

Miami Township Trustees
Minutes of August 5, 2024
**see acronym glossary following minutes*

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Hollister, with Trustee Moir and Trustee Mucher present.

Fire Chief Denny Powell, Zoning Inspector Carrie Smith, Fiscal Officer Jeanna GunderKline, Road Department employee Dan Gochenouer, and Recorder Cyndi Pauwels were in attendance.

Corrie Van Ausdal and Brian Housh, representing Yellow Springs Development Corporation (YSDC); and Krista Magaw, representing Tecumseh Land Trust (TLT) were also present.

Adoption of Minutes

Trustee Mucher **moved to adopt the minutes** of July 15, 2024, as presented. Trustee Moir **seconded**, and the **motion carried unanimously**.

Trustee Mucher **moved to adopt the minutes** of the special meeting held July 29, 2024, as presented. Trustee Moir **seconded**, and the **motion carried unanimously**.

Payment of Accounts

Trustee Mucher **moved** and Trustee Moir **seconded** to **pay bills** in the amount of **\$85,136.72**:

- General Fund – \$9,506.22
- Cemetery – \$5,700.50
- Fire Fund – \$25,664. 04
- Road and Bridge – \$44,265.96
 - 2021 – \$39, 335.20
 - 2031 – \$4,930.76

The motion carried unanimously.

Correspondence

No correspondence noted

Public Comment on Agenda Items

See New Business

Fire Department Report

Chief Powell reported **36 EMS runs** and **15 fire calls** since last meeting. This included **requesting mutual aid** for 1 EMS run, and **mutual aid response** for 6 EMS runs and 2 fire calls.

Justin Turner will return to full duty by the third week of August following recovery from an injury sustained at the Hawthorne Apartments fire in August 2023.

The **rescheduled Fourth of July parade and fireworks**, rebranded as Yellow Springs Community Day on August 3, 2024, went well, with a Touch-a-Truck opportunity including a CareFlight helicopter.

Medic 82 brake repairs were completed for ~\$3,000; however, the service could not be done in-house as expected.

The MTRF **domestic water booster pump** needs service/repair. The **building generator** also needs maintenance. Chief Powell is scheduling both.

Chief Powell is waiting for the anticipated \$40,000 grant money before ordering the previously-discussed **Stryker cot replacement**.

Chief Powell has enrolled in a Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) **“Essentials of Human Relations”** course.

Chief Powell asked for approval to purchase the previously-discussed **Lifepak 35 defibrillator from Stryker** (\$52,797.20 w/\$2,500 trade-in credit) **on a 3-year-plan of \$19,166.59 annually** (\$57,499.77 total). Trustee Mucher so **moved**, and Trustee Moir **seconded**. The **motion carried unanimously**.

Cemetery and Road Report

Cemetery:

Mr. Gochenouer reported **1 burial** at Oak Grove and **1 interment of ashes** at old Glen Forest.

Paving has been completed at **Glen Forest**. **Gravel** will be laid in **Oak Grove** later this week, after rolling the path.

Brandon will be **mowing Clifton**.

Brian Housh questioned if sites in the **Prairie are sold out**. **They have not**, and ~500 sites are also available in Oak Grove.

Trustee Moir informed Mr. Gochenouer an individual will be **removing goldenrod, etc., in the Prairie** this week.

Roads:

South River Road will be **trimmed**, and, after Trustee Mucher’s inquiry, so will Grinnell Circle.

Trustee Mucher asked about what are apparently **two new residential sites** on the Cedarville side of Larkin Road. Zoning Inspector Smith confirmed they are **in the planning stages**.

Fiscal Officer's Report

US Bank checking balance: 7/31/24: \$1,078, 203.63

StarOhio investment acc balance: 6/28/24: \$1,366,615.18 (no July balance posted yet)

Ms. GunderKline reported the planned **bill payment** move is in progress. She is checking into Trustee Mucher's suggestion to **move funds into the StarOhio account in order to earn interest**.

Mr. Housh, in his capacity as Village Councilman, suggested Ms. GunderKline contact the Village Finance Director Michelle Robinson for **help with StarOhio**.

Ms. GunderKline asked about the location of the **Township's paper files**, specifically employee records and historical documents. Trustee Mucher specified their locations.

Ms. GunderKline requested the **Township website be updated** to replace Fiscal Officer information with her contact information. Trustee Moir will see to it.

Zoning Inspector's Report

Ms. Smith presented the Zoning Commission's recommendation for **new regulations re: small solar (self-generation)**. After their public hearing on July 16, 2024, they are recommending adoption of same. The Trustees scheduled their **public hearing on the matter for August 19, 2024**, after which they will adopt, reject, or modify the proposal. A notice will be placed in the *Yellow Springs News*.

Ms. Smith issued **1 permit for a deck**, and a **permit is pending for a house** (barndominium) on Clifton Road.

The Board of Zoning Appeals (**BZA**) will hold a **public hearing on August 21, 2024**, on three issues:

- 2 agritourism requests
 - Chamber of Commerce sunflower field
 - Stoney Creek Gardens classes
- A request for variance for home construction on SR 343 (one main cabin and two smaller cabins)

Although she has agreed to assist in the interim until a new Zoning Inspector is hired, Ms. Smith will be unable to attend the hearing because of her new position as Building and Zoning Manager for Clinton County. The Trustees will request their attorney attend the hearing in her stead. She also suggested they consider **contracting with Regional Planning** for zoning services in the short term.

The Trustees extended their **thanks and best wishes to Ms. Smith** on her new job.

Old Business

Corrie Van Ausdal and Brian Housh, representing Yellow Springs Development Corporation (YSDC), were present to continue the discussion held June 15 and July 1, 2024, re: their **request for funding** to support hiring a **part-time Executive Director (ED)**.

Ms. Van Ausdal recapped the previous discussions. Trustee Mucher acknowledged receipt of the financial documents he requested from YSDC, and asked for clarification on several items, along with a number of follow-up questions.

Trustee Mucher asked why funds for the ED were not taken from the community solar grant as had been suggested at an earlier meeting. Ms. Van Ausdal noted that is an option, but that the bulk of that funding is intended for the community solar project.

Mr. Housh reported the Village has approved \$40,000 in support of the hiring, and that the position has been posted. Of the **54 applicants received, 8 have been short-listed** with interviews to begin August 6th.

Extended discussion was held on Trustee Mucher's query re: individual donations, specifically in light of the "revolving loan fund" created during COVID. Ms. Van Ausdal said no ask has been made by YSDC for individual donations outside that fund. Trustee Mucher said he considered those funds "economic rescue," not the economic development that is the goal of the YSDC.

Trustee Mucher noted the documents he was provided do not list the Miami Township fire station sale and related fees as a donation, which he feels it was. That issue was reviewed again (also see previous meetings noted earlier). He also said that, in reference to any return on investment (ROI) on the community solar project, "I don't see that generating anything."

Ms. Van Ausdal and Mr. Housh apologized for not giving the Township more recognition/public credit for its support, and asked at what point all parties can be satisfied moving forward.

Trustee Mucher said he was not looking for credit, but was disappointed it didn't happen. After a short further exchange, Trustee Mucher **moved to donate \$10,000 from existing ARPA funds to support the hiring of a part-time Executive Director for YSDC**. Trustee Hollister **seconded**. Trustee Moir noted she has requested discussion on the APRA appropriation in the past, and that while it hasn't happened, given the industrial growth in nearby jurisdictions, "This is the time" to support YSDC. The **motion carried unanimously**.

New Business

Krista Magaw, volunteer (and former Executive Director) of Tecumseh Land Trust (TLT) presented a **new project they are gathering financial support for on the western edge of the Township**. She gave a brief overview of TLT's history and operations with the

green-space fund and farmland preservation, and provided a map of a property to be auctioned soon that has been on TLT's radar for many years.

The **Welch Family Farm on Dayton-Yellow Springs Road** is currently listed for auction in 3 different parcels, with 2 smaller parcels (~40 acres) up for bid on August 22. The largest parcel (~116 acres) does not have a date set at this time; that is the parcel under TLT consideration for preservation/easement. Ms. Smith noted there is an issue over ownership of a strip of land at the road for that parcel that may be delaying the auction.

Extensive discussion was held on the history of the land and why TLT, the Township, and the Village have long wanted to be sure it was preserved as farmland rather than used as residential or business development. Ms. Magaw also reviewed the multi-jurisdiction process that was undertaken for the Agraria land a few years ago. TLT is currently seeking the same type of cooperation to provide "money on the table" for the Welch farm when it does go to auction.

Trustee Mucher confirmed this would be a **commitment to funds at this time, not an actual payment**. Ms. Magaw said yes, and that jurisdictions with a local government fund for green space are a "step ahead" in these arrangements.

Given the land's location near a useable access line, Trustee Moir asked about any **flexibility of conservation easements when it comes to solar development**. She noted that the Welch farm runs adjacent to the only high voltage transmission line in the western side of the township and makes the land ideal for leasing for solar as an income source for the landowner. Trustee Moir cited the easement on the village owned Sutton farm, which prevented the village from installing solar at their public works area due to an overly strict conservation easement.

Moir also stated that the headwaters of Jacoby Creek run through the Welch farm. She referenced the \$2 million Jacoby Creek restoration project implemented on the Agraria farm immediately downstream from the Welch Farm and queried whether or not easements could be more imaginative in terms of protection and even rehabilitation of the Jacoby Creek on this land.

Ms. Magaw said there can be **"designated pockets of use" written into an easement**.

Mr. Housh reported **the Village has committed \$209,000** to the project.

Trustee Mucher noted the Township's Comprehensive Land Use Plan states the focus of Township land use is agriculture. To that end, he wants to be "fiscally responsible and preserve farmland." He feels the remaining ARPA funds would be put to good use for this project.

Trustee Moir did not feel comfortable making a decision on this project 20 minutes after it was first presented. She restated her concern over to-be-discussed appropriations of the ARPA funds and the need to “get a handle on long-term fire department outlay.”

Trustee Mucher **moved** that the **remaining ARPA funds** (~\$113,000 after the earlier-committed YSDC donation) **be committed to TLT use for the successful purchase of easements for the Welch property by December 31, 2024.** Trustee Hollister **seconded.** Trustee Moir restated her concerns, voted “No,” and **the motion carried 2-1.**

Executive Session:

Trustee Mucher **moved** for an **Executive Session** to “consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee.” Trustee Moir **seconded.** The meeting recessed at 7:17 p.m., and reconvened at 8:25 p.m.

Trustee Mucher **moved** to **increase the base salary of the MTFR Chief to \$87,000 annually.** Trustee Hollister **seconded.** The **motion carried unanimously.**

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m., with the next meeting scheduled for **Monday, August 19, 2024,** at 5 p.m.

Chairperson _____ **Attest** _____

***Acronyms:**

- MTFR: Miami Township Fire & Rescue
- MVRPC: Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission
- OTA: Ohio Township Association
- RPCC: Greene County Regional Planning & Coordinating Commission
- YSDC: Yellow Springs Development Corporation

/clp