

# **HAMILTON COUNTY, OHIO**

## **GOVERNMENT REFORM TASK FORCE**

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**Report to the Hamilton County Commission**

**September 2010**





September 3, 2010

Board of County Commissioners  
Hamilton County, Ohio

Honorable Members of the County Commission:

The Government Reform Task Force that you established herewith submits its report in accordance with the direction set forth in the resolution adopted by the Board. The Task Force worked hard to learn about the current structure of Hamilton County government and to study alternative approaches. We heard presentations from those with knowledge bearing on our assignment and carefully evaluated their testimony and the consequences of alternative approaches to governance.

We were concerned throughout about the effectiveness and efficiency of County operations, as was the Board in creating the Task Force. These were major considerations leading to the recommendations in this report. We understood that the functions of county government are set forth in state and federal law and were not our focus. Our goal was to identify reforms that would increase accountability and help taxpayers get the best bang for our buck.

The structure in use today dates from 1851 and contains many opportunities for improvement. Even so, we were impressed with and have the utmost respect for the talent and commitment of all of the elected and appointed officials who serve Hamilton County today and with whom we met.

We recommend that the County Commission implement a staged approach to reform. The first stage, which can be directly placed on the ballot by the Board, draws on the option in Chapter 302 of the Revised Code of the State of Ohio. The second stage, as described in our report, will take up the option of a more refined Charter approach.

These recommendations were developed with unanimous support by the Task Force at the conclusion of its six-month study of the current government and the options for reform. We appreciate this opportunity to be of service to Hamilton County.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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The Board of County Commissioners unanimously created the Government Reform Task Force to study the structure of Hamilton County today and the alternatives permitted under Ohio law with the charge to recommend reform that would improve the operation of the government. Task Force members worked hard during the past six months learning about the workings of Hamilton County government and studying alternatives.

The Task Force was unanimous in its conclusions. There was agreement with the premise of the Board's resolution that the current form of government (which dates from 1851 in Ohio) is antiquated and that there are opportunities for improvement.

The Task Force notes that the County has been well-served by the elected officials who currently hold office and that Hamilton County should be proud that it remains untainted by recent scandal or corruption.

Under the current structure the Board of County Commissioners has limited authority to determine policy or administrative direction for the County. Indeed, with responsibility for County administration divided between the Board and eight row officers, as well as the elected judiciary and independent boards and commissions, nobody is accountable for the performance of Hamilton County government as a whole.

There are two options for reform. One option is that the County Commission could propose to the voters that they approve the creation of a Charter Commission and elect 15 citizens to draft a Charter government. Once this is accomplished a draft Charter could then be submitted to the voters.

A second option is provided in the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) called the statutory Alternative Form of government. Under this option, the Board can obtain home rule, which it does not now have, and become the official policy body for the County, accountable for the County as a whole. In accordance with the ORC the Board can streamline many functions that are now dispersed under separate elected officials, such as finance, personnel and purchasing, resulting in savings in the cost of County operations.

The Task Force recommends a staged process to reform Hamilton County government, implementing the statutory Alternative Form immediately, then creating a Charter form within five years thereafter, drawing on the experience of the first transition.

This alternative form of government will be a moderate transition plan for Hamilton County, enabling improvements without radical change in the core way the County is structured to do its business. Under this alternative form, the Task Force recommends that this new statutory plan have a County Commission with three members elected at-large, as at present, and that it appoint a professional County Executive to operate the government. Indeed, although the Commission will be empowered to centralize key staff functions and thereby reduce costs, the existing elected row officers remain in place. Subsequently, the County can tailor further refinements in the government structure to suit local needs with a Charter.

## **INTRODUCTION**

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Hamilton County has evolved from a mostly rural community to an area that is predominantly urban and suburban in character. In 1851, the year that the present structure of county government was developed in Ohio, the population of the state was 1,980,329, which included 156,844 persons in Hamilton County. Since then, the County population has increased to 851,494.

The Board of County Commissioners determined that the changes over time have been so significant (in both the area and population served by county government as well as in the services it provides and the service delivery techniques available in the modern era), that a review of improvement opportunities would warrant the creation of a Task Force to study the structure of the government. Additionally, the County's current revenue base has been shrinking and the budget of Hamilton County, like state and local governments everywhere, is stressed by the current economic recession. Without change, Hamilton County could be at a disadvantage in addressing the challenges and opportunities of an increasingly competitive 21<sup>st</sup> century economy.

The Board of County Commissioners unanimously adopted a resolution creating the Hamilton County Government Reform Task Force (see Attachment A). Fifteen residents from Hamilton County were appointed by the Board of County Commissioners to serve as a Government Reform Task Force to examine the structure of county government. Members of the Task Force were broadly representative of Hamilton County residents and employment sectors. One of the original members subsequently resigned.

The Task Force selected James O'Reilly and Margaret Cook as Co-Chairs, and Management Partners, Incorporated, was selected to serve as facilitator for the Task Force. During six months of regular meetings the Task Force conducted an exploratory process to examine the options for restructuring and reforming County government to be more effective, efficient, and productive.

### **Task Force Charge**

The Resolution (included in full as Attachment A) adopted by the Board of County Commissioners created the Government Reform Task Force and

charged it to bring forward a report with recommendations for reform that results in a government that is:

Streamlined and narrowly tailored to work effectively and efficiently with, for and on behalf of the 49 political subdivisions; Hamilton County's immediate neighboring jurisdictions; Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana officials and federal authorities.

The County Commission was clear with its direction to the Task Force that the scope of the review includes the current Hamilton County government and excludes county judicial operations as well as the possibility of merging Hamilton County with another local government within the county. The focus was to be exclusively on the basic structure of Hamilton County government.

Specifically, members of the Task Force were charged with "making recommendations about a proposed and reformed Hamilton County government structure as permitted under the authority of Chapters 301, 302, 305, and 307 of the Ohio Revised Code and the Ohio Constitution."

## **Methodology**

To develop a common base of knowledge among members the Task Force embarked upon a process to review topical information about county government structures within the State of Ohio. The multi-faceted strategy included:

- Discussions with Hamilton County elected officials and administrators. Attachment B provides a list of individuals who provided input to the Task Force.
- Review of information pertaining to the structure of county government in Ohio and nationally by subject matter experts such as the National Association of Counties, the League of Women Voters, the County Commissioners Association of Ohio, Public Policy Reform, Hamilton County administrative staff, and others. Attachment C contains a bibliography.
- Comparative review of Ohio county government structures.
- Public input from representatives of local and state organizations.

The Task Force applied this strategy to review the current organization and functions of Hamilton County government and to assess the alternatives available to the County Commission for implementing reform to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of how county government serves its residents.

## **FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION**

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Task Force members identified filters that were used to sort through important dimensions of governance prior to advancing recommendations. The filters represent important values when evaluating the effectiveness of self-government. They are:

- Democratic Representativeness
  - All constituencies
  - Opportunity to participate
- Government Competence
  - Leadership
  - Staff Professionalism
  - Political neutrality
  - Merit selection and retention
- Accountability
  - Responsiveness to constituents and other elected leaders
  - Outcome oriented administration and operations
- Efficiency
  - Services provided in line with revenues
  - Allocation of resources in a balanced manner

The filters assisted Task Force members in sorting and prioritizing the current and desired aspects of Hamilton County government as it sorted through issues and information pertaining to the current structure and options for reform. The process used by the Task Force was deliberative and oriented toward finding a government structure that would best fit the unique qualities of Hamilton County in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



## **CURRENT HAMILTON COUNTY GOVERNMENT**

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Ohio law prescribes the current form of County governance, including the form of organization, allocation of duties and responsibilities and the powers and duties of the component entities. The original Constitution of Ohio gave very little guidance for the provision of governance for local political subdivisions; therefore in 1851 the Constitution was revised to include the creation of counties to serve as administrative units of state government. Hamilton County operates under a statutory form of government which includes three county commissioners elected at-large for four year terms of office. As an agent of the state, Hamilton County officials may administer and enforce state laws, collect taxes, assess property, record public documents, conduct elections, and issue licenses. Other primary duties of the County Commissioners include:

- Approving an annual county budget
- Establishing department budgets
- Determining tax levies and bond issues
- Appointing members of various boards and commissions
- Approving municipal annexations and incorporations
- Managing real and personal property owned by the county
- Appointing the county administrator and department directors of offices for which they have responsibility
- Implementing state regulations pertaining to physical needs of the county (sewers, zoning, etc.)
- Entering into agreements with municipalities, special districts and other counties, as needed to carry out projects or programs
- Taxing, appropriating, and purchasing
- Serving ex-officio on certain boards and commissions

The County Commissioners have created the position of County Administrator to lead the professional staff of the county administration. The County Administrator has been selected on the basis of professional merit in recent years and leads a staff also selected on the basis of merit to administer the functions that are the direct responsibility of the County Commission. The County Administrator and his/her staff also assist the Commission in discharging its other duties, notably the creation and adoption of an annual budget that includes the entirety of county government. The functions within Hamilton County government that are the administrative responsibility of the County Commission and its professional county administrator are:

- Adopt the County Budget
- Communications Center

- County Facilities
- Environmental Services
- Human Resources
- Jobs and Family Services
- Planning and Development

Appointed officials and members of boards and commissions are responsible for providing county residents with services such as parks, libraries, emergency management, family and job assistance, and hospitals/medical care facilities, in some cases.

In addition to the three Commissioners, eight other elected officials serve the residents of Hamilton County. Each elected official has executive authority with duties assigned to them under state law. Each heads a separate department of county government and operates independently from the Board of County Commissioners. They are sometimes referred to collectively as “row officers.” The following summary describes the functions of Hamilton County elected department heads or row officers.

**Auditor** - Serves as chief fiscal officer for the county; conducts regular real property appraisals; issues warrants to county treasurer for county expenses.

**Clerk of Courts** - Enters all orders, decrees and judgments; collects and distributes court costs; keeps records of court dockets and journals; issues and transfers automobile title certificates.

**Coroner** - Determines the cause of any death not clearly due to natural causes; conducts autopsies, issues death certificates, supervises the county morgue and laboratory. The coroner must be a state licensed physician for at least two years.

**Engineer** - Responsible for the county road and bridge system and is engineer for unincorporated townships. The county engineer must be a registered professional engineer and surveyor.

**Prosecuting Attorney** - Prosecutes all complaints, suits and controversies in both Common Pleas and Municipal Courts in which the state is a party; serves as legal advisor to all county officials and boards, and is the county’s chief legal officer. The prosecuting attorney must be an Ohio licensed attorney.

**Recorder** - Records deeds, mortgages, plats, powers of attorney, proceedings of annexation and municipal incorporation and liens.

**Sheriff** - Serves as the county’s chief law enforcement officer; administers county detention and correctional facilities; provides full police protection to townships which do not have their own police departments.

**Treasurer** - Collects county, local government and certain state taxes; invests county funds; disburses funds from treasury on warrant from the county auditor.

Table 1 shows the budget and staffing for Hamilton County based upon current budget accountability.

**TABLE 1: ALL FUNDS BUDGET AND STAFFING**

Department	All Funds Budget	FTE** Staffing
County Commission and Administration	\$762,966,644	1,348.28
Auditor	10,602,739	105.00
Clerk of Courts	14,186,616	219.13
Coroner	4,243,061	42.33
County Engineer	26,728,637	181.19
Prosecutor	12,726,805	181.70
Recorder	1,682,664	26.00
Sheriff	77,615,020	803.00
Treasurer	2,691,307	33.50
Court of Appeals	58,439	0
Court of Common Pleas	13,492,770	85.75
Court of Domestic Relations	3,885,637	59.00
Court Reporters	2,491,395	40.50
Juvenile Court	32,738,570	396.26
Municipal Court	9,421,148	103.36
Probate Court	3,419,524	40.00
Probation	13,147,339	180.50
Board of Elections	8,128,624	45.40
Developmental Disabilities Services	106,802,575	619.41
Emergency Management	1,641,179	9.03
Family and Children First Council	6,703,263	14.50
Law Library	997,266	7.00
Mental Health and Recovery Services	115,296,599	41.14
Multi-County Systems Agency	12,713,807	0
Public Defender	12,962,000	109.50
River City Community-Based Corrections	5,771,840	94.61
Soil and Water Conservation District	0	10.00
Veterans Service Commission	1,527,272	10.15
	<b>\$ 1,264,642,741</b>	<b>4,806.24</b>

\* The County Commission and Administration budget includes 21 county agencies overseen by the Commission, including the Metropolitan Sewer District (\$196.8M); Job and Family Services administration of federal and state funding (\$150M); property tax levies for indigent health care, senior services, the zoo, museum center and law enforcement computerization (\$71.1M); stadium debt and operating (\$57M); and countywide healthcare and workers compensation programs (\$44.7M).

\*\*FTE is full-time equivalent staffing

Budget accountability generally includes the independent ability to operate within the adopted budget, appoint officers and employees, determine the allocation of staff time between duties, determine how each assigned function is carried out, and be accountable for performance. Elected officials are accountable to the voters of Hamilton County, while appointed officials are accountable to those who appoint them.

The total all funds budget for Hamilton County is approximately \$1,265,000 with 4,800 full-time equivalent employees.

## **OPTIONS FOR REFORMING COUNTY GOVERNMENT**

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In addition to the basic statutory county government currently used by 87 of the 88 counties in the State of Ohio including Hamilton County, there are two optional forms for structuring county government. The first option is a statutory Alternative Form, the terms and characteristics of which are set forth in Chapter 302 of the Ohio Revised Code. The second option, permitted under Section 301 of the Ohio Revised Code, is to adopt a County Charter that spells out the details of the structure and operating rules for a county. Summit County has operated with a Charter since 1980, and Cuyahoga County has a new Charter that will take effect on January 1, 2011.

### **Alternative Form**

Under this statutory alternative, the Board of County Commissioners can, within the parameters of the statute, set forth a new plan of government for the County and ask the voters to approve it by majority vote. A plan submitted under this approach must specify the size of the County Commission, whether Commissioners are elected at-large or from districts, and whether the County Executive will be elected or appointed.

The Alternative Form of county government grants home rule or limited legislative powers to the county, unlike the current form. With home rule, the county board is the designated policy-making body for the county government and is given the authority to act on any matter unless specifically prohibited by state law or the Ohio Constitution. However, only taxes authorized by state law can be levied. The Alternative Form of county government does not allow for abolishment of any elected county officials.

### **County Charter**

Proposals for the adoption of a County Charter can be submitted to the voters by one of three methods:

- Resolution by the Board of County Commissioners asking the voters to approve the formation of a county charter commission. If approved, the voters will also be asked to elect 15 members of the Commission. This group will then have the responsibility to

actually write a proposed charter, which in turn will be submitted to the voters for approval.

- County commissioners may be petitioned with signatures of eight percent of the electorate to submit the question to voters about forming a county charter commission, as in Option 1.
- Or a petition with signatures of at least ten percent of the electorate may be submitted to the County Commission to submit a proposed charter to the voters for approval.

In the recent example of Cuyahoga County, a petition with a proposed Charter was submitted for placement on the ballot, and the County Commission responded by placing its own proposal to create a Charter Commission on the same ballot (the petition version won). In Ashtabula County, a petition for a new Charter was circulated this year but did not obtain enough signatures to qualify for the ballot in November.

Appendix 1 provides a comparative summary of county organization and structure for counties having adopted or considering a Charter form of government.

## **THE OHIO COMMISSION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM AND COLLABORATION**

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In 2008, the 127th General Assembly established the Ohio Commission on Local Government Reform and Collaboration (HB 562). The Commission is comprised of 15 members: three of whom were appointed by the Governor, three by the Speaker of the House, three by the President of the Senate with the remaining six members appointed by the following organizations: County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO), Ohio Library Council (OLC), Ohio Municipal League (OML), Ohio Association of Regional Councils, Ohio School Board Association (OSBA) and the Ohio Township Association (OTA).

The Commission is required to develop recommendations on ways to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of local government operations, to achieve cost savings for taxpayers and to facilitate economic development in the state. It is has been supported with state funding by the John Glenn School of Public Affairs at The Ohio State University and is charged to report to the Governor and the Legislature by September 1, 2010.

The Commission considered the organization of county government among many topics that it has examined. An extract from the draft of the Commission's report relating to Counties follows:

The Commission recommends amending current law to allow for the expansion of alternative forms of county governance. County government is operated under a government structure that the General Assembly developed approximately 150 years ago. The size of Ohio's counties and their government structure is generally attributed to the belief that no citizen of Ohio should be more than one day's horseback ride away from the county seat. This government structure, which likely made sense when it was created given the technology of the time, may no longer hold the same relevance for some counties.

The factors that drove the structure of county government have changed, the Ohio Revised Code legislates that three structures of county government are possible, two of which are used. The two utilized county structures are the statutory form of government, used by 87 of Ohio's 88 counties (soon to be 86), and the county charter form of

government, adopted by Summit County in 1980 and Cuyahoga County to be effective in 2011. There is a third alternative, a county statutory government that allows the number of county commissioners to be up to 21, allowed under Chapter 302 of the ORC. However, no county has enacted this alternative form.

To increase the options available to any particular county and its citizens, the General Assembly should amend ORC Chapter 302 to expand the forms of alternative county governmental structures that may be placed before the voters of that particular county. That chapter currently permits an alternative statutory structure (if voter ratified) of the Board of Commissioners; this recommended change could, for example, permit structural alternatives to any aspect of county governance structures. This statutory change would enable any individual county governmental structure to be reformed while avoiding the extensive restructuring associated with enacting a charter. Any proposed change to the county structure would require placement on the ballot under the provisions of current law by a majority vote of the Board of Commissioners, or through the initiative petition process. Its enactment would require approval by a majority of those voting in a county-wide election.

The State Commission remains at work even as the Hamilton County Government Reform Task Force is finalizing its recommendations to the County Board. Therefore, it appears as if the State Commission is coming to the conclusion that originally inspired the Hamilton County Commission to adopt its resolution creating the Government Reform Task Force: that the structure of county government is antiquated and that there are opportunities for improvement at the local level.

Once the State Commission has submitted its recommendations for reform, any changes must be enacted by the State Legislature and approved by the Governor before they may affect the course of action currently under consideration in Hamilton County.

## **OBSERVATIONS**

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The structure of government in Hamilton County has not been modernized or updated in anyone's lifetime. It is the same basic structure that the State of Ohio used to establish county government in 1851. Government and the society of which it was a part in those pre-Civil War days was by modern terms extraordinarily small and unsophisticated. There was no such thing as trained professionals in public service and the primary means of communication was travel by horse and buggy.

Indeed, in 1851 there was no trained professional law enforcement or fire department, public roads were largely dirt or gravel, there was no social safety net and public waste was dumped into the Ohio River. There was, of course, no way other than by hand to communicate ideas and information since the telephone and modern computer had yet to be invented. Indeed, the Western Union Telegraph Company was just formed in 1851 and it did not even have transcontinental telegraph service until ten years later. It was a different era.

In studying the current structure of Hamilton County government the Task Force obtained information from a variety of sources. Task Force members reviewed data about the services that are currently provided and about the scale of the agencies that are part of the current government including budget and staffing data. Additionally, each of the County's elected officials were invited to meet with the Task Force, to inform members about the work of the agencies for which they are responsible and to express their views about structural reform. Every member of the County Commission met with the Task Force as did every one of the elected department directors except the Prosecutor, who declined the opportunity.

The most basic observation of the Task Force is that while the Hamilton County government structure is antiquated, the residents of the county are served by elected office-holders who are competent and have the best interest of the county at heart. Hamilton County is blessed with government that has not suffered from recent scandal or corruption. Everyone involved with the government states that participants work effectively together on behalf of county residents.

In addition to having elected office-holders who work hard to do their jobs well, the county has been well-served by high quality professional management at the staff level. The County Commission has effectively relied on a professional administrator to lead the professional staff of

county agencies under the jurisdiction of the Board, and the staff positions within those agencies have been filled and managed on the basis of merit.

Nonetheless, the Task Force is of the opinion that there are opportunities for improvement, as detailed below.

- **Policy Leadership.** Although the County Commission has informally taken it upon itself to serve as the policy-making body of the county government, that is a role that is not explicitly sanctioned by state law. The independent elected department directors of the county operate independently of the Board of County Commissioners which does not have the power to set policy for the government as a whole.
- **Internal Cooperation.** Although the county has developed capacity within the government to provide some back-office services on an efficient centralized basis for the government as a whole, there is no requirement that the eight departments headed by row officers or the judiciary use those services. Purchasing, personnel, information technology, and facility management are all services that can be provided on an efficient centralized basis. While some of the separate departments not under the County Commission use centralized services, others do not. Cooperation is voluntary. To understand the extent to which centralized support services are used by individual county agencies, County Administration prepared a matrix chart. Each county department had the opportunity to review the chart to assure its accuracy. It is included in this report as Appendix 2, Matrix of Support Services.
- **Accountability.** Accountability for government performance is dispersed among the separate office-holders in Hamilton County and no one is ultimately accountable for the performance of Hamilton County government as a whole. The three County Commissioners and the eight elected department directors are separately accountable to the voters for the performance of just their part of the government. Thus, in a real sense there are nine separate county governments with separate accountability to voters plus an independent judiciary with separate electoral accountability.

The Task Force members value direct accountability to voters and believe that it is consistent with the tradition of American democracy. Yet, there is concern among Task Force members that limiting accountability for technical department operations to an up or down vote every four years is inadequate. Several of the departments headed by elected row officers have duties that are essentially ministerial in nature, requiring professional competence to execute well rather than independent judgment available to any voter.

Accountability in our representative democracy has two important and related dimensions:

- Accountability of the office-holder to the voters for government performance, and
- Accountability of office-holders and government employees who are appointed to their jobs on the basis of merit to elected officials.

The accountability chain is direct in both cases; the elected official is accountable for the work of his/her entity and the appointed official is accountable to the elected official with authority to hire and fire.

- **Efficiency.** Task Force members value efficiency and believe that every opportunity should be taken to improve efficiency and reduce the cost of government to taxpayers. Streamlining the internal operations of Hamilton County government should serve the goal of improving efficiency and should seek to reduce duplication and therefore waste. At the same time, however, Task Force members recognize that there may be a trade-off between efficiency and the other democratic values of self-government such as electoral accountability.

The Task Force examined the internal functions of county government as part of its effort to assess the opportunities for improving the efficiency of county administration. At its request, the County Administration prepared a summary matrix showing the internal services that support the entire government and which separate agency within the existing government structure use those services and which support services are separately maintained. That matrix is included as Appendix 2 to this report.

The Task Force members considered all of these factors during the course of its six month effort to develop recommendations for the Board of County Commissioners. In doing so, Task Force members came to appreciate the complexity of the enterprise and the trade-offs that occur between different values when they are applied to individual decisions about structure.



## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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During deliberations, Task Force members have sought to find an approach that will improve the ability of Hamilton County government to operate as a whole. In doing so, Task Force members recognize that the importance of the quality of the individual office-holders, something with which the county is currently blessed, is at least as important to effective governance as is the government's structure. Nonetheless, the current structure appears to be antiquated and there are opportunities for improvement.

In coming to its conclusion, Task Force members considered the three choices, as well as combinations of these choices, among which it had to choose in formulating a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners,

- Take no action.
- Propose to the voters that they create a Charter Commission to develop a Charter with a new form of County government.
- Propose to the voters that the alternative form of government presently authorized by statute be adopted for Hamilton County.

The alternative of recommending no action flies in the face of the evidence considered by the Task Force. The current form is well into its second century and both its responsibilities and the techniques for executing those responsibilities have changed radically since it was created in 1851. The opportunity to improve on this antiquated structure is simply too important to ignore and pass up.

Serious consideration was given to the option of recommending that the county take the approach of creating its own Charter. This course is attractive because it would allow the County to design a governmental structure that would be tailored specifically to the needs of Hamilton County, with terms and conditions designed locally. Moreover, this approach would bring home rule to the county government giving it some independence from lawmakers at the state level in Columbus.

In the immediate term, however, there were several drawbacks to the Charter approach. Since the existing statutory structure has been in place for so long, a change to a Charter form could be perceived as too complex to county voters to make at once. Secondly, while the Task Force could suggest governance elements that could be addressed by a Charter Commission in developing Charter language, the Board of

Commissioners can only put a measure to create such a commission on the ballot, leaving the content of a new Charter entirely up to the members of such a commission. At this point, that reality served to reinforce the perception that moving directly to a Charter form of government might be too large of a step to take initially.

In considering the many dimensions of fashioning an approach to reform to recommend, the Task Force developed a staged approach melding the idea of using Options 2 and 3 above – first the statutory alternative provided in ORC Chapter 302, followed by subsequent consideration of a Charter.

The Task Force sees the alternative form of government currently provided by statute in the Ohio Revised Code as an appropriate choice to adopt as a major first step in reform. Once this reform is in place and the county has established overall accountability for Hamilton County operations with its County Commission and Executive Officer, it will be appropriate to consider the option of a more tailored set of reforms that can be included in a county charter (discussed further below). This approach will modernize Hamilton County government and take advantage of the tools and techniques of local government best practices in 2010, while retaining the good features of an underlying statutory structure (including, importantly, the incumbent office-holders) that are known and comfortable for voters.

**Recommendation: The Board of Commissioners place a new plan of government on the ballot for voter adoption based on the alternative authorized by Chapter 302 of the Ohio Revised Code.**

With this action, voters can approve a form of government that clearly establishes accountability for the functioning of Hamilton County as a whole by lodging that responsibility in the County Commission as the official policy-making body of the government. In addition, the new plan will give the Commission and its executive the authority commensurate with that responsibility, including control of county personnel and finances.

Under the Alternative Form of government, the County Commission must adopt the basic terms of the new Hamilton County government plan to be placed on the ballot. After evaluating the alternatives, The Task Force recommends that the new plan contain the following balanced elements:

- **County Commission.** The County Commission under the new form should continue with three members elected at-large.
- **County Executive.** The plan should create the position of County Executive to be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the County Commission.

- **Accountable Departments.** The plan should create the three departments under the County Executive and Commission with duties enumerated in ORC Chapter 302: Finance, Law and Personnel Departments, and such other departments as will make the operation of the government more efficient.

This new plan for Hamilton County government is similar to the structure that voters are familiar with now. However, this plan will have the effect of creating Hamilton County governance accountability that does not now exist for the County as a whole government and establishing the basis for streamlining and modernizing its operations.

In recommending these elements of the new Hamilton County plan, the Task Force considered a number of factors in balancing the elements of the Commission, the Executive and the Departments that comprise its recommendation.

**County Commission.** ORC Chapter 302 grants home rule powers to the County Commission, along with specific enumerated powers set forth in the code (see Appendix 3). Those powers will give the new County Commission both the responsibility and the authority for the overall performance of the government.

In adopting a plan for the new structure, the current Commission must determine the size and method of election for the Commissioners. Under the alternative form of government authorized by ORC Chapter 302, the new plan may provide for a legislative body with between 3 and 21 members and affords the opportunity to have some of the members elected by district instead of under the current at-large method. The Task Force recommends continuing with a small, three member Commission selected on an at-large basis.

A small legislative body can function more easily than can a larger group. Additionally, an individual member of the County Commission plays a more significant role in the work of the Commission as a whole with fewer members.

**County Executive.** Chapter 302 of the Ohio Revised Code spells out explicit duties of a County Executive not currently applicable to Hamilton County (see Appendix 3). In formulating its new plan for Hamilton County government, the Board of County Commissioners must recommend either an elective County Executive or an appointive County Executive. The Task Force recommends the appointive County Executive plan because that approach will continue to guarantee that the county administration will be headed by a professional manager selected on the basis of established professional credentials. With an elected executive the government would be led by a partisan politician rather than by a neutral professional executive of proven professional executive competence.

It is noted that the powers and duties of the appointive executive are the same as those of the elective executive with two exceptions: the elected executive would have veto power over acts by the County Commission, which the appointive executive would not, and the elected executive has the appointing power for county employees, which is retained by the County Commission with an appointive executive. Of course, a Commission with an appointed professional executive can choose to effectively delegate its appointive power to its executive as does the County Commission under the current statutory form of government.

Hamilton County has made excellent use in recent years of a professional administrator, employing a person with professional credentials based on a nationwide competitive process. This practice has served the county well and can and should be continued under the new Hamilton County plan. We note that the statute calls for the appointed executive to be an elector of the county; we do not believe this requirement precludes the current practice of conducting a nationwide search because all a prospective appointee from outside the county need do to qualify is to register to vote prior to assuming office. The experience with recent county administrators is clear evidence that this can work.

**Accountable Departments.** The statutory alternative form gives the Board of County Commissioners the power to establish county departments under the jurisdiction of the County Executive. The departments of finance, law and personnel have specific duties enumerated in ORC Chapter 302, no doubt so as to avoid an interpretation of conflict with elected department directors who will continue to exist. This section in addition empowers the Commission to establish departments of Purchasing, Health, Public Works and Detention/Corrections or such other departments as are appropriate. Importantly, departments established by the Commission under the County Executive in the new Hamilton County form of government will be directly accountable for the work of the whole of Hamilton County government, unlike the present system where no one has overall accountability.

The power given under the Alternative Form to the County Commission to create accountable departments carries with it the expectation that the county will streamline its operations, using the new power to take advantage of streamlining opportunities to avoid duplication. The ability of the Commission and Executive to control the budget and personnel under the alternative form assures that there will not be duplication between consolidated staff departments and pre-existing row officer departments. In other words, creating these new accountable staff departments cannot risk duplication with functions previously performed by elected department heads. And, of course it should not.

The Task Force takes note of the work of the Ohio Commission on Local Government Reform. That work supports the Task Force's conclusion that there is opportunity for improvement in the structure of Hamilton County government and that the statutory Alternative Form can serve as a good next step for improvement.

It will take time to submit a ballot measure for a new Hamilton County government plan to the voters of the County and some time to implement the approach we recommend. Task Force members believe this approach is an excellent transition step to improve the operation of Hamilton County government. Once the new Hamilton County government structure has been implemented, we believe it will be appropriate for the Board of County Commissioners to consider the creation of a structure that is carefully tailored for the county by a Charter Commission. The flexibility of the Charter alternative will be attractive to county leaders and voters alike over the long term going forward.

**Recommendation: The Board of County Commissioners should act to implement a Charter within five years of implementation of the statutory Alternative Form of government recommended in this report.**

As discussed in this report, the Charter option offers the opportunity to tailor the specifics of the governmental structure to local needs. After establishing a solid structure based on home rule and centralized accountability for administration, consideration of the Charter option will be a natural transition.

We believe that these recommendations taken together are a reasonable, measured approach to keeping the best of current Hamilton County government while modernizing its structure and strengthening its efficiency and effectiveness for the years ahead.



## **ATTACHMENT A – THE RESOLUTION CREATING THE TASK FORCE**

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### **AMENDED RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A COUNTY GOVERNMENTAL REFORM TASK FORCE**

This **RESOLUTION** establishing a County Governmental Reform Task Force is adopted this 19TH day of May, 2010 at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners.

**WHEREAS**, Hamilton County Government is established under authority of Volume Three of the Ohio Revised Code and the Ohio Constitution; and

**WHEREAS**, the exact structure of county government may be altered and amended under provisions detailed in Chapter 302 of the Ohio Revised Code and the Ohio Constitution; and

**WHEREAS**, Hamilton County contains 49 separate political jurisdiction made up of 37 municipalities and 12 townships with Hamilton County government working in a collaborative manner with all 49 jurisdictions and further providing services for the direct and indirect benefit of, or managing and/or supervising services for, all 49 political subdivisions in Hamilton County; and

**WHEREAS**, Hamilton County is a mostly urban and suburban, built-out county, notwithstanding pockets of rural operations; and

**WHEREAS**, due to the practical nature of how Hamilton County has evolved over time and the kinds of issues and challenges Hamilton County faces in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that include, without limitation, the need to be able to be streamlined and narrowly tailored to work effectively and efficiently with, for and on behalf of said 49 political subdivisions; Hamilton County's immediate neighboring jurisdictions; Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana officials and federal authorities; and

**WHEREAS**, Hamilton County's revenue base of operations is shrinking due to reductions in the state of Ohio's budget; the economy and the actions of other political jurisdictions that work to reduce the availability of funding to Hamilton County; and

**WHEREAS**, it is the desire of the Hamilton County Commission to reform the structure of Hamilton County government in a manner that reflects the consensus will of the People of Hamilton County and that will position Hamilton County in such a manner as to be a more effective, efficient, productive and economical body of government and partner to others;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED** that the Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners does hereby authorize the creation of ***the Hamilton County Governmental Reform Task Force*** that shall be constituted, devised, created, formed and tasked as follows]:

1. The Task Force shall be comprised of a body of 15 individuals who shall possess such qualifications as are hereinafter set forth:
  - A. Each Member shall be an "Elector" in Hamilton County, Ohio ; and
  - B. The makeup of the task force shall reflect the diversity in Hamilton County; including political, racial gender, age, and socioeconomic diversity; and;

- C. Members selected shall represent Villages, Cities and Townships and reflect the division of urban, rural and suburban makeup of the Hamilton County; and
  - D. Members appointed shall reflect the five relative geographic areas of the county in the context of north, south, east west and central.; and
2. Such Electors shall be appointed by the Board of Hamilton County Commissioners upon Motion of the President of the Board with the advice and consent of the Board. A Unanimous Vote shall be required to appoint each Member of the Task Force; and
  3. The Members of the Task Force shall each serve at the pleasure of the Board until the work of the Task Force as hereinafter described shall be completed or until such time as the Board shall otherwise determine; and
  4. The task Force shall convene at such times and in such fashion as required by law until their work is completed and a unanimous recommendation delivered in writing and presented to the Board at the next regularly scheduled Board Staff Meeting following Labor Day, 2010; and
  5. The Task Force shall receive staff and administrative support from the Hamilton County Department of the County Commissioners and County Administration; and
  6. The Task Force shall make such recommendations about a proposed and reformed Hamilton County Governmental structure as are permitted under authority of Chapters 301, 302, 305, 307 of the Ohio Revised Code and the Ohio Constitution and any amendments thereto that may be adopted by the Ohio General Assembly at any time up to and including the final presentation of the Report and Recommendations of the Task Force; and
  7. It being anticipated that the Board of County Commissioners shall convene Public Hearings upon the recommendations of the Task Force, the Task Force shall remain an empowered body capable of reconvening at any time up to and including the final date of action by the BOCC to advance a recommendation to the ballot at either a General or Primary Election.

**ADOPTED** at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Hamilton County Board of Commissioners this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2010.

Mr. Pepper \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. Portune \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. Hartmann \_\_\_\_\_

**CERTIFICATE OF CLERK**

**IT IS HEREBY CERTIFIED** that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of a resolution adopted by the Board of County Commissioners, Hamilton County, Ohio, in session this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2010.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the official seal of the Office of County Commissioners, Hamilton County, Ohio, this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2010.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jacqueline Panioto, Clerk  
Hamilton County Commissioners  
Hamilton County, Ohio

## **ATTACHMENT B - INDIVIDUALS PROVIDING INPUT AND COMMENT TO THE GOVERNMENT REFORM TASK FORCE**

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Commissioner Todd Portune

Commissioner David Pepper

Commissioner Greg Hartmann

Dusty Rhodes, County Auditor

Simon Leis, Sheriff

Bill Brayshaw, County Engineer

Wayne Coates, County Recorder

Patricia Clancy, Clerk of Courts

Robert Goering, County Treasurer

Andrea Hatten, Administrator, Coroner's Office

League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area

Chris Finney, Coalition Opposed to Additional Spending and Taxes

Tim Burke, Chairman Hamilton County Democratic Party

Alex Triantafilou, Chairman, Hamilton County Republican Party

Dan Troy, Co-Chair, Ohio Commission on Local Government Reform and Collaboration

Jennifer Evans-Cowley, Ph.D., consultant to the Ohio Commission on Local Government  
Reform and Collaboration

Larry Long, Executive Director, County Commissioners' Association of Ohio



## **ATTACHMENT C - BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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## APPENDIX 1 - OHIO COMPARATIVE COUNTY GOVERNMENT SUMMARY

Jurisdiction	Form of Government	Executive System	Size of Legislative Body	How Legislators are Elected	Term of Office	Other Elected Officials	2009 Population Estimate
<b>Hamilton County</b>	Statutory	Appointed County Administrator	3 County Commissioners	All Commissioners elected at-large	4 year terms	Auditor, Treasurer, Recorder, Clerk of Courts, Coroner, Engineer, Prosecutor, Sheriff	855,062
<b>Summit County</b>	Charter	Elected County Executive	11 County Council members	8 Council members elected by district 3 Council members elected at-large	County Executive - 4 years; Council members - 4 years	Clerk of Courts, Engineer, Prosecutor, Sheriff, Fiscal Officer	542,405
<b>Cuyahoga County (old form – through Dec 31, 2010)</b>	Statutory	Appointed County Administrator	3 County Commissioners	All Commissioners elected at-large	4 year terms	Auditor, Treasurer, Recorder, Clerk of Courts, Coroner, Engineer, Prosecutor, Sheriff	1,275,709
<b>Cuyahoga County (effective January 2011)</b>	Charter	Elected County Executive	11 County Council members	All Council members elected by district	County Executive - 4 years; Council members - 4 years	Prosecutor	
<b>Ashtabula County (currently)</b>	Statutory	Appointed County Administrator	3 County Commissioners	All Commissioners elected at-large	4 year terms	Auditor, Clerk of Courts, Coroner, Engineer, Prosecutor, Recorder, Sheriff, Treasurer	100,767
<b>Ashtabula County (proposed Charter – did not qualify for ballot)</b>	Charter	Appointed County Executive	7 County Council members	5 County Council members elected by district 2 County Council members elected at-large	Council members - 4 years Prosecutor – 4 years	Prosecutor	

Source: Management Partners, Inc.



**APPENDIX 2 – MATRIX OF SUPPORT SERVICES**

	Human Resources	Facilities Management	Fleet Management	Mail Room	Printing Services	Email Admin.	Network Administration	Internet Service	Security	Legal Counsel	Telephone Service	Financial Management General Ledger	Risk Management, Insurance	Purchasing	Records Retention	Invest. Management
<b>Auditor</b>	Internal, County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept.	County Engineer	Clerk of Courts	Hybrid	Internal	Internal	Comm. Dept.	Hybrid; Facilities Dept.	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management	Hybrid	Hybrid	Treasurer
<b>Board of Elections</b>	Internal, County HR Dept.	Internal	County Engineer	Internal	Internal & Various Vendors	RCC	Internal	Comm. Dept.	ADT Security	Prosecutor's Office	Internal	Auditor	County Risk Management / Insurance	Internal	Internal	N/A
<b>Building and Development</b>	County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept.	Internal	Clerk of Courts	Perfect Printing/JFS Print Shop	RCC	Internal/Full Service Network	Comm. Dept.	Facilities Dept.	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management	County Purchasing	Internal, Clerk of Courts	Treasurer
<b>Clerk of Courts</b>	Internal/County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept.	Internal	Clerk of Courts	Internal	CMSNet	CMSNet	Comm. Dept.	Facilities Dept.	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management	Internal, County Purchasing	Internal	Internal
<b>Commissioners &amp; County Admin.</b>	County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept.	N/A	Clerk of Courts	JFS Print Shop and Varied Vendors	RCC	Internal	Comm. Dept.	Facilities Dept.	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management	County Purchasing	Internal, Clerk of Courts	Treasurer
<b>Communications Center</b>	County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept.	Fuller Ford	Internal	Internal & Respond Printing	RCC	Internal	Internal	Facilities Dept. & Internal. *Facilities doesn't provide security staff	Prosecutor's Office	Internal	Auditor	County Risk Management	Internal & County Purchasing	Internal	Treasurer
<b>Coroner</b>	Internal and County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept.	N/A	N/A	Negligible	RCC	LAN: internal, WAN: Comm. Dept.	Comm. Dept.	Aegis Protective Services	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management	County Purchasing	Internal	N/A
<b>County Engineer</b>	Internal with support from County HR Dept	Internal + Facilities Dept.	County Engineer + Warranty work at dealership	Clerk of Courts + Internal	Internal	RCC	Internal with support from Comm. Dept.	Comm. Dept.	Internal, Facilities Dept. only at CAB	Clemans Nelson for Personnel, Kegler, Hill Brown & Ritter for TID, Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept., Cincinnati Bell	Auditor	County Risk Management	Internal + County Purchasing	Internal	Treasurer
<b>County Facilities</b>	County HR Dept.	County Facilities Dept.	County Engineer, Sheriff, Public Works, Woody Sanders Ford, Bob Summeral, Superior Chevrolet	Clerk of Courts	JFS Print Shop, Educational Service Center, Queen City, Corporate Printing	CMSNet	Communications Dept., CMSNet	Comm. Dept.	Sheriff, Clerk of Courts, Securitas (vendor for Facilities Dept.)	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept., Sprint/Nextel (Cell Phones)	Auditor	Risk Management, Ohio Underground Storage Tank Policy, Contractors, Design Partners	County Purchasing, Internal	Clerk of Courts, Internal	N/A

	Human Resources	Facilities Management	Fleet Management	Mail Room	Printing Services	Email Admin.	Network Administration	Internet Service	Security	Legal Counsel	Telephone Service	Financial Management General Ledger	Risk Management, Insurance	Purchasing	Records Retention	Invest. Management
<b>Court of Appeals</b>	Supreme Court of Ohio	County Facilities Dept.	Not Applicable	Clerk of Courts, USPS	PJS Printing	CMSNet	CMSNet	Comm. Dept.	Facilities Dept., Clerk of Courts	Prosecutor's Office, Ohio Atty. General	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management	County Purchasing	Clerk of Courts, Court of Appeals	Treasurer
<b>Court of Common Pleas</b>	Internal	Facilities Dept.	N/A	Clerk of Courts	JFS Print Shop/ Prograde	CMSNet	CMSNet	Comm. Dept.	Facilities Dept.	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management	County Purchasing	Internal	Treasurer
<b>Court of Domestic Relations</b>	County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept.	N/A	Clerk of Courts, Internal	Various Vendors	CMSNet (Conexio)	CMSNet (Conexio)	Comm. Dept.	Sheriff; Facilities Dept.	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management	County Purchasing	Internal, Clerk's Office	N/A
<b>Court Reporters</b>	County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept.	NA	Clerk of Courts	Internal	Comm. Dept.	CMSNet (Conexio)	Comm. Dept.	Sheriff; Facilities Dept.	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	NA	County Purchasing	Internal	Treasurer
<b>Emergency Management</b>	Internal, County HR Dept.	City of Cincinnati	Fuller Ford	Internal	PIP Printing	RCC	Internal & James Wasinger, Consultant	RCC	Internal & James Wasinger, Consultant	Prosecutor's Office	RCC	Auditor	County Risk Management	County Purchasing	Internal	Treasurer
<b>Environmental Services</b>	County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept.	County Engineer	Internal	Multiple - Best quoted price	RCC	Internal and Communications Dept.	Comm. Dept.	Facilities Dept.	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management	County Purchasing	Internal	Treasurer
<b>Human Resources</b>	County HR Dept.	County Facilities Dept.	N/A	Clerk of Courts	JFS Print Shop/City of Cincinnati (price depending), Engineer	RCC	Communications Dept. / Administration / Internal / Jim Wasinger Consulting	Comm. Dept.	County Facilities Department	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management	County Purchasing, Internal	Internal	N/A
<b>Job and Family Services</b>	County HR Dept.	County Facilities Dept.	County Engineer	Internal	JFS Print Shop	Internal	Internal	Comm. Dept.	Sheriff; Securitas	Prosecutor's Office	Internal	Auditor	County Risk Management	County Purchasing	Internal	Treasurer
<b>Juvenile Court</b>	Internal, County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept./Internal/Engineer	Facilities Dept.	Clerk of Courts	Internal	Comm. Dept.	CMSNet (Conexio)	Comm. Dept.	Internal/Sheriff; Facilities Dept.	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management	County Purchasing	Internal	Treasurer
<b>Municipal Court</b>	Internal, County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept.	n/a	Clerk of Courts	Prograde	CMSNet	CMSNet	Comm. Dept.	Sheriff; Facilities Dept.	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management / Insurance	Internal	Internal	Treasurer

	Human Resources	Facilities Management	Fleet Management	Mail Room	Printing Services	Email Admin.	Network Administration	Internet Service	Security	Legal Counsel	Telephone Service	Financial Management General Ledger	Risk Management, Insurance	Purchasing	Records Retention	Invest. Management
<b>Probate Court</b>	Internal, County HR Dept. for Benefits/Worker's Comp Only	Facilities Dept. & Internal	Internal	Clerk of Courts	Internal, PJS, Heskamp	CMSNet (Conexio)	CMSNet (Conexio)	Comm. Dept.	Clerk of Courts, Facilities Dept. after hours agent	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept., Cincinnati Bell	Auditor	County Risk Management, Energy Insurance aka AAA	County Purchasing, Internal	Internal, Cintas, Clerk of Courts	Treasurer, Internal
<b>Probation</b>	Internal and County HR Dept.	Internal and Facilities Dept.	Internal, Facilities Dept., and County Engineer	Internal and Clerk of Courts	JFS Print Shop and Varied Vendors	Internal and CMSNet	Internal and CMSNet	Comm. Dept.	County Facilities and Sheriff	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept., Cincinnati Bell	Auditor, Internal	County Risk Management	Internal, County Purchasing	Internal, County Clerk of Courts	N/A
<b>Prosecutor</b>	County HR Dept., Internal	Facilities Dept.	County Engineer	Clerk of Courts	PrintMgmt thru BOCC contract	Internal	Internal & CMSNet	Comm. Dept.	Clerk of Courts, Facilities Dept.	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management	County Purchasing	Internal	County Public Depository for Special Funds
<b>Public Defender</b>	County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept.	Enterprise Car Rental for Court Ordered Visitations	Clerk of Courts	Pro Grade	CMSNet	CMSNet	Comm. Dept.	Clerk of Courts; Facilities Dept.	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management	County Purchasing	Internal	Treasurer
<b>Recorder</b>	County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept.	NONE	Clerk of Courts	PEERLESS PRINTING	RCC	Comm. Dept.	Comm. Dept.	Facilities Dept.	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management	County Purchasing & Internal	Union Central Life Insurance Company	Treasurer
<b>Sheriff</b>	County HR Dept.	Internal, Facilities Dept.	Internal or Dealer	Clerk of Courts	JFS Print Shop, Ink Spot	Internal	Internal, Comm. Dept.	Internal, Communications Dept.	Internal	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor, Internal	County Risk Management	County Purchasing, Internal	Internal	Treasurer, Internal
<b>Treasurer</b>	Internal, County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept.	Bob Summeral	Clerk of Courts	JFS Print Shop, Kinkos	RCC	Comm. Dept.	Comm. Dept.	Facilities Dept.	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management	Internal	Internal	Treasurer
<b>Veterans Service Commission</b>	County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept.	N/A	Clerk of Courts	Alliance Printing	RCC	RCC	Comm. Dept.	Clerk of Courts; Facilities Dept.	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management	County Purchasing	Clerk - County's Policy	N/A
<b>Hamilton County Family &amp; Children First Council</b>	County HR Dept., Internal	N/A	N/A	Internal	Hamilton County Educational Center, JFS Print Shop	RCC	Comm. Dept. and Internal	Comm. Dept.	N/A	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	County Risk Management	County Purchasing	Internal	Treasurer
<b>Mental Health Service Recovery Board</b>	ODAS/Internal, County HR Dept. for Benefits/Worker's Comp Only	Excel Development Corporation	N/A	N/A	As Needed by Bid	Internal	Comm. Dept./ Internal	Comm. Dept.	ADT	Prosecutor's Office	Comm. Dept.	Auditor	Internal	Internal	Internal	Treasurer

	Human Resources	Facilities Management	Fleet Management	Mail Room	Printing Services	Email Admin.	Network Administration	Internet Service	Security	Legal Counsel	Telephone Service	Financial Management General Ledger	Risk Management, Insurance	Purchasing	Records Retention	Invest. Management
<b>Developmental Disability Services</b>	Internal, County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept., Internal	County Engineer	Internal	K.P.B.	Internal	Internal	Comm. Dept.	Sonitrol	Prosecutor's Office	Internal/CBL D	Auditor, Internal	County Risk Management, Internal	County Purchasing, Internal	Internal	Treasurer, Southwest Ohio Council of Gov.
<b>Metropolitan Sewer District</b>	City of Cincinnati, County HR Dept.	City, County Facilities Department Note: Facilities does not provide any services to MSD	City, Fleet Serv.	MSD Internal	MSD Internal	RCC	RCC	RCC	MSD Internal	City and Prosecutor's Office	RCC, Comm. Dept.	City, Finance	City, County Risk Management	City, County Purchasing	MSD Internal	County Administration
<b>CLEAR</b>	City of Cincinnati & Hamilton County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept.	N/A	Kinley Express	City of Cincinnati - Printing Services	RCC	RCC	RCC	Facilities Dept.	Levy Fund: Prosecutor's Office Operations: City of Cincinnati Law Dept.	RCC	Levy Fund: Auditor Operations: RCC	City of Cincinnati - Risk Management	City of Cincinnati - Purchasing	Internal	Treasurer
<b>CAGIS</b>	City of Cincinnati, County HR Dept.	Facilities Dept.	City of Cincinnati Fleet Services	City of Cincinnati	City of Cincinnati	RCC	Comm. Dept., Internal, RCC	Comm. Dept., RCC	Facilities Dept.	Prosecutor's Office and City of Cincinnati Law Office	RCC	Internal and RCC	City of Cincinnati Risk Management	City of Cincinnati Purchasing	Internal	City of Cincinnati

## **APPENDIX 3 – POWERS OF COUNTY COMMISSION AND EXECUTIVE UNDER ORC CHAPTER 302**

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### **302.12 Board to be policy-determining body - powers and duties.**

The board of county commissioners is the policy-determining body of the county. Except as otherwise provided by sections [302.01](#) to [302.24](#), inclusive, of the Revised Code, it has all the powers and duties vested by law in boards of county commissioners. All powers and duties which may be vested by law in counties or in county officers or agencies, or which may be transferred to the county by action of a township or municipality under authority of Section 1 of Article X, Ohio Constitution, and which are not assigned by law to any department, office, or body existing under the alternative form of government in force, shall be exercised or performed by the board or by the department, office, or body designated by resolution of the board.

Effective Date: 01-23-1963

### **302.13 Specific powers of board.**

Pursuant to and in conformity with the Constitution of Ohio and without limiting the powers and duties otherwise vested in the board of county commissioners, the board may:

- (A) Establish a department of finance, a department of human services, a department of health which shall exercise the powers and perform the duties of the general health district according to policies established by the board of county commissioners notwithstanding Chapter 3709. of the Revised Code, a purchasing department, a department of public works, a department of law, a department of personnel, a department of detention and correction, a department of water and sewers, and such other departments, divisions, and sections under the supervision of the county executive, as it determines to be necessary for the efficient administration of the county's business, and may provide for the merger of such departments, divisions, and sections;
- (B) Determine the compensation of appointive heads of departments and divisions under the supervision of the board of county commissioners and adopt by resolution a classification plan and schedule fixing the rates of compensation of all classes and grades in the county service. Such schedule shall provide uniform compensation for like service, and may establish minimum and maximum rates for any grade of position within which the compensation shall be fixed by the appointing authority.
- (C) Determine what officers and employees shall file bond, and fix the amount and form thereof and approve the surety of the bond given;
- (D) Provide for the borrowing of money in anticipation of the collection of taxes and revenues for the current fiscal year;
- (E) Acquire, construct, maintain, administer, rent, and lease property including buildings and other public improvements as provided by law;
- (F) Cooperate or join by contract pursuant to section [302.21](#) of the Revised Code with any city, county, state, or political subdivision or agency thereof, or with the United States or any agency thereof, for the planning, development, construction, acquisition, or operation of any public improvement or facility, or for a common service; and may provide the terms upon which the county shall perform any of the services and functions of any municipality or political subdivision in the county;

- (G) Accept, in the name of the county, gifts, devises, bequests, and grants-in-aid from any person, firm, corporation, city, county, state, or political subdivision or agency thereof, or from the United States or any agency thereof;
  - (H) Request periodic or special reports by the county executive, elected officers, and administrative officers and bodies, and may require their attendance upon its meetings;
  - (I) Designate the maximum number of assistants, deputies, clerks, and other persons that may be employed in each of the offices and departments of the county;
  - (J) Authorize the county executive to employ experts and consultants in connection with the administration of the affairs of the county;
  - (K) Establish procedures governing the making of county contracts and the purchasing of county supplies and equipment by competitive bidding;
  - (L) Exercise control over expenditures by all county officials and promulgate and execute an allotment schedule allocating annual appropriations for any county government purpose by item on either a monthly or quarterly basis;
  - (M) By ordinance or resolution make any rule, or act in any matter not specifically prohibited by general law; provided that, in the case of conflict between the exercise of powers pursuant to this division and the exercise of powers by a municipality or township, the exercise of power by the municipality or township shall prevail, and further provided that the board may levy only taxes authorized by general law.
- Effective Date: 12-23-1986

### **302.17 County executive responsibilities.**

The county executive shall be responsible for the proper administration of the affairs of the county placed in his charge, and, by resolution of the board of county commissioners, may serve as the head of any county department created by the board pursuant to sections [302.01](#) to [302.24](#), inclusive, of the Revised Code, provided he has the qualifications required by law.

Effective Date: 10-16-1961

### **302.18 County executive - powers and duties.**

- (A) The county executive shall be the administrative head of the county and shall have all powers and shall perform all duties of an administrative executive nature vested in or imposed upon the board of county commissioners by general law or by agreement with any municipality or other subdivision of government of Ohio and such additional powers as are granted and imposed by the board, and the county executive shall administer the resolutions of the board of county commissioners and the laws of the state relating to or required to be enforced by the county executive's office. The county executive shall supervise the departments established pursuant to division (A) of section [302.13](#) of the Revised Code. All authority of the board of county commissioners under general law with respect to the adoption of the county budget and the submission of any matter to the electors shall be exercised by the board of county commissioners provided for under Chapter 302. of the Revised Code. Contracts between the county and other agencies of government shall be approved or authorized by the board of county commissioners.
- (B) The county executive, under the elective executive plan, shall exercise all authority of the board of county commissioners to appoint, suspend, and remove all county personnel whose appointment, suspension, and removal was a function of the board of county commissioners under general law, except for the clerk of the board of county commissioners, the clerk's

clerical assistants, and the appointments listed in division (C) of Chapter 302.18 of the Revised Code. Under the appointive executive plan, the board of county commissioners shall have the power to appoint, suspend, and remove all county personnel whose appointment, suspension, and removal was a function of the board under general law, upon the recommendations of the county executive.

(C) Appointment of officers, which by general law in sections [303.04](#), [303.13](#), [305.29](#), [306.01](#), [306.02](#), [329.01](#), [329.06](#), [5153.39](#), and [5155.03](#) of the Revised Code is required to be made by the board of county commissioners, shall be made by the county executive, under either plan, with advice and consent of the board of county commissioners. The county executive, under either plan, also shall appoint with the advice and consent of the board of county commissioners, all officers and members of boards and commissions, other than officers of a court or employees or other persons advisory to or subject to the supervision of a court or judge thereof, which by general law in sections [331.01](#), [339.02](#), [1545.02](#), [1545.03](#), [1545.04](#), and [1545.05](#) of the Revised Code are to be appointed by a judge or judges of the probate or common pleas court of the county.

(D) The county executive, under the elective executive plan, shall have the power to veto any ordinance or resolution adopted by the board of county commissioners. A veto by the county executive may apply to all or any items of an ordinance appropriating money. Certification of a veto must be made by the county executive within ten days of its adoption by the board of county commissioners, and the board of county commissioners may override the veto by a two-thirds vote of all its members. Under the elective executive plan an ordinance or resolution shall become effective upon approval by the county executive, expiration of such ten days without approval or veto, or overriding of a veto.

(E) The county executive shall promote the coordination of all county functions and for this purpose shall make an annual public report on the state of the county.

Effective Date: 10-01-1997

### **302.19 Additional duties.**

In addition to other powers and duties provided in sections [302.01](#) to [302.24](#), inclusive, of the Revised Code, the county executive shall:

- (A) Prepare and recommend to the board of county commissioners the annual tax budget and county appropriation resolution;
- (B) Keep the board advised of the financial condition and future needs of the county;
- (C) Prepare and submit to the board such measures as he deems necessary for the conduct of the county's business;
- (D) Attend meetings of the board of county commissioners and take part in the discussion of all matters before the board;
- (E) Prepare and submit to the board of county commissioners such reports on the operations of any departments, offices, and bodies under his control as may be required by the board.