

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**  
Minutes of Village of South Amherst  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
February 9, 2026

**CALL TO ORDER**

The council meeting was called to order by Mayor Scott 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 Mark Leshinski	P	Law Director Matthew Mishak	P
Councilmember Jeanne Maschari	P	Utility Admin. David Valentine	P
Councilmember Anthony Savage	P	Assistant F.O. Wendy Kolmorgen	P
Councilmember David Troike	P		

*(EA – excused absences)*

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**                      February 2, 2026                      Amendment: Storm - Ludwig Ditch

Councilmember Leshinski moved to approve the agenda as amended. Councilmember Savage seconded the motion.

Jeffers    Koscho    Leshinski    Maschari    Savage    Troike                         Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**                      January 12, 2026

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

Jeffers    Koscho    Leshinski    Maschari    Savage    Troike                         Motion carried.

**VISITORS**

Jim Cahlik 1004 Pyle/SA Rd.

Elliot Eastin – a junior from Amherst Marion Steele H.S., addressed the group regarding her interest in a potential internship. She noted she had previously spoken with Mayor Scott Jones about the opportunity. Ellie highlighted her strong interest in government and politics, mentioning she is applying to Buckeye Girls State, is currently enrolled in AP Government, and has completed five Ashland University courses—four focused on political topics such as American history, politics and literature, the Supreme Court and the Constitution, and comparative economic systems. She expressed a desire to gain experience in local government and requested consideration for an internship.

**MAYOR**

**MAYOR**

BZA Appointment

Councilmember Savage moved to approve the appointment of Ji Cahlik to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Councilmember Koscho seconded the motion.

Jeffers    Koscho    Leshinski    Maschari    Savage    Troike                         Motion carried.

Swearing In

Board of Zoning Appeals – Jim Cahlik

Etiquette Professionalism

Everyone in the village—officials, staff, and residents—must treat one another with professionalism and respect. Criticism of public officials is expected, but hostile or abusive behavior toward staff is unacceptable. Employees deserve a workplace free from intimidation, and residents are encouraged to

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engage constructively. All are asked to lead with kindness and maintain a respectful, welcoming community environment.

NOPEC Energized Community (NEC) Grant

Award of \$3,689.00. Records Clerk will send out applications to department heads, to be returned by March 4th for Council consideration.

**FISCAL OFFICER**

Payment Listing 1/9-1/22/26 & 1/23-2/5

Presented to Council.

Councilmember Leshinski inquired about the following invoices:

- Polen Implements - parts for the gator
- Holland Computers – Villages IT department
- Sunrise - supplies vehicle fuel
- DM Plumbing - replaced the utility room water heater

Financial Reports

The following Financial Reports for January 2026 were presented to council: Revenue Summary, Fund Summary and Appropriation Summary.

December Bank Reconciliation

Completed and ready for signatures.

Year-End Status Update

The audit committee reviewed items and placed documents on the file cabinet for required signatures. The 2025 year-end is nearly closed; the Village is waiting on contracted auditors to finalize the financial statement notes. The fiscal year must be closed by February 28.

Debt Summary

Two loans were fully paid off in 2025: the 2022 police vehicle loan and the water meter loan.

It was noted that the only loans with interest are through OWDA (Ohio Water Development Authority), with rates ranging from 0.5% to 4.59%. OWDA confirmed that paying off early does not reduce total interest due, as interest is charged for the full contract term. OPWC (Ohio Public Works Commission) loans, used for roads and storm sewer projects, carry 0% interest. Council discussed whether it still makes sense to pay off debts early to free future funds and begin building reserves for potential cash-funded projects. The Fiscal Officer clarified that each fund may only be used for its designated purpose, and paying loans off early could unnecessarily deplete those restricted funds. OWDA payments are made from the 5102 water fund, which is funded solely by water user fees. Payments are made twice yearly; one payment has already been made, with the second due in July.

2025 Mayor's Court Financial Report

Gross Receipts	Ohio Reparations	City of Oberlin	Total net Receipts to SA	Computer Fund Clerk	Computer Fund Court	General Fund
\$119,685.00	\$22,081.00	\$855.00	\$96,749.00	\$6,280.00	\$1,882.00	\$88,587.00

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Police Car

The council continued its discussion from the previous meeting and agreed it is more beneficial to purchase the 2026 model rather than the 2025. The only additional cost not included in the estimate is for decals. It was also confirmed that all warranties will remain valid with the updated purchase recommendation.

Councilmember Maschari moved to approve the purchase of a 2026 police vehicle. Councilmember Jeffers seconded the motion.

Jeffers    Koscho    Leshinski    Maschari    Savage    Troike    Motion carried.

OML “Newly Elected” Workshop

Councilmembers Koscho, Leshinski, Maschari, Savage have been registered and will coordinate transportation.

SAFD Compensation resolution needs changed, discuss.

The SAFD rate of compensation needs to be revised and language specifically clarifying the educational stipend the start of March.

Beautification Committee Budget

The 2025 budget for the Beautification Committee was set at \$1,500. For 2026, Council must determine the new budget. It was noted that last year committee members were confused about line-item budgeting. Council discussed whether to continue using line items or provide a single general budget amount. If changes are made, they will need to be clearly communicated to the committee.

Council members noted that costs have increased and suggested raising the budget, with one recommendation of \$2,500. Last year’s spending was briefly discussed; the committee went slightly over budget. Council requested the prior year’s budget description and spending details, as well as information on the committee’s plans for 2026, to help determine an appropriate budget. The Fiscal Officer indicated the committee would like to begin purchasing in early March, so budget approval will be needed on February 23, 2025. The Village Administrator will discuss the issues with the committee prior to the meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**RECORDS CLERK**

Certified Public Records Training

The Certified Public Records Training is a three-hour session, free of charge, provided to public officials or their appropriate designees, and public employees, as well as members of the public. This training is provided by the Auditor of State and is considered to be part of the annual audit and can count against us if elected officials do not have the certification. It is my personal recommendation for all elected officials to complete the training in order to fully comprehend what is a record, records retention and the Sunshine Law versus having a dedicated designee.

Councilmember Troike moved to have officials complete the Certified Public Records Training once per term with no designee permitted. Councilmember Maschari seconded the motion.

Discussion: Councilmember Maschari noted that the CPRT was the only negative issue on the most recent State audit.

Jeffers    Koscho    Leshinski    Maschari    Savage    Troike    Motion carried.

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Contact Information/Report an Issue

Members of the public are encouraged to contact elected and appointed officials using the contact information provided on the Village Officials page of the village website:

[villageofsouthamherst.org](http://villageofsouthamherst.org). To formally report an issue, please visit the website and utilize the yellow “Report an Issue” tab located at the bottom right of the page. Please note that village staff do not monitor unofficial social media pages, including the South Amherst Forum.

Reminder to all elected and appointed personnel:

Please note that the Fiscal Department does not have set office hours, though staff are typically available Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The Water Clerk is available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and the Records Clerk is available Monday through Thursday from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. For questions or requests, please schedule an appointment or submit your inquiry by email to ensure a documented record. Office hours may vary on Council meeting days.

Revised 2026 Calendar (Audit, Ordinance, Safety)

Audit meetings to be held the first Wednesday of the month at 4:30 p.m. Ordinance and Safety committees need to confer with their members and a formal revision of the Village Calendar will be discussed at the February 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

Meeting Format

At the previous meeting, a suggestion was made to allow public comment during that section of the meeting. It was noted that under the Rules of Council and Robert’s Rules, the chair may recognize a visitor to speak, but visitors may not engage in debate with Council. Visitor questions may be addressed at committee meetings, not during regular Council meetings, which are designated for official business.

Councilmember Maschari moved to insert on the Agenda under the Miscellaneous heading “Visitor Follow-up Comments.” Councilmember Savage seconded the motion.

*Discussion: Visitors will still receive 3 minutes to speak.*

Jeffers    Koscho    Leshinski    Maschari    Savage    Troike    Motion carried.

NOPEC Community Event Sponsorship Grant

Proposal submissions were due as of today. As no recommendation has been presented, I would suggest that Council consider using the \$1,000 Community Event Grant as the CDE budget for community events which would include Valentins/Appreciation Day, Memorial Day, Halloween & Tree Lighting.

Councilmember Maschari moved to have the NOPEC Community Grant of \$1,000.00 used for the CED budget for community events. Councilmember Koscho seconded the motion.

Jeffers    Koscho    Leshinski    Maschari    Savage    Troike    Motion carried.

**UTILITY ADMINISTRATOR**

**Street/Service**

Salt

The Village continues to face a countywide salt shortage and is receiving salt only as needed, so main roads will be prioritized. Florence Township was thanked for assisting during the recent storm. To avoid future shortages and delays, the Administrator recommended developing the Village’s own salt storage and purchasing a used skid-steer for loading, which could also support other street and utility projects.

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Existing space is available at the service garage, and options range from a low-cost cover to a full salt-storage structure. Cost estimates and details will be brought to the next meeting.

**Water/Storm**

Fire Hydrant

The fire hydrant that was damaged on January 16<sup>th</sup> due to a weather-related vehicle accident was fixed today with the help of Diggers of Ohio.

Consumption Report

The bar graph located at the bottom of the page will start showing the difference between the current year and the previous year.

Facility Inspections

The Town Hall sprinkler system in the utility room has been inspected, and additional related items will be reviewed with the Building & Grounds Committee.

Ludwig Ditch

An update was provided on the Ludwig Ditch project. The County has moved from the engineering phase to seeking contractor bids. The work includes clearing a 25-foot easement path along approximately 2,600 feet of the ditch, bank and soil restoration, and tree restoration. Tree clearing must be completed by March 31. According to the County's information, the project cost is estimated at \$45,000, and no cost-sharing or Village expenses were indicated. The Village requested confirmation to ensure no financial obligation exists.

**Cemetery**

Weather Closing

A reminder was given that during severe snow events; the Village Administrator has authority to close the cemetery. The cemetery is a low-priority area for plowing unless a funeral is scheduled. Residents are asked not to move or bypass "Road Closed" signs, which are posted for safety. Anyone who removes a sign or enters a closed area does so at their own risk. During Level 2 snow emergencies or higher, funerals may be postponed, and the cemetery may remain closed for safety reasons.

**Park**

Playground Revitalization

Discussion was held regarding the playground revitalization project and the plan to apply for the LCPH Healthy Places Grant and the PEP Safety Grant, with funds to be used toward the equipment purchase. Two quotes were received regarding new playground equipment, which is needed because the current equipment is outdated and does not meet ADA safety or accessibility standards. The quotes are similar in price, with about a \$7,000 difference; the higher quote includes canopies and additional activities. The selected option would come fully installed with mulch delivery. Site preparation would still be required, and this has already been discussed with Diggers.

Councilmember Troike moved to purchase the Big Bend Playground System. Councilmember Savage seconded the motion.

Jeffers x Koscho x Leshinski x Maschari x Savage x Troike x

Motion carried.

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**COMMITTEES**

**Ordinance**

Good Neighbor Resolution

A draft of the Good Neighbor Resolution was presented. Councilmember Savage had requested word changes. The records clerk explained that the resolution was written in general terms to maintain support for the townships while recognizing the Village's long-term efforts toward securing sewer services.

Councilmember Maschari moved to proceed with the draft of Resolution 772-26 as presented.  
Councilmember Savage seconded the motion.

Jeffers  Koscho  Leshinski  Maschari  Savage  Troike  Motion carried.

**RESOLUTIONS**

Resolution No. 771-26 (Emergency) Rate of Compensation for Water Clerk

Councilmember Troike moved to approve Resolution No. 771-26 as an emergency. Councilmember Koscho seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Jeffers  Koscho  Leshinski  Maschari  Savage  Troike  Motion carried.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

Speaker

Firelands Superintendent – February 23<sup>rd</sup>.

LCPH Healthy Places Grant

Grant application submission deadline is February 20<sup>th</sup> will apply and if accepted the funds will be used for the playground.

Real Estate Raffle

Scott Taylor, representing the Susan Ann Foundation and the builder of the home at 225 N. Lake St., inquired with the Village about any potential issues related to conducting a real estate raffle. Staff confirmed that there is no ordinance prohibiting such a raffle. The Police Department noted they would simply need to coordinate with the organizers if an open house is planned, in order to address any traffic or parking concerns.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

ORC 121.22 (G)(1)

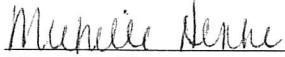
Councilmember Savage move to enter Executive Session to consider discipline of a public employee in accordance with ORC 121.22 (G)(1) at 7:55 p.m. Councilmember Maschari seconded the motion.

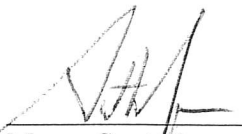
Jeffers  Koscho  Leshinski  Maschari  Savage  Troike  Motion carried.

Return to regular session at 8:25 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT** Time 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

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