

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**  
Minutes of Village of South Amherst  
**REGULAR COUNCIL**  
July 14, 2025

**CALL TO ORDER**

The council meeting was called to order by Mayor Jones at 7:00 p.m., commencing with the recitation of the Lord's Prayer followed by the Pledge Allegiance.

**LORD'S PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL**

|                                     |   |                                |    |
|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|----|
| Councilmember Jeffers               | P | Fiscal Officer Michelle Henke  | P  |
| Councilmember Robb Koscho           | P | Records Clerk Laurie Beran     | EA |
| 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** July 14, 2025

Councilmember Koscho moved to approve the agenda as presented/amended. Councilmember Siesky seconded the motion.

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** June 23, 2025

Councilmember Siesky moved to approve the agenda as presented. Councilmember Maschari seconded the motion.

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

**MAYOR**

Tonight's meeting will cover several topics, including a Q&A following the water presentation. The administration addressed recent concerns regarding water bills, which have gained attention on social media. To clarify the situation, the village administrator and water clerk were invited to present on the billing software and its role in ensuring accuracy and transparency. It was emphasized that there is no manipulation or misappropriation of funds; issues stem from misinformation, miscommunication, and late payments. The village continues to recover from a \$677,000.00 theft under the previous council, highlighting the need for structure and accountability. New policies and procedures are being implemented to protect public funds and services. While the village is not responsible for personal financial management, residents are urged to pay their water bills on time.

Several flags were recently removed—not to offend or diminish community pride—but to preserve their integrity, as many were damaged and neglected. A flag committee has been established, led by Kathy Hunter and Nicholas Hofecker, to oversee proper placement, maintenance, and replacement of flags moving forward.

Concerns were raised about the discouragement felt by volunteers due to negative online behavior. The administration condemned the criticism of community contributors by individuals who do not actively participate. The village is committed to building a community based on service, not slander, and will continue to move forward with positivity and purpose.

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### Minutes of Village of South Amherst

Following reports of coyote sightings, a citation was issued for dogs repeatedly found loose. The caretaker explained the dogs belonged to a family member experiencing personal difficulties. While the situation is understood, further citations will be issued if the issue persists. The village is exploring proactive measures to ensure public safety.

The administration acknowledged that change can be difficult but emphasized the importance of building pride and accountability. Efforts are underway to prevent future issues and foster a stronger community. Appreciation was expressed to those who continue to contribute positively despite challenges. Attendees were invited to speak, with a three-minute limit per person. Water-related questions were requested to be held for the Q&A session following the presentation.

#### **VISITORS**

Penny Becker 405 Sunnyside Dr., Kayla Burgess 114 Vivian St. Robert Dittmer 5807 Russia Rd. SAFD Assistant Chief Ron Zaleha

Chris Gallagher 390 Annis Rd – address correction to construction report.

Joe Cole 216 Charles St - expressed frustration over a tree located in the village right-of-way that had been visibly leaning and deteriorating for an extended period. Despite repeated reports and safety concerns raised by the resident, no action was taken by the village. The tree eventually fell at approximately 3:55 AM on a Monday. Mr. Cole stated that he had warned the village multiple times about the tree's condition, noting it was hollow and posed a danger to pedestrians, children, and vehicles. Mr. Cole objected to being held financially responsible for the tree's removal, asserting that the tree was on village property and therefore the village's responsibility. They requested reimbursement for the cost incurred and sought clarification on property boundaries and municipal obligations regarding tree maintenance. The resident also expressed dissatisfaction with the communication from village officials and requested a formal response from the council. Mr. Cole will be calling Mayor Jones after work on July 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss the issue further.

#### Hybrid Wolf Concerns

Amy Young 108 Vivian - Raised concerns about loose dogs in the neighborhood, some of which have reportedly killed 13 chickens and pose a threat to small pets and children. The resident owns two small dogs and fears for their safety. The dogs have been seen roaming between Charles Street and Vivian, with some wearing collars and others not. Two dogs were kenneled at a residence, but the identities and ownership of the remaining dogs are unknown. Ms. Young questioned whether the dogs are hybrids (dog-wolf mixes) and expressed frustration over the lack of resolution. The police and village officials are actively investigating, with open citations issued. Residents were encouraged to share photos and timestamp footage from security or trail cameras to help track the animals' movements and build a case. The resident asked at what point the situation would be considered an emergency, emphasizing the risk of an attack on a child or pet.

Officials acknowledged the concern and stated that documentation is ongoing, and once ownership is confirmed, appropriate action will be taken. The dog warden has been contacted but indicated limited ability to intervene. The village will continue monitoring and encourage community cooperation in reporting sightings and sharing evidence.

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Desiree Jones S. Lake St – Commented that the dogs in question are loose between the times of 7- a.m. and 8-10 p.m. daily. As reported the dogs had killed a number of chickens, but the major concern is her children ranging from 2 – 10 years old.

Steve Wells 203 Charles St. – This morning, three large dogs—two larger than a German Shepherd and without collars—were seen roaming near Charles and Vivian Streets. Last week, the resident's wife was unable to leave for work because the dogs were positioned between her and her vehicle. While residents understand that discharging firearms within the village limits is prohibited, the ongoing presence of these dogs is creating a potentially dangerous situation. If this continues, someone may feel compelled to protect themselves, which could result in the dogs being harmed.

Katie Sanders 110 Vivan St. – The 3 dogs in questions have charged at my husband and are dogs, fortunately they were inside our fenced backyard.

Andy Nichols 207 Charles St. – I'm growing increasingly concerned for my own dog, as these unfamiliar dogs have been entering my property and sniffing around the patio area.

*The administrator asked for video and pictures to be time-stamped and emailed to him, so that evidence may be compiled. The residents gave permission for the administration to come onto their property to view the dogs. Residents that were present all agree that the dogs belong to a person on E. Elm St. seeing that they return to that area when someone whistles or calls them.*

#### Flags

Jeri Leigh Siss 107 White Birch Way - Ms. Siss expressed disappointment that the American flags were taken down. I've lived in South Amherst for nine years, and the flags have always been a source of pride and a unique part of our village's identity, especially along Route 113. I understand concerns about flags becoming torn or twisted, but I see that as a sign of use and respect, not a reason for early removal. Volunteers have long supported this tradition, often covering costs themselves and maintaining the displays without burdening the village. If the intention is to reinstall the flags later in the season, that wasn't clearly communicated. Transparency is important, and some residents were left confused. In recent years, the flags have remained up all summer, which has been well-received by the community. My request is simple: please reconsider keeping the flags up from Memorial Day through September 11th.

Tyler Hyster 510 W Main St. – Commented on his frustration with the lack of communication to the volunteers that have been placing the flags for years.

Dennis Burdue 463 Annis Rd. - Expressed concern over the early removal of the American flags, a tradition in the village for approximately 40 years. The flags were originally put up by members of the American Legion, as a tribute to veterans and a symbol of civic pride. He emphasized that the flags have historically been displayed from Memorial Day through Labor Day without issue, and their early removal this year caused disappointment among many residents, particularly veterans. The tradition has long been a point of pride for the community and urged the council to restore the flags and maintain the established display period.

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Kathy Hunter 104 Maroy Dr. – A resident, raised in a military family, shared that South Amherst was the first place she truly called home. She emphasized that the flags hold deep meaning for military families and are a source of pride for the village. She urged the council to have them replaced and continue the tradition. Ms. Hunter has volunteered to lead the Flag Committee.

Tim Moore 197 Oakdale Dr. – Expressed his concern regarding the lack of communication regarding the flags.

*The Village Administrator expressed appreciation for the volunteers who place the flags each year. Bracket replacements this year totaled \$700. While the flags are currently provided at no cost, it is uncertain how long that program will continue.*

#### No Turn On Red

Tim Moore 197 Oakdale Dr. – expressed that the sign is unnecessary due to the village's low vehicle and pedestrian traffic compared to nearby towns like Wellington and Oberlin and requested its removal.

*Mayor Jones cited that of the 400 citations written in a 3-month period there were only 15 (3.75%) for a No Turn on Red violation.*

#### Water Department Presentation - Water Utility Payments: Bill & Meter Read Processing

##### **1. Meter Reading Schedule**

- Dates: Meters are read between the 23rd and 25th of each month.
- Authority: Readings follow the guidelines set by Lorain County Rural Water, our water supplier.
- Technology Used: Meter data is automatically uploaded via radio integration into Neptune 360 Meter Software.

##### **2. Billing Process**

- Data Transfer: After meter readings are collected, they are imported into CUBIC (billing software).
- Report Generation: A monthly report is generated listing all active residential and commercial accounts and their usage for that billing cycle.
- Clerk Review: The Clerk reviews for discrepancies such as zero usage or unusually high or low readings
- Investigation of Discrepancies: If found, these are verified using Neptune 360 Live to ensure accuracy.

##### **3. Bill Distribution**

- Mailed Bills: Processed and mailed through om service provider.
- E-Billing: Accounts with paperless preferences receive bills via email on the same day as billing.

##### **4. Billing Cycle**

- Due Date: All water bills are due by the 20th of each month.
- Billing Lag: Keep in mind:
  - \* Billing is one month behind. (Ex. A bill issued on 6/24/25 covers usage period from 5/23/25 to 6/24/25. Due date for this bill would be 7/20/25.)
- Penalty Assessment: Accounts unpaid by 9:00 AM on the 21st receive a late fee penalty of 10% per Village Ordinance No. 921.08.

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**5. Disconnect Notices**

- Disconnect notices are issued following the due date for bills that are due on the 20th and after late fees have been applied.
- Disconnect notices are issued for those accounts that have a balance of more than 60 days past due.
- Notices are mailed 2 weeks before shut-off date
- *Notices Include: shut-off date, final electronic payment due date, After which, only in-person payments (cash/check at Town Hall) are accepted.*

**6. Common Billing Confusions**

Your bill may appear higher or doubled due to:

- Late Payment: If a previous bill was paid after the next billing cycle, both charges may appear.
- Returned Payments: Non-sufficient funds (NSF) and closed account returns.
- Missed Payments
- Higher usage during summer months and/or holidays.
- Leaks

**7. Returned Payment Fees**

- A fee of \$40.00 is charged for: NSF checks, payments from closed accounts, and disputed payments that are stopped by the resident.
- The original amount is added back to your account balance.

*Any questions about usage, bill amounts, payments, anything water related please reach out to us. Clerk hours summer are Tuesday thru Friday from 8-1 and the Village Administration is here Monday thru Friday from 8 to 4:30*

**VISITORS**

Rob Beckett 5803 Russia Rd. – The resident expressed concern that a nearby cell tower may be interfering with water meter readings and requested that the meter be tested. He also questioned a Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) fee on his monthly bill, stating he has never had a payment returned. The Water Clerk invited him to her office to review the charge and provide clarification.

Jennnifer Dittmer 5807 Russia Rd. – Requested that her water meter be tested.

Jed Willis 106 Kenwood St. – A former council member, currently employed part-time by the village, addressed concerns about negative discourse on social media impacting village staff. He commended current efforts to reduce water loss from over 40% to 17%, attributing past issues to decades of underinvestment in infrastructure. He emphasized the importance of supporting qualified personnel and warned that continued public accusations on social media could lead to staff resignations, negatively affecting village operations and property values. He urged the community to focus on constructive dialogue and long-term sustainability.

Tom Pelletteri 107 White Birch Way – A former BPA member explained that he supported the Usage Fee as a means to fund the installation of new waterlines.

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Grass Clippings

Robert Dittmer Russia Rd. - Inquired whether it is illegal to blow grass clippings onto the roadway. Yes, placing injurious materials on roadways is prohibited, though grass clippings are not explicitly mentioned. The resident expressed frustration that police frequently pass by individuals blowing grass into the street without taking action, noting the safety hazard it poses to motorcyclists. The matter will be brought to the attention of the Police Chief for further review.

**FISCAL OFFICER**

Payment Listing

The Payment Listing for 6/20 to 7/10/2025 was presented to council.

Financial Reports

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

June Mayor's Court Financial Report

| <u>Gross Receipts</u> | <u>Ohio<br/>Reparations</u> | <u>City of<br/>Oberlin</u> | <u>Total net<br/>Receipts to SA</u> | <u>Computer<br/>Fund Clerk</u> | <u>Computer<br/>Fund Court</u> | <u>General Fund</u> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| \$14,055.00           | \$2,682.50                  | \$106.50                   | \$11,266.00                         | \$730.00                       | \$223.00                       | \$10,313.00         |

May Bank Reconciliation

Completed and ready for signatures.

203 N Lake Septic

Issue is still under review.

**RECORDS CLERK (Fiscal Officer presented.)**

June Construction Report

| <u>B/Z</u> | <u>ADDRESS</u> | <u>DESCRIPTION</u> | <u>B/Z</u> | <u>ADDRESS</u> | <u>DESCRIPTION</u> |
|------------|----------------|--------------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|
| B          | 330 Annis      | Re-roof            | B          | 213 Erie       | Re-roof            |
| B          | 391 Annis      | Garage             | Z          | 483 Annis      | Fence              |
| B          | 115 Buckeye    | Electrical         | Z          | 305 Leonard    | Fence, concrete    |
| B          | 813 S Lake     | Windows            | Z          | 200 Annis      | New construction   |
| B/Z        | 615 W Main     | Shed               | Z          | 126 Maroy      | Concrete           |
| B/Z        | 120 W Main     | Pool               | Z          | 6281           | Fence              |
| B          | 217 Erie       | Re-roof            | Z          | 301 Fern       | Concrete           |
| B          | 315 Elm        | Re-roof            | Z          | 5801 Russia    | Concrete           |

Employee Handbook Revision

Two additions were added to Chapter III Section G Training Requirements: Fraud Training and OML New Council Seminar (New Council Members Only)

Councilmember Maschari moved to approve the revision of the Employee Handbook.

Councilmember Siesky seconded the motion.

Jeffer's x Koscho x Maschari x Sangiacomo x Siesky x Troike x

Motion carried

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Rules of Council Revision

Although the Rules of Council have been reviewed over the past few years, they have not been updated. With upcoming elections, it became necessary to ensure they reflect current council practices and use updated language.

Councilmember Koscho moved to approve the revised edition of Rules of Council.

Councilmember Jeffers seconded the motion.

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

**UTILITY ADMINISTRATOR**

**Water**

Consumption Report

Consumption Report for June was presented to council.

Complaint requests

As the administrator overseeing the water department and cemetery, I will not be responding to social media posts. If there is a legitimate concern or issue you wish to discuss, both my contact information and that of the water clerk are available on the Village website. Public funds will not be used to monitor or engage with social media activity.

Website – **Report an issue** tab.

**Storm**

Estimate S. Lake

Received two estimates for the storm drain repair on S. Lake St. at the bridge just south of village hall for \$14,200.00 and \$7,054.00.

Councilmember Troike moved to approve the storm drain repair on S. Lake St. for a cost of not to exceed \$15,000.00. Councilmember Siesky seconded the motion.

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

Estimate was received to replace 1000' of pipe not to exceed \$7,054.00 (General Fund) in the farm field that the Village owns directly behind 3 homes on W. Main adjacent to the cemetery.

Councilmember Troike moved to repair 1000' of storm pipe not to exceed \$7,100.00.

Councilmember Sangiacomo seconded the motion.

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

**Street**

Tree

5797 Russia Rd. the tree is dead and, in the right-of-way, waiting for a removal estimate.

Councilmember Troike verified that the paving project of Buckeye-Erie-Juanita and Kenwood-Charles-Vivian would begin in August.

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**DEPARTMENT**

**Fire**

Certificate of Authority

Presented to the fire department that formally grants council approval for the fire inspectors to perform fire inspections.

Certified Firefighter

Councilmember Jeffers moved to approve Thomas Campana as a Certified Firefighter.

Councilmember Koscho seconded the motion.

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

**ORDINANCE**

Ordinance No. 1840-25      An ordinance repealing existing South Amherst Codified Ordinance Chapter 181.02 Definitions and enacting new South Amherst Codified Ordinance Chapter 181.02 Definitions and declaring an emergency

Councilmember Troike moved to approve and pass as an emergency Ordinance No. 1840-25. Councilmember Siesky seconded the motion.

*Discussion: Update to terminology. During the review of the income tax section, it was noted that one part defined the reciprocity rate as 10%, while another section redundantly restated the percentage and referred back to the original definition. It was suggested that the second section should simply reference the initial definition to avoid confusion. To clarify the concept of income tax reciprocity: if a resident works outside the Village—such as in Cleveland—and owes \$300 in Village income tax, they may receive a credit of up to 10% (in this case, \$30) for taxes already withheld by their employer in the other municipality. This means the resident would only owe the remaining \$270 to South Amherst. This credit applies only if taxes are withheld by the employer in the other jurisdiction.*

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

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**Community Economic Development**

Director

Councilmember Maschari moved to approve Penny Becker as the Community Economic Development Chair. Councilmember Jeffers seconded the motion.

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

Flags

Councilmember Sangiacomo asked that the flag discussion be reopened. Councilmembers stated that they were not aware that the flags were going to be removed after the Fourth and would like to see them back up.

Councilmember Sangiacomo moved to have the flags replaced. Councilmember Troike seconded the motion.

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

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**  
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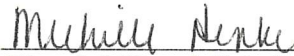
Veteran Banners are still a consideration as a joint project with the South Amherst Historical Society. The Fallen 14 would be the first consideration as phase 1 of the project.

Ward Hill

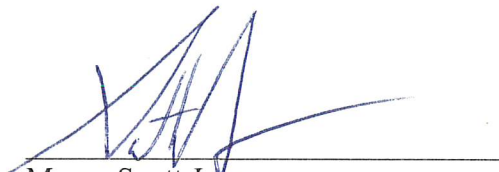
The rededication of Ward Hill in memory of Miranda Ward will take place at 6:30 p.m. on August 26<sup>th</sup>. Miranda was riding her bike down the hill to the east side of town hall and was struck and killed by a motorist. A park bench was placed on top of the hill in 2002 and has been refinished by the Service Department.

**ADJOURNMENT** 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



\_\_\_\_\_  
Fiscal Officer Michelle Henke

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Scott Jones

 **Certificate of Authority**

**Presented by the Village of South Amherst**

This certifies that the

**South Amherst Volunteer Fire Department** and its **Certified Fire Inspectors**  
are hereby granted the authority to conduct and enforce fire inspections  
as established in:

**Part Fifteen – Fire Prevention Code of the Codified Ordinances of the Village of South Amherst**  
(1647-20 Passed the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2020)

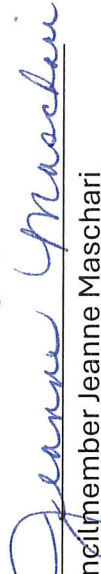
**Ohio Revised Code (O.R.C.)**

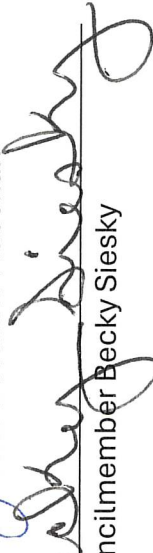
**Ohio Administrative Code (O.A.C.).**

The **Village Council** hereby formally upholds and affirms the laws  
as stated in the aforementioned codes,  
recognizing the authority and responsibility entrusted to the  
South Amherst Volunteer Fire Department and its Inspectors  
in safeguarding the community through fire prevention and enforcement.

**Date of Issue:** July 14, 2025

  
Councilmember Michelle Jeffers

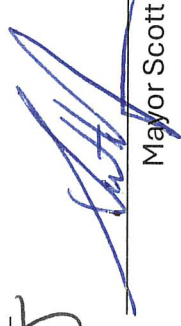
  
Councilmember Jeanne Maschari

  
Councilmember Becky Siesky

  
Councilmember Robb Koscho

  
Councilmember Mike Sangiacomo

  
Councilmember David Troike

  
Mayor Scott Jones