

Miami Township Community Action Team (CAT) – Meeting #3 Summary Report & Analysis

Meeting Date: Wednesday, December 3, 2025

Purpose: Review information requested at CAT II, evaluate levy scenarios, and prepare for final recommendations and analysis to Township Trustees.

1. Introduction

The Community Action Team (CAT) reconvened to continue its work evaluating the long-term needs of Miami Township's Police, Fire, and EMS services. This meeting focused on:

- Reviewing notes and follow-up information from CAT II
- Assessing the sustainability of service levels under different millage options
- Determining what levy duration and funding levels are appropriate
- Preparing the groundwork for a final recommendation/analysis to the Township Trustees

The discussion centered on balancing community expectations, operational realities, and long-term financial responsibility. As in previous meetings, CAT members emphasized transparency, clear information, and ensuring residents understand both the need and the impact of future decisions.

2. Review of CAT II Follow-Up Information

Township staff presented the information that CAT members requested at the prior meeting, including:

- Service level impacts at various millage levels
- Preliminary cost estimates for staffing, equipment, and fleet needs
- Comparisons of levy duration options
- Updated operational data to inform “good,” “better,” and “best” service models

CAT members reviewed and discussed this information in detail as they prepared to refine their recommendation range.

3. Key Themes & Discussion Points

A. Levy Duration: Five Years Appears Necessary

There was strong consensus among CAT members that:

- A future levy should be designed to last five years
- Guaranteeing a ten-year levy lifespan is not realistic given current cost trends
- Asking residents for a levy every three years would be too frequent, but a five-year cycle is reasonable and has historically been manageable

Members also noted that the Township has historically stretched levy dollars responsibly — including making the current five-year levy last more than a decade through strategic use of grants and other revenue offsets.

B. Millage Range: 2.9 to 3.5 Mills

The CAT expressed clear opinions about the likely millage range:

- The “best” service model is considered financially out of reach at this time
- The reasonable range for consideration is 2.9 to 3.5 mills
- Many CAT members believe there is no meaningful middle ground between those two points
- Presenting a slightly higher, well-supported millage may give Trustees flexibility
- CAT members emphasized that if the community is asked for 3.5 mills, the Township should not simultaneously present 2.9 mills, allowing Trustees to adjust downward as needed

CAT members requested cost breakdowns for:

2.9, 3.1, 3.3, and 3.5 mills, including what service increases each level would support.

C. Building Improvements if Millage Exceeds 2.9

Many members felt strongly that:

- If the millage ends up above 2.9, the Township must show tangible improvements—such as staffing increases, equipment upgrades, or specific service enhancements.
- Using higher millage only to extend levy duration would not be supported.

Clear articulation of improvements (especially for Police and Fire personnel) is an action item for CAT IV.

D. Continued Support & Community Confidence in Safety Services

The CAT reiterated several important points:

- Miami Township has never failed a safety services levy

- Police and Fire/EMS enjoy broad, longstanding community support
- Residents generally believe services are strong and well-run
- Any levy should clearly communicate that funding will support both departments, and the millage will be shared between them

The group stressed that community understanding of the dual-department structure is essential.

E. Importance of Personal Impact

To help residents understand why funding is needed, CAT members emphasized the need for clear, concrete analysis, such as:

- Fleet downtime affecting the ability to respond to emergencies
- The role of safety services in saving lives or preventing crime
- How current funding levels have been responsibly extended
- The uniqueness of Miami Township's service model, including:
 - School Resource Officers in every school
 - Community health programs
 - High performance EMS (progressive protocols, paramedics on every apparatus)
 - Miami Township's recognition as one of the safest communities in Ohio

Members repeatedly noted that residents respond best when they understand how a decision impacts them personally.

F. Outreach and Community Engagement Efforts

CAT members asked what efforts are currently underway to communicate with the public. Examples provided included:

- Attendance at HOA meetings

- Discussions with senior living communities
- Increased presence at community events
- Ongoing conversations with local organizations and residents

Members agreed this outreach is valuable and should continue.

G. Fleet, Personnel, and “Better” Service Level Questions

CAT members raised several questions that will inform CAT IV:

- Cost estimates for personnel needed to move from “good” to “better” service levels
- Updated fleet condition analysis for both departments
- How additional funding would maintain service levels and provide minimal increases without overextending resources

Members agreed that pushing for the “best” model is unrealistic at this time, but exploring how 3.5 mills could support a “better” service package is essential.

4. Leadership & Organization

CAT members that have volunteered as spokespersons for the group:

John, Ron, Jeff, and Dan

These individuals will begin drafting talking points ahead of the CAT IV meeting and eventual presentation to the Trustees.

5. Action Items for CAT Meeting #4 (December 10)

A. Operational & Financial Detail Needed

- Finalize cost of “better” services, centered on personnel needs for Police and Fire
- Provide fleet replacement timelines and associated costs
- Develop full cost comparisons for 2.9, 3.1, 3.3, and 3.5 mills

B. Messaging & Story Development

CAT members requested examples and drafts of stories that help explain:

- Why a joint Police/Fire levy is necessary
- Increasing costs of equipment and services
- Fleet downtime and its real-world consequences
- The Township’s history of fiscal responsibility
- The uniqueness and value of Miami Township’s safety services
- Personal impact on homeowners, businesses, and seniors on fixed incomes

C. Preparation for Trustee Presentation

- Create a bullet-point summary for the Trustee presentation
- Develop 3–5 core discussion points
- Outline how the CAT arrived at its recommendation range

D. Recommendation Framework

- Narrow the levy recommendation to a final level between 2.9 and 3.5 mills
- Identify service improvements tied to each option

- Clarify levy duration expectations (likely five years)

6. Next Steps

The CAT IV meeting is scheduled for:

Wednesday, December 10 at 6:00 PM at the PSTC

At that meeting, the CAT will:

- Finalize its levy recommendation range
- Review cost and service impacts associated with each millage option
- Refine the key points for the recommendation to the Trustees