

VILLAGE OF MINSTER, OHIO
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, January 20, 2026

Council Meeting: Council convened at 6:30 pm in Council Chambers with the following council members present: Josh Osterloh, Travis Wilges, Trey Steele, Curt Albers, Nicole Clune, and Craig Sherman. Also, present were Craig Oldiges (Mayor), Don Harrod (Administrator), and Jim Cain (Fiscal Officer).

Attendance: The Evening Leader, The Daily Standard

Mayor Oldiges called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the January 6, 2026, Minutes: Steele and Wilges motioned to accept the minutes from January 6, 2026 meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Visitors: David and Tina Meyer, 53 S. Garfield, Minster were present to address council about their concerns for commercial development of the property across the street(east) to the north of the bowling alley. Their concerns were about safety with potential increased traffic and possible declining property value. The property is zoned commercial.

ORDINANCE AND RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution 26-01-01: Discussion and second reading of a resolution authorizing the Village's participation in the Ohio Department of Administrative Services' Cooperative Purchasing Program for 2026.

Enclosed is a copy of Resolution 26-01-01 authorizing the village's participation in the State of Ohio's Cooperative Purchasing Program, more commonly known as State Purchasing. The Department of Administrative Services requires local governments to annually pass a resolution or ordinance authorizing their participation in this program.

The primary benefit of this program is that it allows local governments to realize the benefits and cost savings of buying goods and services through state contracts. Local governments can buy limited quantities of equipment or materials at bulk rates through the program and can avoid incurring the additional costs that are associated with the formal bidding process.

Participation in the program does result in a significant costs savings for the village and I would encourage Council to pass this resolution.

A motion by Sherman and Albers for the second reading of Resolution 26-01-01. Motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 26-01-02: Discussion and second reading of a resolution authorizing the sale of excess personal property by internet auction.

In your packet is a copy of a resolution expressing the Village's intent to sell excess personal property by internet auction. For the past several years, we have utilized a government internet auction site called GovDeals.com to auction excess equipment and vehicles that we had accumulated. We would like to do the same this year as equipment and vehicles are replaced. However, to do this, according to the Ohio Revised Code, the legislative authority must adopt a resolution expressing its intent to sell excess and used property by internet auction each year.

Just to refresh your memory, GovDeals.com is an internet site for the sale of government surplus equipment only. Communities can list their excess equipment on the site, set a minimum bid limit, set terms and conditions of a sale and set an auction length. Bidders can easily register and bid on equipment of their choice. There are no fees to list the equipment. If a piece of equipment sells, there is no client fee, however the winning bidder pays a buyer's premium. Payment from a successful bidder is due within 5 business days and payments are made electronically through the GovDeals.com website and then transferred into the village's bank account.

Even though we would be selling items on the internet, the Ohio Revised Code does call for the notice of sale to be published once in a local paper and put on the village's website.

If this is acceptable to council, the resolution would need to be passed.

A motion by Osterloh and Clune for the second reading of Resolution 26-01-02. Motion passed unanimously.

Ordinance 26-01-01: Discussion and second reading of an ordinance to approve the execution of a schedule with American Municipal Power, Inc. for participation in the Community Energy Savings Smart Thermostat Program.

Late last year, Erin Miller from AMP presented information on a program offered by AMP called the Smart Thermostat program. This program combats transmission and capacity charges by reducing members system peak demand through the management of Wi-Fi connected thermostats. The program, which was started in 2023 is a thermostat program that adjusts thermostat load during peak days but no more than 80 hours a year. There were 16 peaking events in 2025 where the thermostats were changed.

Residents who have a Wi-Fi connected thermostat can participate at no cost to them. During peak times, the thermostat's set point would be raised by no more than three degrees. This increase in temperature reduces equipment load at peak times by more than 1 kW per thermostat enrolled. A customer who signs up for the program receives a onetime incentive payment of \$55 and if they stay enrolled after each peaking season, they can win an additional \$250.00. A customer can also opt out of any event, where the thermostat set point is raised.

AMP has seen a participation rate of 1.5 to 2% of residential meters enroll in the program. Based upon the number of meters that the village has that would be around 25 meters. The Village would need to pay AMP \$80.00 per meter that is enrolled, however, the estimated annual savings per thermostat enrolled is \$138.00, a net savings of \$58.00 a meter for the village. Annual savings for the village based upon 20 to 25 meters enrolled would be about \$1,160.00 to \$1,508.00. If more meters enroll than the number will rise.

There is no other cost for the village to participate in the program. Members only need to help market the program to customers and provide AMP with a customer list for participant verification. AMP provides all the marketing materials

Even though the savings are small for the village, any efforts at reducing the capacity and transmission peaks for the village save all customers in the long run. This is especially true as capacity charges and transmission charges continue to rise. If council would want to participate in the program, they would need to pass an ordinance. The deadline for enrollment for 2026 is February 27th, so council could give the ordinance the full three readings

A motion by Wilges and Steele to have the second reading of Ordinance 26-01-01. Motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

STREETS: Committee met and discussed multiple projects, which included new water lines, curb and gutter on N. Garfield, brick replacement on 4th over the canal, finishing Columbia Dr., a developer has asked the Village to put in a street ahead of the Village's timeline, and ODOT anticipates resurfacing SR 66 through the Village this fall.

SAFETY: None

PARKS: Committee met and discussed multiple topics including, the land exchange process with the school, Paris St. Park improvement plans/phases, a Centerpointe Energy easement, pool and pool management, the pool manager has indicated she would like return, discussions on the Ft. Loramie Trail with a meeting set for February.

PERSONNEL: Committee met and discussed potentially hiring a new Public Works Employee and had discussion on the new health insurance coverage and minor issues getting providers switched.

UTILITIES: Met on 1/14 and discussed getting a price for 4 transformers at Danone. Topics also included a new cost of service study for Village utility billing, a large love joy bearing is out at the waste water plant and needs replaced, and finally a couple of laminate power poles in the village have rotted and need replaced sooner than anticipated. The Electric Department and Village are working to see if there is any warranty since these poles are only at about half of their expected useful life. Also, the Electric Department is looking to get a company to come and inspect approximately 30 similar poles in the Village.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Committee met and discussed the following items: there is a business interested in a large lot in the Industrial Park, finishing Columbia Dr. in the Industrial Park, and set a tentative date for a CIC meeting of 2/14.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT: Committee met and discussed a new publication put out quarterly to help improve public communication to residents. The goal will be to get the first issue out in March via mail and social media.

FINANCE/AUDIT: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion and motion to appoint individuals to various commissions and boards.

There are several positions open on various boards and commissions that will need to be re-appointed for new terms. These open positions and those who have volunteered to serve are listed below:

Tree Commission (3 Year Term)

Kellen Mescher
Open

West Ohio Rail Authority (3 Year Term)

Don Harrod

Community Fund Representative (3 Year Term)

Joel Wuebker

Regional Planning Commission (2 Year Term)

Craig Oldiges
Don Harrod

Income Tax Appeal (2 Year Term)

Xavier Bernhold
Mike Griner
Phyllis Baumer

We still have an opening for a position on the Tree Commission that we will need to fill yet. For these individuals to serve on their respective boards, the Mayor must appoint and the Council must approve the appointments by passage of a motion.

A motion to reappoint members to the commissions and boards listed above by Clune and Steele. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and motion to seek bids for the Brick Replacement Project on Fourth Street over the canal.

Choice One Engineering has completed the engineering on the Fourth Street brick repair over the canal. This project involves replacing the brick, the underlaying concrete base and the bituminous layer that hold the bricks together. As anyone knows who has driven over the bricks they are starting to settle out, and we believe this is do to the underlying concrete deterioration and the fact that the bricks are shifting due to not having a solid anchor keeping the bricks tight against each other. Choice One's recommendation is to replace the underlaying concrete and attach a piece of angle iron where the bricks meet the asphalt to help hold the bricks in place better. This will keep the bricks from shifting and cause the bricks to deteriorate.

This work is very labor intensive as many of the bricks need to be cut to fit in the area. Choice One has prepared an estimated costs of the project of \$188,765.00, with \$46,000.00 being for the concrete base and \$79,000.00 allocated to remove and reset the bricks. I have included a copy of the estimate in your packet for your review.

Last week, the street committee met to discuss the project and were in favor of seeking bids for construction. Choice One is working on the bid documents for the project, however, to seek bids council would first need to authorize us to do so through the passage of a motion.

A motion to seek bids by Steele and Osterloh. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and motion to move James Cain from introductory status to full time permanent status as the village's fiscal officer.

Jim Cain has completed his six-month introductory period as Fiscal Officer and should be removed from the introductory status to permanent full-time status.

In my opinion, Jim has done a very good job in his first six months of employment with the Village. Jim has taken the necessary training to learn the Harris accounting system and is working very diligently to wrap up fiscal year 2024 and fiscal year 2025. He seems to be a quick learner and isn't afraid to ask questions for clarity. His previous knowledge obtained from being a fiscal officer for Van Buren township has served him well as he has transitioned to his new position.

I have spoken with the Mayor and he suggested that we go into executive session to discuss Jim's removal from introductory status with the entire council. If Council wants to grant a pay increase to Jim, we will need pass an ordinance amending the 2026 pay ordinance which would set a new salary for Jim.

As we have done in the past, the Mayor would need to make a recommendation and Council would need to confirm the recommendation to remove Jim from introductory status with the passage of a motion.

A motion to move James Cain to full time permanent status and a 2.8% cost of living raise by Osterloh and Albers. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and motion to approve invoices over \$3,000.00.

In your packet is a list of invoices that are over \$3,000.00. The list below are purchases that were authorized by the Administrator by the Ordinance that council passed authorizing the Administrator to make purchases up to \$25,000.00. However, the State Auditors have told us that any purchase over \$3,000.00 must be approved by Council utilizing this method. The purchases are as follows:

PAB CONSTRUCTION	\$ 63,777.42	HAMILTON ST. RECONSTRUCTION
CITY OF ST MARYS	\$ 19,551.56	4TH QTR ADMIN FEE
CIVIC PLUS	\$ 4,617.27	SOCIAL MEDIA
CORE AND MAIN	\$ 3,112.41	PWD REPAIR SUPPLIES
FERGESON WATERWORKS	\$ 3,609.00	NAS MIXER W/ MOTOR
FLOCK GROUP	\$ 23,000.00	ANNUAL FLOCK SYSTEM
OHIO CONCRETE CRUSHING	\$ 79,812.34	CRUSH CONCRETE
PAB CONSTRUCTION	\$ 10,082.00	HAMILTON ST. RECONSTRUCTION
SOUTHWEST AUGLAIZE CHAMBER	\$ 5,250.00	ANNUAL DUES
TANTALUS	\$ 28,305.59	ANNUAL DUES
US GEOLOGICAL SURVEY	\$ 3,813.00	MONITORING FEE
OHIO TREASURER	\$ 10,417.32	OPWC LOAN PAYMENT
AXON ENTERPRISE	\$ 33,928.84	ANNUAL FLEET CONTRACTS
CHOICE ONE ENGINEERING	\$ 7,020.00	PARIS ST. PARK PLAN
FENSON CONTRACTING	\$ 53,751.70	COLUMBIA DR. WATER/SEWER
SUNBELT SOLOMAN	\$ 73,325.00	REBUILD TRANSFORMERS

A motion to approve invoices over \$3,000 by Albers and Wilges. Motion passed unanimously.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

- 1) Brumbaugh Construction has nearly completed the sidewalk installation on the east side of State Route 66 north of the Eagle Plaza. All the storm work has been completed, and the sidewalk has been installed up to Bensman Road. Brumbaugh needs to come back in and finish grading the area and prepping the area for seeding. Pleiman Landscaping has been contacted, and we are on their list for early spring. Also in the spring, the electrical department will finalize the updated crosswalk signals once the material comes in.
- 2) The Village has received notification from the Ohio Department of Transportation that ODOT will be resurfacing State Route 66 through the village sometime in late summer or early fall. This is an ODOT project and they will handle all the bidding, contract management and will oversee the resurfacing. The Village has notified ODOT that the week of September 28th is not a good time to complete the project.
- 3) Travis Fishbaugh has advised us that a bearing in the oxidation ditch that operates the augers needs replaced due to wear and tear. This bearing connects the augers together at the main drive shaft. To fix the issue, the augers need to be pulled from the oxidation ditch, the bearing replaced, and then the augers reset in the oxidation ditch. The village has all the parts necessary for the repair; however, we do not have the crane to remove the augers. Therefore, Peterson Construction will be in the week of January 26th to assist the wastewater plant employees with the repairs.
- 4) The electric department has discovered that two of the laminated wood poles that are at the intersection of Paris and Seventh Streets are starting to show signs of rot. The electric department has removed the wires from one of the poles and reconnected the wires to a new ductile iron pole that was set to replace the laminate pole. The department is in the process of removing the butt of the laminate pole and from that we will take pictures of the pole and reach out to the manufacturer because these poles are only about 16 years old. In the meantime, we are also going to be looking at getting the other laminate poles tested to make sure that no other poles are starting to deteriorate. We have about thirty some laminate poles throughout the village.
- 5) Courtney and Associates are nearing completion of the cost-of-service studies for both the water system and the electrical system. Now that we have 2025-year end numbers, Courtney will plug those numbers into the cost-of-service studies to get the village the latest and most accurate data. Once Courtney finalizes the studies, we will meet with the utilities committee to review the data and recommendations.
- 6) PAB Construction continues to work on the reconstruction of North Hamilton Street. They have finished the installation of utilities between Fifth and Sixth Street and have laid a stone base in this section. They are currently excavating the section of Hamilton Street between Sixth and Seventh Street and getting ready to install utilities in this area.
- 7) Well number five at the Four Seasons Park is out of service. We believe that we have a bad motor that is causing issues with the well. Quinter Well Drilling has been notified, and we are awaiting them to come in and pull the motor to verify.

- 8) The Ohio Plan and Stolly Insurance has notified us that the village's property and liability insurance premiums will increase less than one percent from 2025 to 2026, even though the property values increased by over 2.7 million dollars.
- 9) The electric department anticipates receiving their new fifty-foot bucket truck from Utility Truck Equipment within the next two weeks. Once the truck is delivered, we will change everything over from the old truck and get the old truck ready to auction off.
- 10) Tanya Helton the pool manager for the past several years, has indicated that she will return for another year. Also, we are beginning the push to hire lifeguards and maintenance workers for the pool this summer. An article will be in the Town Crier newsletter, and we will reach out to the schools to let them know that anyone that wants to apply for a lifeguard position can now do so.
- 11) The Village will begin accepting on-line shelter house reservations beginning at 12:01am on March 1st. Anyone who wants to reserve a shelter house in person can do so beginning at 8:00 am on March 2nd.
- 12) The Ohio EPA has notified the village that our request to increase the TDS limits because of the updates to the tributary area has been rejected. The Miami-Erie Canal is a modified warmwater habitat and per 3745-1-05(A)(12), a "modified warmwater habitat" is considered a "limited quality water"; therefore, because of this designation, per the OAC, we were exempt from a full blow anti-deg. The basis for the rejection of our anti-deg request is that Loramie Creek is less than 2 miles downstream from the Minster 001 Outfall – and Loramie Creek is a "warmwater habitat" which is not a "limited quality water" and there is a clause in the OAC that allows consideration for downstream waterbodies when determining if a modification is warranted. Therefore, they are going to require a social-economic justification portion of the anti-deg process to be completed before they reconsider an increase in the TDS limit because of the tributary area. We are looking into what the social-economic justification entails.

A motion to approve invoices totaling \$1,475,836.76 by Clune and Osterloh. Motion passed unanimously.

No new receipts to report.

A motion to enter executive session by Albers and Steele at 7:43 to discuss employee compensation including wages and benefits with action. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion to exit executive session by Osterloh and Steele at 8:13. Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was made by Clune and Wilges at 8:15pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Craig Oldiges, Mayor

James Cain, Fiscal Officer

Recorded & typed by James Cain