

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**  
Minutes of Village of South Amherst  
**PUBLIC HEARING**  
January 12, 2026

**CALL TO ORDER** by Mayor Jones at 6:30 p.m.

**ATTENDANCE**

Councilmember Michele Jeffers	P	Fiscal Officer Michelle Henke	P
Councilmember Robb Koscho	P	Records Clerk Laurie Beran	P
Councilmember Mark Leshinski	P	Utility Admin. David Valentine	P
Councilmember Jeanne Maschari	P	Assistant Fiscal Officer	P
Councilmember Anthony Savage	P		
Councilmember David Troike	P		

**NRT – New Russia Township**

**PURPOSE**

Councilmember Maschari presented:

Annexation PPN 0500010102029

The Village is in the process of annexing 15.83 acres of village-owned property currently located in Amherst Township. This land, which is vacant and situated behind the cemetery, is being annexed in preparation for conforming to the official boundaries of the Village of South Amherst.

Conforming of Village Boundaries

The Village was incorporated in 1918. Since then, several annexations have occurred; however, the required annual process of formally conforming these annexations to the village boundaries—by submitting them to the County Commissioners for approval—was not completed. As a result, some tax revenues have continued to be allocated to Amherst Township or NRT instead of the Village. Additionally, some residents have remained eligible to vote for township trustees based on the boundaries recorded at that time. By conforming to the boundaries, tax dollars will remain in the Village of South Amherst, supporting the services provided to residents, such as road maintenance, snow removal, and fire protection.

Once finalized, changes will be reflected on real estate tax bills, and residents in the affected areas will no longer vote for township trustees. A new tax district will be assigned to the Village of South Amherst, and related tax revenues will flow accordingly.

Additional information that was asked at the previous public hearing and in recent emails.

There are approximately 219 households that are in the Village and NRT, representing about \$7,000 in real estate taxes, and 459 households in the Village and Amherst Twp. If the Lorain County Commissioners approve the conforming, the county tax department will follow the law as stated in Ohio Revised Code 709.19, in which the townships will be compensated for lost tax revenue spread out over 12 years.

To clarify, the Village would only be annexing one parcel of property that has been owned by the village since April of 1982. It is vacant land in Amherst Township with no tax revenue behind Evergreen Cemetery. All of the other parcels that are covered in our zoning map were legally annexed from 1918 through 1999. We need to conform to the boundaries, and it would be cost-prohibitive to do each township at separate times. This is not a land grab; it is correcting a financial error where residents are paying real estate taxes to the townships and not receiving any services.

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

### Minutes of Village of South Amherst

“At our last hearing, I, Jeanne Maschari, clearly stated that this project has nothing to do with the activity that is going on with NRT. Since that has been challenged and I did the research, I am providing a list of my activities with dates and contacts that I spoke with to answer a question that I was asked by a resident. This may be incomplete because I did not keep track of all the hours spent researching over two years, nor does it include what other village administration may have worked on. You may review them at your convenience and follow up with me on any questions you may have. I encourage you to do so, and my contact information is on our village website. As you can see, it started in the winter of 2023.”

- 11/1/2023 Resident questioned why he was paying taxes to New Russia Twp when he lives in South Amherst. See the public forum on Facebook for the answer I provided. I also informed our council members and asked if they wanted me to pursue further.
- 1/18/2024 State Rep Joe Miller, District 53, Emailed re conforming boundaries.
- 1/26/2024 State Rep Joe Miller, District 53, Emailed re conforming boundaries.
- 2/25/2024- 3/14/2024 Amherst Twp trustee Neil Lynch received three to four email communications about real estate taxes.
- 4/12/2024 New Russia Twp meeting at the township hall with Mr. Daniel Jarven, Zoning Inspector/Cemetery Sexton, to discuss cemetery software. While there, he suggested we disincorporate from the township. Also briefly discussed with Lisa Akers.
- 4/12/2024 Emailed Lisa Akers, providing my email address and asking to start a conversation about disincorporation. They also advised me to check out the internet about what Oberlin, Ohio, did about disincorporating from New Russia Township.
- 4/15/2024 Email reply from Lisa Akers, where she would discuss further with Trustees. No further discussion.
- 5/6/2024 Matthew Mishak, Law Director for the Village, started an email conversation as to what we need to do, and is it a disincorporation or what? Those conversations went through December of 2025.
- 8/14/24 Mr. Petticord, Asst Prosecutor for Lorain County, phone conversation to try to understand. He was unable to help as he represents the townships.
- Fall of 2024 Fiscal officer verified with Sonja at the tax settlement office that we needed to conform the boundaries.
- 8/2024 through February 2025, gathered as many files as I could on the annexations, put them in order, and prepared a spreadsheet for the project.
- 3/25/25 Theresa Upton, Clerk, Lorain County Commissioners, an in-person meeting to review my spreadsheet of the annexations and questions about what documents are needed to conform the boundaries, and to whom we submit them.
- 3/25/2025 Aaron Appell, Village Engineer an in-person meeting to review what information I had.
- 8/11/2025 Village Council Meeting adopted ordinance #1843-25 authorizing the annexation of municipal-owned property
- 8/25/2025 Aaron Appell, Village Engineer, emailed an estimate for requirements for annexing one parcel of property.
- 8/28/2025 Mark Yeager of KS Associates Records Clerk emailed requests a second estimate for annexation. Followed by a conversation with me about dropping off a copy of all annexation records to see if there is a more efficient and less costly way to accomplish what we need.
- 8/29/2025 Continued to work on copying and organizing files and reviewed the zoning map against annexations to ensure I had all the annexations with the Fiscal Officer.
- 9/30/2025 Jeanne Maschari dropped off files at KS Associates in Elyria.
- 10/19/2025 Fiscal Officer and Jeanne Maschari met with Lorain County Auditor and staff to discuss the financial impact of making this decision.
- 11/06/2025 Mark Yeager, KS Associates, emailed an estimate for annexation and conforming the boundaries.
- 11/10/2025 Village Council meeting, I updated the council on the project and reviewed the estimate from KS Associates. I suggested we have two public hearings to give residents an opportunity to be informed and ask questions.
- 11/24/2025 Village Council Public Hearing on annexing one parcel of 15.68 acres and conforming the boundaries of the other 16 annexations.
- 1/11/2026 Followed up with Michelle Tyner, New Russia Twp Trustee, and discussed the situation.
- 1/11/2026 Mark Yeager, KS Associates, I emailed and asked if the estimate provided in August would have changed.
- 1/12/2026 Mark Yeager provided a new estimate with an increase of \$850.00.

## VISITORS

### South Amherst Residents

Annis Rd: 390 Chris & Tom Gallagher, 392 Ellen Gonos, 460 Anthony Salib, 463 Dennis Burdue

Charles St: 214 Jim & Michelle Smith

Elm St: 306 Xavier Hill

Kenwood St: 106 Jed Willis

Maroy Dr: 107 Lynn Obechi

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**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**  
Minutes of Village of South Amherst

Pyle/SA Rd: 1004 Jim Cahlik  
Russia Rd: 6034 Bob Laeng, 6280 Jim Graham, 6281 Chad Conrad, 6240 Chad Arcaba  
Sunnyside Dr: 405 Penny Becker  
SAFD: Chief Grimm, Assistant Chief Ron Zaleha

S. Lake St: 268 Kevin Machovina  
W. Main St: 220 Scott Dolan

**Other**

Bechtel Rd: 94753 R. Reitzel  
Russia Rd: 45589 Erin Mason, 45549 James Roman  
Whitehead Rd LaGrange: 19401 David Roberts

Parsons Rd: 43612 Andrea Barlow  
W River Rd Elyria: 2299 Amanda Quimper  
Maple Creek Dr Amherst: Brad Lasko 516

Cahlik: My primary concern is that holding the vote could jeopardize my ability to serve on the NRT Board of Zoning Appeals and reduce township tax revenue that could support legal efforts against mega-site development.

C. Gallagher: Requested clarification on the parcels that were being annexed and conforming to the boundaries. The Village map was displayed and Councilmember Maschari reiterated the process and explained that property tax money is to be used for road improvement, snow plowing, etc. and that zero dollars have been spent from the townships for the benefit of the township residents that reside in the incorporated portions of the village.

Machovina: Understands why the boundaries need to be conformed, however the timing in relationship to the issues facing NRT could not be worse and is requesting a delay in the voting. Further clarification of the Village Zoning map was given regarding the different districts and what area was covered by NRT.

T. Gallagher: Asked what funds the village would receive and how they would be used. Ms. Maschari explained that once the boundaries are aligned, the townships would experience a gradual reduction in property tax revenue over the next twelve years. The more than \$30,000 that residents currently pay to the townships each year could instead provide a helpful contribution toward road-paving loan payments.

J. Roman: What are the plans for this parcel? Council explained that the parcel is landlocked and already owned by the municipality, and that if the boundaries are being conformed, it is logical to include all affected parcels.

Arcaba: Expressed concern about the proposed boundary conformity and its potential impact on voting rights for residents in the southern portion of the village/township. He questioned why these residents should lose the ability to vote on township matters and referenced discussions about possible tax changes. He noted that residents pay under \$7,000 annually for services and compared this to the township's approximately \$1.6 million annual budget, arguing that the \$30,000 involved in the proposal is relatively small. The resident urged council to **table the proposal**, preserve residents' voting rights, and move forward only by conforming the portion located in Amherst Township, requesting that his area be excluded.

Barlow: NRT resident thanked council for its transparency and acknowledged the reasoning behind the boundary proposal. She urged council to delay action, stating that the county is facing significant challenges and that residents of NRT and Brownhelm Township are overwhelmed and exhausted from ongoing efforts to address them. She emphasized that the situation is larger than residents can manage alone and asked council to pause the process to provide relief. She also expressed concern that although the proposal may save \$37,000, residents could face higher utility costs and increased taxes, arguing that

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**  
Minutes of Village of South Amherst

the financial impact would exceed the amount saved. She concluded by asking council again to hold off and thanked them for listening.

**ADJOURNMENT** Time 6:57 p.m.