

Hamilton Township Trustee Meeting

April 2, 2025

Trustee Board Chairman, Joe Rozzi, called the meeting to order at 6:00PM. Mr. Rozzi, Mr. Cordrey and Mr. Sousa were present.

Roll call as follows: Joe Rozzi
Darryl Cordrey
Mark Sousa

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

A motion was made by Mr. Rozzi, with a second by Mr. Cordrey, to approve the clerk's journal as the Official Meeting Minutes of March 19, 2025, Trustee Meeting.

Roll call as follows: Darryl Cordrey Yes
Mark Sousa Yes
Joe Rozzi Yes

A motion was made by Mr. Rozzi, with a second by Mr. Cordrey, to approve the bills as presented before the Board.

Roll call as follows: Mark Sousa Yes
Darryl Cordrey Yes
Joe Rozzi Yes

Public Comments

Mr. Rozzi opened the floor to public comments at 6:02PM.

Mr. William Camp asked about the company Truck Base, located on Grandin Road, and whether there were plans for expansion.

In response, Mr. Cordrey and Mr. Rozzi explained that the property is appropriately zoned for the company's operations, but at this time, they cannot provide further details regarding current activities or any potential expansion plans.

With nobody else approaching the floor Mr. Rozzi closed the floor to comments at 6:03PM.

New Business

Resolution 25-0402A – A resolution placing a moratorium on the processing and issuance of any permits allowing adult use cannabis operators within Hamilton Township, Warren County, Ohio.

Administrator Wright stated that on January 16, 2025, the Board extended a three-month moratorium on processing or issuing permits for adult use cannabis operators. The moratorium does not affect personal use provisions of Issue 2, such as possession or home cultivation. He also noted that House Bill 96, recently introduced in the Ohio Legislature and supported by the Governor, could significantly impact local control by eliminating community host fees and removing a township's authority to prohibit or limit cannabis operations after the bill takes effect, though moratoriums passed before that date would remain valid. Wright added that if a strong business proposal were ever presented, the Board or a future Board could lift the moratorium to consider its benefits to Hamilton Township.

Mr. Cordrey said he's strongly against bringing adult-use cannabis businesses into the township, especially if the township can't benefit financially from cultivation or manufacturing. He also pointed out that there's already limited space for commercial and economic development.

Mr. Sousa agreed, saying it's a big risk to allow these businesses without financial return.

Mr. Rozzi agreed with both, adding that this feels like another way the state is taking control from townships.

A motion was made by Mr. Rozzi, with a second by Mr. Cordrey, to approve Resolution 25-0402A, a resolution placing a moratorium on the processing and issuance of any permits allowing adult use cannabis operators within Hamilton Township, Warren County, Ohio.

Roll call as follows:	Mark Sousa	Yes
	Darryl Cordrey	Yes
	Joe Rozzi	Yes

Resolution 25-0402B – A resolution authorizing payment of obligations of the Township by direct deposit of funds

Mr. Rozzi made a motion with a second from Mr. Cordrey to approve Resolution 25-0402B – A resolution authorizing payment of obligations of the Township by direct deposit of funds.

Roll call as follows:	Joe Rozzi	Yes
	Mark Sousa	Yes
	Darryl Cordrey	Yes

Resolution 25-0402C- a resolution approving an increase in township appropriations in the Fire & EMS Special Levy Fund and Police District Fund to reconcile budgets for the calendar year 2025.

Fire Chief Jewett reported a reappropriation in the Fire & EMS Special Levy Fund to support the purchase of a replacement tanker truck, approved by the Board on February 19. The truck will serve areas without fire hydrants and support other fire scenes requiring water transport. A \$100,000 down payment will be reallocated to the Fire Capital Motor Vehicle Fund of \$50,000 and \$50,000 from the expected sale of old Ladder Truck 76.

Mr. Rozzi made a motion with a second from Mr. Cordrey to approve Resolution 25-0402C- a resolution approving an increase in township appropriations in the Fire & EMS Special Levy Fund and Police District Fund to reconcile budgets for the calendar year 2025.

Roll call as follows:	Darryl Cordrey	Yes
	Joe Rozzi	Yes
	Mark Sousa	Yes

Public Hearing: Resolution 25-0402D, a resolution adopting text amendments to chapters 1, 2, 4, and 5 of the Hamilton Township Zoning Code.

Law Director Benjamin Yoder explained the procedure for the public hearing on the proposed zoning text amendments. He asked those wishing to speak to stand and take an oath, which was then administered.

Zoning Director Cathy Walton presented the text amendments, which were initially introduced in February and discussed at the Board Retreat. These amendments were also reviewed by the Regional Planning Committee and the Hamilton Township Zoning Commission, both of which recommended approval.

The proposed amendments include the following:

- General Provisions (Ch. 1): Replace all references to "Zoning Code" with "Zoning Resolution" to align with Section 519 of the Ohio Revised Code.
- Development Review Procedures (Ch. 3): Remove Site Plan Review from this chapter, allowing zoning-compliant applications to be reviewed and approved by staff. Variance applications will be reviewed by the Board of Zoning Appeals, with staff issuing the final zoning certificate.
- Zoning Districts & Use Regulations (Ch. 4): Permit unenclosed porches and decks to encroach up to 10 feet into the rear yard setback to reduce variance requests.
- Planned Unit Development Regulations (Ch. 5): Remove Township Trustees' involvement in determining major or minor PUD modifications. Instead, staff will assess modifications based on established criteria. Minor modifications will be approved by staff, while major modifications will follow the PUD review process before Trustees' approval.

Mr. Rozzi then opened the floor for public comments. Mr. Brad Turner, a member of his subdivision's HOA, requested clarification on the setback change. Ms. Walton explained that many cases brought before the Board of Zoning Appeals involve minor encroachments into

setbacks, particularly in Planned Unit Developments (PUDs). The amendment would allow only unenclosed decks to encroach up to 10 feet beyond the PUD requirement.

When Mr. Rozzi asked if there were any comments in opposition, no one came forward.

During board discussions, Mr. Sousa acknowledged that Site Plan Review has been a long-debated topic. He, Mr. Rozzi, and Ms. Walton confirmed that all previous site plans presented to the Board complied with zoning regulations. Since zoning regulations determine what businesses are allowed in a particular area, the Board cannot legally block a business from operating if it meets zoning requirements.

Mr. Cordrey asked Mr. Yoder how often courts overturn site plan decisions. Mr. Yoder responded that courts generally uphold, or overturn decisions based on compliance with zoning regulations.

Mr. Rozzi closed the public hearing at 6:23PM.

Mr. Rozzi made a motion with a second from Mr. Cordrey to approve Resolution 25-0402D, a resolution adopting text amendments to chapters 1, 2, 4, and 5 of the Hamilton Township Zoning Code.

Roll call as follows:	Mark Sousa	Yes
	Darryl Cordrey	Yes
	Joe Rozzi	Yes

Motion to authorize the Township Administrator to accept the proposal from The Impact Group for strategic plan and mission, vision, and core value creation services in the amount of \$34,500.

Mr. Tom Speaks introduced himself as a representative of The Impact Group. Chief Jewett explained that Mr. Speaks was present to answer any questions from the Board regarding the proposed strategic plan to rebrand the Hamilton Township Fire Department. He noted that the proposal outlines a five-year plan.

Mr. Speaks elaborated that the plan includes opportunities for both the Board and the community to express their expectations through surveys and focus groups, which will help establish clear goals and objectives.

Mr. Cordrey raised concern about how the vision of the plan would be maintained amidst employee turnover. In response, Mr. Speaks emphasized that the plan is designed to be larger than any one individual. Mr. Rozzi added that it would be the responsibility of leadership to uphold and carry out the plan over time.

Mr. Sousa expressed skepticism about the value of community input, questioning whether individuals without direct knowledge of the fire department's operations could provide meaningful feedback. Mr. Speaks clarified that The Impact Group uses its subject-matter

expertise to interpret community feedback, helping to shape a vision that reflects residents' expectations and priorities. These insights are then shared with the Board and Chief Jewett to guide the planning process.

Mr. Cordrey acknowledged the value of involving the community, noting that such engagement could foster support for future levies by increasing public understanding and buy-in for the department's goals and changes.

Mr. Rozzi made a motion with a second from Mr. Cordrey to authorize the Township Administrator to accept the proposal from The Impact Group for strategic plan and mission, vision, and core value creation services in the amount of \$34,500.

Roll call as follows:	Darryl Cordrey	Yes
	Joe Rozzi	Yes
	Mark Sousa	No

Motion to authorize the Township Administrator to execute an agreement with Santander Bank for the financing of the replacement tanker truck.

Mr. Cordrey expressed that he is excited that they will receive the tanker earlier than expected.

A motion was made by Mr. Rozzi, with a second by Mr. Cordrey, to authorize the Township Administrator to execute an agreement with Santander Bank for the financing of the replacement tanker truck.

Roll call as follows:	Mark Sousa	Yes
	Darryl Cordrey	Yes
	Joe Rozzi	Yes

Motion to accept the transfer of property identified as Parcel i.d. number 16-11-230-0107 from current owner Beaver Creek Site Management, LLC located at the intersection of Grandin and Striker Roads.

Mr. Wright explained that the developers Joe and Ed Farruggia, owners of Bear Creek Site Management, discovered that a small parcel at the intersection of Grandin and Striker Roads, which was believed to be owned by the HOA of Miami Bluffs for over 20 years. Once the HOA realized they did not own the property, they took down the sign for their subdivision and informed the Township they would stop maintaining the property after 2024. The Farruggia have now asked if the Township would accept full ownership of the parcel, offering to donate it. In return, they will fund the manufacturing and installation of a Hamilton Township sign to complete the existing stone wall. A Quit Claim Deed has been prepared and reviewed by Mr. Yoder and Mr. Wright.

There was additional discussion regarding the management of surrounding common areas, including the right of way, median, and other areas, which will be maintained by Miami Bluffs, Hamilton Township, and Beaver Creek Development.

A motion was made by Mr. Rozzi, with a second by Mr. Cordrey, to accept the transfer of property identified as Parcel i.d. number 16-11-230-0107 from current owner Beaver Creek Site Management, LLC located at the intersection of Grandin and Striker Roads.

Roll call as follows:	Joe Rozzi	Yes
	Mark Sousa	Yes
	Darryl Cordrey	Yes

Motion to authorize Security Fence Group, Inc. to replace guardrail on Grog Run Road in an amount not to exceed \$23,125.

Public Works Director Don Pelfrey stated that Security Fence Group, Inc., an ODOT Approved Contractor, submitted a bid of \$23,125.00 to replace approximately 800 feet of outdated and damaged guardrail on Grog Run Road to bring it up to current standards.

Mr. Rozzi made a motion with a second from Mr. Cordrey to approve to authorize Security Fence Group, Inc. to replace guardrail on Grog Run Road in an amount not to exceed \$23,125.

Roll call as follows:	Darryl Cordrey	Yes
	Joe Rozzi	Yes
	Mark Sousa	Yes

Motion to approve the purchase of a cemetery deed as presented to the board.

A motion was made by Mr. Rozzi, with a second by Mr. Cordrey, to approve the purchase of a cemetery deed as presented to the board.

Roll call as follows:	Joe Rozzi	Yes
	Mark Sousa	Yes
	Darryl Cordrey	Yes

Motion- Approve Hamilton Township Roster as presented

Mr. Rozzi made a motion with a second from Mr. Cordrey to approve of the Hamilton Township Roster as presented before the Board.

Roll call as follows:	Mark Sousa	Yes
	Darryl Cordrey	Yes
	Joe Rozzi	Yes

Public Comments

Mr. Rozzi opened the floor to public comments at 6:41PM, with nobody approaching he closed the floor to comments.

Administrator's Report

Administrator Wright gave the following updates:

- Hamilton Township was ranked the 5th safest community in the state, the largest among the top five. This reflects the dedication of law enforcement, elected officials, and residents.
- The Hop into Spring event is rescheduled for Saturday, April 12, 10 AM – 1 PM at Testerman Park. At the park, the basketball court is nearly complete, with final fence installation tomorrow. Tennis and pickleball court upgrades will follow.
- New developments are in progress along SR 48 and 22. Aldi plans to submit its zoning application this month and open by year-end at Grandin. Currito will open this month at Township Center.
- Infrastructure updates include the Amberwood Way house demolition, pending Duke Energy's service cap.
- The 2024 state audit will begin in June.
- Soil testing will soon start for the new Public Works Facility near Station 76.
- Ahead of severe weather, Public Works cleared catch basins. Residents should keep drains clear of leaves and debris. Next week, a live fire training trailer from the State of Ohio will be on campus for firefighter training.

Trustee Comments

Mr. Rozzi first congratulated Leah on her first year as the Township Fiscal Officer. He then welcomed Assistant Chief Short to update the public on his whereabouts over the past six months.

Assistant Chief Short began by thanking the Board and Chief Hughes for supporting his participation in an FBI Fellowship, a program he was personally invited to join, and which was fully funded by the FBI. During his time there, he was assigned to the Major Theft Unit, where he worked on several high-profile cases, including the Joe Burrow home burglary, which was successfully solved during his fellowship. He expressed enthusiasm about bringing back both the knowledge and advanced software tools from his training, which are now being implemented in the township and utilized by the department's detectives to enhance crime tracking and investigations.

Mr. Cordrey expressed his pleasure in seeing the township ranked fifth among the safest communities in Ohio. He noted that since he and Mr. Rozzi began their terms, the township has consistently remained in the top 10. He also shared his appreciation for the ongoing efforts of Fire Chief Jewett to strengthen and advance the department, emphasizing the importance of looking ahead. Mr. Cordrey commended the high standards set by the staff and departments and

thanked them for their dedication, care, and continued service to the community. Lastly, with the incoming weather tonight, residents need to make sure that they are prepared, have batteries, water, etc.

Mr. Sousa expressed his enthusiasm about having Assistant Chief Short back from his training and remarked how exciting it was that he played a role in the viral Joe Burrow case being solved. He also echoed Mr. Cordrey's concerns about the approaching storm, reminding residents to ensure their cell phones are fully charged and ready in case of emergency.

Mr. Rozzi concluded the Trustee comments by urging everyone to stay safe this evening as the weather moves through the area.

Adjournment-

Mr. Rozzi made a motion with a second from Mr. Cordrey to adjourn at 6:55PM.

Roll call as follows:	Joe Rozzi	Yes
	Darryl Cordrey	Yes
	Mark Sousa	Yes