



City of Ashtabula
Ashtabula City Council
Safety Forces Committee
Monday, January 13, 2025 at 8:30 AM
Council Chambers
4230 Lake Avenue, Ashtabula, OH 44004

Minutes

Opening of Committee Meeting

Call to Order

The meeting of the Ashtabula City Council Safety Forces Committee was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Committee Chair Guerriero.

Roll Call

Members Present: Chair: Ward 2 Councilor Terence Guerriero, Vice Chair: Ward 1 Councilor Kym Foglio, Member: Council President John Roskovics

Absent: none

Officers Present: City Manager James Timonere, Clerk of Council Stacy Millberg

Ashtabula Department Heads Present: Police Chief Robert Stell, Fire Chief Shawn Gruber

Visitors:

Sunshine Law Certification

A quorum was established as defined by the Ashtabula City Council Rules of Order. The meeting met the requirements of the Ohio Sunshine Laws Open Meetings Act.

Welcome and Acknowledgement of Visitors

Special Guest Presentation

Police Department – Chief's Report

Chief Stell provided the report. The stats for December are not accurate. There was an 11-day period that the software provider was not importing information. The number of calls is closer to 1,100 to 1,200 for December. Calls for Service during the winter are consistent with the rest of the year. There is a slight up-tick during the summer months but nothing drastic. Jim Oatman, Chief Stell's administrative assistant, retired. Catherine Terry, formerly of the Ashtabula City Finance Department, replaced him. The Police Department and Fire Department will hold entrance exams on March 23, 2025. The Police Department has openings for five or six officers. The Police Department is currently accepting lateral transfers.

APD Stats December 2024

Fire Department – Chief's Report

Chief Gruber provided the report. The stats for 2024 are in line with previous years except for the large fire loss, which was due to the large ship fire in the Harbor. Structure fires stay consistent. In light of the wildfires in California, Committee Chair Guerriero asked if areas of the City are at risk for similar events because the houses are close together. Chief Gruber stated fire officials have

procedures in place to protect neighboring properties. The fire department will have one opening, possibly two, later this year.

AFD 2024 Stats

City Manager's Report

City Manager Timonere stated the open dispatch position was filled. Another opening is anticipated later this year. The City Manager discussed purchasing a program called Lexipol to assist with policies and procedures for the police department. Police department employees will also have access to the program for training purposes. The initial cost is approximately \$40,000. There will be a yearly cost of between \$8,000 to \$10,000. The City Manager plans to use funds from the Opioid Settlement Fund for personnel costs for a detective on the drug task force. The money saved on the detective's salary will be used to fund the initial cost of the program.

City Solicitor's Report

Unfinished Business

New Business

President Roskovics discussed a concern from a resident regarding parking at the end of a neighbor's driveway making it difficult to get out of the driveway. City Manager Timonere stated as long as there is not a designated parking restriction, residents can park wherever they want. Vehicles must park at least 30 feet from an intersection and 10 feet from fire hydrants.

Golf Cart Legislation

City Manager Timonere suggests not allowing golf carts on any of the main roads, other than Bridge Street and Main Avenue. Golf carts would not be permitted on any roads with a speed limit above 25 mph. Golf carts will still be able to cross those roads. One thing City officials are trying to determine is how golf carts can get from Ward 2, east of the river, to the west side of the river. City officials are working on where golf carts should be allowed in the City and police department officials and the Solicitor's Office are working on the legal side, such as licensing. The City Manager anticipates having something in place by the summer.

HB 315 - Costs to provide video public records

City Manager Timonere discussed new legislation to allow a chargeable cost for video public records. Entities can charge up to \$75 per hour of video produced, with a total cap of \$750. The City Manager stated the police department is seeing an increase in requests for body camera videos from the news media and it is a time consuming process to prepare them. The City Solicitor will prepare legislation for City Council to vote on.

Next Meeting

February 10, 2025

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 a.m. by Committee Chair Guerriero.