

Austinburg Township Meeting
August 17, 2026

The regular meeting of the Austinburg Township Board of Trustees opened at 7:30 pm. In attendance were Brian O'Dell, Rob Lapuh, Mark Byram, Laurie Robishaw, Genny Costanzo, Luke Gildemeister, Bryan Ledford, Kevin Bailey, Bill Wilms and Ron Duff.

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

Res. 121-26 John moved to accept the minutes as written, Pete seconded. The roll call: Haase, aye. Dutton, aye. Kusar, aye.

Res. 122-26 John moved to pay the bills, Byron seconded. The roll call: Haase, aye. Dutton, aye. Kusar, aye. Bills paid were \$30,793.97 and receipts were \$3,476.65.

In terms of correspondence, we received an email from Harpersfield Township that they are looking to hire a Zoning Administrator and a Zoning Clerk. We received an email from Lisa Hawkins with the County Commissioners office in regards to wind and solar resolutions. We received an email from the County Commissioners in regards to Coffee with the Commissioners on August 27th at 10:00 am at Wall Street Café. We received an email from the County Engineers Office that Eagleville Road will be closed until the end of August.

Zoning Administrator Rob Lapuh reported that he issued a building permit for an accessory building on Mechanicsville Road. Rob has no update on the old Mr. C's. The lot split has gone through the County Commissioners Office. However, Rob is having to issue a new address for the lot split. Rob spoke with the owners of the property at the corner of 307 and 45. They said they will get it cleaned up as soon as possible and get it mowed.

Fire Chief Bill Wilms reported he has found a used fire truck that he would like to look at for the fire department. This would replace fire truck 501. Fire truck 501 is about 40 years old. The truck will cost \$49,000.

Res. 123-26 John moved to give Fire Chief Bill Wilms the authority to purchase the 4 Guys/American LaFrance for \$49,000 or more if needed, Pete seconded. The roll call: Haase, aye. Dutton, aye. Kusar, aye.

Road Dept. no report.

Genny Costanzo from NOPEC spoke about the new rates for electric. Genny reminded the Trustees and the Fiscal Officer that we have \$2,627.00 in grant money to use. We have until next year to use it. It must be used for energy efficiency upgrades.

Pete reported Forman Road was striped today. Pete reported that all the trucks at the road department need some repairs and maintenance before winter. John said to have Michael get some quotes on getting the repairs and maintenance done so next meeting we can decide which truck to start on. Byron reported on NAD. Byron spoke with Vince Gildone and he will be getting us 3 refurbished AEDs. The AEDs we have are no longer in service. Byron reported that the items the Township Road Department put on Gov Deals has all been sold. John reported that the portable restroom has been delivered to Tote Road Park. PennOhio said the portable restrooms are all set for Austinburg Country Days. John put together a list for the road guys outlining what needs to be done before Austinburg Country Days, since this is Michael's first year setting up for the festival.

Resident Ron Duff asked how many miles were on the proposed fire truck that the Fire Department is going to look at. It was stated that the truck has 68,000 miles and 4,500 original hours. Luke Gildemeister from Reactivate spoke to everyone in attendance regarding a proposed solar project. Luke read a letter from Jeff Bohles, the owner of the property located at 3852 Clay Street in Austinburg. In the letter, Bohles explained why his family is interested in moving a portion of the property into a solar power field. Luke explained that the proposed project would be a small-scale principal-use solar facility capable of producing 2.98 megawatts of electricity.

Austinburg Township Meeting

August 17, 2026

The fenced-in area would encompass approximately 14 acres. FirstEnergy has already approved connecting the proposed solar facility to the substation located on Clay Street. The anticipated lifespan of the solar facility is 25–40 years. Luke provided the Trustees with proposed plans for their review. Numerous questions were raised by both the Trustees and residents, as there is considerable information circulating regarding solar farms and their potential impact. Trustee John Kusar and Zoning Chair Laurie Robishaw explained the steps that Reactivate will need to go through to determine whether the proposed project can move forward. Robishaw expressed concern that there is currently limited guidance available regarding zoning regulations for solar energy facilities. Trustee John Kusar suggested that Luke invite the property owners, as well as residents who are either in favor of or opposed to solar energy, to attend the next meeting. This would allow the Trustees to hear directly from residents and better understand the community's position on the proposed project. Resident Kevin Bailey mentioned a PGM app that provides information regarding the percentage of energy being used and the type of energy source being utilized. Brian Ledford expressed concerns about allowing out-of-state companies to come into the Township and County to establish solar farms. Ledford stated that he is concerned about the potential for a “domino effect,” whether the projects involve solar panels or wind turbines.

Res. 124-26 Pete moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 pm, Byron seconded. The roll call: Haase, aye. Dutton, aye. Kusar, aye.



Kanda O'Dell, Fiscal Officer



John Kusar, Chairman