School District. The Law Director & City Prosecutor provides advice and legal representation to the Lancaster City School District on an as needed basis.

D. LITIGATION

1. Civil Litigation

- a. Civil litigation for the City in 2020 entailed 14 active cases involving community block grant mortgage foreclosures, allegations of personal injury, allegations of federal and state law violations, declaratory relief actions, construction law claims, and constitutional law challenges. The Law Director & City Prosecutor's Office is actively litigating these cases internally and, in some cases, with the assistance of outside counsel. Due to the nature of civil litigation, additional details regarding these pending civil litigation cases is attorney/client privilege and/or work product privilege, but will be made available to City Council members for review.

2. Self-Insured Claims Adjusting Reports

- a. The City received ten insurance claims in 2020 involving vehicle, personal injury, and property damage. Of the ten claims filed, seven were denied; one was paid by the Lancaster Fire Department; and one by the Gas Department. The Law Director's Office assumed this responsibility in 2006 in order to save the City approximately \$20,000/year. The Law Director & City Prosecutor's Office, in conjunction with the City's insurance agent, investigates and reviews these claims against the City in the context of governmental immunity provided in the Ohio Revised Code. Due to the nature of these claims, additional details regarding their review and disposition is attorney/client privilege and/or work product privilege, but will be made available to City Council members for review.

E. MISCELLANEOUS AREAS OF SERVICE

1. General Services

a. Hours of Operation

Due to the relocation of the Law Director & City Prosecutor's Office in April, 2016 to the new Fairfield County Municipal Courthouse, we had to change our office hours to conform to the building's hours of operation. Our office is now open from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., Monday through Friday, and closed all Federal Holidays. Due to the nature of what we do these hours are often expanded by attorneys and staff to fulfill our professional duties and responsibilities (i.e. jury trials, City Council and City Board meetings, etc.).

b. Down Payment Recovery

The Law Director has assisted with the coordination of the Community Development Block Grant Program and assists in recovery of down payments through foreclosures and bankruptcy procedures.

c. Collections on Damage to City Property

Since 1998, the Law Director & City Prosecutor's Office has conducted collection proceedings for City departments when City property is damaged, (i.e. fire hydrants, guardrails, and electrical poles). In 2020 our office obtained judgments, collected, and/or forwarded to a private collection company \$69,657.04 in an attempt to reclaim taxpayer money. Since 1998, we have worked to recover \$571,393.90 of which we have successfully collected or are receiving payments toward \$510,148.31.

2. Additional Services

a. Zoning and Code Enforcement Work for Additional Villages

The Law Director & City Prosecutor's Office is mandated by the ORC to handle zoning and code enforcement prosecution for townships and villages in Fairfield County. This activity has increased in the last several years as more municipalities and townships adopt property maintenance and zoning codes. We are also seeing an increase in village tax collection cases.

b. Special Assessment of Code Enforcement Violations

One responsibility of the City's Code Enforcement Officer is to notify property owners of code violations. These violations are received by phone, email, or observed by the Code Enforcement Officers. Once the violation has been received the Code Enforcement Officer moves forward to notify the property owner of the need for abatement. If the abatement is not addressed in a reasonable amount of time, the Code Enforcement Officer will then have the abatement performed pursuant to City ordinances. The abatement services, performed by the company hired by the Code Enforcement Office, range from mowing and property maintenance to securing a vacant business, and/or complete demolition of a structure or structures. The Code Enforcement Office contracts with companies that correct the code violations, invoice the Code Enforcement Office for payment, and forward a copy of the invoice to the Law Director's Office for special assessment.

The Law Director & City Prosecutor's Office receives the invoice from the Code Enforcement Office and must keep an annual spreadsheet tracking property owner, parcel number, address, service, and cost of the assessment. The Law Director's Office then compiles all the information and files the special assessments annually with the County Auditor's Office on the first Monday in September pursuant to Ohio Revised Code. The County Auditor's Office then places the assessment on the real property tax duplicate and it is billed to the property owner via real estate tax. Should a property change hands, the amount assessed must be paid in full to the County Auditor's Office or the closing cannot take place. The County Auditor's Office then reports the receipt of the assessment and the City receives their portion by check. All collected funds are placed back into the General Fund.

The Law Director & City Prosecutor's Office started the real property special assessment process in 1998. On May 11, 2009, City Council passed Permanent Ordinance 9-09, approving an administrative processing fee on the real property every time abatement occurs. Total assessments since 1998 total \$668,023.86 that has been or will be reimbursed to the General Fund as referenced in the chart below. By request of the County Auditor, 2014 and future assessments are listed as combined yearly totals and not broken down by category.

There have been no increases to administrative processing fees since the inception of Permanent Ordinance 9-09. On May 1, 2018, the special assessment fee was increased by the Mayor to help cover taxpayer costs.

Code Enforcement Special Assessments Field

Year	Mowing	Demolition	Secure	Clean up	Yearly Total
1998	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 85.00	\$ 85.00
1999	\$ 240.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 240.00
2000	\$ 874.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 874.00
2001	\$ 1,380.00	\$ 6,940.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8,320.00
2002	\$ 1,628.00	\$ 3,640.00	\$ -	\$ 281.88	\$ 5,549.88
2003	\$ 2,233.00	\$ 4,744.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,977.00
2004	\$ 2,376.30	\$ 7,400.00	\$ 9,699.00	\$ 51.00	\$ 19,526.30
2005	\$ 3,848.99	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 170.00	\$ 4,018.99
2006	\$ 2,913.20	\$ -	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 1,452.00	\$ 7,865.20
2007	\$ 3,360.60	\$ -	\$ 2,857.00	\$ 480.00	\$ 6,697.60
2008	\$ 5,392.00	\$ 9,200.00	\$ 1,135.00	\$ -	\$ 15,727.00
2009	\$ 12,761.11	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,761.11
2010	\$ 27,305.00	\$ -	\$ 4,457.43	\$ -	\$ 31,762.43
2011	\$ 16,949.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 16,949.00
2012	\$ 20,055.20	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,055.20
2013	\$ 18,759.26	\$ -	\$ 268.41	\$ 2,700.00	\$ 21,727.67
2014	see total	see total	see total	see total	\$ 47,213.08
2015	see total	see total	see total	see total	\$ 43,800.00
2016	see total	see total	see total	see total	\$ 34,164.50
2017	see total	see total	see total	see total	\$ 53,916.00
2018	see total	see total	see total	see total	\$ 89,276.00
2019	see total	see total	see total	see total	\$ 155,235.90
2020	see total	see total	see total	see total	\$ 65,282.00

F. GRANTS WRITTEN AND RECEIVED BY THE LAW DIRECTOR

We are pleased to report that our VAWA grant, which funds one of our Family Violence Unit prosecutors, was granted and awarded in 2020 for \$60,000.00 bringing our total grant funding amount up to \$2,865,488.09.

PROJECT	AMOUNT	FUNDING SOURCE
Safe Routes to School I	\$ 383,000.00	SRTS Federal Money
Safe Routes to School II	\$ 345,000.00	SRTS Federal Money
Safe Routes to School I Enforcement 2013	\$ 21,840.00	SRTS Federal Money
Safe Routes to School II Enforcement 2014	\$ 24,000.00	SRTS Federal Money
Safe Routes to School Signs/Safety Equipment	\$ 62,000.00	SRTS Federal Money
Safe Routes to School I (West Sidewalks)	\$ 453,600.00	SRTS Federal Money
Safe Routes to School II (Sheridan Drive Sidewalks)	\$ 453,385.00	SRTS Federal Money
Bike Trail Phase IV	\$ 373,605.00	Clean Ohio Fund State Money
Bike Trail Phase IV	\$ 5,400.00	Columbus Foundation
Family Violence Prosecution Unit	\$ 116,349.00	JAG – ARRA Stimulus Funds
Family Violence Prosecution Unit	\$ 29,828.00	VAWA – ARRA Stimulus Funds
Bike Trail Phase IV 2013	\$ 25,000.00	PNC Foundation Grant
Bike Trail Phase IV 2013	\$ 66,500.00	Fairfield Heritage Trail
Bike Trail Phase IV 2013	\$ 19,659.50	Community Development Block Grant
Sensory Trail Connects to Bike Trail 2013/2014	\$ 10,000.00	Community Development Block Grant
VAWA 2012 (funding for 2013)	\$ 44,410.15	Federal pass through
VAWA 2013 (funding for 2014)	\$ 45,953.04	Federal pass through
VAWA 2014 (funding for 2015)	\$ 49,409.51	Federal pass through
VAWA 2015 (funding for 2016)	\$ 41,881.51	Federal pass through
VAWA 2016 (funding for 2017)	\$ 54,667.38	Federal pass through
VAWA 2017 (funding for 2018)	\$ 60,000.00	Federal pass through
VAWA 2018 (funding for 2019)	\$ 60,000.00	Federal pass through
VAWA 2019 (funding for 2020)	\$ 60,000.00	Federal pass through
VAWA 2020 (funding for 2021)	\$ 60,000.00	Federal pass through
TOTAL	\$2,865,488.09	

II. Criminal Report

A. CRIMINAL PROSECUTORIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 1901.34, the Law Director & City Prosecutor's Office is responsible for the prosecution of misdemeanor criminal cases arising in the City of Lancaster and in the unincorporated areas of the county. In 1997, we began the process of formalizing contracts for reimbursement to the City for prosecution work performed for villages in Fairfield County (i.e. Amanda, Bremen, Lithopolis, Millersport, Carroll, Sugar Grove, Rushville, West Rushville, Pleasantville, and Thurston) by negotiating one contract with the Fairfield County Commissioners. Additionally, the Law Director has negotiated prosecution contracts with the City of Pickerington and the City of Reynoldsburg due to the increased number of criminal cases being filed and prosecuted in the Fairfield County Municipal Court from those jurisdictions. Through this process, we are responsible for the prosecution of all adult misdemeanor crimes that occur in Fairfield County, Ohio. This process provides uniformity of access and expectations to Fairfield County law enforcement and the Court in the investigation and prosecution of adult misdemeanor crimes. The COVID - 19 pandemic brought changes to our criminal prosecution procedures in 2020 in many ways, but most notable was the utilization of Zoom and Citrix encrypted software to keep our prosecution efforts on track.



B. CRIMINAL STATISTICS

The Court's statistics for the Law Director & City Prosecutor's Office for 2020 represent the major use of resources of this office. Approximately 80% of the budgetary funding for the Law Director & City Prosecutor's Office is directed towards criminal prosecution. Management and prosecution of the high volume of cases takes a team approach to file management and prosecution efforts. Because of the short timeline for prosecution of misdemeanor cases (30-90 days without a time waiver), cases continue regardless of the availability of the prosecutor. Our office assigns attorneys to the dockets as needed to keep cases moving forward in the courts.

Fairfield County Municipal Court Statistics						
Year	Misdemeanor	OVI	Other Traffic	Jury Trials	Trials to Court	New Court Filings
2009	2,660	601	11,828	14	2,411	19,915
2010	2,246	751	13,448	8	2,520	21,239
2011	2,809	755	12,132	9	2,662	20,417
2012	2,246	698	12,877	17	5,485	21,239
2013	2,954	711	13,672	10	3,270	21,125
2014	2,629	686	14,583	27	3,230	21,535
2015	2,743	611	14,277	14	2,884	21,119
2016	2,956	694	13,028	15	2,725	19,932
2017	2,917	633	13,981	12	2,629	21,453
2018	2,517	532	12,347	13	2,114	19,616
2019	2,382	571	12,223	13	2,111	19,663
2020	1,782	372	8,381	3	1,182	13,539

C. FAMILY VIOLENCE UNIT

To ensure efficient and effective prosecution of domestic violence and Senate Bill 2 cases pursuant to the Fairfield County Domestic Violence Protocol, and to assure that crime victims' constitutional rights (Marsy's Law) are guaranteed, the Law Director & City Prosecutor's Office operates a Family Violence Unit. The Unit consists of two Assistant Prosecuting Attorneys and one Victim/Witness Coordinator Paralegal that focus solely on handling and prosecuting these cases, separate and apart, from the other general criminal docket offenses being prosecuted by our office. The Unit makes it possible to devote the time and attention needed to successfully prosecute these cases. We utilize a 12-month Violence Against Women (VAWA) grant to fund one Family Violence Unit Prosecutor position. Due to the unfortunate number of these types of offenses occurring in Fairfield County (1,018 in 2020) the Unit with the VAWA grant funded prosecutor is an invaluable prosecution tool within our office that we constantly rely on and cannot afford to lose. This Unit works diligently to ensure victims of crime in Fairfield County Municipal Court are heard and protected.



Victims served through the Family Violence Unit:

Statistics Family Violence Unit				
Year	DV Intakes	Stalking Intakes	Other SB2 Cases	Total Intakes/Victims Served
2008	233	18	523	774
2009	206	8	583	797
2010	197	5	491	693
2011	166	5	510	681
2012	648	3		651
2013	136	5	407	548
2014	165	18	430	613
2015	174	18	441	633
2016	200	16	484	700
2017	261	23	487	770*
2018	284	27	600	905*
2019	280	27	842	1,149*
2020	252	14	752	1,018*

*Starting in 2017 our numbers reflect the total number of victims served rather than cases filed.

D. 2020 LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING

The Law Director & City Prosecutor's Office provides free training to law enforcement in the County.

In 2020, our office conducted the following law enforcement trainings:

1. Two new Lancaster Police officer trainings on the Domestic Violence Protocol including determination of primary aggressor, protection orders, probable cause to arrest, Ohio's preferred arrest policy, and civil immunities.
2. OVI case law update training with Pickerington Police Department.

The number of trainings are down for 2020 due to COVID-19.

E. ATTORNEY TRAINING

1. Due to budget constraints and a lack of funding for paid trainings, the Law Director & City Prosecutor, Assistant Law Director & City Prosecutor, and Assistant Prosecutors all attend free CLE trainings provided by the Fairfield County Bar Association which help maintain our CLE requirements prescribed by the Ohio Supreme Court.

I am very pleased to announce that Assistant Law Director Stephanie Hall and Senior Attorney Dan Cogley received admission to the U.S. Supreme Court in 2020.

2. Additional CLE training in 2020 consisted of the following:
 - a) Ohio State Highway Patrol trainings regarding OVI, drugged drivers, and general traffic enforcement;
 - b) Ohio Animal Cruelty Investigation Workshop;
 - c) Ohio Ethics Commission trainings;
 - d) Election Day Law Primer;
 - e) Victims' Rights in Ohio Post Marcy's Law;
 - f) CARES Act Funding;
 - g) Families First Coronavirus Response Act Trainings.

F. TOWNSHIP ZONING VIOLATIONS

An area this office has seen greatly expanded is the filing of criminal violations of township zoning codes. As the townships grow, zoning enforcement has become an increasingly necessary concern. Since the office prosecutes all misdemeanor violations in the unincorporated areas of Fairfield County, this includes township zoning issues. The County Prosecutor's Office handles all other legal needs of the townships.

G. BUDGET CONSTRAINTS

The greatest challenge to the Law Director and City Prosecutor's Office in 2020 was meeting the demands of criminal and civil caseloads and city requests for legal services. We received a Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) grant to fund one Family Violence Prosecutor for 12 months. While grant opportunities are needed and helpful, our absolute reliance on them to maintain attorney staffing levels does not create stability for our prosecution efforts that continue to escalate due to the opiate crisis affecting our county and the diligent work of Fairfield County law enforcement in keeping our community safe. We appreciate and thank City Council and City Administration for their recognition, understanding, and continued efforts to stabilize the mission of our office.

III. How Did We Do Meeting our 2020 Goals?

A. MAINTAIN FAMILY VIOLENCE UNIT

We applied for and received a VAWA grant to continue funding one Family Violence Prosecutor.

B. NEGOTIATE PROSECUTION CONTRACTS

We successfully negotiated new prosecution contracts with the City of Pickerington and the City of Reynoldsburg.

C. PROVIDE MEANINGFUL AND RELEVANT TRAINING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

Please see Section II. D on page 15 regarding Law enforcement trainings provided by our office in 2020.

D. ESTABLISH A SET OF BY-LAWS FOR THE LANCASTER CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

We did not achieve this goal in 2020, but will continue to work towards completion of this goal in 2021.

E. CONTINUE TO WORK WITH LAW COMMITTEE, CITY DEPARTMENTS, AND CITY COUNCIL TO IDENTIFY AND UPDATE LANCASTER CODIFIED ORDINANCES THAT ARE OUTDATED OR IN NEED OF REVISION

We continued to make progress in 2020 and will continue our work in this regard in 2021.

F. ASSIST CITY ADMINISTRATION IN THE NEGOTIATION OF A NEW COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT WITH THE POLICE DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATION TECHNICIANS

We successfully negotiated a new CBA with CommTechs in 2020 and began negotiations with Police, Fire, and AFSCME.



IV. Milestones Achieved in 2020

1. Worked with City Council and City Administration to put a tax levy on the ballot to help fund Police and Fire services in the City that was passed by the City electorate in November.
2. Successfully negotiated real estate transactions on behalf of the City and the Lancaster Port Authority to get cleaned up Brownfield sites sold for re-utilization and to promote businesses and economic development in the City.
3. Successfully advised the City and its operations through a global pandemic due to COVID-19.
4. Oversaw the receipt of Lancaster CIC assets and liabilities by the Lancaster Port Authority with the dissolution of the Lancaster Community Improvement Cooperation that served economic development interests of the City since 1979.
5. Assisted City Administration with research and negotiation of new City health insurance.
6. Negotiated and prepared a Cooperative Services Agreement between the City and the Lancaster Port Authority in furtherance of economic development.

V. Goals for 2021

- A. MAINTAIN FAMILY VIOLENCE UNIT**
- B. NEGOTIATE NEW PROSECUTION CONTRACTS**
- C. PROVIDE MEANINGFUL AND RELEVANT TRAINING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**
- D. ESTABLISH A NEW SET OF BY-LAWS FOR THE LANCASTER CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**
- E. CONTINUE TO WORK WITH LAW COMMITTEE, CITY DEPARTMENTS, AND CITY COUNCIL TO IDENTIFY AND UPDATE LANCASTER CODIFIED ORDINANCES THAT ARE OUTDATED OR IN NEED OF REVISION**
- F. ASSIST CITY ADMINISTRATION IN THE NEGOTIATION OF NEW COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS WITH THE POLICE DEPARTMENT, FIRE DEPARTMENT, & AFSCME**
- G. REVIEW AND UPDATE LANCASTER PORT AUTHORITY BY-LAWS**
- H. PROVIDE INSIGHT, ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE REGARDING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN THE CITY**