

Miami Township Community Action Team (CAT) Meeting #1

Summary Report & Analysis

Meeting Date: Wednesday, November 19, 2025

Focus: Long-term planning for Police, Fire & EMS Services

1. Introduction & Purpose

Miami Township's Community Action Team (CAT) convened for its first working session to evaluate the future of police, fire, and EMS services. This meeting follows two fall town halls and a community-wide survey that captured resident feedback about service quality, expectations, and future needs.

The purpose of the CAT is to take a deeper dive into operational realities, funding challenges, and long-term service needs—and to provide clear guidance and recommendations to Township Trustees as they consider how Miami Township should move forward.

Across all discussions, CAT members emphasized transparency, clarity, practical solutions, and direct communication with residents.

2. Major Themes & Discussion Points

A. Current Service Levels & Community Expectations

CAT members consistently noted that residents hold a very positive perception of both the Police Department and Fire/EMS services. The reputation of each department is strong, and residents frequently express satisfaction with the level of service they receive.

However, this created key questions for the committee to wrestle with:

- If residents are largely satisfied today, what does “doing better” look like—and at what cost?
- Is continuing “good” service enough, or is improved service necessary to meet future demands?
- How can the Township help residents understand the real impact of maintaining, improving, or reducing services?

Members stressed that public messaging must highlight positive achievements and the value of today’s service levels, while also being transparent about emerging challenges and tradeoffs.

B. Operating Lean: What Has Already Been Done?

Across several points in the discussion, CAT members expressed a need to clearly articulate:

- What the Township has already cut or reduced to stay lean
- Whether departments have already exhausted internal efficiencies
- How long the Township has been “running lean”
- Why current funding is no longer sufficient

This request reflects the community’s desire to understand that before being asked for additional revenue, the Township has taken tangible, responsible steps to control spending.

Cited questions included:

- “What have we done to not ask for funding?”
- “Have we reduced spending?”
- “Can we be leaner with our current budget?”

Providing a clear, fact-based answer to these questions will be a critical part of future communications.

C. Exploring Additional Funding Sources

CAT members requested a thorough review of alternative, non-levy funding options. These included:

- Grants
- EM S Billing Enhancements
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) where appropriate
- Commercial Activity Tax (CAT Tax / Developer Fees) – identified as a potentially underutilized revenue source
- A joint School Safety Levy
 - Potential to fund School Resource Officers (SROs)
 - Create alignment between Township and School District safety priorities
 - Reduce duplicative efforts

The group stressed that even if these sources cannot fully fund operations, residents will expect to know that every revenue avenue has been explored.

D. Millage, Levy Length, and Transparency

A major theme was the need to clearly explain what different millage levels actually provide and why the Township may need a levy at all.

CAT members emphasized:

- Residents must be shown the impact of each proposed millage level (e.g., 2.0, 2.9, 3.0 and above)
- The length of the levy (continuous vs. 5–7 years) is equally important
- Educational materials should visualize how current millage drops off over time, creating a funding gap
- Communications must be direct, asking residents for what is truly needed—not simply what seems easier to pass

E. Communicating the Personal Impact to Residents

The CAT stressed that future messaging must go beyond statistics and clearly articulate:

- Response times with and without additional funding
- What happens if service levels are reduced
 - Example: Reducing from four ambulances to three
 - How that change translates to real-world impacts for residents
- How decisions affect individuals, families, and neighborhoods

Members highlighted that people respond to “How does this affect me personally?” and that honest, concrete examples will be essential.

F. Business vs. Residential Perspectives

While Miami Township is primarily residential, CAT members emphasized that business owners play a critical role in the local economy and should have a voice in the process.

Recommendations included:

- Adding local business owners to the CAT
- Highlighting how strong safety services support the business community
- Ensuring outreach includes both sectors

The committee noted that businesses and residents hold equally important perspectives, and both must be considered in long-term planning.

3. Data, Trends & Future Outlook: What the CAT Wants to Understand Next

Members identified several operational trends they want deeper analysis on before making recommendations:

- Call volume changes over the last 10 years and projections for the next 3–5 years
- Response time trends, including how staffing and demand have shifted
- Population growth, new developments, and the addition of new housing units
- Patrol fleet usage, including total miles driven per year
- Precise impacts of different millage levels
- What each funding level “buys” in terms of staffing, response times, and equipment

This information will help the CAT evaluate long-term sustainability of services.

4. Action Items for Next Meeting

The CAT outlined clear follow-up items needed to continue the evaluation:

Operational & Service Data

- Detailed response time data

- Calls for service across Police & Fire
- Patrol fleet mileage per year

Financial Modeling

- Side-by-side comparison of proposed millage levels
- What each millage rate specifically funds
- Visuals showing current millage decline and future funding gaps

Community Impact Analysis

- Real examples of how service reductions would affect residents
- Clear explanation of personal impacts (ambulance availability, police response time, etc.)

5. Conclusion

This first CAT meeting provided a strong foundation for the work ahead. Members demonstrated a shared commitment to:

- Transparent communication
- Understanding real operational needs
- Exploring every possible funding option
- Being honest with the community about costs, trade-offs, and future expectations

As the CAT continues, its recommendations will help guide Township Trustees through one of Miami Township's most important long-term decisions: how to maintain high-quality Police, Fire, and EMS services in a fast-growing community.