

Miami Township Trustees
Minutes of January 4, 2024
Organizational Meeting
**see acronym glossary following minutes*

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 p.m. by Chairperson Moir. Trustee Hollister and Trustee Mucher were also present.

MTFR Chief Denny Powell, Fiscal Officer Margaret Silliman, and Recorder Cyndi Pauwels were in attendance.

Nick Bundrun from Ohio Land & Liberty Coalition and area residents Jenifer Adams, Cynthia Mucher, and Kate LeVesconte were present.

Organizational Elections

Trustee Hollister moved to appoint Fiscal Officer Silliman **Temporary Chair** for the purpose of electing the 2024 Trustee Chair; Trustee Mucher **seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Temporary Chair Silliman called for nominations. Trustee Mucher nominated **Trustee Hollister** to serve as **Trustee Chair for 2024**; Trustee Moir **seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

New Trustee Chair Hollister called for nominations for Vice-Chair. Trustee Mucher nominated **Trustee Moir** to serve as **Trustee Vice-Chair** for 2024; Trustee Hollister **seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Adoption of Minutes

Trustee Moir **moved to adopt the minutes** of December 4, 2023, as presented. Trustee Mucher seconded, and the **motion carried unanimously.**

Trustee Mucher **moved to adopt the minutes** of December 18, 2023, 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 **\$45,443.21:**

- General Fund – \$7,965.71
- Fire Fund – \$30,798.38
- Cemetery – \$720.52
- EMS Billing – \$3,000.00
- Road and Bridge – \$2,958.60
 - Gas Tax – \$2,958.60

Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment on Agenda Items

Nick Bundrun from Ohio Land & Liberty Coalition spent a few minutes asking questions about the Township's position on **solar installations**. The Trustees summarized the lengthy Kingwood process for him.

First-of-the-Year Business

Trustee Mucher **moved** to set **zoning fees** for the year 2024 as follows: \$25 general permit, \$25 agritourism permit, \$100 BZA application, and \$25 roadside work permit. Trustee Moir **seconded**, and the **motion carried unanimously**.

Trustee Mucher **moved** and Trustee Moir **seconded** to **establish mileage rate** for travel outside the township at \$.67/mile. **Motion carried unanimously**.

After a review of the committees and previous representatives, Trustee Mucher **moved** and Trustee Moir **seconded** to establish the following **Board appointments by consent of those appointed**:

- Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC): Trustee Moir
- Greene County Regional Planning (RPC): Trustee Mucher
- Clifton-Union Cemetery: Trustee Hollister
- Miami Township Cemeteries Sexton: Dan Gochenouer and Fiscal Officer Margaret Silliman
- Yellow Springs Development Corporation (YSDC): Trustee Moir and Corrie Van Ausdal
- Yellow Springs Schools Active Transportation Committee: Trustee Moir
- Glen Forest Natural Burial Committee: Trustee Moir

Motion carried unanimously.

After a brief discussion about possibly moving to Wednesday meeting nights, Trustee Moir **moved** and Trustee Mucher **seconded** to **establish the meeting schedule** for the year 2024 as follows: **first and third Mondays of each month at 5 p.m.**, unless they fall on a holiday, then meetings will be on the Wednesday following the holiday. Special Meetings will be posted on the Township's website and on the Fire Station bulletin board. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Trustee Mucher **moved** and Trustee Moir **seconded** to **set contracts** with Green Township for Clifton-Union Cemetery maintenance, and with the Village of Clifton for snow removal and street repair as requested. Each contract to be negotiated separately and as soon as possible. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Trustee Mucher **moved** and Trustee Moir **seconded** to adjourn to **Executive Session** to "consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee." **Motion carried unanimously.** Adjourned: 5:28 p.m. Session resumed: 5:35 p.m., after reviewing all personnel positions, to make the following **appointments and hourly pay adjustments**:

Trustee Mucher **moved** and Trustee Moir **seconded** to appoint Dennis Powell as Interim Fire Chief, any additional full-time or multiple part-time **Firefighter/EMT/ Paramedics** as needed, and all current volunteers on the roster. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Trustee Moir **moved** and Trustee Mucher **seconded** to appoint Daniel Gochenouer and Brandon Morris as full-time **Road Department** employees, and any part-time employees as necessary. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Trustee Mucher **moved** and Trustee Moir **seconded** to increase Brandon Morris' pay by \$1/hour. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Trustee Moir **moved** and Trustee Mucher **seconded** to appoint Denise Swinger as **Interim Zoning Inspector**, retroactive to December 4, 2023. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Trustee Moir **moved** and Trustee Mucher **seconded** to appoint Fred Legge to the **Zoning Commission** for the term effective 1/1/2024 through 12/31/2028. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Trustee Moir **moved** and Trustee Mucher **seconded** to appoint Richard Silliman to the **Board of Zoning Appeals** for the term effective 1/1/2024 through 12/31/2028. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Trustee Mucher **moved** and Trustee Moir **seconded** to establish a **2024 pay schedule for full-time employees and part-time fire/EMS** at the current rate with a 2% cost of living increase retroactive to January 2, 2024. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Trustee Mucher **moved** and Trustee Moir **seconded** to establish the **holiday schedule** for 2024 as follows:

- Martin Luther King Jr. DayJanuary 15th
- Presidents' DayFebruary 19th
- Memorial DayMay 27th
- JuneteenthJune 19th
- Independence DayJuly 4th
- Labor DaySeptember 2nd
- Indigenous Peoples' DayOctober 14th
- Veterans DayNovember 11th
- Thanksgiving DayNovember 28th
- Christmas DayDecember 25th
- New Year's DayJanuary 1, 2025

Motion carried unanimously.

Correspondence

The Trustees received:

- Fund status, revenue status, and appropriations status for January 3, 2024

- UAN (Uniform Accounting Network): New threshold – 10+ employees must file W-2 electronically
- TruGreen/Chris Mucher: Invoice error
- MVRPC: February agenda
- Sheri Tipton, USDA: December 11th attempt to obtain information re: Compliance Review and security inspection due for Miami Township
- Sheri Tipton, USDA: Forms RD-442, RD-443
- Brosius, Johnson, and Griggs, LLC (attorneys): 2024 billing rates and request for Resolution (see New Business below)

Fire Department Report

Since he has just returned from PTO, Chief Powell will email the **EMS/fire runs numbers**.

Cemetery and Road Report

Cemetery:

In Mr. Gochenouer's absence, Trustee Mucher reported he has been handling numerous inquiries and burials, noting it will be a busy January with 1 burial at Glen Forest last week, 2 next week, and possibly a third which needed to be rescheduled because of conflicting dates.

Trustee Hollister commented on a stone cavern with a steel gate at Clifton-Union Cemetery used in the past for winter storage when the ground was too frozen to accommodate burials. Trustee Mucher noted the current equipment is able to handle the permafrost layer, so that isn't an issue.

Trustee Mucher reported all new **permanent tree markers** have been installed at Oak Grove. There have been several compliments from citizens on the markers and on natural burial in general.

Roads:

In Mr. Gochenouer's absence, Trustee Mucher reported the roads are in good shape, with one area on East Hyde Road to repair. Trimming is also well done. New "No Outlet" signs have been installed/replaced at several locations, and Brandon has been busy servicing equipment.

Trustee Hollister reported he has received several complaints about the **condition of the road at the Vale mailboxes** near the covered bridge. Trustee Mucher said that is not Township responsibility, possibly the US Postal Service's.

Fiscal Officer's Report

Ms. Silliman presented the following Resolutions, with action as noted following brief discussions:

- **Resolution 2024-01 Pay Scale for Trustees and Fiscal Officer** – Trustee Mucher **moved to adopt** and Trustee Moir **seconded**. Resolution **adopted unanimously**.
- **Resolution 2024-02 Amendment of Temporary Appropriations** – Trustee Moir **moved to adopt** and Trustee Mucher **seconded**. Resolution **adopted unanimously**.
- **Resolution 2024-03 Establish Maximum Amount for Blanket Purchase Orders** (at \$150K) – Trustee Mucher **moved to adopt** and Trustee Moir **seconded**. Resolution **adopted unanimously**.

Trustee Hollister asked about the timing for **swearing in the new Fiscal Officer**, Jeanna GunderKline, since she officially takes office April 1, 2024, which is between meetings. A discussion was held re: the timing, training, and a possible stipend to cover her time until the active date. The matter will be reviewed further after checking with Ms. GunderKline.

Zoning Inspector's Report

Trustee Moir reported on the **Zoning Commission meeting held December 19, 2023**, which focused on solar regulations. Approximately 10 members of the public were in attendance for the lengthy discussion. Kate LeVesconte said the citizens are looking for more science to answer outstanding questions as to the effects solar farms have on the land. Jenifer Adams said the meeting was used as an information-gathering session for the Zoning Commission.

Trustee Moir relayed an invitation to the Trustees to attend the **January 16th Zoning Commission business meeting for introductions**. The solar discussion will resume in February.

Trustee Hollister noted that in years past, the Farm Bureau had made a presentation on the **land leases used for solar installations**. He will check to see if that information is still available.

New Business

Resolution 2024-04 Employing Township Attorneys Brosius, Johns, & Griggs, LLC on an Annual Basis for the Year 2024, with new rates noted, at a cost not to exceed \$5,000 without further approval. Trustee Mucher **moved to adopt** the Resolution and Trustee Moir **seconded**. The Resolution was **adopted unanimously**.

Resolution 2024-06 Annual Reappointment of Fire Rescue Department Personnel, as detailed. Trustee Moir **moved to adopt** the Resolution and Trustee Mucher **seconded**. The Resolution was **adopted unanimously**.

After a discussion, Trustee Mucher **moved to adopt** **Resolution 2024-05 Endorsement of the 2023 Yellow Springs Schools School Travel Plan**. Trustee Moir **seconded**, and the Resolution was **adopted unanimously**.

Old Business

Trustee Moir reported on correspondence from Attorney Lee Sloane, **recommending the Township withdraw from the pending Ohio Supreme Court cross-appeal on technical issues re: the Kingwood solar project, and continuing with the appeal on what Trustee Hollister noted is reason #6 of 8 possible reasons to reject utility-scale solar: public opposition.** Trustee Mucher so **moved**, and Trustee Moir **seconded**. The **motion passed unanimously**.

Jenifer Adams offered comments on the Kingwood controversy and thanked the Trustees for listening to the public before taking action.

Adjournment

A **motion** was made by Trustee Mucher and seconded by Trustee Moir to adjourn at 6:34 p.m. **Motion carried by acclamation.**

Next meeting scheduled for **Wednesday, January 17, 2024**, at 5 p.m., due to Martin Luther King Jr. Day on Monday.

Chairperson _____ **Attest** _____

***Acronyms:**

- MTFR: Miami Township Fire & Rescue
- MVRPC: Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission
- OTA: Ohio Township Association
- RPC: Greene County Regional Planning & Coordinating Commission
- YS CDC: Yellow Springs Community Development Corporation

/clp