

**SHARON TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES
REGULAR SESSION HELD AT
95 E. Wilson Bridge Road
February 18, 2026
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The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

Roll Call:	John Oberle, Chair	Present
	Laura Kunze, Vice Chair	Present
	Michael Farley, Trustee	Present
	Justin Adkins, Fiscal Officer	Present

Attendance: Chief Tuchfarber, Supt. Kayati, Marcus Rose

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge was led by Chair Oberle.

Approval of Agenda

Kunze asked for a discussion on the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC).

Tuchfarber asked for a discussion about an applicant for the department.

Oberle requested a discussion on property taxes and a moment of silence for Shirley Ella Salyers.

Kayati asked to add an update on the recent water leaks.

Adkins asked to add January Bank Reconciliation.

Moment of Silence

Oberle led the room in a moment of silence for Shirley Ella Salyers, a township resident since 1964, who recently passed away.

Approval of Minutes

Farley moved to approve the minutes for January 28, 2026, as submitted. Kunze seconded.

Motion passed unanimously. The minutes are approved.

Kunze moved to approve the minutes for February 4, 2026, as submitted. Farley seconded.

Motion passed unanimously. The minutes are approved.

Oberle praised Adkins and his diligence on the minutes.

Resident Comments

None

TRUSTEES

Old Business

Levy for Increased Funds for the Fire District

Farley updated the Trustees that the Board of Elections had certified the ballot question, and that Issue 27 will appear on the May 5, 2026, ballot. The certified amount that residents will vote on is 2.34 mills for each \$1 of taxable value, which amounts to \$82 for each \$100,000 of the county auditor's market value.

Resident Pat Kelly expressed a desire to host an educational meeting for residents at the Fire House.

Resolution 02182026A - 2026 Permanent Budget

Farley led the Trustees through a review of the proposed \$4.6 million budget and noted they could adopt it tonight or schedule a special meeting. Costs have been set aside for road department equipment, and the Township is beginning to spend down its Gas Tax Fund reserves.

There are two one-time charges for this year: a new truck and a one-time payment. It's also expected that there will be another truck purchase and a one-time payment next year. After that, the Township will start allocating \$25,000 per year in a special sinking fund. Staffing levels will remain flat.

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Farley noted the Township will likely run out of funds to fully operate at the end of next year, going into 2028. Oberle responded that they have lots of options. Farley said it's a smart move to pursue options while remaining transparent and expressed gratitude for the JEDD.

The Police Department budget assumed pay raises and the purchase of two new cruisers. The Trustees are finding ways to take care of employees with low-effort, high-impact approaches. The fire district budget is straightforward, with money in and money out.

Farley noted that cash flow is much healthier than when he started, and that the Township can continue to operate independently of county tax advances.

Oberle thanked everyone for the hard work and asked department heads and those attending virtually for comments or feedback.

Tuchfarber and Kayati both spoke to their involvement with the budget process and expressed support.

Oberle used the opportunity to speak to the active efforts of others to place a statewide ballot initiative to abolish property taxes and the Township's obligation to educate residents. He suggested holding regional meetings after Memorial Day with residents, using them as an opportunity to have long-term budget conversations, and is seeking more engagement.

Farley noted that if the initiative passed, there would be almost total loss of township services, and the township way of life would change dramatically. He discussed the need for a contingency plan to protect employees. A fix from the state legislature would take some time, and the Township has cash on hand to fund the police department for nine months. He expressed dissatisfaction at not being able to comment further on the proposed initiative and wished the General Assembly would allow elected trustees to do so.

Kunze highlighted the efforts of the Ohio Township Association to create educational materials on the ballot initiative and to plan their use.

Oberle brought the discussion back to the budget and expressed a desire to move forward, but requested further comment from those in attendance.

Resident Pat Kelly requested that the neighborhood meetings include America 250 celebrations.

Hearing no objections, Oberle moved to adopt the resolution. Farley seconded and requested a roll-call vote.

Kunze	YES
Farley	YES
Oberle	YES

The 2026 Permanent Budget was passed unanimously.

New Business

Resolution 02182026B - Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

The Trustees discussed MORPC at the last meeting, and all agreed it would be a good decision to join. Kunze has met them through the Ohio Township Association and knows they provide a wide range of resources. She noted that the Commission would also have to pass a resolution admitting the Township as a member.

Farley noted that grant options are also available through membership.

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There was a discussion among the Trustees about who would serve as the representative. Kunze will serve as the Township's representative, with the option to have backups.

Kunze moved to adopt the resolution. Farley seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Worthington Memorial Day Parade

Kunze notified the Trustees that they had been asked whether they planned to attend the Memorial Day Parade. There was a discussion among the Trustees on their availability.

District Advisory Council for Public Health

Kunze reminded the Board of the upcoming District Advisory Council for Public Health meeting on March 19th. There was a discussion among the Trustees and the Fiscal Officer about who should attend, with Kunze and Adkins planning to attend.

FISCAL OFFICER

Old Business

Closing Out 2025 Fiscal Year

Adkins provided each Trustee with a copy of the annual Hinkle report prepared by Julian & Grube. The report, which had no special notes and was consistent with previous years, has been submitted to the Auditor, and an announcement will also be published in the Columbus Dispatch that the report is available for public review.

Completing the report allowed Adkins to close out the fiscal year and proceed with January's bank reconciliation.

New Business

January Credit Card Statement

Adkins presented the January credit card statement and noted there was nothing of importance. Oberle signed the statement.

January Bank Reconciliation

Adkins presented the January 2026 bank reconciliation report to the Trustees. He drew their attention to a few outstanding payments that were duplicates from previous years and to an incorrectly posted date on an interest receipt; both items would be addressed in the next reconciliation.

The Trustees signed the reconciliation.

POLICE

Old Business

None

New Business

Officer Wellness Program

Tuchfarber informed the Trustees that officers will soon have access to a mental health and wellness program. The Lieutenant and he are contemplating requiring officers to attend a once-a-year, mandatory, confidential session, and leaving the option of return visits to the individual officers. The Township will cover a portion of the costs, which are already budgeted, and our insurance is also accepted. Other departments have been doing this successfully.

Farley expressed support for the program, noting that recent studies have shown that mental and personal health are correlated, with benefits for employee retention, and thanked the Chief for being willing to personally take part in the program.

The Township will evaluate the program in the long term and monitor employee participation. Oberle requested a utilization report at year-end.

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Coffee with the Chief's

Tuchfarber reminded the Board that Coffee with the Chiefs is scheduled for February 27, 2026, from 9-11 am at the Worthington Hills Country Club. The event has been posted to Facebook and the website, and the entire township is invited.

New Camera Near Back Entrance

Tuchfarber remarked that a recent quote for new light poles was higher than expected, and the Chief isn't sure if it's worth the effort. He would like to proceed with installing a camera on the back of the building at an estimated cost of \$600. The Chief recommends it and offered to cover the costs from the Police District Fund. The camera would function like other cameras around the building and include night-vision capabilities.

Kunze, Farley, and Adkins offered to help find low-cost solutions that benefited the department and other tenants.

Verbal Offer to Applicant

An offer of employment was extended to an applicant, and the Chief expects to hire them at the March 4th Trustee meeting, with swearing-in at the next meeting on March 18th. This would be the eighth full-time employee, but the department is sadly expecting to lose an officer within the next three to six months.

Perry Township 60-Day Pilot with Flock Cameras

Tuchfarber notified the Trustees that, as part of a 60-day pilot program, Perry Township would like to install two Flock Safety cameras in Sharon Township: one at Lookout Point and Highview, and the other on Clubview, further up the hill.

The Trustees have not approved the installation of any cameras and were surprised to learn of this only now. Oberle wants to be sent an official proposal. Tuchfarber expressed concern about fairness and neighborhood needs and noted that a representative from Flock should also attend to answer residents' questions.

Farley asked if there was any chance the Township could let Perry install them and have Sharon Township use them. Oberle noted that the Township must take care of all areas. Farley suggested holding a public meeting on this topic, noting that he has experience with it but that residents deserve an opportunity to learn and weigh in.

A resident in attendance expressed displeasure with the idea of Flock cameras.

ROAD

Old Business

Tremont Gardens Water Leaks

Kayati reported another water leak in Tremont Gardens this past week, this time on Rosslyn Avenue, the fifth one this winter. The City of Columbus was quick to respond, and Kayati believes the Township is being prioritized, but the frequency is becoming frustrating.

Oberle said the current situation is unsustainable and that the Township needs a meeting with someone higher up in the Columbus Water Department. Kayati expressed dissatisfaction with their repair methods and said a more permanent fix is needed. Kunze asked whether the Township could bring together the County Engineer, Columbus Water, and the Township. The Trustees and residents in attendance expressed their displeasure with the situation.

New Business

Aqua Ohio – Singing Hills and Mission Hills

Kayati updated the Trustees that Aqua Ohio plans to proceed with installing new water lines under one lane of Singing Hills Lane and Mission Hills Lane, meaning only half of each road

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will be repaved. Kayati would like the entire road paved, not just one side. The engineer would probably be able to include it in the original budget at an estimated additional cost of \$100,000.

National Underground Network to Freedom

Kayati announced that the cemetery's application to include the Ozem Gardner House in the Network to Freedom program had been approved, and that a National Park Service plaque will eventually be installed.

The Trustees extended a huge thank-you to the cemetery staff and volunteers for getting this done, particularly to Elaine Russell. Written proof was required for the application, which required more than 200 hours of research at the Ohio Historical Society and other locations.

Oberle, the board's liaison to the Cemeteries, said that the renovations to the Gardner House will be completed by the end of March and called it a labor of love. Farley wanted Russell and her husband to be recognized publicly for their work at an upcoming joint meeting with the City of Worthington. Oberle expressed gratitude to the Township and the City of Worthington for their support of the cemeteries. He also thanked Kayati and Rose for their hard work, noting that snowstorms double and triple the workload.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further matters to discuss, Farley moved to adjourn the meeting. Oberle seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 pm.

Date

Chair

Fiscal Officer