

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
Minutes of Village of South Amherst
REGULAR COUNCIL
June 9, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

The council meeting was called to order by Mayor Jones at 7:00 p.m.

LORD'S PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Councilmember Michele Jeffers	P	Fiscal Officer Michelle Henke	P
Councilmember Robb Koscho	P	Records Clerk Laurie Beran	P
Councilmember Michael Sangiacomo	P	Law Director Matthew Mishak	P
Councilmember Becky Siesky	P	Utility Admin. David Valentine	P
Councilmember David Troike	P	(EA – excused absences)	
Council Pro Tempore Jeanne Maschari	P		

APPROVAL OF AGENDA June 9, 2025 Amendment: Tree on Charles St.
Councilmember Koscho moved to approve the agenda as amended. Councilmember Maschari seconded the motion.

Jeffers x Koscho x Maschari x Sangiacomo x Siesky x Troike x Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES May 27, 2025
Councilmember Siesky moved to approve the minutes as presented. Councilmember Jeffers seconded the motion.

Jeffers x Koscho x Maschari x Sangiacomo x Siesky x Troike x Motion carried.

VISITORS

Dawn Howell & James Smith 218 Charles St.; Susan Kuncel 314 Annis Rd.

Cheryl Tompot 1931 King James #202 Westlake: I am the daughter and granddaughter of the Fankhauser headstones in Section B

Cheryl Tompot, daughter and granddaughter of those buried at the Fankhauser plots in Section B of Evergreen Cemetery, has raised serious concerns about persistent and worsening flooding at the gravesites.

- Flooding Issues: Photos from April 2025 show extreme flooding that prevented her son from accessing the graves. Water levels have risen to the point of soaking into the headstones. This issue has been ongoing for years but has now reached an alarming level.
- Headstone Displacement: Multiple photos from 2022 to 2025 document the gradual shifting of both her father's and grandparents' headstones off their bases, likely due to water damage and poor grading.
- Comparative Conditions: Areas to the east and west of the site do not appear to be affected, suggesting a localized drainage or grading issue.
- Previous Repairs: Some headstones were repaired in 2022, but the problem persists and has worsened.
- Request for Action: Urging officials to prioritize this issue during the summer. She recommends regrading the area, installing or repairing French drains, and taking immediate steps to prevent further damage. She emphasized the emotional toll and the disrespect this situation represents to her family.

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MAYOR

CED Director Position

The job description for the Community Economic Director was presented to the council. Mayor Jones emphasized that without someone in this role to coordinate events, the responsibility would default on the mayor and council members. As no volunteers have come forward to take on these duties, it is being proposed that the position be offered at a rate of \$15.00 per hour, with clearly defined parameters for maximum allowable hours.

Councilmember Maschari moved to post the CED Director position as described in Exhibit A. Councilmember Sangiacomo seconded the motion.

Jeffers x Koscho x Maschari x Sangiacomo x Siesky x Troike x Motion carried.

Movie Nights at the Park

First movie is scheduled for Friday, 6/20, to be a family-oriented movie. Equipment cost will be covered by the NOPEC Community Grant. Councilmember Maschari volunteered to help with Movie Nights but is unable to do the first one. At this time the mayor did not have all the information on what had been finalized during the previous CED committee meetings. Further details to follow.

BZA Vacancy

Dominic Gentile has resigned from the board due to his impending move to Independence, Ohio effective June 17, 2025. Position to be posted.

FISCAL OFFICER

Payment Listing

The Payment Listing for 5/22 to 6/6/2025 was presented to council.

Financial Reports

The following Financial Reports for June were presented to council: Revenue Summary, Fund Summary and Appropriation Summary.

May Mayor's Court

<u>Gross Receipts</u>	<u>Ohio Reparations</u>	<u>City of Oberlin</u>	<u>Total net Receipts to SA</u>	<u>Computer Fund Clerk</u>	<u>Computer Fund Court</u>	<u>General Fund</u>
<u>\$13,825.00</u>	<u>\$2,562.50</u>	<u>\$100.50</u>	<u>\$11,162.00</u>	<u>\$750.00</u>	<u>\$225.00</u>	<u>\$10,187.00</u>

Public Hearing 2026 Tax Budget

June 23rd at 6:45 p.m.

State Audit

As your Fiscal Officer, I want to inform you that the audit for fiscal year 2021–2022 is officially closed. There was one finding noted: the required Sunshine Law training for council members. This training covers both the Public Records Act and the Open Meetings Act, which are essential for ensuring transparency and public access to government records and meetings. These laws require that public officials conduct business openly and make records accessible to the public. Elected officials are required to complete this training once per term. The State Auditor has recommended that someone be designated to ensure compliance. While I personally do not

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recommend assigning this responsibility to just one individual, I also do not want us to be non-compliant with a state-mandated requirement.

Councilmember Maschari commended the Fiscal Officer for the audit, noting that the only exception was related to council's responsibility to complete the required training. As someone who previously served as Fiscal Officer, I was always advised that it is council's duty to formally vote on a designated representative for the Sunshine Law training—and to date, that step has not been taken. It's important that we fully understand our responsibilities and how these processes are intended to work. When we overlook these details, it detracts from the excellent work that has been done on the audit overall.

The next audit (2023-24) will be focusing on fraud and the first thing that will be reviewed is the bank statements with all the cancelled checks. Every month council should be reviewing the bank statement and signing the reconciliation.

State House

In the interest of full transparency, I want to bring to your attention two significant pieces of legislation currently being considered by Ohio lawmakers that could directly impact how our village is funded.

First, House Bill 335 "Property Tax Relief Now Act" proposes eliminating *inside millage*—the portion of property taxes that local governments can collect without voter approval. For us, this means the revenue we currently receive from property taxes—excluding voter-approved levies like the fire levy—could be eliminated. While this might sound appealing to those unfamiliar with how local governments are funded ("No more property tax!"), the reality is concerning. A substantial portion of our General Fund relies on this revenue and losing it would have serious implications for our ability to provide essential services.

Second, House Bill 309 targets municipalities like ours that have the ability to collect income tax. It suggests that if additional revenue is needed, municipalities should raise income taxes—but this can only be done with voter approval. Furthermore, the bill grants County Commissioners the authority to deny inside millage to any municipality that carries over more than 30% of its General Fund annually. This could penalize fiscally responsible communities that maintain healthy reserves. An example would be that the general fund budget is \$900,000.00, you would only be allowed to carryover \$270,000.00 anything over that amount means the commissioners can say, "No you're not getting the inside millage."

These proposals represent a major shift in how local governments are expected to operate and fund services. It's critical that we stay informed and understand the potential consequences of these changes.

Clarification was made that the current fire levy and storm water assessment would not be affected by either bill because it is not considered inside millage. The inside millage is an unvoted 10 mil throughout the state. That 10 mil is divided between the state, counties, townships, villages/cities, libraries and schools. So, it would affect everything including future village projects.

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Mayor Jones requested information for the newsletter from the fiscal officer regarding these House Bills and how they could affect the Village.

RECORDS CLERK

May Construction Report

B/Z	ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	B/Z	ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION
B/Z	725 S Lake	Addition	B	6240 Russia	Re-roof
B	126 Maroy	Patio Roof	Z	391 Annis	Garage, concrete
B/Z	482 Annis	Garage	Z	107 N Lake	Fence
B	114 E Main	Re-roof	Z	601 W Main	Fence

Council Agenda 6/23

Due to the Federal holiday on June 19th, which is the Thursday prior to the next council meeting, please have agenda items entered by Wednesday the 18th at 9 a.m.

UTILITY ADMINISTRATOR

Water/Storm

Consumption Report

Presented to council.

Water Break

Two breaks and both have been repaired.

Storm Line Replacement

Fifteen-foot storm line replacement on W. Main due to an eight-foot root ball, which was causing water to back up.

Cemetery

Estimate for drainage

Presented to council an estimate to replace 1500' of drain, add 3 catch basins with grates, 5 tees for yard drains with grates for a cost of \$42,000.00. This estimate does include Section B that would go north to the flagpole. The proposed plan is to abandon the current line and relocate across the road.

Councilmember Maschari moved to approve the Cemetery drain project for \$42,000.00, Councilmember Jeffers seconded the motion.

Discussion: Fiscal Officer clarified that there would need to be an Appropriation Ordinance for the next meeting and the funds would come from the Cemetery Operating and Perpetual Funds. Councilmember Jeffers inquired if additional quotes should be considered. Councilmember Maschari felt the Digger's estimate was adequate seeing they have been doing the work at the Cemetery for over 20 years, and they know the layout.

Jeffers x Koscho x Maschari x Sangiacomo x Siesky x Troike x Motion carried.

Code Enforcement

List of violations year-to-date were presented to council.

Tree Charles St

Tree upended this morning at 3:30 a.m., whose responsibility is it to finish the cleaning up.

Mayor Jones received information from the police chief that in this type of situation the Village

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is responsible to maintain access on the road. Law Director recommended that further discussion on the subject should be held in executive session.

RESOLUTION

Resolution No. 761-25 (Emergency) Rate of Compensation Records Clerk &

Administrative Assistant

Councilmember Koscho moved to approve Resolution No. 761-25 and passed as an emergency.

Councilmember Siesky seconded the motion.

Discussion: Councilmember Troike inquired as to why this was an emergency. Fiscal Officer replied that the evaluation was to have been completed in May.

Jeffers x Koscho x Maschari x Sangiacomo x Siesky x Troike x Motion carried.

Appropriation No. 325

Councilmember Siesky moved to approve Appropriation Ordinance No. 325. Councilmember Troike seconded the motion.

Jeffers x Koscho x Maschari x Sangiacomo x Siesky x Troike x Motion carried.

Appropriation No. 326

Councilmember Koscho moved to approve Appropriation Ordinance No. 326. Councilmember Siesky seconded the motion.

Jeffers x Koscho x Maschari x Sangiacomo x Siesky x Troike x Motion carried.

MISCELLANEOUS

Officer/Staff Meetings

Is an officer meeting a public or private meeting? The law director summarized ORC 121.22 stating that the officers' meeting is not considered a public body in regard to the Open Meetings Act.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ORC 122.22 (G)(3) Litigation

Councilmember Jeffers moved to enter executive session to discuss imminent litigation in accordance with ORC 122.22 (G)(3) at 7:45. Councilmember Sangiacomo seconded the motion.

Jeffers x Koscho x Maschari x Sangiacomo x Siesky x Troike x Motion carried.

Returned to regular session at 8:25

ADJOURNMENT Time 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Fiscal Officer Michelle Henke



Mayor Scott Jones