

Austinburg Township Minutes

June 16, 2025

The Public Hearing meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by John Kusar in regards to the Austinburg Zoning Commission recommendations for solar panel/systems in residential use in "Proposed Text Amendment 2025 – Proposed Changes List Updated 5/7/25". In attendance were Rob Lapuh, Laurie Robishaw, Paul Lombardo, Ginny Seifert, Ted Seifert, Steve Schafer, Elaine Schafer, Brian O'Dell, David Gottwig and Lorna Masek. Resident Ted Seifert asked why this doesn't include recreational in this. The zoning board explained they were still doing more research on the best way to handle recreational solar panels. Trustee John Kusar moved to close the public hearing. It was closed at 7:32pm.

The regular meeting of the Austinburg Township Board of Trustees opened at 7:32pm. In attendance were Rob Lapuh, Laurie Robishaw, Paul Lombardo, Ginny Seifert, Ted Seifert, Steve Schafer, Elaine Schafer, Brian O'Dell, David Gottwig and Lorna Masek.

The roll call; Haase, aye. Dutton, aye. Kusar aye.

Res. 93-25 John moved to accept the minutes as written, Pete seconded. The roll call; Haase, aye. Dutton, aye. Kusar aye.

Res. 94-25 Byron moved to pay the bills, John seconded. The roll call; Haase, aye. Dutton, aye. Kusar, aye. Bills paid were \$90,172.60 and receipts were \$28,198.71.

In terms of correspondence, we received a letter from the Ashtabula County Covered Bridge Festival asking if we would cover the cost of a portable restroom at Mechanicsville Bridge for the festival Oct. 11th and 12th. We received an email about solar power street lights from a Fonroche light company. We received a letter that OPERS is looking for new board members. We received an email from the Ashtabula County Twp Assoc about the Annual Fish Fry July 19. We also received an email from them about wanting input to the Hazard Mitigation Plan. We received an email from the new Geneva Area City Schools Superintendent Paul Lombardo that he would like to attend our next township meeting. We received an email from Delta Railroad in regards to looking to expand in our township.

Res. 95-25 Byron moved to pay for the portable restroom at Mechanicsville Bridge for the Covered Bridge Festival, John seconded. The roll call; Haase, aye. Dutton, aye. Kusar aye.

The Fiscal Officer reported she met with Nick Cattani from OTARMA; he is doing our building appraisals for 2025. He needs to know the age of the Townhall roof and the age of the old road department building. We also received from OTARMA our questionnaire on equipment and employees because it is due to renew soon. The Fiscal Officer reported that she has ended the contract with Granite in regards to our new phone system per the guidance of the Ashtabula Prosecutor. The Fiscal Officer would like to go with Spectrum and installation costs will be around \$4,680.00. The Fiscal Officer also reported that the 2 CD's at Andover Bank have been opened on 6/10/25. The rollover balance for 1 CD's was \$104,810.84 and the 2nd CD was \$104,826.23. Both CD's will mature on 11/10/25.

Res. 96-25 John moved to terminate our contract with Granite for the phone system in regards to the Townhall, Fire Dept and Road Department and go with Spectrum, Byron seconded. The roll call; Haase, aye. Dutton, aye. Kusar aye.

Zoning Administrator Rob Lapuh spoke with the Assistant County Prosecutor in regards to the property on Millcreek. Rob also spoke with Rick Puckrin in regards to the issue of rotting vegetables. Rob has reached out to Larry Lister who is the Zoning Inspector in Harpersfield in

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regards to the proposed new winery wanting to put cabins on the same land at the corner of Mechanicsville Road and Route 307.

Fire Chief Bill Wilms no report.

Road Supervisor Mike Petro no report.

The new superintendent of Geneva Area City Schools Paul Lombardo introduced himself. He is going around to the different Townships in the Geneva Area City Schools District. He is interested in hearing what is working and what needs to be worked on. He wants to work on building better relationships between the school and the communities. He took several questions from the residents and the Trustees.

Pete said all the paperwork for paving Forman Road is complete; we are just waiting on a start date from Koski. The concrete pads in the park are getting done this coming week weather permitting. Pete must go to the Ashtabula Building Department for permits. He will pay for the permits then we will reimburse him. Byron reported he went to the NAD meeting. Byron had a meeting with everyone about the water line on North Pelton Road. The bill for the 2 fire hydrants should be coming in soon. John said he received a phone call from a Kent Collier in regards to his father's broken head stone in Austin Cemetery; it looks like someone maybe backed into. John had Mike reach out to Haines Memorial to get estimates on a repair. John spoke to the Country Days committee and explained the Township will pay for all the portable restrooms this year.

Res. 97-25 John moved to pay the Rock Creek VFW a \$50 donation for the ammunition used for the Memorial Day service in the park, Pete seconded. The roll call; Haase, aye. Dutton, aye. Kusar aye.

Res. 98-25 John moved to accept the Zoning Amendment as written for solar panels, Byron seconded. The roll call; Haase, aye. Dutton, aye. Kusar aye.

John and Byron went and looked at the tree on Orchard Road. The tree is on our road right away so it is our issue to get rid of it. John spoke with Brobst Tree service but they weren't interested unless there were more trees to remove. John got a quote from Morgan's Tree service for \$4,200. John will look to get more quotes. Next year John said we need to start budgeting for tree removal and storms. The Fiscal Officer said she needs to know what big expenses we have coming up next year or two so it can be reported in the letter to the County Commissioners along with the budget for 2026.

Resident Steve Schafer asked if a speed limit sign could be put up on Orchard Road because the traffic goes way too fast through there. John will reach out to the County Engineers Office to see what the speed limit is there so we can work on getting a sign posted.

Res. 99-25 Byron moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 pm, John seconded. The roll call; Haase aye. Dutton, aye, Kusar, aye.



Kanda O'Dell, Fiscal Officer



John Kusar, Chairman