

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
Minutes of Village of South Amherst
REGULAR COUNCIL
September 8, 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 Michele Jeffers	P	Fiscal Officer Michelle Henke	P
Councilmember Robb Koscho	P	Records Clerk Laurie Beran	P
Councilmember Michael Sangiacomo (arrived 7:40)	P	Law Director Matthew Mishak	EA
Councilmember Becky Siesky (arrived 7:23)	P	Utility Admin. David Valentine	P
Councilmember David Troike	P	(EA – excused absences)	
Council Pro Tempore Jeanne Maschari	P		

Councilmember Troike moved to excuse Councilmember Siesky due to personal concerns. Councilmember Jeffers seconded the motion.

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA September 8, 2025 *Amendments: SAPD Crown Vic disposal option, SAFD Seat-time presentation*

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

Jeffers x Koscho x Maschari x Sangiacomo **Absent** Siesky **EA** Troike x Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES August 25, 2025

Councilmember Maschari moved to approve the minutes as presented. Councilmember Koscho seconded the motion.

Jeffers x Koscho x Maschari x Sangiacomo **Absent** Siesky **EA** Troike x Motion carried.

VISITORS

Chirs Jeffers 230 Oakdale Dr.
SAFD Chief Aaron Grimm

Police Presence

Terra Smith 256 W. Main St. I'm here to express concern about public safety and the need for increased police presence. Many of us have noticed more speeding, impaired driving, suspicious activity, and even attempted thefts. I've personally seen signs of drug use and alcohol litter in yards while mowing. South Amherst has always felt safe, but lately, it seems like that's changing—mostly due to people coming in from outside the village. Just last Friday at 11 p.m., I heard gunshots, and my security camera confirmed it was close. We want to keep our community safe. I understand full-time officers are expensive, but maybe revenue from traffic cameras could help fund a part-time officer or increased patrols from the county sheriff. Lastly, I'd like to ask what is the village's noise ordinance, especially regarding loud motorcycles.

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Bonnie McQuaid 106 Wallu Dr. A long-term resident of 41 years expressed growing concern over increased disturbances in the vicinity of local bars. Historically, noise and activity levels were manageable; however, over the past year, there has been a noticeable escalation in disruptive behavior, which may be attributed to a lack of visible police presence. Specific issues cited include excessive late-night noise, reckless driving evidenced by skid marks, and reports of individuals loitering or engaging in activity after legal closing hours. The resident also referenced secondhand reports of drug activity and a homeless individual residing behind the establishments, though these claims were not personally verified. A request was made for improved lighting in the adjacent park to enhance safety. The resident emphasized the need for proactive measures to deter unlawful behavior. Despite a strong attachment to the community, the resident now feels compelled to take precautions such as installing window coverings due to safety concerns. The overarching request was for increased courtesy and enforcement to preserve the integrity and safety of the neighborhood.

Helen Elosch & Edmund Elosch 101 White Birch Way – A resident of 37 years expressed concern over increased noise, suspected drug activity, and lack of police presence near local bars and the community park. While the area was once quiet and family-friendly, recent years have seen disruptive behavior including late-night engine noise, fireworks, and possible gunfire. The resident emphasized deteriorating safety, citing fear of being alone in parts of their home and the absence of regular patrols. Additional concerns included malfunctioning streetlights and the impact of reduced security on community well-being. A call was made for action to restore safety and preserve the neighborhood's character.

Gen Busik 529 W. Main St. Resident reported ongoing safety concerns related to late-night activity at local bars, including suspected drug transactions, loitering, and noise disturbances. The resident stated they have submitted photographic evidence of bars operating past legal hours and have made multiple reports to law enforcement and regulatory agencies with no response. Additional concerns included delayed police response times, erratic behavior from individuals frequenting the area, and a general decline in neighborhood safety. The resident emphasized feeling unsafe in their own home and urged the council to take action.

Other

Mark Leshinski 592 S. Lake St. Resident reported a lack of response after calling to report an incident and expressed concern over delayed police communication and patrol visibility. Additional safety concerns included late-night noise from off-road vehicles and street racing. The resident also addressed the proposed replacement of a municipal vehicle, suggesting council obtain repair cost estimates and review mileage and engine hours.

Jeri Leigh Siss 107 White Birch Way A certified QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) suicide prevention trainer addressed council in recognition of National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. The speaker shared alarming statistics regarding suicide rates in Ohio and emphasized the impact on all age groups, particularly youth and working adults. In partnership with the Mental Health, Addiction and Recovery Services (MHARS) Board of Lorain County, the speaker offered to provide free QPR training to residents and community organizations. Council was asked to consider scheduling a session to promote awareness and prevention efforts within the community

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Xavier Hill 306 Elm St. A resident inquired about efforts to attract new small businesses to the village. The mayor responded that while the village continues to support existing local businesses, the absence of a sewer system remains a significant barrier to new business development.

MAYOR

Proclamation - Chris Jeffers

Mayor Jones commended Chirs Jeffers for his contributions in revising the fire department's Standard Operating Procedures.

Miranda Ward Dedication

Mayor Jones acknowledged Councilmembers Maschari, Kosho and Siesky for their collaborative efforts in organizing a remarkable ceremony in memory of Miranda Ward.

AI discussion

Council was reminded of the previously adopted AI privacy policy. A proposal was introduced to explore the use of an AI-powered phone bot to improve resident communication and reporting, particularly for after-hours concerns. The system would provide ordinance information and collect reports for follow-up. Further discussion is anticipated with the law director at a future meeting.

FISCAL OFFICER

Payment Listing 8/22-9/4/25

Presented to council.

Financial Reports

The following September Financial Reports were presented to council: Revenue Summary, Fund Summary, Appropriation Summary.

July Bank Reconciliation

Has been completed and ready for signatures.

PEP Recommendations

PEP is Public Entities Pool the Village's insurance provider. In the meeting packet was a list of their recommendations for site inspections, training/remedy recommendations (Exhibit A).

Capital Purchase Approval SAPD

Approval of departmental weapons. Recommended Defender Red Dot – we could not secure a quote at the time because there was no guarantee the part could be delivered, it is available now.

Councilmember Maschari moved to approve the capital purchase of departmental weapons for the SAPD. Councilmember Siesky seconded the motion.

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

SAPD Old Crown Vic

Councilmember Maschari moved to approve the disposal of the SAPD 2011 Crown Vic. Councilmember Siesky seconded the motion.

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Discussion: The car had been deemed unfit for public use in October of 2023. The SAPD had been using it for parts and have used all applicable parts for the remaining Crown Vic.
Jeffers x Koscho x Maschari x Sangiacomo **Absent** Siesky x Troike x Motion carried.

RECORDS CLERK

August Construction Report

B/Z	ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	B/Z	ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION
B	200 Annis	New Home	B	5802 Russia	Siding
B	200 Annis	Pole Barn	Z	121 E Main	Sign, Parking Lot
B	405 Annis	Re-roof	Z	360 Annis	Concrete
B	118 Annis	Siding	Z	323 N Lake	Parking Lot
B	101 Vivian	Re-roof	Z	244 W Main	Shed
B	586 S Lake	Re-roof	Z	5807 Russia	Fence
B	889 S Lake	Covered deck	Z	590 S Lake	Concrete

Parcel Survey

Tabled until second estimate has been received.

Planning Commission

Meeting Monday, September 15 @ 7 p.m.

UTILITY ADMINISTRATOR

Water

Water break

Maroy Dr. issue has been solved. The administrator recommended that residents call ASAP if there is a problem no matter the time, so that issues can be addressed.

Consumption Report

Presented to council.

Storm

Line repair

The line in the farm field west of the cemetery has been fixed and flowing properly.

Street/Service

Truck

The administrator reported that the 2011 F-250 requires approximately \$5,000 in repairs, including shocks, tie rods, cross member bar, transmission mount and pan, wiring harness, spark plugs, and body work. Even with these repairs, the vehicle is expected to have only one additional year if that, of snow plowing capability.

SAFD Chief Grimm requested that the 2011 F-250 be transferred to the department as used as a general utility vehicle for various activities such as hose testing, carrying emergency signs and cones.

Councilmember Troike moved to have the F250 repurposed for the use of the SAFD.

Councilmember Siesky seconded the motion.

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

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The administrator researched various trucks and recommended the 2026 Silverado 3500 from Valley Chevrolet, plus trading in the 2011 Crown Vic. The vehicle information was presented to council. The cost of the truck would be subsidized 75% from the service and 25% from the water department budgets.

Councilmember Maschari moved to purchase a 2026 Silverado 3500 from Valley Chevrolet. Councilmember Kosho seconded the motion.

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

Fire

August Calls

Fire	EMS	MVA	Mutual	Other
1	23	0	0	9

Police

Blotter 8/1-9/4

Traffic Citations (Aug 1-Sept 4) Total 71: 55 Speeding, 2 Stop Sign and 1 Expired License. Reports Taken:

Suspicious Vehicle, South Lake Street- vehicle driven by Amazon looking for address.
Misuse of Credit Card, Annis Road – Outside jurisdiction advised of proper notifications .
Juvenile (4)Trespass Buckeye - advised of posting signage as well as cameras.

The department has officially received authorization from the state to continue operating as a Mobile Data Terminal Law Enforcement Agency. This milestone follows the successful completion of a rigorous and comprehensive audit conducted over several months, in close collaboration with Lorain County 911.

As part of compliance with state requirements, the department will be implementing updated computer login procedures. These changes are designed to enhance the safety and security of our officers and ensure the protection of all classified information accessed through the LEADS portal.

Applicant screening is ongoing, and it has been discovered that some individuals lack valid OPOTA certification. The vetting process remains active and thorough.

Officers working during school bus stop times are asked to stay vigilant and give special attention during their patrols.

COMMITTEES

Building & Grounds

Fire Department (Councilmember Troike presented.)

The committee had previously met with the Chief and Assistant Chief recommending that the meeting room floor be redone and that the lentil plate repair can be delayed. The department will reconfigure equipment placement in order to properly fit trucks in the bays.

Councilmember Troike moved to have the SAFD meeting room floor redone at an amount not to exceed \$12,750.00. Councilmember Jeffers seconded the motion.

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

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Councilmember Troike moved for the fiscal officer to transfer \$5000.00 from Mayor's budget to Capital Outlay. Councilmember Jeffers seconded the motion.

Discussion: Transfer of the \$5000.00 will cover the remainder of the fire department floor and reprogramming of the fire radios.

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

Community Economic Development

Halloween

- Seeking resident participation for those who live on the Village's perimeter roads who would like to participate in Trick-or-Treating along Main St.
- Seeking council participation to decorate the inside of village hall.
- Halloween Coloring pictures to be displayed at village hall and possibly around town. Prizes donated by Sandstone Church.
- Electrical Accents is donating @250.00 for the Halloween and Christmas House Decorating Contest.

ORDINANCE

Ordinance No. 1845-25 (Second Reading) Repeal & Enact New 909.02 Tree Maintenance

RESOLUTION

Resolution No. 765-25 (First Reading) Law Director Agreement

MISCELLANEOUS

Bus Safety

Councilmembers Maschari and Jeffers along with the Service Department researched and discussed various options to residents concerns regarding school bus safety. SAFE STOPS (Exhibit B).

Councilmember Troike moved to involve Ohio State Patrol to follow buses. Councilmember Sangiacomo seconded the motion.

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

Councilmember Maschari moved to approve \$280.00 for 20 signs promoting school bus safety. Jeffers seconded.

Discussion: Councilmember Jeffers had the law director review 2 letters that would be disbursed among residents of Maroy, Thomson and Oakdale.

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

SAFD Seat-time (Councilmember Jeffers presented.)

Seat-time refers to the hours firefighters spend in classroom-based training, such as the Firefighter I course, during which they are compensated at their standard hourly wage. Chief Grimm emphasized the importance of retaining current staff rather than continuing to hire new firefighters, stating that retention is the top priority at this time. Currently, there are three firefighters enrolled in the Firefighter II class and four in the EMR class, with a combined training cost of \$6,400.00. The Chief noted that while it is uncommon to have this many personnel in training simultaneously, the recent turnover has made it necessary to expedite training for new hires. The Chief stated that beginning next year, firefighters seeking advanced training will be required to apply for reimbursement scholarships, as funding will be

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limited. Only a select number of applicants will be approved annually based on available resources.

Councilmember Maschari moved to approve “seat-time pay” for the firefighters who are currently enrolled in training, at their individual payrates and to include a claw-back agreement stating that they must be employed by the SAFD for 2 consecutive years following the completed training. Councilmember Koscho seconded the motion.

Discussion: Fiscal officer will discuss a claw-back agreement with the law director that stipulates the employee must remain with the Village for 2 years after the training.

Jeffers Koscho Maschari Sangiacomo Siesky Troike Motion carried.

Councilmember Maschari moved to approve for the 2026 SAFD budget \$5000.00 designated for Education Scholarship. Councilmember Jeffers seconded the motion.

Jeffers Koscho Maschari Sangiacomo Siesky Troike Motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ORC Personnel; 121.22 (G)(1); 121.22 (G)(6) Security

Councilmember Jeffers moved to enter Executive Session at 8:39 p.m. to consider personnel issues in accordance with ORC 121.22 (G)(1) and security arrangements in accordance with ORC 121.22 (G)(6) at 8:13 p.m. Councilmember Siesky seconded the motion.

Jeffers Koscho Maschari Sangiacomo Siesky Troike Motion carried.

Return to regular session at 9:28 p.m.

Councilmember Maschari moved to approve the Suicide Prevention QRP Training. Councilmember Koscho seconded the motion.

Discussion: The records clerk will coordinate the day and time with Ms. Siss for the training.

Jeffers Koscho Maschari Sangiacomo Siesky Troike Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT 9:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Fiscal Officer Michelle Henke


Mayor Scott Jones