

Hiram Township Trustees

Regular Meeting Minutes

July 21, 2026 at 7:00 PM, Hiram Township Complex

Present: Trustees; Chairman Jack Groselle, Steve Pancost, and Dan Ellenberger. Fiscal Officer Eric Hankinson. Zoning Inspector Rich Gano. Road Supervisor Tom Matota. Public; Various residents of the Township, Hiram Police Chief Clemens, Hiram Fire Chief Murata

This meeting is being recorded to facilitate the written minutes. The recording will be preserved until the minutes are approved.

Reading of the Minutes:

Mr. Hankinson read the meeting minutes from the June 16, 2026 meeting. Some corrections were noted. Mr. Pancost motioned to accept the minutes with corrections. Mr. Ellenberger seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote on the Motion: All Ayes.

Fiscal Officer:

- Mr. Groselle motioned to adopt a Cyber Security Policy for Hiram Township per ORC Section 9.64. Mr. Pancost seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote on the Motion: All Ayes. **Resolution 2026-021**
- Mr. Groselle motioned for Supplemental Appropriations on General Fund of \$30,000 (new website, flag pole, legal counsel, architect, etc). Mr. Pancost seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote on the Motion: All Ayes. **Resolution 2026-022**
- Mr. Groselle motioned to accept documentation of proposed Fire & EMS contract from Chip Comstock (Township Fire law attorney) to be sent to Hiram Village. Mr. Pancost seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote on the Motion: All Ayes. **Resolution 2026-020**

Public Comment:

A resident asked what the proposed contract to the Village contained. The Township submitted the document to the Village as a counter proposal. The Township proposal is that the Township is the majority owner, and the department to be located at the Township facility at 6352 ST 82. A resident questioned why move it out of the Village. Mr. Ellenberger commented that he felt that the Township has not had a voice in the Department for some time and that the Township is looking at a potential direction. Mr. Ellenberger has had conversations with Troy and Mantua/Shalersville on how the Township can be worked together. A resident asked the question of who has control. Mr. Groselle stated that the contract mentions that there will be a Township Trustee, the Township Trustees will appoint someone from the Village or Township, and a member of Village Council (appointed by Village Council) will participate (3 people total for now, majority vote). Mr. Ellenberger reiterated that the Township needs the Village, and the Village needs the Township. A resident asked what does the timeline look like for moving the department and such. Mr. Ellenberger responded that it is a work in process as there are a number of moving parts happening right now so there is no defined timeline. Mr. Groselle clarified that the financing split would be 70% (Township) and 30% (Village). Many residents voiced their concerns about where would the money come from to fund the Fire Department (both equipment and payroll) and

additional unforeseen costs that may be incurred. The Trustees stated that their plan is to fund everything with the current Fire and EMS levies in the Township. Other expenses (ie. Driveway rebuild, building renovation, etc.) would need to come from another Township fund. The residents asked the Trustees if they can eventually provide a cost projection to do everything needed to bring the Fire department to the Township Facility. The Trustees reiterated that the current Township proposal is a counter-proposal and a work in progress. A number of Township residents then argued amongst each other on what the major concerns really are. The Trustees clarified that the Township EMS and Fire levies are generally written to cover anything related to Fire and EMS expenses (ie. operations, capital, and whatever else). The residents asked the Trustees if it would be possible to have another special meeting with a moderator between the Village and Township. Mr. Ellenberger mentioned that the Trustees will have 1-2 additional meetings with the Village prior to the next Township Trustees meeting in August. A resident asked Chief Murata what the policy is for Mutual Aid from other departments. Chief Murata mentioned that it depends on the situation is. If it's most anything short of a disaster or structure fire (tornado, etc) then there is an 8 minute delay on calling for mutual aid. Chief Murata just mentioned that he has recently hired another employee to be sworn in at the department. Chief Murata also voiced his disappointment that Hiram Township was talking to Troy Township about mutual aid and possible collaboration. A few residents asked about the existing Fire employees to be given jobs if the Township takes over. Mr. Ellenberger stated that all current employees would be given jobs at the Township Fire Department if that happens.

Old Business:

Chief Clemens reviewed the Police Patrol activity from the previous month. There was a traffic violation that included seizure of weapons. A resident asked Chief Clemens about the street racing on Norton Rd. He said he has communicated to the entire department about the need to patrol that area. They police have been patrolling but not seen it happen yet.

The Trustees were asked by residents what the idea was to cancel the police protection from the Village. Mr. Pancost responded that it was to review other additional ideas for enforcement possibly being additional signs, cameras, or extra coverage from the County Sheriffs. Mr. Groselle suggested that Mr. Pancost get the costs of the mobile signage for the August meeting and the Township will keep with the Village Police coverage for now.

New Business:

Mr. Ellenberger would like to move forward with updating the website. Mr. Hankinson noted that the website has to be ADA compliant due to recent requirement changes at the State level.

Mr. Groselle asked Mr. Gano if a list is kept for properties with high grass (Mr. Groselle received periodic calls about that). Mr. Gano says he does not keep such a list.

Road:

Mr. Matota asked the Trustees if a special meeting can be setup with an Executive Session to discuss employee situations. Mr. Groselle suggested August 4th at 7:00pm for the meeting. The other Trustees agreed that they can attend. Mr. Matota has done some preliminary work for marking of underground utilities prior to erecting additional "No Outlet" signs for a few roads within the Township. Also, an under-road crossover culvert pipe on Norton Rd needs to be replaced by the Township. The large trucks have had some repairs done but Mr. Matota reiterated his concern that the Trustees need to be planning to replace the trucks in the near future.

Zoning:

Randy from the County Building Dept. has sent an adjudication order for the Amish residents on Winchell Rd. No further news there. Mr. Gano will follow up with the Health Department about the septic systems on those 2 properties. Cheryl Drive property was sent a letter regarding trash. The letter was returned so Mr. Gano will resend using a different address listed on the tax record. Mr. Gano will have the County Prosecutor write up a resolution for another property at 6448 Winchell for dilapidated structure with junk in the yard to be remediated.

Police:

June 2026: 100 Patrol Hours, 48 citations issues, 603 miles driven.

Fire:

June 2026: No report provided until after the meeting.

Mr. Pancost motioned to pay the bills, Mr. Ellenberger seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote on the Motion: All Ayes.

Mr. Groselle adjourned the meeting. Meeting ended at 8:52pm

07-21-26 Meeting Payments and Receipts

Warrant	Payee	Description	Expenses	Received
12681	SCA of OH, LLC		\$1,089.09	
12682	Portage County Township Association		\$264.00	
12683	Allied Corporation		\$272.96	
12684	Village of Hiram		\$49,790.00	
12685	Village of Hiram		\$485.41	
12686	Bonezzi Switzer Polito & Perry Co, LPA		\$1,172.50	
12687	Hiram RCCA		\$105.00	
12688	Mantua Hardware Lawn & Garden		\$140.45	
12689	Blasiman Fire Equipment		\$418.04	
12690	Gee-Ville Auto Parts		\$279.89	
12691	Gannett LocalIQ		\$216.30	
12692	Arms Trucking		\$846.45	
12693	Warren Springs of Ohio		\$2,525.94	
12694	Sarchione Chevrolet 2		\$92.50	
12695	Middlefield Farm & Garden		\$87.97	
12696	Mantua Auto Parts		\$40.00	
12697	Thomas S. Matota		\$2,283.44	
12698	Thomas W. Matota		\$3,893.76	
12699	Charter Communications		\$289.34	
12700	Carter Lumber		\$66.20	
12701	Centerra Co-Op		\$1,667.64	
12702	Ohio Edison		\$751.18	
electronic	Payroll		\$22,371.10	
electronic	Windstream		\$120.85	
electronic	United Site Services		\$126.00	
electronic	Middlefield Bank	ACH Service Fees	\$25.00	
electronic	Middlefield Bank	Interest		\$1,719.03