

Miami Township Trustees
Minutes of August 7, 2023

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m. by Chairperson Moir, with Trustee Mucher and Trustee Hollister present.

Fire Chief Colin Altman, Deputy Chief Denny Powell, Zoning Inspector Richard Zopf (arrived during first Executive Session), and Recorder Cyndi Pauwels were in attendance.

Yellow Springs News reporter Lauren Shows and resident Jeanna GunderKline were also present.

Adoption of Minutes

Trustee Hollister **moved to adopt the minutes** of July 17, 2023, as corrected. Trustee Mucher **seconded**, and the **motion carried unanimously**.

Trustee Mucher **moved to adopt the minutes** of the special meeting held July 28, 2023, as presented. Trustee Hollister **seconded**, and the **motion carried unanimously**.

Payment of Accounts

Trustee Mucher **moved** and Trustee Hollister **seconded to pay bills** in the amount of **\$62,843.10**:

- General Fund – \$8,043.37
- Fire Fund – \$45,516.96
- EMS Billing – \$2,623.12
- Cemetery – \$1,216.31
- Road and Bridge – \$5,443.34
 - 2011 – \$2,212.4
 - 2012 – \$2,871.16
 - 2031 – \$360.14

The motion carried unanimously.

Correspondence

The Trustees received correspondence as follows:

- OTARMA 35th Anniversary
- YSPD Community Survey
- Stephanie Goff, Greene County Engineer: Road Collective Paving Update
- Steve Wirrig: Public information request
- Scott Wright: Cemetery Association meeting
- Ohio Auditor Office: re: Clifton Union Cemetery fund
- Kelli Leingang-Pitrone: Request delay of BZA hearing
- MVRPC: Age-friendly Network news
- Logical Solutions: Verify domain name
- Jen Huber/Richard Zopf: Clarifications of Zoning Resolution Chapter 18

- Marilan Moir: Inquiry re: hypothetical 80-home development
- Chris D. Fritz: RPCC Confidential Audit Report
- RJ Parker: Public information request for Miami Township Budget 2024
- R. Zopf/S. Wirrig: Multiple correspondence regarding agritourism/Current Agricultural Use Value (CAUV), temporary-use hearing of July 6, 2023
- *Grassroots*, the Ohio Township Association newsletter
- Alesia Austin: Question regarding VA burial
- ClaimLinks: ACH breakdown for June 2023
- Chris Mucher: Request for zoning information from attorney
- David Graham, Greene County Auditor: Second-half revenue

Public Comment on Agenda Items

No comments

Fire Department Report

Trustee Mucher read into the record the following **tribute to retiring Fire Chief Altman**:

This may be a sad day for us but it must be the day you've been longing for, especially as you ran into a burning house or pulled a convulsing patient from a nasty auto accident.

A week from today, the reality will be that you have left us. But, more importantly, the greater reality is the legacy that you have left.

Look around. This is the legacy you are leaving us. This is your building, your dream for more years than I can remember.

But your greatest legacy will be the Miami Township Fire/Rescue Service of today. A department that is fully staffed, highly trained and able to respond to any emergency within minutes. 24 hours of the day, 365 days of the year. Think back to July of 1994. Could anyone imagine how far we've come in such a short time. And every brick and every staff person, paid or volunteer are 100% a result of your work.

That is your legacy and we and the residents of Miami Township will never be able to thank you enough.

All those present seconded Trustee Mucher's words with a round of applause for Chief Altman. The public is invited to an **open house in his honor** on Friday, August 11, 2023, from 5-7 p.m., at the firehouse.

Trustee Moir asked for a motion to adopt **Resolution 2023-32 Reclassification of MTFR Personnel**: Firefighter/EMT Mark Murphy from part-time to volunteer (operations) and Chief Colin Altman from full-time to volunteer (general), effective August 12, 2023 (numbering corrected from agenda). Trustee Hollister so moved, and

Trustee Moir seconded. Following Trustee Mucher’s symbolic “no” vote in honor of Chief Altman, the **Resolution was adopted.**

Trustee Mucher **moved** for an **Executive Session** to “consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee.” Trustee Hollister **seconded.** The meeting recessed at 5:26 p.m., and reconvened at 5:36 p.m.

Trustee Hollister then **moved** to **appoint Deputy Chief Powell as Interim Fire Chief** beginning August 11, 2023, at 1700 hours. Trustee Mucher **seconded,** and the motion was **approved unanimously,** with congratulations all around.

At the request of Fire Chief Altman and Deputy Chief Powell, Trustee Mucher **moved** for an **Executive Session** to “consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee.” Trustee Hollister **seconded.** The meeting recessed at 5:38 p.m., and reconvened at 5:46 p.m., with **no action taken at this time.**

Deputy Chief Powell reported **32 EMS runs** and **7 fire calls** since last meeting.

He then detailed a departmental **scheduling software change** that will result in overall **improvements in scheduling and in tracking employee benefit hours.** Compilation that has been done manually will now be automated, thus reducing errors and time involved. Since this is an internal departmental budget shift under \$5,000, no Trustee vote is needed.

Trustee Mucher asked about the status of the **ongoing MTR assessment** being conducted by the Ohio Fire Chiefs Association. Chief Altman and Deputy Chief Powell reported the process has been **very positive and highly informative.** There will be an additional visit, on a date to be determined, and a formal report to the Trustees and to the public when the process is complete.

Cemetery and Road Report

No reports this week due to Mr. Gochenouer’s absence. The listed agenda items will be discussed next meeting.

Trustee Mucher shared information he gleaned at a recent conference in Dayton on cemeteries, where he presented on natural burials. Industry standard suggests that, in the interest of uniformity and a consistent appearance, the Township should handle the **design and etching of columbarium niche doors** rather than allowing the buyer to do so. This could be done through Dodd’s, with the buyer paying for the service. He then **moved** to have Miami Township provide the doors as specified, and Trustee Hollister **seconded.** After Trustee Moir noted Yellow Springs is not known for uniformity, the **motion passed unanimously.**

Fiscal Officer's Report

Resolution 2023-33 Amendment of Permanent Appropriations was presented. Trustee Mucher **moved** to adopt the Resolution as enumerated, and Trustee Moir **seconded**. Trustee Hollister noted that even though the annual budget was approved just a few weeks ago, appropriations are already being amended. Trustee Mucher commented this is probably “the first in a long line” of such amendments. The **Resolution was adopted unanimously**.

Zoning Inspector's Report

Trustee Moir presented **three revised BZA forms** she's been working on after a meeting with Mr. Zopf. Her goal is “clarity and uniformity” in the application process.

An **extended discussion** was held on the proposed forms, the BZA process itself, what the BZA is actually entitled to hear (variance, conditional use, administrative appeal, and possibly 3 other situations – to be determined), and how zoning issues should be addressed.

In particular, **agritourism** and **temporary use permits** were debated. Trustee Moir asked if providing a form for temporary use permits might encourage more residents to request permits contrary to current zoning regulations. Mr. Zopf said that because there are no specific rules for such permits, details cannot be described on a form. He added that the Zoning Commission is working on that issue, noting that “**to change the process, the Township must change the code,**” which he follows. “I don't make the decisions on a variance,” he said.

Mr. Zopf reported that at a recent Ohio Township Association training on zoning he attended, they were told a **BZA is to “listen to testimony, not solicit testimony,”** in which case all information needed must be on the forms presented to them. **See the meeting video for the complete discussion.**

Trustee Mucher said the **goal of consistent zoning rulings** is to keep the Township “out of Common Pleas Court so others don't decide for us,” noting all decisions should be “**defensible, legal, and fair.**” He suggested it was best to review possible changes and scope of BZA with legal counsel, and it was decided Trustee Moir and/or Mr. Zopf would do so.

Trustee Moir deferred a **motion and vote on the proposed BZA forms and a related BZA coordinator position** until Mr. Zopf has reviewed them and legal counsel has been obtained. Trustees Hollister and Mucher commended her efforts thus far.

Trustee Mucher asked Mr. Zopf about a **citizen inquiry** the Trustees received regarding a **pending/soon-to-be-filed permit request** for a property on US 68 that is time sensitive. Mr. Zopf stated he had responded to the citizen in question yesterday (Sunday, August 6th).

In his monthly report, Mr. Zopf noted he signed off on a **lot split on Houston Road**. The **Zoning Commission met recently**, continuing their discussions on temporary use permits and solar zoning.

A **BZA hearing has been scheduled for September 14, 2023**, on an agritourism request.

Trustee Mucher asked Mr. Zopf if he would be attending a **Greene County Regional Planning & Coordinating Commission meeting on agritourism**. Mr. Zopf said yes, adding he needed to confirm the date. He also recommends an 8-week training session that is offered for zoning officials.

New Business

Trustee Mucher asked Trustee Hollister if he would relay a request to Home, Inc., to use the back parking lot on Friday (when Chief Altman’s open house is planned).

Trustee Moir asked about a communication received re: **electric utilities aggregation** outreach. Trustee Mucher said he would be happy to do so if they could provide addresses for the sixty or so properties who have not joined.

Old Business

Nothing to discuss at this time.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

Next meeting scheduled for **Monday, August 21, 2023**, at 5 p.m.

Chairperson _____ **Attest** _____

/clp